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by the growth of party spirit among those that remain. Men hoist the flag of faction and exchange shots in the columns of a newspaper, who might, within the Church's council-chamber, heal their differences in the balm of brotherhood. The individual of decided but one-sided views might derive from the voice of brethren in Synod that element of balance and temper of which he is now unjustly and mischievously deprived. For lack of this, men think their own thoughts apart, start on solitary or centrifugal orbits, and conceive antipathies and alienations, until, in proportion to their power of original thought, they become either party leaders or isolated and perhaps recalcitrant units.

Men who dislike being recalled to a forgotten standard of primary duty are always fertile in "practical difficulties." Strange indeed it would be if, where you have to dig out entire masses of men from the frozen ruts of centuries of prejudice and oblivion, there were not practical difficulties in the way. But some nine hundred clergy could meet under Bishop Borromeo of Milan for eleven or more years successively in the seventeenth century. How can such a thing, with our improved locomotion, raise any difficulty worth naming in England at this end of the nineteenth? Besides, the thing is done in Scotland before our eyes. There analogous institutions have prevailed for two centuries at least. Of course, if a diocese becomes so unwieldy, or in parts so congested, as to make gatherings difficult, that is a reason at once for dividing it, but none at all for depriving its presbytery of their rights. The same sort of argument, which would be scouted with contempt, if applied to the suppression of any civil franchise, is by some thought good enough for denying the clergy their primary right, older by centuries than the earliest germ of the rights of Englishmen as such.

HENRY HAYMAN, D.D.

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ART. II.—JAMES BONNELL.

THE Bishop of Salisbury in his book on the Holy Communion (*note*, p. 184) refers to an inhabitant of the city of Dublin at the close of the seventeenth century as "that excellent Irish Churchman." The individual thus spoken of was James Bonnell, Accountant-General of Ireland from 1684 to 1699, a name we suspect that few will recognise at the present day. James Bonnell, however, merits the high eulogium he has received at the hands of Dr. Wordsworth. We propose in this paper to give some account of his life and

the times he lived in, and revive the memory of one who in his day was remarkable for his piety and universal benevolence. Fortunately, a sketch of Bonnell's life was furnished a few years after his death by his friend William Hamilton, Arch-deacon of Armagh. A third edition appeared in 1707, and the book was republished in later times.<sup>1</sup> The original edition bore the imprimatur of no less than three of the Irish Bishops who united in their expression of admiration and regard for the character of their deceased friend.

James Bonnell, like so many other deeply religious men who found their home in these countries in the seventeenth century, was a Protestant of foreign extraction. His ancestors lived in the Low Countries, from whence they fled at the outbreak of the Duke of Alva's dragonnades. Probably the name was originally Bonneille, as we find a David Bonneille in Norwich, "the son of an alien and merchant." A Thomas Bonnell fled from Holland at the close of the sixteenth century, and settled at Norwich, and became Mayor of the city. His life was published by Curl, the famous London bookseller satirized by Pope. His grandson, Samuel Bonnell, was a successful merchant doing business in Italy. He lived at Genoa where his son James was born in 1653. Samuel Bonnell amassed a considerable fortune, which was all expended on behalf of the Royalist cause.

When the Stuart dynasty was restored, Samuel Bonnell returned to England, and in recognition of his services received the lucrative post of Accountant-General in Ireland, with right of succession for his son.<sup>2</sup>

To this office James Bonnell succeeded on the death of his father and while still a minor. For many years the duties were discharged by deputies. Bonnell's early education was carefully looked after by his mother, who was a daughter of Thomas Sayer, also of Norwich. Having learned the rudiments in Dublin, he was sent in the first instance to the Grammar School of Trim, then under the care of Dr. Tenison, afterwards Bishop of Meath. Tenison took note of the strong religious tendencies of the boy, and afterwards spoke of "the sweetness of his humour" and "the good-nature of his disposition." His constant companion in these early school-days was an old-fashioned handbook of personal religion known as "The Practice of Piety," which he read every morning. While at Trim School he received his first Communion. When fourteen years of age young Bonnell was sent to a private

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<sup>1</sup> An edition was published by Joseph Masters, Aldersgate Street in 1852.

<sup>2</sup> "Liber Munerum Hibernicorum," part ii., p. 137.

