Methodism at Balbriggan started in 1799 with three itinerant preachers fluent in Gaelic; Smyrl discusses over thirty circuits or meeting houses in all. The 'Others' are a good deal less familiar than the Presbyterians and Methodists. Among them, controversy eclipsed complexity, and the fissiparous generation of Walkerites out of Kellyites was not the result of profound theological cogitation. It is indicative of the personal charisma of the reverend gentlemen that the Church of Christ (or the Church of God) should go down in ecclesiastical history under John Walker's name. However, Smyrl is not always consistent in preferring the popular cognomen: the group generally known as the Plymouth Brethren is here exactly termed Christian Brethren.

No fewer than fourteen Brethren places of worship are described, the vast majority of them lying on the southern side of the Liffey, close to the coast, the railway and the better class of holiday resort. Open and Exclusive assemblies are treated, as is the origin of the Brethren among Wicklow gentry in the 1820s. Whereas Kelly and Walker left behind no permanent movement or corporative body, the Brethren continues with reasonable numbers and has been served by assiduous historians, notably T. C. F. Stunt.

Smyrl's account of the Salvation Army demonstrates close links with Primitive Wesleyan Methodist societies (for example, in Bray). His observation that 'the Army's doctrines are those found among most Protestant evangelical denominations' may be incontestable but underscores a broad silence in these pages concerning theology. More unexpected is the paucity of detail about the Army's social work – the hostel in York Street (nowhere mentioned) was a notable feature of the provisions offered to the poor and homeless. Though Smyrl's *terminus ad quem* date of 1920 may excuse the omission, it does not prevent him from dilating on Brethren experience in the 1960s, and even in the 1990s.

Dissent, in other words, is strongly interpreted as evangelical, with the result that deism and New Light scarcely get a look in. The Dublin Unitarian congregation had a high public profile through the Rev. Henry Martineau (a supporter of Daniel O'Connell), Margaret Huxley (a pioneering nursing matron and niece of T. H. Huxley) and the Rev. Savill Hicks (installed 1910, died June 1962). All three were English by birth and upbringing, and the congregation they adhered to had its origins in a strand of English Presbyterianism that arrived with the Cromwellians. Liberal, non-Calvinist dissent is not so well comprehended in these pages, though Smyrl's first appendix, 'Surviving Records: Dates and Locations', provides the most exact detail required in tracing the archive of the Stephen's Green congregation. Indeed, the appendices constitute a valuable scholarly resource in themselves.

Primarily focused on places of worship, the *Dictionary* is rich in detail about leasing arrangements, property values, the role of patrons, licences to perform marriages and much non-religious data. It also adopts a generous attitude towards passing secular incidents – Ferdinand Weber's public concert on his newly built organ in 1761, the expansion of bread-maker McCambridge's storage space in latter-day Ranelagh. In many ways, 'dictionary' is too modest a term to describe a cornucopia of carefully assembled and annotated information. The arrangement, first by denomination and then by geographical location, does have the effect, however, of maintaining only a diffused image of religious life in the Irish capital. Anyone attempting to paint that larger picture will have early and frequent recourse to the book under review.

W. J. Mc Cormack

People, politics and power: essays on Irish history, 1660–1850, in honour of James I. McGuire. Edited by James Kelly, John McCafferty and Charles Ivar McGrath. Pp xiii, 216. Dublin: University College Dublin Press. 2009. €50.

In 1981 James McGuire published an historiographical review of work that had appeared during the 1970s on Irish history in the long eighteenth century. He had occasion to welcome

important contributions, particularly those produced by an emerging generation of younger historians, but he also noted the many lacunae that remained. In the intervening period, as the editors of this Festschrift in McGuire's honour put it, a 'revolution in the interpretation of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Irish history' has occurred (p. 1). The editors and contributions make it clear that James McGuire has played an important role in that process. The essays have all been written by colleagues and former students. They dovetail neatly with McGuire's historical interests, which makes for a tighter than usual Festschrift.

John McCafferty opens with an incisive essay on John Bramhall's unhappy 'second Irish career', which complements the author's major work on Bramhall and Laudian reform in 1630s Ireland. James Kelly provides a fascinating assessment of the career of a prominent eighteenth-century bishop, Richard Woodward of Cloyne, best known for his *The present state of the Church of Ireland* (1786), which introduced the 'Protestant ascendancy' to Irish political discourse. Kelly examines Woodward's full career, revealing his surprising connections to Thomas Conolly, his advocacy of a system of poor relief for Ireland (eventually realised in the piecemeal House of Industry system), and his unexpectedly complex political positions. While Kelly illustrates that Woodward rose above his less active or less-talented colleagues on the episcopal bench, he is surely correct to conclude that his main legacy, the idea of a 'Protestant ascendancy', was deeply problematic in the long term.

Catholic Ireland also receives extensive coverage. Hazel Maynard's important essay on Irish Catholic involvement in the legal profession from the 1660s to the 1680s strikes closest to James McGuire's own work. Maynard uncovers the extent of Irish Catholic attendance at the Inns of Court in London. This, in turn, explains the heavy involvement of lawyers in the 'Catholic counter-revolution' of the late 1680s; indeed, she argues convincingly that the existence of a large number of highly trained lawyers allowed the counter-revolution to take place. The reaction of Catholic Ireland to the changes of this period is also a theme of Éamon Ó Ciardha's essay on tories and rapparees. Ó Ciardha shows how the politicised outlaws of the Restoration and Jacobite periods gave way, in literature, to an increasingly unrealistic, romanticised outlaw image. There is still much to discover about all kinds of 'outlaws' in early modern Ireland, and the subject demands comparative investigation (it is worth noting that Eric Hobsbawm's social banditry has been used effectively to think about Irish rebel gangs operating in the 1798–1804 period).

