

The following is a literal translation of the old Latin text of Adrian's Bull:

"Adrian, Bishop, servant, of the servants of God, to our most dear Son in Christ, the illustrious King of the English, greeting, and the Apostolical Benediction.

"The thoughts of Your Highness are laudably and profitably directed to the greater glory of your name on earth and to the increase of the reward of eternal happiness in heaven, when as a Catholic Prince you propose to yourself to extend the borders of the Church, to announce the truths of Christian Faith to ignorant and barbarous nations, and to root out the weeds of wickedness from the fields of the Lord; and the more effectually to accomplish this, you implore the counsel and favor of the Apostolic See. In which matter we feel assured that the higher your aims are, and the more discreet your proceedings, the happier, with God's aid, will be the result; because those undertakings that proceed from the ardor of faith and the love of religion are sure always to have a prosperous end and issue.

"It is beyond all doubt, as your Highness also doth acknowledge, that Ireland, and all the islands upon which Christ the Sun of Justice has shone, and which have received the knowledge of the Christian faith, are subject to the authority of St. Peter and of the most Holy Roman Church. Wherefore we are the more desirous to sow in them an acceptable seed and a plantation pleasing unto God, because we know that a most rigorous account of them shall be required of us hereafter.

"Now, most dear Son in Christ, you have signified to us that you propose to enter the island of Ireland to establish the observance of law among the people, and to eradicate the weeds of vice; and that you are willing to pay from every house one penny as an annual tribute to St. Peter, and to preserve the rights of the churches of that land whole and inviolate. We, therefore, receiving with due favor your pious and laudable desires, and graciously granting our consent to your petition, declare that it is pleasing and acceptable to us, that for the purpose of enlarging the limits of the Church, setting bounds to the torrent of vice, reforming evil manners, planting

the seeds of virtue, and increasing Christian faith, you should enter the island and carry into effect those things which belong to the service of God and to the salvation of that people; and that the people of that land should honorably receive and reverence you as Lord; the rights of the churches being preserved untouched and entire, and reserving the annual tribute of one penny from every house to St. Peter and the most Holy Roman Church.

"If, therefore, you resolve to carry these designs into execution, let it be your study to form that people to good morals, and take such orders both by yourself and by those whom you shall find qualified in faith, in words, and in conduct, that the Church may be adored; and the practices of Christian faith be planted and increased; and let all that tends to the glory of God and the salvation of souls be so ordered by you that you may deserve to obtain from God an increase of everlasting reward, and may secure on earth a glorious name throughout all time. Given at Rome," &c.

Before we proceed with the inquiry as to the genuineness of this letter of Pope Adrian, I must detain the reader with a few brief preliminary remarks.

First: Some passages of this important document have been very unfairly dealt with by modern writers while purporting to discuss its merits. Thus, for instance, Prof. Richey, in his "Lectures on Irish History," presenting a translation of the Latin text to the lady pupils of the Alexandra College, makes the Pontiff to write: "You have signified to us, our well beloved son in Christ, that you propose to enter the island of Ireland *in order to subdue the people*, etc. . . . We, therefore, regarding your pious and laudable design with due favor, etc., do hereby declare our will and pleasure, that for the purpose of enlarging the borders of the Church, etc., you do enter and *take possession of that island*."\* Such an erroneous translation must be the more blamed in the present instance, as it

\*"Lecture on the History of Ireland," by A. G. Richey, Esq., delivered to the pupils of the Alexandra College during the Hilary and Easter Terms of 1869. Dublin, 1869, pages 122, 123.