“philosophical” school at Nettlebed, Oxfordshire, kept by a Mr. Cole, who had formerly been Principal of St. Mary’s Hall, Oxford. The purpose of his friends in sending him there was that he might escape the temptations incident to a large public school. Unfortunately this object was defeated, and Mr. Cole’s school was found to be a nursery of vice. In later years Bonnell would say, “I cannot with comfort reflect upon the time spent in that place; in it were all the dangers and vices of the University without the advantages.” By God’s goodness he was preserved from falling into the evil practices he saw around him, and kept his innocence. Mr. Cole himself was not a bad man, but he failed to maintain discipline in his school. A few years later Bonnell was entered on the books of St. Catherine’s College, Cambridge, where he had as tutor the famous Dr. Calamy, the strong Puritan divine, who afterwards took a prominent part in assisting the Restoration. At Cambridge Bonnell pursued a strictly religious life, observing all the fasts and holy-days of the Church, and preparing himself with great diligence for his Communion. On holy-days, he tells us, “if the weather were fair and calm, I would usually spend them in the fields, if otherwise in some empty chamber in the college; in the absence of my chamber-fellow in my own chamber, or in my study if he were there; but not so as to give him or any else the least suspicion of this practice all the time I was there.” His secular studies were also pursued with great zeal, and he became a well-read scholar, especially versed in Hebrew and Greek and the French language. Later in life he commenced a translation of the works of Synesius. Having completed his University education, Bonnell became tutor in the family of Mr. Ralph Freeman, of Aspenden Hall, Hertfordshire. In the year 1678 he travelled with his pupil into Holland, and stayed for nearly a year at Nimeguen, after which time he returned to England. In 1684 he visited France, and at Lyons nursed his former pupil in a dangerous attack of small-pox. His influence over Mr. Freeman was entirely for good, and kept him, as he confesses “from running into many mischiefs he should hardly otherwise have avoided.”

In his early years Bonnell had a delicate constitution, and many of the reflections created by his state of health are given by his biographer. His intense devotion led him to the prayer that the Divine grace “might be in his heart and tongue, in his looks and in his eyes, and shine bright in all his actions.” All these years he was “a constant communicant; his self-examinations for the Sacrament were strict and severe.” His biographer gives many samples of the

“Sacramental Meditations” he was in the habit of composing on these occasions.

The time at length arrived when it was necessary that Bonnell should take up the duties of his high office in Dublin, which had hitherto been discharged by deputy. Accordingly, at the close of 1684 he arrived in that city, and became *de facto* as well as *de jure* Accountant-General of Ireland. We may observe that on two occasions subsequently he had serious thoughts of resigning his official position and taking Orders in the Church. An offer was made by his friend and former pupil to buy an advowson for him, a step which he resolutely opposed as being entirely against his principles. His thoughts on the sacred ministry show how profoundly he recognised the responsibilities of the solemn office, and with what a mind he would have entered on them. He made two efforts to resign his public position and take Orders, and he tells us how they were both frustrated by circumstances over which he had no control—one of them the outbreak of the Revolution in 1688, and the other the state of his health. As his biographer points out, it was no worldly consideration that suggested the change, for the temporal advantages of his office were far greater than those he could have expected in a long time from any ecclesiastical preferment, and his station was besides “of sufficient dignity and credit.”

Let us now try and get a picture of Dublin and its society when Bonnell took up his residence there in 1684. The city was a small one for its population and importance as the metropolis of Ireland. It extended but a little way round the castle, and was hemmed in on all sides by walls. Trinity College was still *juxta Dublin*, and the city was entered at some distance through Dames Gate. The principal churches lay clustered near each other. They were the cathedral of Christ Church and the churches of SS. Andrew, Nicholas, Michael, John the Evangelist, and Werburgh. The Custom House, where the Bonnells' office was situated, lay on the river-side close to Essex Bridge (then a new structure), and immediately below the castle. Here was the harbour of Dublin of those days. His private residence was in Smock Alley, now Essex Street West, a thoroughfare which led to Fishamble Street, and was then fashionable. This street a little later became the Drury Lane of Dublin, and here the chief theatre was situated. As far back as 1649 it was known as Cadogan's Alley, Captain William Cadogan, ancestor of the present Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, then living there. The principal business street was Skinners' Row, a narrow and gloomy passage which ran east and west to the south of the cathedral. It was so called from the extensive trade in hides

