

ART. III.—CLERICAL LIFE IN IRELAND IN THE  
EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

IN an article in this Magazine in June last, a sketch was given of the life of a remarkable Irish Divine of the eighteenth century. But Skelton's life was so full of incident, that little space was left to treat of the times in which he lived. To that subject we now revert. A glance must, however, be taken even further back if we wish to understand the low state of spiritual and Church life a hundred and fifty years ago. Take Bramhall, King, and Boulter, as three leading men on the Episcopal Bench, occupying each a prominent place in successive epochs, and we shall learn from them in what condition the Reformed Church of Ireland existed a century or two after the Reformation was forced on the country.

John Bramhall was brought to Ireland by Strafford as his chaplain, and was employed by him to ascertain the condition of the Church. In 1633 he was a commissioner in a Royal visitation in which the revenues and status of the Church were inquired into. The revenues were found to have been squandered, the discipline scandalously despised, the clergy meanly considered, and many bishoprics were made as low as sacrilege could make them. Cloyne was reduced to five marks a year. Ardfert and Aghadoe, in Kerry, were reduced, the former to £60 a year, the latter to £1 1s. 8d. Simony prevailed largely. Bramhall wrote to Laud that in Dublin one church was converted into a stable for the Lord Deputy's horses, and the choir of another into a tennis court, of which the vicar acted as marker. Christ Church vaults were tippling-rooms for beer, wine, and tobacco, let to Popish recusants. The Holy Table in the Cathedral was "made an ordinary seat for maids and apprentices."

Bramhall found the clergy what might be expected when the churches were insulted thus. Plurality abounded. One bishop held twenty-three benefices with his bishopric in various parts of the kingdom. At this time sectarianism abounded in the North, but Popery advanced with rapid strides elsewhere. Bedell, the saintly Bishop of Kilmore, was labouring for the salvation of souls, and even made converts from the ranks of the Romish clergy. He printed the Bible and Prayer-book in Irish, and sought to win by love those whom the Lord Deputy was striving to force by law into the communion of the Church.

And then burst forth the storm of the great massacre of 1641, followed up by the sharp stern rule of Cromwell. Under Charles II. the Church was re-established, and Bramhall received the Primacy, and Taylor the See of Down. These

prelates, however, had but short breathing-space for reforms. James II. succeeded his brother in 1685, and three more evil years for the Church of Ireland followed.

Archbishop King, writing in 1692, has given us, in his "State of Irish Protestantism," a series of pictures of the events which passed under his eyes. It is not hard to explain the depressed condition of the Church in the beginning of the eighteenth century, when these facts are remembered. Under James the clergy of Rome were permitted to enter on and take possession of Protestant glebes, "so that the truth is, hardly one parish in ten in the provinces of Leinster, Munster, or Connaught, has any glebe left them." The tithes of the Romanists were all collected by the priests. In some places the incumbents were imprisoned for not paying first-fruits to the Crown, although their livings had, with the connivance of the Crown, been seized. Lieut.-Colonel Roger Moon, clerk of the first-fruits, was imprisoned because he would not force the clergy to pay. By these means, King tells us, many clergy were obliged to live on the alms of their almost beggared flock (p. 228).

For some time after those evil days began, the churches were left undisturbed, though the Romanists boasted they would yet have mass in Christ Church. But an Act was passed to make priests capable of succeeding to Protestant benefices, and this gave them a legal title to the churches. Duke Schomberg's landing awed them for a little; the rabble, however, was not checked in breaking into churches and wrecking the furniture. A rather extraordinary instance of church breaking is thus related by King (note, p. 420):

One Keating was a soldier in the Lord of Kenmare's regiment. He, with other associates, having often before plundered and despoiled the seats of the Church of Trim, without being interrupted, resolved on Christmas Day by night to break and plunder the altar (on which on that day the Holy Communion had been celebrated), and to that end he, with others, about midnight entered the church. Keating attempted to break one of the folding doors which led to the communion table, and immediately, as he thought, saw several glorious and amazing sights. But one ugly Black Thing (as he called it) gave him a great souse upon the poll which drove him into so great a disorder that he tore all the clothes off his back and ran naked into the streets, and used all "mad Bedlam pranks." He died in a deplorable manner in a few days, refusing food and clothes.

