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A MID-VICTORIAN HOME.¹

BY THE RIGHT REV. BISHOP E. A. KNOX, D.D.

“A LITTLE cedar-twig from the garden of your old Home which is being pulled down”; so ran the covering words which accompanied the little gift. It awoke memories, such as I have been begged more than once to commit to writing, though I do so with the greatest reluctance. The snare of autobiographies is that we neither see ourselves as others see us, and recognise not our littleness in the great ocean of human life: nor do we see ourselves as God sees us, but turn, as George Herbert says, “to a few pages in life’s book,” and try to make these selections do duty for the whole. Perhaps the only solution of such perplexities is to make an attempt to place our memories of the past in the context of the world to which they belonged, to disentangle, so far as is possible, what was unique and unusual from what was commonplace and typical, and in narration to observe due proportion between the two. In this way recollections of individuals become contributions to history, and history is the record of the reactions of man to the will and purposes of God.

To return then to the cedar-twig. It carried me back to the years 1860 to 1865. The tree on which it grew was set in a small garden, of about half an acre in extent, with a paddock of about three-quarters of an acre attached. The paddock served for the rudiments of cricket. The garden was of extraordinary fertility. I remember well, besides the cedar, two noble white-heart cherry-trees, a fertile pear-tree, an old acacia, a bay-tree, and other shrubs, currant-trees, black, white, and red, and on the red-brick walls surrounding the garden, peaches, apricots and greengages which duly ripened. The lawn was very small; neither croquet nor tennis had been invented. But knowing suburban gardens, as I now know them, I am amazed that a small suburban garden within ten miles of London, and tended only by an old labourer once a week, should have been so productive. But we were still separated from London then by miles of open country. Our home, a semi-detached house, stood where the Beddington Lane starts on a by-road between Croydon and Beddington. It faced a large meadow at the end of which flowed the Wandle, Isaac Walton’s own beloved Wandle. Between our home and Beddington lay, first, a large mill-pond haunted by dab-chicks, and, no doubt, containing trout, though I never saw it fished; then from the mill-pond onwards we followed a lovely country lane, fragrant, as the seasons recurred, with may, briar, and honeysuckle, and still flanked by the stream. Next came a mysteriously dark and strongly redolent snuff-mill. Next, a path bordering the Wandle, from which we saw great trout lying motionless on the gravel

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bottom. So we went on, past the rural post office, past a splendid avenue of Spanish chestnut trees attributed to Sir Walter Raleigh, to Beddington Church, which lay just outside Beddington Park, the estate of the Carews. Such amenities, unspoiled by the builders, linking us up with English history, and adorned with all the wealth of the Surrey country-side, were at our doors, and their influences woven into our lives. The builder has effaced or is effacing them all; and in his work of destruction for reconstruction has included our old home and garden.

Waddon itself consisted of half a dozen residences, one of them a farm, where I have seen wheat thrashed out with flails, a public-house, of course, and a few cottages. Our gentlefolk all had business in town to which they went up daily. There was one Unitarian non-resident. The rest were Church folk, most of them Church-goers, dividing their allegiance between Beddington and Croydon our Parish Church, the Vicarage of which was practically in Waddon. Of Church Services something may be said presently. For the present let the Home engage our attention.

Foremost in my memories stands the *res angusta domi*. My father's income I take to have been about £650 a year, out of which, after paying rent and taxes, he had to face the expense of a household of thirteen, in which were included three servants. His pension as an ex-Chaplain of the East India Company included provision after his decease for his widow and unmarried daughters—of them there were two—two others born in England were not entitled to this provision. The sons' allowances, if he died first, ceased on their attaining the age of twenty-one. It was a handsome allowance after sixteen years' service in the East, my father's own portion, while he lived, being £1 a day. But the problem was how to feed, clothe and educate this family on £2 a day. For the cost of living—apart from rates and taxes—was not much lower than it is to-day; probably higher, for bread was dearer. Servants' wages were, however, so low as to be almost a negligible item.

Three meals a day supplied, if not our appetites, our allowance. Four-o'clock tea and supper were not. Meat appeared only at the midday meals, and for the other two we each had a round of bread with jam or salt butter, followed by as much dry bread as our appetites demanded. I can remember how during the Crimean War the bread was liable to contain horrible lumps of alum, and how during the Lancashire cotton famine we gave up butter, not at our parents' suggestion but at our own. Of the devices by which clothes chosen for durability passed in rotation down the family, it is not necessary to speak. It was on my sisters that the hardships of frocks and hats fell heavily. Durability took precedence of fashion. To the boys fashion mattered less. But even we hated the "old Trojan," nicknamed after the duration of the war of that ilk. "He," however, was unique in our wardrobe.