formerly carried on between Dublin and Bristol. Here stood the Tholsel, or Market House, a quadrangular building of hewn stone, containing the municipal courts, a "gilded" room, and the Exchange. Two statues, 8 feet high, stood in niches in front of the Tholsel representing Charles I. and II. The streets, which were "uneven, very dangerous, and dirty," were paved for the most part with rough cobble-stones from Wicklow. The city was lighted by lanterns and candles hung out from the citizens' windows, five inhabitants on each side of every street being required to hang out lanterns with candles "in such suitable places as the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs should direct."<sup>1</sup> The city was infested with idle and vagrant beggars, "liveing nuisances," as the old chronicles called them. Begging was a profession, and all authorized beggars were required to wear badges; beggars appearing in the streets without them were subject to imprisonment or deportation. It is interesting to know that the Recorder of the city immediately before Bonnell came to reside in it was Sir Elisha Leighton, elder brother of the saintly Robert Leighton, Archbishop of Glasgow. The Master of the Free School of Dublin (the school in which Ussher and the great Duke of Marlborough were educated) was at the time the Rev. Edward Wetenhall, D.D., who had resigned a canonry in Exeter to take up the school.<sup>2</sup> He was the author of a Greek and also a Latin Grammar, which were in much vogue both in English and Irish schools. Wetenhall, who was a great friend of Bonnell, afterwards became Bishop of Cork, and then Bishop of Kilmore. He was buried in Westminster Abbey. As Bishop of Kilmore he preached Bonnell's funeral sermon in St. John's Church before a large congregation. He prefaces the publication with the advertisement that it was drawn up and preached in much haste, "my dear friend's death being a great surprise to me, who was then but just come up from my home into the city, and very full of business."

Among the inhabitants of Dublin in Bonnell's time were large numbers of French Protestant refugees, who found a hospitable home in the city and became the most industrious and prosperous of the citizens. After a short residence they were admitted to the franchise. The burgess rolls of the day are full of such names as Blondeau, Latour, Bernard, Chaignau, Tabary, Guillaume, Chevalier, Rosseau, Martineau, etc. Among these Bonnell would naturally be an acceptable visitor and benefactor, being himself the descendant of refugee Pro-

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<sup>1</sup> Gilbert's "Calendars of the City of Dublin." V., pp. 452-457.

<sup>2</sup> Bishop Reeves' Preface to Rev. W. G. Carroll's "Succession of Clergy in St. Bride's Parish, Dublin."

testants. In 1687 we find the benevolence of Dublin further illustrated by public subscriptions on behalf of Christians "held in slavery with the Turkes in Sally" (*i.e.*, Sallee, Morocco), a movement in which we may be sure Bonnell had his part.

There are intimations in Bonnell's "Remains" that there was another and a darker side to the picture. Dublin was not free from those vices which belong to all cities. . Bonnell took his part in counteracting the evil, and helped to establish and support various organizations for the moral and spiritual improvement of the community. Many of these institutions sprang up in Dublin about the year 1693. His biographer says: "They gave him great comfort and joy. He not only approved of the pious design, but did very much encourage and promote it. He pleaded their cause, writ letters in their defence, and was one of their most diligent and prudent directors. . . . He was likewise a zealous promoter of the societies for reformation of manners who apply themselves to the suppression of profaneness and vice; he was always present at their meetings, laid their design truly to heart, and thought much of them; he contributed liberally towards their necessary charge, and constantly prayed for their success."<sup>1</sup> Again we are told: "He was continually dispersing good books among young people, his clerks, and servants, and poor families; which he seconded with such constant instructions upon all fitting occasions, delivered with such kindness and concern as could not fail of making great impressions upon many of them."<sup>2</sup>

Among the literary men of Dublin in Bonnell's day were William Molyneux, the friend and correspondent of Locke, Secretary of the Philosophical Society of Dublin and author of many philosophical and scientific writings, and George Ashe, Provost of Trinity College. Ashe was tutor to Jonathan Swift, and reputed to be the clergyman who went through the form of marriage between Swift and Stella in the grounds of St. Patrick's Deanery; Dr. Foy, Fellow of Trinity College, and Rector of St. Bride's, who when only fifteen years of age gained a scholarship (a feat in these modern times repeated at Oxford by John Keble); Dr. King, Dean of St. Patrick's, and afterwards Archbishop of Dublin, who wrote the Latin inscription on Bonnell's monument in St. John's Church; and Dudley Loftus, the learned Hebrew and Syriac scholar, who held the high office of Vicar-General and Judge of the Prerogative Court were also contemporaries. These and others like them formed a brilliant literary coterie in Dublin at the close of the seven-

<sup>1</sup> "Life and Character," p. 191.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 213.