In October, 1689, the priests seized almost all the churches in the kingdom. They forced the doors, and said masses in the churches. The Protestants complained to James, and got no redress beyond the opinion that they might prosecute the priests if they pleased. It was but forty years since all the Protestant churches had been repaired after the great rebellion, and very many had been rebuilt by private persons. In 1689

James issued a proclamation that no more churches were to be seized, but he said nothing about the restoration of those already taken.

In June, 1690, General Lutterel issued a proclamation forbidding all assemblies of more than five Protestants on pain of death; and any churches which were left were then shut up. So great was the hatred then shown to Protestants, that many Romanist husbands cruelly beat their Protestant wives, and masters their servants. The persons and houses of the bishops were attacked: the Bishop of Waterford, an old man of eighty and bed-ridden, was stabbed in his bed. Many of the inferior clergy were beaten, and their houses wrecked or burned.

King gives a list of a dozen clergy imprisoned for over a year. In some cases soldiers entered the churches (previous to the proclamation of Lutterel), and swore they would shoot the clergyman if he mounted the pulpit. At the same time, the Protestant laity were robbed and ruined. Whole parishes were unable to contribute twenty shillings to the maintenance of their rectors. Many of the clergy, in consequence, fled the country. Some, however, bravely stood by their flocks, and King writes in the above-cited work, page 268:

They foresaw what use the Papists would make of empty churches and deserted congregations, and that the priests would not be wanting to persuade the people that they were no true pastors who fled in time of danger. We owe it to the clergy who remained, next to God's goodness, that so few were prevailed on to change their religion, notwithstanding that they saw they must be ruined if they stood firm.

The great deliverance by William Prince of Orange put an end to these evil days. But it was not so easy to wipe out the effects of them on the spiritual and temporal condition of the Church. The eighteenth century dawned on a scene of depression, spiritual and temporal, in Ireland. The export trade of the country, especially in cattle and woollens, was ruined by unjust laws passed at the instance of greedy English traders. The effects of fifty or sixty years of turmoil on the Church Establishment was terrible. Religion never was at a lower ebb.

At this period lived Narcissus Marsh, who held successively the Sees of Cashel and Dublin. His name is still familiar in connection with the library which he bequeathed to the Diocese of Dublin, and which, in a somewhat gloomy building in the close proximity of St. Patrick's Cathedral, has recently been made freshly available to readers under the care of Dr. George Stokes, its new librarian. Marsh was Archbishop of Dublin in 1694, and we have several charges and pamphlets from his pen. In the charge to the Dublin clergy, 1694, which is a reprint of a charge to the Cashel Diocese, 1692, he refers largely to the "recent troubles" so fully described by King; and begins by thanking God for the newly-won liberty to meet as clergy

again. "Your flocks," he says, "have not only been disordered, but some of them have been dispersed." He provides a form for the re-admission of "lapsed men," but recommends caution in its use. The following counsels to the clergy show the temper in which he worked :

The office of a minister is *habere curam animarum*, to take care of the souls committed to his charge, that he may bring them safe to heaven and be able to say, in a degree, as Christ did : "Of these whom Thou gavest me I have lost none" . . . . Expound the Catechism for the instruction of all, so that it can be forgotten of none. Unless the people be thus grounded in the principles of Christianity, your preaching will be almost lost upon them.

In order to instruct the flocks he, therefore, orders that the Catechism be divided into fifty-two portions, and taken up every Sunday afternoon. Speaking of preaching, as based in the Catechism, he urges that it should be on a system, *i.e.*, that each sermon should have relation to those which went before and followed it. This preaching in order on the body of divinity will be, he says, of much advantage to young preachers themselves, requiring them to study the doctrines of their Church. He presses the clergy to deal, and to deal lovingly, with recusants. In visiting the sick he warns them against the extremes of leading them to presumption and despair. "Do not," he added, "give absolution upon slight repentance, nor deny it when the repentance seems hearty and sincere." Moreover, he insists on more than the Sunday services ; requiring that "you read prayers publicly in your churches on week-days, especially on Wednesdays and Fridays, in all towns and other places where your churches stand conveniently for a congregation to attend." "'Tis objected," he continues, "as a reproach to our religion, that our churches stand shut all the week long. I am sure the thing is very unbecoming, to say no more, and ought to be amended ; and I pray that this be done in the future. Read the Canons in church once a year, and also the Act of Parliament against profane cursing and swearing." He requires that the Communion be administered once a month, or at least four times a year. Thus did this good Archbishop attempt to recall the clergy to duty.

