

UNDER THE ENGLISH CROWN

birth of a people. It would be going too far to say that it created a new national character—that, of course, was impossible; but it profoundly changed and strengthened the mental and moral qualities of the Welsh-speaking people. In the highly-strung and sensitive natures it produced a saintly type equal to any afforded by the literature and tradition of the Church. Among the people, who as a whole threw themselves into the movement, it developed intellectual powers which may have before existed, but which were only imperfectly utilised. It induced men who had never indulged in speculation to raise and to discuss fundamental religious and philosophic problems, and stimulated to an extraordinary degree the argumentative and imaginative faculties of a naturally quick-witted race.”¹

It was in this fashion that a religious renaissance paved the way for an intellectual one, whose principal leaders were the impassioned clergy who in a few years sprung up under the influence of the Reformation. At the beginning of the seventeenth century few educated Welsh-

¹ *The Welsh People*, p. 474.