teenth century. "Many of the physicians of Dublin," says his biographer, "were likewise his intimate friends." Archdeacon Hamilton thus enlarges on his intellectual attainments: "He was master of the accomplishing as well as necessary parts of learning; had thoroughly digested the Greek and Roman authors, understood the French language perfectly well, and had made good progress in Hebrew. In philosophy and oratory he exceeded most of his contemporaries in the University, and applied himself with good success to mathematics and music. In the course of his studies he read several of the Fathers . . . particularly Synesius. . . . He had a delicacy of thought and expression that is very rarely to be met with. . . . He had a nice taste both in men and books, and was very conversant in our best English divines. But he particularly admired Hooker, whom he used to commend as an author who writ with a primitive spirit, but modern judgment and correctness. . . . He was particularly fond of two authors, Kempis and Salles [St. Frances de Sales], and has left behind him a correct translation of the 'Introduction to a Devout Life' written by the latter."<sup>1</sup>

Bonnell is described by his biographer as "tall, well-shaped, and fair. His aspect was comely, and showed great sweetness mixed with life and sprightliness. There was a venerable gravity in his look, a natural modesty and sincere openness. But in the House of God his countenance had something in it that looked heavenly and seraphical. . . . His natural and acquired seriousness was tempered with a very engaging cheerfulness in conversation."<sup>2</sup>

The even tenor of Bonnell's life was sadly interrupted by the Revolution of 1688, which threw Dublin and the whole of Ireland into the utmost consternation. A second massacre was feared. Multitudes fled out of the country to England. Bonnell notes in his diary, under December 9: "Last Thursday the letter threatening a massacre of all the English on this day came to town, and people not receiving such satisfaction from the Lord Deputy as they expected, began to think of England, and multitudes flocked away. I went myself to Rings-end, thinking if there were any alarm I was nearer to take shipping." Eventually he made up his mind that it was his duty to stay in Ireland. It was a testimony to his high character and the esteem in which he was held, that, though a strong Protestant, he was not removed from his office when other high officials were dismissed by the Government of James II. A contemporary in his employment writes of him that he "was continually at the Custom House, because they

<sup>1</sup> "Life and Character," p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 79.



could not be without his knowledge in the revenue." He adds that Bonnell spent most of his official income at this time in relieving the poor of the city, especially the distressed Protestant refugees.<sup>1</sup> The municipal government of the city had been entirely in the hands of the Protestant citizens. The King now required that the Roman Catholics should be admitted to the franchise without taking the oath of supremacy. The relation between the city and the Government became very strained. Sharp communications went on between Alderman Castleton, the Lord Mayor, and the Earl of Clarendon, Lord Lieutenant. A short time later the Earl of Tyrconnell endeavoured to abolish the charters of the city and destroy all civic privileges. He taxed the citizens in 6,000 pairs of shoes and 5,000 yards of gray cloth monthly.<sup>2</sup> The Papists threatened to burn Dublin if King James's army was defeated. Trinity College was turned into a garrison, and the Fellows and students expelled. The streets were chained up, and breastworks made at the entrance into each against the army of William III., in case it should attempt a landing.<sup>3</sup> As a measure of precaution, the plate of St. John's Church was buried, and not dug up again till 1690.

Archbishop King, in his "State of Irish Protestants under James," gives a graphic picture of the reign of terror. By order of Colonel Luttrell no Protestants were allowed to "walk or go in the streets from ten o'clock at night till five in the morning, and no greater number than five should meet and converse at any time."<sup>4</sup> The Archbishop's book throws a side-light on the condition of the Irish Church at the time (1690). It shows, among other things, that Irish Churchmen were not then averse to the use of the term "altar" for the Holy Table, and also were in the habit of saying daily prayers in their churches. Thus we read "the humble petition of Alexander Allen of Wexford, clergyman—That your petitioner being minister of the parish church of St. Iberius in the town of Wexford hath therein for several years past daily celebrated Divine service; complains of the rabble at the instigation of the Mayor breaking into his church and destroying all the pews and altar of the said church." Again, the minister of Trim, Mr. Prowd, complains of how the soldiers on Christmas

<sup>1</sup> Mason, in his "History of St. Patrick's Cathedral," tells us that several members of the French Protestant congregation who had been allowed to worship in the Lady Chapel had been seized along with their minister to be sent back to France. The cruel sentence failed to be executed in consequence of the victory at the Boyne.

<sup>2</sup> State Papers for 1690, p. 532.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 279.