Little by little, the influence of her more earnest prelates began to tell on the revived Church. But when the curtain is lifted again some thirty years later, we find from the letters of Primate Boulter, that the Church was still surrounded by a sea of troubles. Persecution had ceased, but the tithe question had arisen, and for a hundred years proved one of the most fatal hindrances to the influences of religion.

We shall take Boulter's letters as a guide of unquestionable value to an understanding of the condition of the Irish Church about the middle of the century.

Boulter had been brought over in 1724 from the See of Bristol, and he writes to the Archbishop of Canterbury after a year's experience (1725): "I shall always make it my endeavour to promote the good of this Church, though I fear I shall not always meet with the concurrence I could wish for here." To the Bishop of London (1728): "The laity here are as troublesome and vexatious as they can be in England, and fight a case against their clergy through all the courts." The country was passing through one of its many periods of agricultural depression. Emigration to America was extensive. Boulter threw himself into the wants of the people. "The country," he wrote to Sir Robert Walpole, in 1729, "is in a deplorable condition." He raised a subscription in 1728 to buy corn for the famine-stricken people of Ulster, and partly checked the "frenzy for going to America." "What Boulter did in 1739-40," writes the editor of his Letters, "exceeds belief. There was not a poor person in Dublin who applied to him who was not duly relieved; and the House of Commons voted him their thanks for his country. The sums he then expended must have been very great, yet when he hath been complimented on his liberality, his usual answer was that he feared he should die shamefully rich."

Boulter's name is honourably connected with the foundation of the Charter Schools, of which so vivid an account will be found in Mr. Froude's "History of the English in Ireland." In 1730 he began to work for the establishment of schools in all parts of Ireland, to instruct the children of all creeds in English and the principles of the Christian religion, together with useful trades—following an example recently set in Scotland. Dr. Maul, Bishop of Cloyne and later of Meath, expended a large part of his fortune for the same object, which was afterwards taken up by Parliament, and largely aided by subscriptions from England. "It highly concerns us," wrote Boulter, in 1730, "to try all possible means to bring the Papists to the knowledge of the true religion"; and he adds, "one of the most likely methods we can think of is, if possible, to instruct and convert the young: for, instead of converting the adults, we are daily losing many of our meaner people, who go off to Popery." In 1734 these schools were in operation. We may read in the pages of Mr. Froude, how shameful mismanagement and neglect on the part of Boulter's successors suffered this effort to dwindle away and come to nought.

Boulter was working against wind and tide. In 1727 he wrote to the English Primate: "There are probably in this kingdom five Papists at least to one Protestant. We have incumbents and curates to the number of about 800,<sup>1</sup> whilst there are near

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<sup>1</sup> He puts the number, in writing to another correspondent, at 600. We cannot understand the vagueness of these estimates.

3,000 Popish priests of all sorts here. A great part of our clergy have no parsonage house, and no glebes to build them on. We have parishes eight, ten, twelve, and fourteen miles long, with, it may be, only one church in them, and that open at one end of the parish." He obtained an Act enabling churches and chapels to be built near where the people lived. He also promoted an Act enabling clergy to reside on their cures by facilitating the purchase of land, and obliging them to build, guaranteeing them a return of three-fourths of what they expend. "For," he writes, "we see nothing but force will make them build."

Boulter was working all round for the benefit of the country. Now he was urging the improvement of the coinage, and found strange opposition in Dean Swift to the introduction of English money; but he lived to see it greedily taken up. Now (1729) he promoted an Act for the draining of peat-bogs. Again, he is encouraging rich men to build churches, by securing to them the right of presentation; and once more he is urging the enclosing of woods and copses, to prevent the stripping of the country of all its ancient forests. In 1727 he is to be seen introducing a Bill in the Irish Parliament, requiring everyone occupying 100 acres to keep five in tillage, for the encouragement and employment of labour and the prevention of famine. The land was going out of cultivation, and farmers taking to stock-raising, so that thousands of hands were idle, and the people emigrated to a dangerous extent.

