

tent to live at ease far away from their dioceses and livings, leaving their flocks to care for themselves. Some bright lights shot out occasionally from this gloom. Archbishop King, already mentioned, Peter Browne, Bishop of Cork, and Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne, were men of power and are well known to history and literateurs. But they were but occasional lights. The gloom was intense. According to Rev. Philip Skelton, an Irish rector, clubs existed in Ireland among the upper classes for the encouragement of profanity, one of them being called the "Hell Fire Club," and as for the lower orders of the people they were sunk in the deepest ignorance, so that he felt like a missionary sent to convert them to Christianity.

In this state of things John Wesley and his preachers found Ireland a fair field for their evangelistic work. Wesley himself preached in Dublin in 1747, in the reign of George II. and attracted large crowds of people as he poured forth by the road side, in the market place and on the street, his vehement and startling preaching. Irish Wesleyans, till of late years, always considered themselves Church people, which in itself showed how careful Wesley must have been to teach them reverence for the good old mother whom he deeply loved himself even to his dying day.

While these events were moving forward a feeling was gradually growing up in favour of more toleration in religious matters, and the hard laws against Roman Catholics were gradually relaxed. This began with the Toleration Act in 1719 (George I.) and continued until in 1795 (George III.) Roman Catholics were admitted to almost every privilege and a large sum of money voted by Parliament towards building and endowing a college for them, so that their young men might receive the benefit of higher education under their own auspices. This college was built at Maynooth, a village in the county of Kildare, and is usually known as Maynooth College.

Thus the eighteenth century drew to its close (George III. on the throne) and the nineteenth dawned to witness first of all the abolition of the ancient Parliament of Ireland. Against much opposition the old Parliament buildings of Dublin, in which Grattan, Plunket, Burke and many others had poured forth eloquence that would have done honour to any country under the sun, were closed and sold to the Bank of Ireland.

This was in 1800, when the Union between Great Britain and Ireland took place, and this union which transferred the Irish members of Parliament to the Imperial House at London necessitated a change in the name of the Church which henceforth was to be known as the "United Church of England and Ireland."

In 1829, in the reign of George IV., the last ban was removed from Roman Catholics, by the

passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act, which allowed them to send members to Parliament. In 1831, the year after William IV. came to the throne, Richard Whately, an Englishman, was appointed Archbishop of Dublin. As a writer he stands high for deep reasoning and solid thought, and his book on Logic has become a standard work. When he received the appointment to the Archbishopric of Dublin, he spoke of himself as having been called to "the helm of a crazy ship in a storm." His name, however, seems to be connected more with secular education than with the work of the Church.

The Irish clergy were largely supported by tithes gathered from the land; but this became a grievance which, in 1832, under William IV. was somewhat mitigated by an act which directed the altering of the tithes to their equivalent in money.

It was in this reign also, that in 1834 the famous Church Temporalities Act was passed, which made several sweeping changes in the Church. It will be remembered that at the Restoration the Church of Ireland commenced its work equipped with four archbishops and seventeen bishops—twenty-one in all. The Church Temporalities Act of William IV. reduced these to twelve—two archbishops and ten bishops. Tuam and Cashel were to be archbishoprics no longer—Armagh and Dublin alone to retain that honoured title. The ancient dioceses were retained in name, one bishop being placed over two or three as the case might call for.

Then came the dawn of our own era when Victoria became Queen in 1837. The question of tithes still became a grievance, and in 1838 it was enacted that the tithe equivalent should no longer be paid by the tenants but by the landlord. At this time William Archer Butler, a beautiful writer and eloquent preacher was, one of the professors in Trinity, Dublin, and an ornament to the Church of Ireland, but his career was short, death coming to claim him in the prime of life.

The increased activity in Church matters which has made the reign of Queen Victoria remarkable, spread also to Ireland, where, in a short time 500 new churches were built, and 919 new clergy enrolled. Schools and orphanages and societies, gifts and contributions showed that the activity which had been so long dormant was at last aroused and that the Church was moving on to better things. But nothing could save her from the fate that was in store for her. She had not gained the masses of the people. A society, called the Irish Society, late in the day, had been formed in 1818 to promote Church principles as far as possible among the Irish speaking people of the country, which if it had been done hundreds of years before might have saved the Church from the spoliation and humiliation which overtook her.