<sup>4</sup> "State of Irish Protestants," etc., pp. 123, 124.

night did "break and plunder our altar on which we had that day celebrated the Holy Communion."<sup>1</sup>

During all these excitements Bonnell continued bravely at his post. We do not find that he took any part in the political agitations of the day, but he joined with the rest of the citizens in expressing his joy at the results of the Revolution which placed William III. on the throne. The change was great indeed. All the parish churches had been closed by order of James II., and the Protestants denied the exercise of their religion in public. Several of the churches had been converted into prisons, and the clergy imprisoned. Bonnell saw in it a judgment for previous negligence as to Divine worship and their "irreverent, careless, undevout behaviour." The turn in the affairs of the kingdom created universal joy. Bonnell exclaims: "How did we see the Protestants on the great day of our Revolution, Thursday the third of July (a day ever to be remembered by us with all thankfulness; O had it been begun with visiting our churches, and presenting ourselves there to God our deliverer), congratulate and embrace one another as they met like persons alive from the dead! Like brothers and sisters meeting after a long absence, and going about from house to house to give each other joy of God's great mercy, inquiring of one another how they past the late days of distress and terror." He entirely condemned the acts of retaliation contemplated by the Protestants on their Roman Catholic neighbours. He writes: "Instead of breaking open our church doors this day with the first dawn of it, to praise Thy stupendous mercy to us, we ran together into herds, we met in crowds to arm ourselves as there were no way but this to keep the enemy from returning back upon us. When it was Thou alone, O Lord, who without any arms of ours hadst driven them from us."<sup>2</sup>

Bonnell's residence lay in St. John's parish. The church is no longer standing, and on its site has been built the Fishamble Street Mission Hall. It shared the same fate with St. Michael's, another of the ancient churches of Dublin, whose site is now occupied by the Synod House of the Church of Ireland. The church tower alone remains, and forms the nucleus of the new buildings. The original church of St. John's parish was erected in 1168, and the founder's name is on record—Giolla Michell. It was rebuilt in the sixteenth century by Arland Ussher, the father of Archbishop Ussher, several members of whose family lived in the parish. It was rebuilt again in 1682, when we learn "a consecration dinner"

<sup>1</sup> "State of Irish Protestants," etc., pp. 115, 116.

<sup>2</sup> "Life and Character," etc., pp. 60-65.

was given, at which the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Francis Marsh, was present. It was a small and mean building with a low roof: the walls were only twenty feet high. There were forty-two square pews on the ground-floor, each pew being occupied by several families. Here Bonnell worshipped, taking always a secluded seat. When the church was to be rebuilt, a petition of the ministers, churchwardens and parishioners was addressed to the Lord Lieutenant in Council to forbid the erection of butchers' and other stalls against the walls of the new church. The petition contains the almost incredible statement that "the very altar" of the old church had been constantly polluted with the refuse of the butchers' stalls, "to the great offence of the communicants."<sup>1</sup> Among the articles of furniture provided for the new church was a desk for "Bishop Jewell's Book" (the "*Apologia Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ*"), ordered to be placed by royal edict in all the churches, where it took a place almost on a level with the Bible.

Literally within a stone's-throw of St. John's Church stood the Cathedral of Christ Church. Here most probably Bonnell was often to be seen. His high official position would lead him to be present on state occasions. The cathedral is properly the Chapel Royal, and contains the viceregal pew called the "State." We have a contemporary account of how the Irish Court went to prayers in Bonnell's time. "When they go to church [*i.e.*, the Lord Lieutenant and Court] the streets from the Castle gate to the church door, as also the great aisle of the church to the foot of the stairs by which they ascend to the place where they sit, are lined with soldiers. They are preceded by the Pursuivants of the Council-Chamber, two Maces, and on State days by the King and Pursuivant at Arms, then Chaplains and Gentlemen of the Household, with Pages and Footmen, bare-headed. When they alight from their coach, in which commonly the Lord Chancellor and one of the Prime Nobility sit with them, the Sword of State is delivered to some Lord to carry before them. And in like manner they return back to the Castle, where the several courses at dinner are ushered in by kettle drums and trumpets. In these cavalcades the coach in which they ride is attended by a small squadron of horse, after which follow a long train of coaches that belong to the several Lords and Gentlemen who attend them." The writer follows them into the cathedral. "They sang an anthem with vocal and instrumental music, there being two pair of organs in Christ Church, of which one is a very noble one. When the minister ascended the pulpit, I

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<sup>1</sup> Hughes' "St. John's Parish," pp. 25-30.

heard him with great attention and delight."<sup>1</sup> A contemporary local writer also tells us how the city magnates went to church on these occasions. The Lord Mayor "is waited upon by the Sheriffs, Masters, Wardens, and members of each company of the city in their formalities. In which manner attended, his Lordship waits on the State to church and from church in Castle-street until they pass by, and then follows the train of the State towards Christ Church, where the chief governor usually repairs, as far as near the end of Skinners'-row, and so turn off into the church, through a lane kept open to that purpose into the South door."<sup>2</sup>