Another consequence of our poverty was that we gave no entertainments and consequently received few invitations. We

were not absolutely precluded from attending children's parties, but they had not much attraction for us. As soon as dancing began we had to return home, and that, supperless, unless our hostess snatched a few delicacies from the supper-table for us. On the whole, taking into account the labours and pains of a more elaborate toilet, and the consciousness of our sartorial inferiority, we found little pleasure in the few parties which we attended. In the present day much would be said of "an inferiority complex" in a family so trained. Undoubtedly we were shy in society, and found more distress than pleasure in social functions. To some extent it was probably intended that we should not grow up worldly.

It is impossible to go further in description of the Home without reference to the personalities of my father and mother, each of them typically Victorian in character, each stamped with strong and distinct individuality. If, for the purposes of this memoir, it must be that I should think and write of them as an onlooker outside the home, yet in my deepest consciousness I am aware of something that borders on treason in so doing. For they were to me, both of them, in a very true sense in place of God, devoting their whole selves to the nurture of their children in the fear of God, and counting nothing a sacrifice that might be surrendered for the welfare of the home. Let my mother have precedence.

She was rather short, of sweetest countenance, with a most winning smile, and most charming voice. Her father, a member of the Society of Friends, was Thomas Forbes Reynolds, owner of bleaching mills and grounds on the banks of the Wandle, in the parish of Carshalton. The family was wealthy, and descriptions are extant of the state in which they rode in their chariot to the Friends' Meeting House. My grandfather, a wayward and impetuous youngster, carried off a lovely girl, Frances Daniell, whom her family had good hopes of marrying into the peerage, and was wedded to her at Gretna Green. The marriage certificate and the sentence of my grandfather's expulsion from the Society of Friends for marrying out of the Society are in our possession to this day. The Napoleonic Wars, in part, and my grandfather's impetuosity not less, were responsible for decline of the business. He went to Cambridge to read for a degree in medicine, and there became the fast friend of my father, an undergraduate of Sidney Sussex College.

The Daniell relations having interests in the East India Company facilitated the sending out of my grandfather's two motherless daughters to India. Their intention was to go out as governesses, and my mother had definitely refused an attractive offer to go out with her rich relatives the Curzons, fearing "the world" into which their home would throw her. But a passage to India in those days was as good as a dowry, for India abounded with eligible bachelors, comfortably circumstanced, and backed up with pensions for widows and children. So George Knox met again Frances Mary Anne Reynolds, and married her at Cuddalore in 1844. Both

husband and wife had been bitten with Tractarianism before they left home. Two influences combined to cure them, the Episcopal condemnations of Tractarianism after Tract XC, and, far more potently, Macaulay's *History of England*, the early volumes of which my mother had devoured on her way out to India. Macaulay's *History* was decidedly the strongest of all contemporary antidotes to Tractarianism. "The Trial of the Seven Bishops" and "The Siege of Londonderry" gave to Protestantism that element of Romanticism, which, more than any other intellectual force, dominated early Victorian thought. Macaulay was a cure for Sir Walter Scott, though both were loved. Of distinctly religious influences working in the same direction mention must be made presently.

From India my mother came home at the beginning of 1855 with a family of four sons and two daughters born in nine years, and with a heart hankering desperately after her old home in Surrey. It was three years before her wish could be gratified—years spent, one in Scotland, one in York, and one in London, all to her equally years of exile worse by far than the exile of India. The county feeling, and passionate love of "the county" and pride in it were a strong force still in many Victorian hearts. In Beddington and round it my mother still had friends and kindred. The wife of Samuel Gurney, of Overend & Gurney, was a cousin. Another cousin lived at Wallington, and the daughter of a former Rector lived on at Beddington. My mother was like Naomi restored to her kinsfolk at Bethlehem, and was supremely happy when the seat which had been hers years ago in Beddington Church was by courtesy of her cousin restored to her. I can see her in it now, nestling in the corner, close to the reading-desk. The old Church, the old family seat had a grip on the hearts of devout Victorians. It is a great mistake to imagine that they did not love the Church, though there were no surpliced choirs, nor even barrel-organs in it. But again I am anticipating.