The Primate was painfully harassed by the tithe agitation, especially that against the tithe of agistment (profit of grazing-land). Some of his letters give us a picture of the early days of these tithe troubles: "There is a rage," he writes (Jan. 8, 1736), "stirred up against the clergy equalling anything that has been seen against the Popish priests in the most dangerous times. The clergy have behaved themselves with a surprising good temper." Again, to Sir R. Walpole (Aug 9, 1737):

Since the Reformation, whilst the lands were mostly in Popish hands, the clergy took what they could get, thankfully, *and very few ever went near their livings to do their duty.* Without the tithe of agistment there are whole parishes where there is no provision for a minister. A great part of the gentry have entered into associations not to pay for agistment to the clergy, and to make a common purse in each county to support anyone that should be sued for it, and are understood by the common people everywhere to be ready to distress the clergy by all means. It was, therefore, thought desirable by us bishops to hinder any of the clergy as much as we could from carrying on suits for the time. But though the clergy have been quiet and behaving themselves during the interval with a temper that has surprised their adversaries, . . . yet the laity are making new attacks on other rights of the clergy. I have, in vain, represented to them that in the South and West of Ireland by abolishing the tithe of agistment they naturally discourage tillage (which always paid tithe), and thereby lessen the number of people and raise the price of provisions, and render those provinces incapable of carrying on the

linen trade for which they so much envy the North. It is certain that by running into cattle the population is diminished everywhere . . . . By this means the great part of our churches are neglected, in many places five, six, or seven parishes bestowed on one incumbent, who, perhaps, with all his tithes, gets scarce £100 a year.

In the same letter, which gives us a useful picture of the state of the country, Boulter informs Sir Robert Walpole that the Bishops' fines and estates are being made the next object of attack; and that the Bishops are the principal tie between Ireland and England: "Too many here are disposed to throw off dependence on the Crown, and complaining of it as an almost intolerable burden." And all this agitation against the clergy and bishops was among the Protestant laity. He speaks of this as giving "great encouragement to the Papists to see Protestants so violently attacking their own clergy." But he finds worse things in store. Thus, in the same letter, he says:

By a paper of queries handed about, it looks as if some gentleman designed to have a committee appointed to examine into the behaviour of the bishops and clergy in their pastoral cures. *I must own we are not saints, nor are we the greatest of sinners*; but what a committee, set on foot by such as have the views too many have, may vote concerning our conduct is easily guessed.

Meanwhile the Primate was standing up like a man for his clergy. Recognising their poverty, he had early in his Episcopate sent a circular to the Bishops suggesting that a voluntary taxation should be made by them for the relief of the poorer clergy at the rate of two per cent. of their incomes; and also that the clergy who had above £100 a year should give one per cent. into this fund, the proceeds to go in aid of the first-fruits for purchasing glebes. This scheme, however, failed.

But Boulter took his stand against clerical abuses. He found in existence one scandalous custom, that of men holding livings *in commendam*, *i.e.*, enjoying their revenues without institution to the cure of souls. By this scandal, parishes were left without any incumbent, and total neglect of the spiritual work followed. He cites a warrant, bearing date Nov. 19, 1719, granting a donation of the Deanery of Kilmacduagh to Charles Northcote, A.M., to hold it *in commendam*, together with the Prebend of Kilmacdonogh, the Rectory and Vicarage of Kilmaghan, the Rectory of Boughillane, and the Vicarage of Clonfert, in the Diocese of Cloyne, and also to enter into said Deanery without institution or other solemnity.

One or two more glimpses of the religious state of Ireland from Bishop Boulter, and we may pass on to other witnesses:

In many parts of the kingdom (he writes) by means of impropriation there are vicarages and curacies with £5 to £10 a year, and in several places the bishops let the same person enjoy seven or eight of these, which, possibly, altogether make up £60 to £80 a year. There is generally but one church for all. (To Archbishop of Canterbury, 1727.)

That Popery was advancing, he has already told us. In the same year, 1727, he writes to the Duke of Newcastle: "Till we can get more churches and chapels, and more resident clergy, instead of getting ground of the Papists, we must lose to them, as, in fact, we do in many places, the descendants of many of Cromwell's officers and soldiers being gone off to Popery." Some eight years later, writing to approve the Bishop of London's plan to reprint books against Popery, Boulter says: "We are very much troubled with Popery here; but we are not over much given to read books. Scandal sells the best of anything with us."

We now take our leave of this candid witness, having surely gathered from him a dismal picture of religious life in Ireland. We have to acknowledge that the dawn of better things in the Irish Church must, under God, be attributed to the labours of the Wesleys, and of the zealous members of the Countess of Huntingdon's connection. It is to these workers, who, during their lives, be it remembered, remained steadfast members of the Church, that we owe the Evangelical Revival which made so deep an impression on the Irish Church.