John Dunton, quoted above, was an eccentric London bookseller who visited Dublin at the close of the seventeenth century in pursuit of his business. He established book auctions in several of the principal coffee-houses of the city, and in three or four public sales disposed of as much as £1,500 worth of stock. His lists show us what kind of books were in demand: Pool's "Annotations," Clark's Bible, Hammond "On the New Testament," "Book of Martyrs," Dupin's "Ecclesiastical History," Josephus, Locke "On the Human Mind," Seneca's "Morals," "Cook upon Littleton," Johnson's Works, Shakespeare's Works, Beaumont and Fletcher's Plays, Judge Hale's Works, and those of Boyle, Archbishop Ussher, Tillotson, Taylor, Patrick, Sprat, Barlow, Stillingfleet, Burrow, Sherlock, South, Charnock, Baxter, and the poets Cowley, Dryden, and Congreve. Dunton has curious things to tell us of the opposition he endured at the hands of a rival Scotch salesman of literary wares.

The Church of Ireland in Bonnell's time suffered severely from the abuse of pluralities, a fertile cause of defection from the Protestant Church and of large accessions to the Roman Catholic faith. The scattered flocks of the Established Church were utterly neglected by their absentee Rectors and Vicars. Take the case of two, at least, of Bonnell's clergymen. The Rev. Thomas Bladen, D.D., who was Rector of St. John's Church from 1660 to 1695, held in addition the following preferments: The deanery of Ardfert (county Kerry), the vicarage of Diemer and Gully in the Diocese of Meath, and also the rectory of Kilskyre and Killalon in the same Diocese. He lived in the rectory, 14, Fishamble Street, Dublin.<sup>3</sup> His successor, Dr. Scroggs, Fellow of Trinity College and Professor of Hebrew, apparently did not live long enough to enjoy the same wealth of ecclesiastical preferment. His record is a

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<sup>1</sup> Dunton's "Conversation in Ireland," 1699, pp. 554, 555.

<sup>2</sup> "Calendar of Ancient (Dublin) Records," V., p. xxiii.

<sup>3</sup> Hughes' "History of St. John's Parish," pp. 56, 57.

good one. He put a stop to the abuse of providing drink and tobacco at the cost of the parish for vestry meetings, and he laid the foundation of the first parish schools opened in Dublin for the education of the children of the poor. He thus led the way for what was subsequently the rule all over Ireland, namely, the institution of schools in connection with the parish churches. Dr. Scroggs was succeeded in St. John's by Dr. Harrison (1696-1720), an ecclesiastic who in addition held the following preferments: The deanery of Clonmacnoise, a canonry in Kildare Cathedral, and the rectories of Ballraine and Killashee in the Diocese of Kildare. How could a Church flourish under the incubus of such abuses?

The "Life" of James Bonnell shows, among other things with regard to the Church in his time, how deep-seated was the repugnance to kneeling at the Lord's Table. It was a controversy that had never ceased to rage since Ussher's time. "The kneeling posture," says the Bishop of Salisbury, "was at one time a great matter of controversy and of deep feeling, as is shown by the declaration on kneeling still appended to the office." And in a note the Bishop refers to Bonnell's "Life," and adds: "The controversy as to sitting or kneeling was apparently still going on in the Church of Ireland when the 'Life' was published in 1743."<sup>1</sup> We are told by his biographer that this "unhappy controversy . . . was a great trouble to Bonnell. His great humility did then in a particular manner prompt him to fall low on his knees." Bonnell argued out this question for himself. He made a distinction between the soul that sat at the heavenly banquet and the body that knelt. "Were Christ indeed on earth, the Table He sat at we should expect (if we were favoured) to sit at too; . . . but now *He* sits not at this outward Table which is before us; why then should *we*? . . . 'Tis true on our Table the Holy Elements are impregnated with the materials of life; like the first framing of a living creature or an embryo before it is quickened. But they are quickened with spiritual life only upon the faith of each receiver which God hath appointed to be the recurring instrument or means of this Divine quickening. Then they become to us the deeds of glory and the assured conveyances of spiritual nourishment and immortal happiness. And as such they come to us from a higher Table, and while we are permitted to sit at that Table, well may we be content, and well does it become us to kneel outwardly in the church. While we sit with the Church Triumphant, well may we be content to kneel with the Church Militant."<sup>2</sup> We have glimpses of the same controversy in the

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Communion, pp. 145, 274, 275.

<sup>2</sup> "Life and Character," etc., pp. 165-167.

writings of John Dunton. He says: "I resolve to live and die in the communion of the Church of England, as believing that kneeling at the Holy Sacrament is the most becoming posture of all such as would humbly and devoutly commemorate the death of the Blessed Jesus. Our great Redeemer Himself kneeled down and prayed (Luke xxii. 41), and that for certain is the best pattern we can follow. If our blessed Lord so humbled Himself, the greatest men must not think much to come down so low—

" 'Kneeling ne'er spoil'd silk stocking' (*Herbert*).

