

Grants the past year have been as follow:—

To Auxiliary Societies, &c.	11,251
" Schools	10,892
" Diocesan Church Extension Societies . .	2,520
" Irish Church Missions, Irish Society, &c. .	16,702
For Emigrants, &c.	8,439
" Distribution by Correspondents	12,120

Making the grants last year 67,036 copies*
at an expense to the Society of £1792 10s. 1d., including loss on sales at reduced prices.

Total receipts of Free Contributions, from all sources, amount to £2328 10s. 1d.

The gross receipts for the past year have been £4415 18s. 3d., and the hence 103,605 copies of Bibles, Testaments, and Portions.

A wide door is now opening for the Holy Scriptures going forth in this country. Continuous and increasing applications for grants are coming in from several districts heretofore inaccessible to the Society, and it is only by augmented funds that the Committee can meet such extraordinary demands.

IRELAND—ITS EARLY RELIGION, AND DECLINE INTO POPERY.

In the August number of the *American and Foreign Christian Union*, is a very interesting article relating to Ireland—its early religion, and decline into Popery. Thinking that such an account may be interesting to your readers, I will endeavour to make a brief abstract of it.

The first introduction of Christianity into Ireland is involved in obscurity, but the labours of one individual had much to do in its establishment.

On the banks of the Clyde, not far from Glasgow, in the village now called Kilpatrick, was born a boy, named Patrick Succat or Succath. His father was deacon of a church, and his mother was a pious woman. He had reached the age of sixteen, when one day, as he was playing near the sea-shore, he was carried off by pirates, into Ireland, and there set to feeding swine. There he learned the manners of the people, and there too, he became a Christian. Escaping from Ireland, where he had lived six years, he was again carried captive, but this time to France. While here, he felt an insuperable desire to carry the gospel back to the Irish pagans. He returned to Ireland, and, in God's hands was the means of a vast deal of good. Under his influence schools were established &c. &c. Succat died in Ireland 460, A.D. He is canonized as St. Patrick, of whom we hear so much.

The religion of Ireland at that time was a simple, sincere Christianity. In the days of St. Patrick, Rome was counted merely as one of the churches, with her own Bishop. During the sixth, seventh and eighth centuries, Ireland was proverbially the seat of piety and learning, and her people with the Britains and Scots, sent out many missionaries to the northern part of Europe.

But the invasion and conquest of Ireland by the Danes, in the ninth century, brought great calamities on the Irish church. The seats of learning were destroyed, and the students scattered. The Danes were favorable to the Romish church, (in which the Papacy was, at the time, fully developed,) for they had been instructed in religion by the Roman Catholics. When the Normans, who were also Roman Catholics, invaded England, the event was hailed by the Danes of Ireland, who also took the name of Normans. Breaking off connection with the Irish primitive church, they received ordination from the Norman Archbishop of Canterbury, and thus took the first step in Ireland's submission to the church of Rome. In 1156 Pope Adrian III., by agreement with Henry II. of England, issued a Bull, in which he advised Henry to reduce Ireland, and Henry, in return, began to bring that country under the dominion of Rome, and compel the payment of a penny, yearly, for every house to the Pope. This was called Peter's pence.

Thus was Ireland given to England, and thus was the primitive and free church of Ireland broken down, and the people brought under the control of the church of Rome.

For 400 years the English government and the church of Rome supported each other, but when the former became Protestant, the Irish Church, being Roman Catholic, was its bitter opponent. And in the reign of Elizabeth, although seventeen of the nineteen of the Irish bishops renounced Romanism yet few of the people or inferior clergy were either conciliated or consulted, and wherever the priests were put out of their cures, and the tithes given to strangers, a warm-hearted people clung to the priests, and thus they were led by their sympathies to uphold a system which their forefathers had strenuously resisted when introduced by the English.

But there is hope that Ireland will yet return to the religion of her fathers. The *Dublin Nation*, a Roman Catholic paper, says, "The West of Ireland is deserting the ancient *idol*. It is true that the altars of the Catholic church have been deserted by thousands born and baptized in the ancient faith of Ireland." The translation of the holy scriptures into their own language has not been without its fruits. The agitations of O'Connell have been productive of good, and the temperance movement

also. In the summer of 1816, the fathers of the people to cure the potato disease was introduced to Protestantism. The Protestant clergy, who invited the people to their house of worship, got hold of their affections.

