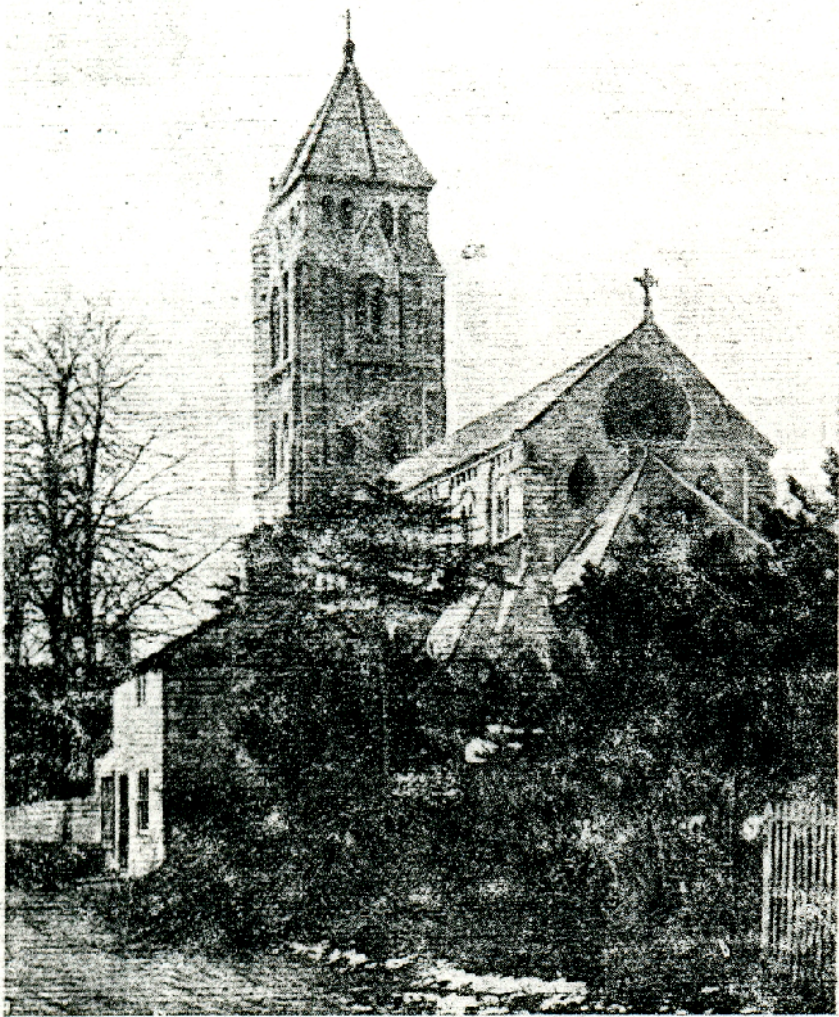


REV. E. L. CLIFFORD.



CLIFFORD CHURCH.

school at the York Convent had thoughts of becoming a nun ; but her nun mistress opposed the design, saying, " You are not to think of being a nun, for your vocation is to do good in the world." She was the real apostle of Clifford. She had regular classes of instruction for converts, and when she had a batch ready, would get the priest from Hazelwood to come over and examine them, and, if he thought fit, receive them into the church ; and it was she who formed the idea of having a chapel and occasional Mass at Clifford. Mass was first said in a room in the house still standing in the churchyard at the west end of the church, but this was found too small for the ever increasing congregation. Arrangements were then made for the purchase of an adjoining Wesleyan chapel, on the site of which now stands the present church tower, and Dr Briggs, the vicar-apostolic, agreed to found a regular mission at Clifford, and appointed the Rev. Edward Lambert Clifford as pastor of the mission. Father Clifford entered upon his duties on

the 24th of December, 1841, and on the 18th of January following the quondam Wesleyan chapel, now dedicated to St. Francis Xavier, was solemnly blessed by the Rt. Rev. Vicar-apostolic.

THE REV. EDWARD LAMBERT CLIFFORD.

Edward Lambert Clifford was the second son of George Lambert Clifford of Foxgarth, Staffs, and a great-grandson of the third Lord Clifford of Chudleigh; his eldest brother, Sir Charles Clifford, was the first speaker of the House of Representatives, New Zealand, from 1856 to 1860; two of his younger brothers became Jesuits, and one of his sisters a nun.