To return to my mother. Being motherless she was sent with a sister to a boarding-school, and was fortunate in her mistress. The elements of sound education, interest in good literature, sound taste and discrimination, and steady perseverance were imparted. My mother was well read, and—what matters much to a family—well trained in reading aloud. This last acquisition makes all the difference between making books appear fascinating or distasteful. My mother could make Scott's *Commentary on the Bible*, and even Daniel Wilson on the Colossians sound attractive in our ears. Naturally when she read *Ivanhoe* or *Quentin Durward* or the *Pilgrim's Progress* we were spell-bound. But though her reading voice was so musical, she could neither sing nor play, nor teach music. We grew up a completely unmusical family.

It was in the management of her home that her motherhood shone most conspicuously. In spite of weakness, which necessitated extraordinary care in diet, and confined greatly her freedom of movement, she ruled her household with management as firm as

it was gentle. Rules abounded, restrictions on times and modes of amusements, checks on appetite, on liberty of speech, and on employment of time: rules that affected the maidservants as well as the children. But the loveableness with which my mother enforced those rules, the consciousness that there was not a trace of selfishness or tyranny in her management, led to acceptance of it practically without demur. Of course being a hot-headed, quick-tempered, parcel of boys and girls we had our quarrels, but in her settlement of these there was no favouritism. She lived with us and among us, so far as her health permitted, from morning to night. She hardly ever left home; not for more than one or two nights in the year. Her rule was broken by no seaside-lodging interludes, for we never left home. No cousins intruded on the regular tenor of our routine: we had none on my father's side, and the cousins on my mother's side, being taken over by their mother to the Church of Rome were, at once and permanently, estranged from us. So the home-life established itself on our minds as an existence ordered, orderly, and unquestionable, and markedly independent—a world of its own.

On one other feature of the home-life, attributable to my mother's care, a few words must be added—that is, on its extraordinary healthiness. In an age when phthisis, small-pox, typhoid fever, and occasionally even cholera took heavy toll of Victorian homes, ours was almost immune. The family doctor meeting our nurse with her charges in the road one day, spoke almost bitterly of "that healthy family." One sister indeed lay for some weeks between life and death in an attack of bronchitis. Then my mother nursing her night and day kept the thermometer for weeks in her room at sixty degrees in a desperately cold winter. This was the only serious illness that I remember. Of ordinary children's complaints running through a family I have no recollection, saving one attack of mumps, nor of being detained from school by them. My mother had acquired, how I know not, a wholesome sanitary regimen, striking the mean between coddling and rashness, together with a strong faith in the use of castor oil. She was vigilant without being fussy, and mingled tenderness with sound common sense. The extraordinary healing touch in her hand on an aching brow I remember to this day. Nor can I doubt that her foreseeing and remedial care had behind them the guidance and wisdom that are promised to the prayerful. Her unquestioning faith in the Lord as "the Keeper" of her home rested on a solid foundation of spiritual reality.

Passing from my mother to my father I recall a sharp contrast between my two parents, on which filial respect forbids me to enlarge. My father was a man of dominant mien, of high forehead, hooked nose, flashing eyes, and forceful speech, handsome, sparkling with wit, a man who by force of appearance—apart from character—could not fail to command attention, whatever might be the society in which he found himself—a man who would stand no nonsense. A luckless tramp, who insisted on seeing "the benevolent features

of the Rector " was soon observed hurrying away as fast as his legs could carry him. My father was of Ulster descent. His father, a Knox of Prehen, as a young man evinced such sympathy with the FitzGerald rebellion, that he found it prudent to retire to Jamaica. On his way home his vessel was captured by the French, and he spent some time in a French prison. In 1804, he married Laetitia Greenfield, daughter of the Rector of Moira, a neighbour of his in his Irish life, and their son George, my father, was born in 1814. My father's first school was in France, at Bourbourg near Gravelines, in 1823 and 1824; his second, St. Paul's, then under the brilliant High Mastership of Dr. Sleath, who numbered among his many distinguished scholars, my father's junior by some years, Benjamin Jowett. George Knox took a high place in the School, being third Monitor. But bitter disappointments awaited him. He had no mathematics; they did not form part of the curriculum of the School. At Oxford, where the lack of them formed no bar to Honours, all scholarships except Trinity and Oriel were barred against him because he was born in Middlesex. At Cambridge, his failure to take Honours in Mathematics shut him out from Honours in Classics. Being determined to take Holy Orders, he found himself shut out by lack of influence in England from all preferment. Why he did not fall back on Ireland I cannot say. Those were still the days in which an ordinand who had "influence" was ordained as a deacon to the benefice to which his patron presented him. Those who had no patron behind them fell into the ranks of the inferior clergy. They were the Curates whose assistance enabled their more fortunate brethren to hold several livings in plurality. My father was fain to be content to serve two curacies in Wales in the year 1837-8. Then came to his great joy the offer of a Chaplaincy of the Honourable East India Company, and saved him from the life of drudgery and penury that seemed to lie before him.

