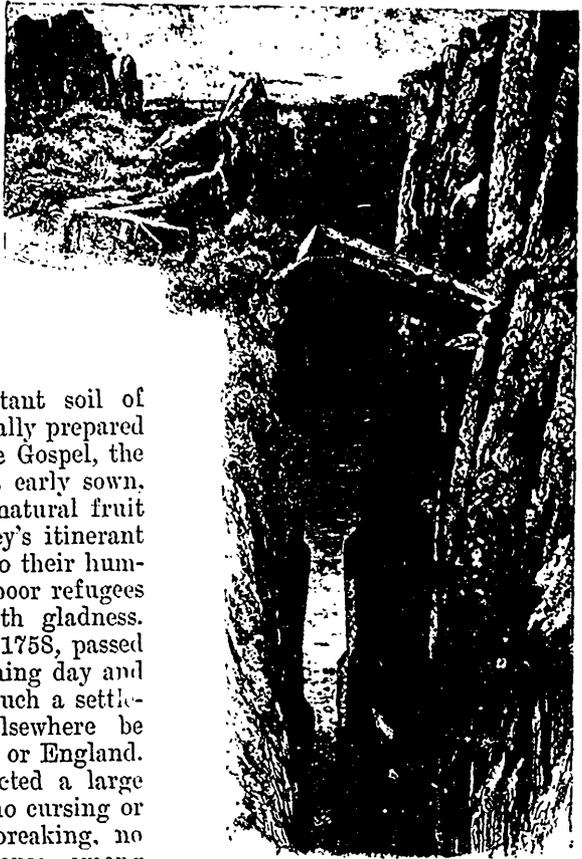


houses are remarkably clean, beside which they have a stable, cow-houses, and neat kitchen gardens. The women are very industrious. In short, the Palatines have benefited the country by increasing tillage, and are a laborious, independent people, mostly employed on their own farms."

In the good Protestant soil of those hearts, providentially prepared for the reception of the Gospel, the seed of Methodism was early sown, and brought forth its natural fruit of good-living. Wesley's itinerant "helpers" penetrated to their humble hamlets, and these poor refugees received the Word with gladness. When John Wesley, in 1758, passed through Ireland, preaching day and night, he records that such a settlement could hardly elsewhere be found in either Ireland or England. The Palatines had erected a large chapel. "There was no cursing or swearing, no Sabbath-breaking, no drunkenness, no ale-house among them. They were a serious, thinking people, and their diligence had turned all their land into a fruitful garden. How will these poor foreigners," he exclaims, "rise up in the Day of Judgment against those that are round about them!"

In this remarkable community was born, in the year 1734, the child destined to be the mother of Methodism in the New World. The family seem to have been of respectable degree, and gave the name, Ruckle Hill, to the place of their residence in Balligarrane. Barbara Ruckle was nurtured in the fear of the Lord, and in the practice of piety. She grew to womanhood fair in person, and adorned especially with those spiritual graces which constitute the truest beauty of female character.



THE GREY MAN'S PATH.

In her eighteenth year she gave herself for life to the Church of her fathers, and formally took upon her the vows of the Lord.

In 1760, in the twenty-sixth year of her age, she was united in Christian wedlock to Paul Heck, who is described as a devout member of the Teutonic community. Ireland then had scarce begun to send forth the swarms of her children who afterward swelled the population of the New World. Only her more adventurous spirits would brave the perils of the stormy deep and of the untried lands beyond the sea. It is, therefore, an indication of the energy of character of those Irish Palatines that about this time a little