In 1849 a Society was formed to maintain missionaries, on square roads, and members of their own. This Society was called, "The Society for Irish Church Missions to the Roman Catholics." The information rapidly spread. In the district of West-Down, where in 1840, not 800 Protestants were to be found, there were in May, 1862, nearly 6,000 converts attending church services, and 2,000 children were taught in the Bible schools. In ten years, in various parts of Ireland, more than 30,000 converts have been found, who have cast off the errors of Rome. The Society employed 219 agents.

"The Irish Liberator Society" for education and religious instruction in Irish have 85 missionaries, 240 scripture readers, 680 teachers, and 30,000 pupils under instruction.

"Thus there is no longer room for doubt or denial of the great work going on. But it was but seen from the history, that the converts, instead of deserting, are but returning to the ancient fold, the primitive faith of Ireland."

IRISH PRIESTLY VIOLENCE.

It is well known that in the west of Ireland the missionary exertions of many of the Protestant clergy have been attended with remarkable success; that within the last few years a very large number of persons have ceased to attend mass, and have declared themselves on the side of Protestantism. Schools have been established in various places throughout Connaught, attended by multitudes of children from families that at one time adhered to popery. The testimony of persons of all denominations who have visited the school is uniformly to this effect, that the scriptural knowledge imparted to the children, is clear, accurate, and extensive; such as to enable them, children as they are, to give every man that asketh them a reason for abandoning the church of Rome.

One of the most successful of these schools was established at the town of Cong, and enjoyed the active and earnest patronage of the rectory of the parish, the Rev. Edwin L. Moore. The schools, indeed, under the care of this excellent clergyman were too successful to remain unmolested. But how has the Romish priesthood acted in this case? They have resolved to use any means, however unscrupulous, to gain their end, that being, if possible, the extinction of the vigorous reformation that was proceeding in the parish. Six Jesuit priests, selected for the work from the neighbourhood of Dublin, accompanied by six active seculars, came down on the town of Cong—a town, the dimensions of which are scarcely beyond those of an ordinary sized village. Three Jesuits enlisted the Roman Catholic gentry in the neighbourhood to aid them in their object, by getting them to promise help to those parents or converts who might need it and accept it, and by engaging them to turn from their land those who might not yield to less violent means. Their efforts, therefore, was to get all information about every convert or child attending the school which could aid them in their design. They proclaimed "a seven years and seven times seven days indulgence" to all who would attend their daily services, and would attend three confessions, etc. Though priests are sworn to keep the secrets of the confessional, and will deny on oath their knowledge of facts which they learn from confession, yet these priests openly acted on the very abundant information derived from this source. They were in the confessional from six in the morning till six in the evening. They compelled parents and others in whose houses there were Bibles, to swear they would destroy them, and withdraw their children from the schools. They preached three times a day, and kept up, for several weeks, a constant and fanatical excitement among the people. The priests themselves threatened some of the parents, that unless they withdrew their children from the school, their houses would be burned down. The consequence has been that the schools have been scattered. Some of the children, indeed, have learned so much of Bible truth as to be able to brave the anger both of priests and parents, and several of them are living in the rectory, who have been expelled from their own homes by their own priest-ridden parents, because they would not go to mass. The clergyman of the parish has been hooted by an excited mob on the streets. The readers and the schoolmaster share the same odium. Some of the readers, indeed, have been beaten by the people who have been receiving their directions from the Romish Jesuitical pulpit and confessional.

A goodly number of the most violent of these assassins were brought before the local criminal court and convicted. As to the punishment of these convicted rioters, we can at present give no information. But at the very time of the trial the friends of the Protestant mission were attacked by a mob, before which, even the police force were compelled to retreat to the barracks, and there, under arms, and with fixed bayonets to endeavour to keep the peace. We are sorry to add that, from the latest information we have received, an attempt has been made to punish the teachers of this violence, or to assure the sufferers of their own protection or of the vindication of the law.

The innate and active power of virtue, which pervades all the circumstances even of this life like a vital principle, and shines through the obscurity of human actions, is to the virtuous the pure ray of heaven; to the guilty, the destructive glare of the lightning.

Creature comforts are often to the soul what suckers are to a tree; God takes off the suckers that the tree may thrive.

* In the Annual Report of the Parent Society, p. clxii., the issues for the past year of the Hibernian Bible Society are stated to be 67,026, whereas the issues amount to 103,605, and the grants to 67,036 copies.