"The Bible became a new book to me when I was out in India," so my father said repeatedly. What he meant, I think, was this, that he had never before understood the possibilities of the corruption of human nature, nor the depths of human depravity from which the Cross of Christ delivered the Christian world. He had gone out bitten with Tractarianism. In India he passed under the influence of Calvinism, and became a staunch Protestant as became his Ulster origin. He was not alone in this experience. The East Indian Army in which he served was a veritable school of Calvinism. To understand this we have to think of the position of young men separated from home by a three- or four-months' sea journey, in easy or even luxurious circumstances, serving often in isolated stations, unsupported by any Christian public opinion, exposed to the devilry of Oriental temptations, and to the deteriorating influences of an army of occupation, before we can gauge the forces with which English civilians and officers were confronted in India. It was fatally easy for them to lose faith, morals, even decency of conduct. Yet it was under these conditions that some

of the finest examples of Christian life were brought to birth by the grace of God. While men at home were counting themselves saints and martyrs for their self-imposed austerities, some as followers of Pusey, others of Simeon or of Kingsley, all under the safe shelter of long-established Christian environment, it was in the fiery ordeal of the Indian Army and Civil Service that such men as the Lawrences, Havelock, Nicholson and Roberts were fashioned into the image of the likeness of Christ.

I do not pretend that my father ever took, while he was in India, the same prominent position that these heroes held in the army of Christ. Life at Madras was more settled; the Europeans were a strong Christian community; above all, my mother's saintly influence was a tower of strength incalculable. The young couple drew around them all that was best and purest in the life of Madras, and of their influence I heard, years afterwards, from those who had known them there. It is enough if I have suggested some of the often-forgotten sources from which the river of Victorian Church life gathered strength and volume, of which more remains to be said.

First, however, let us envisage George Knox at the end of his three-months' voyage home, landed at Gravesend in April, 1855. He is still without "influence," but the England to which he has returned is transformed for the Middle Classes by the adoption of the competitive system. He can see a prospect for his sons if he can make scholars of them. But, so far as he himself is concerned, all the old barriers hem him in on every side. Even Macaulay found that absence in India had cut him off from his old standing for a time. He complained that men had forgotten him. For my father, it was little less than beginning the world again. His short stay in Scotland led to nothing. A curacy in York led to nothing. As Senior Curate of All Souls, Langham Place, at the beginning of 1857, he found himself again in London to his joy, for he was a thorough Londoner at heart, born within the compelling echoes of Bow Bells. Unfortunately my mother detested London as heartily as my father loved it. The All Souls' curacy could not be more than a temporary expedient, till some post could be found which gave him work in London combined with freedom to make a home in the suburbs. That condition was secured by his appointment to the post of Association Secretary to the Church Missionary Society for the S.E. district in 1858. So the home at Waddon was found, the home, which, far more than my school, was to be the formative influence of my life. The school was to me, what the Greeks named it—the "*schole*" or leisure ground, the serious work of my life was done in my father's study. It was a Spartan discipline. I had rather dwell on its aims than on its methods. The immediate and foremost aim was the winning of the great educational prizes, either the Indian Civil Service or scholarships which might lead on to Fellowships at Oxford or Cambridge. My elder brother was placed at Merchant Taylors School, from which, if he won a Scholarship confined to the School

at St. John's College, Oxford, he succeeded in due course without further competition to a Fellowship of £300 a year tenable as long as he remained a bachelor. But my brother had sufficient memory of India to prefer the Indian Civil Service, in which he completed fifty years of a distinguished career with only one day's furlough, that is leave of absence, as distinguished from flying visits during his three months' holiday. All that was in the future when we settled at Waddon. What my father clearly foresaw was that it was not enough to have placed his sons at school, my elder brother at Merchant Taylors, the rest of us at St. Paul's. He must himself see to it that they won their way to the top of the School, and he must take a hand in the process. Was this possible? His duties took him daily to the C.M. House at Salisbury Square from about 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. unless he was in his district on deputation work. Evening meetings for the Society had to be attended frequently. Deputation work claimed him from Saturday afternoon usually till Tuesday morning. The margin of time available for coaching his boys was but scanty. No one but he, I think, would have imagined it possible to take in hand the tuition of three boys, attending two different schools, and of course at different stages in their school career.

