

## THE NATION'S SLEEP

drew upon them considerable increase of oppression. Truly it seemed as if this unhappy nation was beyond all hope,—at the beginning of the eighteenth century, the condition of its people being about as miserable as it well could be.

Externally nothing now remained of the old Cymric life which had flourished for so many centuries behind the remote fastnesses of Wales. On English soil, under English laws, and oppressed by masters speaking the English language and practising the religion of England, there existed a poor and ignorant population, who seemed like a little colony left forgotten by time—a forlorn fragment dropped off the surface of history. No doubt the people still remembered, but if they did they had entirely abandoned hope. Since their last intervention in favour of the Stuarts they had taken no part in the political events of the kingdom. Energy seemed dead in them, like a stream dried up at its source. The Conquest had completely arrested its intellectual development. True, the landlords since the reign of Henry VII. had been educated at English colleges, and for those of a lower class there were here and there grammar schools at