If it hurt the finery, it will make him the better Christian. Kneeling is a fit posture for all acts of devotion. The Eucharist is the highest act of worship, or, rather, it contains in it many other acts—prayer, praise, thanksgiving, and adoration."<sup>1</sup>

It is pleasant to think that at a time when there is not much evidence that religion flourished in Dublin, there lived in the city so devout a spirit as James Bonnell. His influence was altogether on the side of what made for good in the family, in the Church, and in the world. Reading his reflections and prayers, we are reminded of Thomas à Kempis, of Rutherford, and of a later Irish Churchman, Alexander Knox. Bonnell's devotion to the Sacrament was very intense. Beginning with a bi-monthly Communion, he found his spiritual life demanded more, and he was not contented without communicating weekly as well as on all holy-days. He also practised meditation with great regularity and exactness. His preparations for his Communion were earnest and devout. "It troubled him that he was often forced to be late at his office on Saturdays, lest his going to the Sacrament next day might have an ill effect upon his servants and tempt them to presume too far and approach the Lord's Table without sufficient preparation. . . . During the whole administration, so intense were his thoughts, so earnest were his prayers, that those who were near hardly ever beheld him without tears, which he concealed as much as he could by keeping close in the most private corner of the seat."<sup>2</sup> His devotions took the form of a devout thanksgiving to God for "giving him the sacrifice of His dear Son in the Blessed Sacrament." There is evidence from his biography that daily prayers were said twice in the Dublin churches in Bonnell's time; it was his own habit, we learn, to attend the public service of the Church "twice every day." "When once prayers began, he took no notice of any about him, and was always troubled at those

<sup>1</sup> "Conversation in Ireland," p. 530.

<sup>2</sup> "Life and Character," etc., pp. 164, 165.

unseasonable salutes wherein too many allow themselves in time of Divine service." He loved the fasts and feasts of the Church, "giving them devotions proper to them as much as his engagements in the world would allow—humiliation and repentance if days of sorrow, praises if days of joy." "Happy soul!" we find him exclaiming, "to whom each new week is welcome and known not, by the almanack or the outward face of the year, but by the grace it proposes to thy meditation and practice in its collect, while thou dost join with the whole Church in making this theme thy study and thy care; when each month is known to thee, not by the old heathen name it bears, but the blessed Saints it commemorates, welcoming with joy their holy festivals. . . . May my soul enter into your secrets and dwell with you in this sacred exercise! May I ever rejoice in this orderly revolution of time, ever be with you the children of the kingdom, the favourites of Heaven, the delights of my soul and heirs of eternity in all the happy periods of this revolution!"<sup>1</sup> He also prized the book of Common Prayer and set it up above all extemporary effusions. "Even his private prayers were a well-digested form." We get more than one insight into the nature of his private devotions. While undressing it was his habit to repeat the fourth Psalm. He also had forms of prayers: "Kneeling down before stepping into bed;" "at lying down;" "waking in the night;" "waking in the morning;" "when first getting out of bed, kneeling;" "while washing." The following is this last form of prayer: "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquities and cleanse me from my sin. O wash me with Thy precious blood, O most gracious Lord Jesus, who hast loved us and washed us from our sins. Except Thou wash me I have no part in Thee. Thou hast made me sensible that I stand in need of Thy amazing condescension to be washed from the stains which I daily contract, that Thou mayest engage me to practise daily the same condescension to my Christian brethren." His habit was also to repeat on his knees the *Miserere* every Friday at noon.

It is well known that religious conversation is one of the most difficult of Christian attainments—to introduce the subject without appearing to force it. Bonnell had a great gift in this direction. He could speak without giving offence or appearing to take liberties. "He had a peculiar art," says his biographer, "of engaging company upon such subjects, and managed his part of such discourse with that modesty and prudence that there appeared nothing of artifice or design, nothing that aimed at magnifying himself or raising his own

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<sup>1</sup> "Life and Character," etc., p. 184.