The method employed was to set us down to work arranged by my father, but under my mother's superintendence if my father was from home. This work lasted from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. The schools did not overburden us with evening work. There was a margin always of time for the work arranged for us by my father, and that work was severely gone through with him in the evenings when he was at home. He was an exact scholar according to the standard of his time, and the main outlines of our tuition gave him no trouble. But he had to allow for the march of scholarship, and, being unable to afford purchase of books, contrived, in some mysterious way, to consult modern authorities at the British Museum, bringing home copious notes for our use. He taught us how to keep notebooks, how to make analyses, even, to some extent, how to distinguish between authorities. In fact, he did for us all that the best "crammer" could do, but with the important distinction, that we had to do our own share. We were not spoon-fed.

It would be of no interest to others to enumerate the books that I read under his tuition, or to tell how he compelled me to translate Thucydides and Demosthenes at sight, driving me on with his forceful impatience. But he gave me such mastery of Greek that I can remember as a boy reading the *Phaedo* in the train for my own pleasure, and devouring the *Antigone* for the sake of the argument. My father's transfer from the Association Secretaryship to the position of Metropolitan Home District Secretary relieved him of much Deputation work. He began to lay hands on all Examination papers that he could find—how I had to bully every schoolfellow who stood for a scholarship to lend me the papers he had brought back with him! The passages set in those

papers for Unseen Translation were hunted down in their several authors, they were noted in MSS. exercise books for reference. Critical papers were copied, and a vigilant watch kept on idiosyncrasies of Examiners as far as they could be traced. My father exacted much of us. He exacted far more of himself. He never allowed himself a day's holiday. He never wasted an hour. He played no games except very occasionally a game of chess. He was profoundly indifferent to all forms of sport. The only paper that was taken into the house was the *Record*, which was published thrice a week.

It might be imagined that this passion for his sons' welfare interfered with his official duties. But this was not the case. The standard of duty has always been high at Salisbury Square, and in those days when typewriters were not and clerks were few, the multiplicity of letters to be answered with the Secretary's own hand, and of callers to be personally interviewed, balanced the then restricted area of the Mission Field. My father kept himself *au courant* with all that was passing at home and abroad. His papers in the *Church Missionary Intelligencer* at a later date testified to his wonderful industry and acumen. Years afterwards, two African Bishops at Lambeth assured me that there was no writer who had his grasp of the African problem. A learned exponent of Mohammedanism (Doctor S. Koelle) selected his, as the best of all the reviews of his book. I have the copy of his book, presented to my father with the inscription—"To K., who in the *C.M.S. Intelligencer*, has written so much, and it is hoped will write still more that is telling and true concerning Mohammedanism, with kind Christian regards from the Author." Venn gathered around him Secretaries of the highest standard of culture. He had at one time three Fellows of Colleges working in the office. Among these men of culture my father moved at his ease. He was well read in English and French literature. His judgments were shrewd, and his power of leading interesting literary conversation was amazing. Among the great Anglo-Indians who frequented the office my father as an Anglo-Indian was thoroughly at home. He could speak so as to command attention in Committee. If, to some, he seemed narrow and too incisive, even those who differed from him could not allege any lack of shrewdness, any suspicion of insincerity, any trace of obscurity.

The times were stirring. An Evangelical, or to speak more exactly, an Evangelistic Revival was waking up the Church from the torpor which ensued on the failure of the Tractarian Movement. There was an ardent zeal to evangelise the masses of our large towns, and Lord Shaftesbury, in 1857, carried the Religious Worship Bill, repealing the penalties imposed by Statute on religious meetings in unlicensed places. Shaftesbury was in this work supported by Tait, the newly-appointed Bishop of London. How many of the Anglo-Catholics at the White City and the Albert Hall realised that they owed their freedom of assembly to Lord Shaftesbury, and to Tait, the whilom instigator of proceedings in Oxford against