Whitfield visited Ireland in 1738, the year in which Boulter announced the overthrow of "Wood's halfpence," and rejoiced in the grand success of the English coinage. Swift had been succeeded in the Deanery of S. Patrick by Delaney, a man sincerely anxious for a revival of religion, and a great contrast to his predecessor. The journals of Charles Wesley, and the "Memoirs of Selina, Countess of Huntingdon," give us a most vivid picture of Ireland from the religious point of view. We must, indeed, read these with a certain degree of caution. We must not consent to their doctrine that those who did not approve of revival measures were without faith. But we have learned too much already from the candid pen of the Government ecclesiastic to be able to abate much from the deplorable state of religion in Ireland given in the journals and the Memoirs.

The state of religion in 1738 is thus described by the author of Lady Huntingdon's Memoirs:

‡ Ireland was sunk in darkness; there was little Evangelical knowledge among the Protestants. Only here and there an individual cleaved to the faith, and dared to be singular. The conduct of the clergy was such as, with few exceptions, to deserve the severest reprobation. Not one, perhaps, in a county was an active parish priest, preaching the pure doctrines of the Gospel, visiting and catechizing his flock, entering into the cabins of the poor, to instruct them, to fortify them against Romish emissaries, and to reclaim those who had been led astray.

In 1738-9 Whitfield visited Ireland, and was warmly received by Dr. Burscough, Bishop of Limerick, who invited him to preach in the Cathedral. Dean Delaney also received him, and intro-



duced him to Rundel, Bishop of Derry, and to Primate Boulter, both of whom urged him to stay at their houses. He preached in Dublin to crowded congregations at S. Werburgh's and S. Andrew's.

The Wesleys both began their labours in Ireland in 1747. Charles Wesley's Diary is charming reading. He is the true and self-sacrificing servant of the Lord; the genuine son of the Church of England, without a shadow of hankering after dissent. The Dublin rabble, both Protestant and Romanist, attacked him in most places where he preached. One day we find him strengthening his faith by receiving the Sacrament in S. Patrick's; the next he is preaching in Stephen's Green, and being heard with rapt attention. "A great multitude of serious hearers," he writes, "encompassed me; while those who had not ears to hear sat on the opposite bank in rows. I preached from 'Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters,' and I never saw the hand of God more visible." By quoting à Kempis he frequently disarmed the opposition of the Romanists.

On Sunday, October 25th, he enters in his Diary :

I passed three hours at S. Patrick's, under my usual burden, among the dry bones of the house of Israel. I seldom enter this place but they are ready to drag me out as a profaner of the Temple. The Dean I must except, who has always treated me with courtesy, looks pleased to see our people making the bulk of the communicants, appointed us to sit by ourselves, and constantly administers to me first as the rubric directs.

December 13th.—We had a large increase in the number of communicants at S. Patrick's, mostly of the Society. The good Dean expressed his satisfaction at the sight.

We pause for a moment to quote words of this "good Dean," written but a few years before, and ere he had come in contact with the Methodist pioneer. In 1732 he had written: "Some of the clergy study only to *entertain*, not to instruct. If they can preach prettily, 'tis all they wish. Will moral teaching, however, check the passions of such as we?" In a passionate plea he implores the clergy to preach Christ, the fall, redemption, and sanctification, and not any longer to be patrons of infidelity. Here, then, were men who did not try to "preach prettily," but to unite men to Christ, and Dean Delaney saw his dearest wish fulfilled.

On December 23rd, 1747, Charles Wesley writes in his Diary :

In a conference with two clergymen concerning this way, they confessed it was no schism or new religion, but the faith once delivered to the Saints; and one of them invited me to his rooms in college.

Charles preached in the north parts of the country, was heard eagerly at Tyrrel's Pass, and records that some of them received the truth, and "whistled for joy." "Few such have I met since I left England." At Athlone a riot was raised by one Father Ferril, but the preacher was wonderfully rescued.

Meanwhile, John Wesley preached in the South. In Kinsale he so spoke with moderation in doctrine and earnestness in manner that Protestants, Presbyterians, and Romanists all claimed him as their own. In the spring of the following year the brothers met in Dublin, and returned to England. In 1749 the Countess of Huntingdon, whose family were of the Irish peerage, turned her thoughts to Ireland, and probably under her auspices Charles Wesley was encouraged again to visit that country. In this year the grand jury of Cork city agreed on the following presentment :

We find and present Charles Wesley to be a person of ill-fame, a vagabond, and a common disturber of his Majesty's peace, and we pray that he may be transported.