Vincent Morley's contribution also deals with disaffected Catholics but in a very different way. His essay is one of a series of responses to criticism directed at some of his findings by Sean Connolly (it would, therefore, have been helpful to have referenced the background to this instalment). Connolly had criticised Morley's argument, in a previous work, that evidence for middling sort and elite Catholic Jacobitism could be found in the debates about the 1774 oath of allegiance. As Patrick Fagan has shown, the oath was undoubtedly divisive. To vindicate his argument, Morley provides a close reading of three works published as part of the public debate about the oath that 'identified the persistence of loyalty to the Stuarts as an important factor in the reluctance of Catholics to take the oath' (p. 139). Morley's point is that none of the authors would have bothered addressing Jacobite concerns had they not actually existed. This is an interesting argument, though there are other ways to interpret the pamphlets: the authors may have been setting up a 'straw man' case for rhetorical reasons, for example, or they may have been implicitly suggesting that opposition to the oath would inevitably lead to suspicions of Jacobitism. Morley's essay is stronger on the conditional nature of Catholic loyalty to the Hanoverians. He notes that Catholics would have changed allegiance to whatever de facto monarch took the throne – a point worth further elaboration.

Back in 1981 McGuire pointed neophyte researchers to the opportunities available in the under-studied high politics of early eighteenth-century Ireland. Two former students to have taken up the challenge, specifically in the area of parliamentary history, contribute essays. Ivar McGrath offers a characteristically detailed and persuasive reading of Alan Brodrick's tenure as Speaker of the Irish House of Commons in 1703–4. John Bergin shows how an intricate study of eighteenth-century legislation has ramifications beyond

high politics. He examines Irish divorce bills and acts, some of which have been discussed previously by A. P. W. Malcomson. While the number of divorces is too small to constitute a general study of marital breakdown – as Malcomson pointed out – the essay sheds light on the fascinating lives of those involved in these unusual transactions. Much of the essay is taken up with legal procedure, but the rich evidence marshalled by Bergin supports the rather surprising conclusion that 'eighteenth-century Ireland was remarkably indulgent of sexual and marital irregularity' (p. 109).

The final two essays in the book deal with well-known historical figures. Patrick Geoghegan argues that Daniel O'Connell's prime objective was always repeal of the Union, even before the granting of Catholic emancipation. James Quinn writes a revealing study of Thomas Davis's work on the 'patriot' Parliament of 1689. He shows how Davis's nineteenth-century concerns influenced his reading of the late seventeenth century, though he ultimately passes favourable judgement on Davis as historian.

Overall, this is a stimulating collection of essays that showcases some of the current strengths of early modern Irish history. We know much more today about the Restoration period, the workings of the Irish Parliament and the history of the first half of the eighteenth century than we did thirty years ago. Of course, James McGuire's influence reaches beyond the historiography of early modern Ireland, through his work with this journal, the Irish Manuscripts Commission and, above all, his editorship (with one of the contributors, James Quinn) of the monumental *Dictionary of Irish biography* (2009). This volume is a fitting tribute to an exceptional historian and, as Art Cosgrove puts it in his affectionate 'personal memoir', 'a real gentleman' (p. 15).

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Politics and provincial people: Sligo and Limerick, 1691–1761. By D. A. Fleming. Pp xiv, 272. Manchester: Manchester University Press. 2010. £60.

The self-confidence radiating from the features of those members of the Limerick 'Hell-Fire Club', who stare out from the dust jacket of Dr Fleming's book, suggests a provincial elite complacent in its control of the power structures of local society. And this is, broadly speaking, the picture painted in the text, but with important and subtle reservations. Dr Fleming offers a pair of local studies of two western counties remote from the great world of Dublin and, at first glance, promisingly different: Sligo – relatively poor, with a declining population and dominated by a handful of landowning families of recent vintage; Limerick, by contrast, larger (six times as populous as the town of Sligo), more prosperous – its economic life centred on a substantial port, its political power diffused among a broader circle of landed proprietors – and more richly documented. Yet despite these differences, political life in each county followed a similar pattern. The greater gentry families dominated county politics (in the case of County Limerick, the smaller boroughs of Askeaton and Kilmallock as well) while the county towns were ruled by a commercial and professional oligarchy closely connected with, and often subservient to, landed interests.

Yet, as the work of other historians has suggested (notably, Dr Fleming's supervisor, Dr Toby Barnard), the *menu peuple* were not 'inconsiderable'. The party conflict of the first two decades of the eighteenth century, by arousing sectarian prejudices, had induced citizens and freeholders to support Whig and Tory candidates for ideological reasons rather than deference to social superiors. Later 'patriotic' agitations, in the 1720s over Wood's Halfpence and more intensively in the controversy over the money bill in the 1750s, also involved 'ordinary' voters, their opinions influenced by the increased availability of politically charged reading matter, and their involvement in public affairs encouraged by social interaction in guilds and clubs (though here Limerick was well in advance of Sligo). Dr