character. When he spoke of religion it was with a natural easiness, with calmness and humility, and he never soured such conversation with uncharitable reflections upon others who either differed from him in opinion or fell short of him in practice."<sup>1</sup> He watched the character of his own conversation strictly. There is a smack of Baconian sententiousness in the following observation: "If I converse with politicians and men of business, it makes me worldly; if with men of learning and wit, it makes me vain; if with fair persons, I am in danger of being sensual; if with great ones, of being proud."<sup>2</sup> Another difficult attainment is that of administering reproof, and here also Bonnell shone. When he reproved, "He did it not in a haughty imperious way, but with the prudent endearments and tenderness, as well as sincerity, of a friend; in such a manner as by his reproofs to oblige them and fix them faster to his friendship." He was a good causist, and we learn that the clergy "advised with him in their difficulties and doubts, particularly where any man's conscience was concerned, and always paid a great regard to his judgment."<sup>3</sup> He bewailed the differences between Christian men, and used to say that most differences "were chiefly in words." He "compared the quarrels of parties among Christians to engagements that happen in armies when they fall foul on their friends, thinking that they are enemies."<sup>4</sup> A charitable man himself, he thus urged generosity upon others: "Observe thy good humours, take thyself in thy fits of charity. Art thou disposed at any time to give largely? Do it out of hand lest the grace of God withdraw and thou growest cool in thy good purposes. No man ever repented of his charity, though it might seem to have been in excess."<sup>5</sup> He was the special friend of orphans and "poor housekeepers."

As Bonnell was going out of the world of Dublin life, another and a very different person was entering it. No greater contrast could be drawn than between the gentle, sweet-tempered, and spiritually-minded Accountant-General, and the cynical, materialistic-minded and misanthropic Jonathan Swift, shortly afterwards to be Dean of St. Patrick's. He had taken Orders, and was Vicar of Laracor, about twenty miles from the city. That Swift did not like Bonnell goes without saying, and he made fun of his "Exemplary Life and Character," when published. Some years ago Swift's copy of this book was disposed of by a second-hand bookseller in Dublin, and on the fly-leaf were found inscribed in the Dean's handwriting these lines:

"Life and Character," p. 192.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 199, 200.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 234, 235.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 233.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 201.



Thus James Bonnell lived, plainly doth appear,  
 A Book so Thick, a copper plate so neat,  
 To prove his money, like his life, well spent ;  
 They likewise here do Fix *his* monument,  
 Who as a mark upon his sacred dust  
 Obliged the Public with his pretty bust.  
 What's wanting to make the book worth minding,  
 Is easily Got—A pretty Binding.  
 Then surely none can doubt the book will sell,  
 James Bonnell lived and dyed so well.<sup>1</sup>

Bonnell married late in life Jane, daughter of Sir Albert Conyngham, Lieutenant - General of the Ordinance, who fought on the side of William at the Boyne.

The inscription on Bonnell's monument was from the pen of the learned Dr. King, Archbishop of Dublin, and was as follows :

P.M.S. Jacobi Bonnelij Armigeri, Cujus exuviæ unà cum patris et duorum filiorum Alberti et Samuelis juxta sitæ sunt. Regibus Carolo II<sup>do</sup> Jacobo II<sup>do</sup> et Guiliemo III<sup>do</sup> erat Rationibus Generalibus in Hiberniâ temporibus licet incertis dominis fidus, ab omni factione immunis, nemini suspectus, omnibus charus. Natus est Novembris 14<sup>o</sup> 1653 patre Samuele qui propter suppetias Regiæ familiæ exulanti largiter exhibitas, officio Computatoris Generalis fisci Hibernici An<sup>o</sup> Dom. 1661 una cum filio remuneratus est. Avo Daniele Proavo Thomâ qui sub Duce Albano Religionis ergo Flandriâ patria suâ exul, Norvicum in Anglia profugit, ubi mox civis et demum Prætor. Pietate avitâ et pene congenitâ imo primævâ et Apostolica eruditione, prudentiâ, probitate comitate, et morum simplicitate conspicuus. Mansuetudine, patientiâ et superomnia charitate insignis. Urbem hanc exemplo et præceptis meliorem, morte mæstam reliquit. Obijt Aprilis 28, 1699. Monumentum hoc ingentis doloris publici præsertim sui, exiguum pro meritis posuit Conjux mæstissima Jana e Coninghamorum gente.

The monument has long since disappeared.

A humble, sweet-tempered and sincere Christian, full of the enthusiasm of personal religion, a light shining in a dark place, a striking example of the power of the Divine Spirit to mould and influence human lives in the most unlikely atmospheres, James Bonnell stands alone, as far as we know, in the society of Dublin at the close of the seventeenth century, as a man who combined the intensely devotional spirit of Thomas à Kempis with the loyalty of a true Churchman. His name is one that deserves the feeble recognition and renewed attention we have endeavoured to give it in this paper.

J. A. CARR.

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<sup>1</sup> See *Notes and Queries*, second series, vol. v., p. 207.