At Lady Huntingdon's request application was made to the Speaker of the House of Commons, and toleration was obtained for the preachers, seven or eight others of whom had been treated as Charles Wesley was by the Cork magnates.

This is not the place to deal fully with the labours of that extraordinary lady. It is not easy for us now to understand how she could, like a Bishop with a staff of missionary clergy, direct the labours of large numbers of ordained clergymen of the Church of England, who had not separated themselves from her communion. But the fact is we find her for years sending a succession of missionaries to Ireland. A few salient features of their labours we must trace, for there is no doubt the revival of spiritual religion in the Irish Church was due to these men in chief measure.

Rev. John Edwards was one of the Countess's earliest emissaries. He preached in Dublin, and on this occasion, when a riot arose, two parties of "boys" fought for his body. The Ormond boys, who called him Swaddling John, seized him and threatened to throw him in the Liffey. But the Liberty boys on the other side of the river rescued him and carried him home in triumph, declaring he was *their* Swaddling John, for he lived on their side of the river, and none should hurt him. This preacher, on another occasion, was let down from a window in a basket to save his life, when the house was attacked.

Among the Irish Clergy there were some who did not lie open to the sweeping accusations quoted above. Two of these became prominent members in Lady Huntingdon's "connection." Rev. Walter Shirley and Rev. R. de Courcy had been earnestly preaching the Gospel of Christ, and spiritedly defending what they taught by reference to the Articles of Religion. Rev. Mr. Eccles, member of a well-known family near Omagh, was another of this limited number. When he undertook mission preaching, he was admitted to some churches. He came

to Fintona, where Rev. Philip Skelton, whose career we have sketched, was vicar. Skelton at first refused to admit him, but on examination was forced to allow his perfect orthodoxy, and thenceforward Eccles often occupied the pulpit at Fintona. In later days Skelton similarly befriended some of the preachers when threatened in Dublin with inhibition.

Mr. Shirley was a man of ardent faith and devotion. It is not to be wondered at that he found enemies among the high and dry clergy of the day. It is related concerning him that a curate of Tuam used to make all sorts of accusations against him. The Archbishop of Tuam seems to have seen through his accuser's motives, as the following anecdote shows: On one occasion this curate sought an interview with his Grace, and said, "Oh, your Grace, I have such a circumstance to communicate; one that will astonish you." "And what may that be?" "Why, my Lord," replied the curate in a sepulchral voice, "Mr. Shirley wears *white stockings!*" "Very dreadful, indeed," returned the Archbishop, as though much shocked. Drawing his chair close to the visitor, and in solemn tones, he added, "Does Mr. Shirley wear them outside his boots?" "No, then, your Grace, I cannot say so." "Then, sir, the first time you see Mr. Shirley with his stockings over his boots pray inform me, and I shall deal with him as he deserves."

When Shirley preached in Dublin, he was listened to by the Archbishop, the Dean of Christ Church, the Dean of Kildare, the Bishops of Limerick, Ossory, and Derry, and the Dean of Clonmacnoise. These men really objected to the doctrine of the necessity of conversion, but could find nothing in his sermons contrary to the Articles. Of the ministry of Shirley, Fletcher, and the other preachers in Dublin, Dr. Peckwell, a Lincolnshire rector, wrote in 1777: "The upper classes follow them, and the formalist clergy have taken alarm. I expect a storm will soon burst upon them. A Mr. Skelton had behaved very kindly, and *though blind in spiritual matters* [rather hard on our old devoted friend!] has promised me some pulpits. He is a man universally liked, but for all I can hear of him *knows nothing of the Grace of God.*"

Lady Huntingdon, in the exercise of that extraordinary Episcopal authority which she had assumed, sent a succession of good men to preach in Dublin during all the latter half of the century. Among others she had trained in her college several promising young men, prominent among whom was a Mr. Hawkesworth. And when Hawkesworth was withdrawn for a time, she sent the Rev. W. Winkworth, afterwards Chaplain of S. Saviour's, Southwark, and Rev. T. Davies, to supply his place.

The well-known church of the Magdalen Asylum, in Leeson Street, has been the scene of the labours of many devoted men.