Tract XC? Tait was in the forefront of this evangelistic work, preaching in Ragged Schools, in Covent Garden Market, and even in the streets. It was he who organised the London Diocesan Home Mission, of which my father was a Secretary for a few months before he went to Salisbury Square. It was time for the Church to be stirring. Those were the days in which, on the trial of *Essays and Reviews*, Lord Westbury claimed cynically that he had dismissed "Hell" with costs. On *Essays and Reviews* followed Darwin's *Origin of Species*, and then Colenso on the *Pentateuch*. It seemed to many that the authority of Scripture was shaken to its foundation. They were the days of the Indian Mutiny. I well remember bringing home to my parents the news of the death of Havelock, which I had seen on a placard, on my way home from school. They were the great days of Exeter Hall, of the celebrated speech of Sir Herbert Edwards on the C.M.S. platform, and of Dr. Miller's not less celebrated sermon. Bishop Selwyn had roused High Churchmen to believe in missions, as he told from the University pulpit at Cambridge what he had seen in New Zealand of work accomplished under the auspices of the C.M.S. They were the days of Stevenson Blackwood's successful missions in fashionable society, and of Miss Catherine Marsh's work among Navvies. It was good to be alive in those days, and nowhere better to be alive than in Salisbury Square. In all this stir and conflict my father moved, undismayed by attacks upon the Scriptures, cautious in his relations with Revivalists. His Calvinism protected him against unquestioning emphasis on verbal inspiration, left him rather cold towards alliances of Pusey and Shaftesbury in defence of the faith, and made him somewhat distrustful of Revivalists. He concentrated his force on his proper work at the C.M.S., and on the education of his boys. One of his favourite texts was this: "Study to be quiet and to do your own business."

If it appears that this study of a Victorian Home is rather a memorial of my parents than a record of my own doings, my answer is that the achievements of a schoolboy, his prizes, his stamp-collections, his games, are passing incidents. He is being fashioned far more than he is fashioning himself. Especially is this the case when his thoughts and character are being moulded by two such personalities as my honoured father and mother.

Such an education as mine was, modern educationalists would severely condemn. They would find fault with its stern repressions, its isolation, its lack of artistic influences, its concentration upon the advancement of a career. My purpose has not been to present it as a faultless ideal, but as far as my memory goes, to exhibit it historically as a specimen of a Victorian home in the Middle Classes. It is, I think, incontestable that the shaping of the destinies of the Victorian era was largely the work of the Middle Classes. Of these, some sons attending public schools owed more to school than to home influence. So far as I was concerned, the home dominated and almost eclipsed the school. The home and day-school life was an element in the fashioning of the Victorian Age,

and my own home, in some respects very unique, was in others typical. The standard of our homes was in the main that of "my duty to God" and "my duty to my neighbour" in the Church Catechism. The interpretation was largely parental. I have tried to place on record what my parents did for me, and it is only just to their memory to add this one word. Of their eight children (there was indeed a ninth who died in infancy), none died under the age of sixty-two, several attained distinction, all grew up sincerely and devotedly attached to that type of teaching which my parents inculcated. Six of them have died in that faith. The two who remain hope, by God's grace, to do likewise. My parents planned, strove, prayed with this object in view, and would have desired no more complete answer to their prayers. Would they not have said,—nay, are they not saying?—"Thou hast given us our hearts' desire, and hast not denied us the request of our lips."

A volume of great interest to many who are not connected with the Church of Ireland has been compiled by the Rev. Canon J. B. Leslie, D.Lit., a well-known antiquarian, who has prosecuted his research work into the records of many ancient Irish dioceses and parishes. When Dr. Bernard was Bishop of Ossory he suggested to Mr. Leslie that he should undertake the compilation of the Church Records of the diocese. It was fortunate that he did so at the time, for much of the valuable material for his purpose was destroyed in the deplorable incendiary act during the Civil Strife of 1922 when the Four Courts were destroyed and the contents of the Public Record Office "went up in smoke." Mr. Leslie had already made careful abstracts of the most important documents and his volume, *Ossory Clergy and Parishes*, will in future be the only source of the information which was to be found in the Public Records. The succession of Bishops and other dignitaries is traced from the twelfth century, and incidentally light is thrown upon the effect of the Reformation upon the succession, which makes it clear that the majority of the Irish Bishops did not, as Roman Controversialists maintain, adhere to the Pope's party. Many well-known men have been connected with the diocese, and among the Bishops have been many learned writers, such as Dr. O'Brien, Dr. J. H. Bernard, Dr. C. F. D'Arcy, the present Archbishop of Armagh, and Dr. J. A. F. Gregg, the present Archbishop of Dublin. Interesting particulars are given of the parishes, and the family history of many of their rectors, which show in numerous instances that the love of the ministry was hereditary. Whatever may be before the Irish dioceses in the future, this record of the past shows the faithful work of the Protestant Church in Ireland. The edition, which is well produced with good indexes and photographs, is limited to 400 copies. The price is 30s. net and the publishers are The Fermanagh Times Office, Enniskillen.