It had been founded some years previously by Lady Arabella Denny, daughter of the first Earl of Kerry, and widow of Arthur Denny, Esq., of Tralee. On Skelton's assurance of the orthodoxy of the preachers sent by Lady Huntingdon, they were admitted to the Magdalen pulpit. But when they classed the gay fashionables in the pews as equally sinners with the poor penitents behind the screen in the gallery, even Lady Arabella was alarmed. What could this teaching lead to? For a time this pulpit was closed to them, but those of other Dublin churches, as S. Mary's, S. Thomas's, and S. Ann's, were opened. In 1786, Shirley, dying of dropsy, used to preach from his bed to a crowd which thronged the drawing-room and the staircase.

Lady Huntingdon had long supported a chapel in the southern part of Dublin. In 1784, the numbers attending so increased that she appealed for another, and William Smyth, Esq., built Bethesda Chapel on the north side, which was afterwards the scene of the devoted labours of Matthias, Krause, and Alcock. In Bethesda Wesley preached in 1787. There were seven hundred and fifty communicants! So mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed!

Lady Huntingdon's biographer described the spiritual state of the Irish Church at this later period in the following terms:

Rich in tithes and estates, but poor in labours and successes, the clergy, not wanting in learning and wealth, shamefully neglected the people, and presented a phenomenon which never did and never will again appear, it is hoped, in the Christian world. The criminal sloth of the clergy at large and their neglect must astonish and shock every pious mind. The ministrations of Shirley, Piers, de Courcy, Haughton, Peckwell, Townsend, and Smyth revived the spirit of inquiry. They were the only ministers of the establishment who then preached the Gospel of the Grace of God in that country.—*Memoirs*, vol. ii., p. 207.

This was just prior to the rebellion of 1798. During those awful scenes these men found opportunity to rally round them many timid hearts for prayer and encouragement. And at the very close of the century an English society, called the "General Evangelical Society"—consisting, we believe, of church, clergy, and laity—used to send many preachers all about Ireland. Rowland Hill came over in 1802, and on other occasions, and gradually a dissenting element was infused into the work, so that, unhappily, one of the results of Lady Huntingdon's labours was the sowing of seeds of separation. In York Street, Dublin, in 1808, the foundation-stone of a large church was laid, which has ever since been an Independent or Congregational Chapel, and was long the scene of the labours of a well-known Congregationalist and good Christian, William Urwick, D.D.

The Revs. Robert Shaw and Peter Roe in the Church caught the sacred fire; Matthias in Dublin, Daly at Powerscourt, Irwin

at Sandford, near Dublin, and many others came to the front as faithful and earnest men. The torch was kindled, the light spread, and there was no place where the great Evangelical movement of the first thirty years of this century took firmer hold than in Ireland.

The reader will draw his own conclusions from what has been set before him. We doubt not that one of them will be, that the Church of Ireland in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was labouring under a combination of extraordinary disadvantages without and within. But, truly, the good hand of her God has been upon her. The two great religious movements of the present century have told on her inner and her Church life. Earnestness in spiritual things, increasing love of order in her externals, now mark the Church of Ireland, and God's favour seems to have attended her earnest efforts to wipe off the traces of the shameful apathy and formality of the last century.

G. R. WYNNE.



#### ART. IV.—THE PENTECOSTAL GIFT OF TONGUES.

ON the nature of the Pentecostal gift of tongues, the Rev. H. C. Adams in the *CHURCHMAN* for November presents us with a view partly new, partly a revival of older opinions. That difficulties attend the question all will allow; nor will any be shocked or startled by Mr. Adams's treatment of it, which is reverent, and fully recognises the great miracle. But many, with myself, will not think that he has proved his case either negatively against the more general belief about the subject, or positively for his own.

The different opinions about the gift of tongues may be stated thus:

(a) At Pentecost the Apostles (and, it may be, others) were enabled to speak foreign languages, understanding them. (General opinion.)

(b) What the speakers spoke in their own tongue, each hearer was made to hear in his own tongue. (Cyprian, Gregory, Erasmus.)

(c) The speakers spoke sounds in a tongue not understood by themselves, but heard and understood by each hearer as his native tongue. (Mr. Adams and, I believe, the Irvingites and others, with perhaps some modifications.)

The meaning of "tongues" in 1 Cor. xii. and xiv. is part of the question, since most are agreed that their nature was the same as that of the Pentecostal tongues; but we may consider the Pentecostal tongues first.