Father Clifford was born the 20th of March, 1817, and was in his twenty-fifth year when appointed to the mission of Clifford, the similarity of names being nothing more than a curious coincidence. He was a big, powerful man of striking though not handsome appearance; possessed of immense energy and determination, and cap-

man of great enthusiasm and lofty ideals, whose very earnestness of purpose seemed to some more cautious and timid souls to savour of imprudence. The best description, perhaps, of the character of this really remarkable man may be gathered from the following anecdotes told in his own words :
“After comfortably settling myself in my new quarters with Mr and Mrs Ralph Grimston, founders of the mission, and having visited my not very numerous flock, I thought it my duty to make the acquaintance of the chief landed proprietor of the district, from whom the Grimstons held the lease of their flax mill. I had been told that he was an overbearing, proud man, and that he had decidedly set his face against the inroads which it was said were being made against the Church of England by law established by the Roman Catholics. Dr Hook of Leeds had lately been over and had preached a sermon which had pleased him greatly. ‘Little children keep yourselves from idols’ was

liberally to the new Protestant church which was about to be erected.

“To see this man and to know him was my highest ambition ; and yet it was not without a certain amount of fear and apprehension that I approached the gates of Bramham House where his mightiness was then residing. I rang the bell and handed in my card, and waited patiently the result. I did not wait long ; suddenly a voice at my elbow exclaimed clearly and distinctly, ‘D—n you, what do you want?’ and on turning round I found it proceeded from a large grey parrot which kept guard in the entrance hall, followed immediately by a loud voice from within saying, ‘Show him in.’ I entered a small study where the great man lay upon a sofa smoking a cigar, but suffering just then from an attack of gout, to which he was greatly subject. He raised himself partially and begged I would take a chair, and opening a large chest by his side asked me if I smoked, at the same time offering me one of Hudson’s best

upon various topics, never touching upon religion, except his asking me if I was a Jesuit, and informing me if ever there was a saint upon this earth it was his brother-in-law Sir Edward Vavasour. On my rising to withdraw he thanked me very warmly for my visit and hoped soon to be able to return it. From that day forth we were sincerest friends. He came in great state a few days afterwards to visit me, in his barouche with postilions and two flunkies behind, and took some refreshment with me as it was my luncheon time. The people of the village were in amazement to see the great man come to visit the new Catholic priest, and much discussion followed regarding its object.

“It is very certain that his visits and great kindness to me were of great importance and of immense benefit; and a great impetus was thus given towards the conversion of many who were afterwards received into the bosom of the Church.”

On another occasion the Squire came

him in a drive through Bramham Park. "He thought it would please me to see the Park in the height of its beauty and adornments. The rhododendrons were in bloom, and were in themselves a sight worth going any distance to behold; but what he seemed to be most proud of was a thick set hedge of double flowering furze, the scent of which was almost overpowering as we drove along. On arriving at the obelisk raised to the memory of Lord Bingley, he got out of the carriage and walked round it; when stretching himself to his full height (about six foot three), he remarked, 'My dear fellow, they wish me to resume the title of this Lord Bingley and to become a peer of the realm. Were I to do so who would know me as Lord Bingley; whereas George Lane Fox of Bramham is known all the world over.' On our return to the gardens, where the trees in all their towering magnificence resembled the splendid nave of an immense cathedral, he bade me look around upon the horizon to the east: 'I am monarch of all I survey.' I

thought it a good opportunity to put in a word too, and I begged he would always remember that where much has been given much will be required, and that he would have to answer for far more before God than others in poorer circumstances. It was then he confided to me the following : “ I will tell you something that no one knows but God, for I have never named it to a creature. I resolved on one occasion never to refuse any poor person a charity, and I determined that I would give one shilling to every man, woman or child who should ask for charity. This occurred after a long conversation I had had with Sir Edward Vavasour. I continued it for a whole twelvemonth, taking note of every shilling spent in this manner ; what do you think was the sum total at the end of the year ? ’ I dared not give a guess, fearing to be below the mark. ‘ Well, it amounted to seventy pounds odd at the end of the year,’ then he continued ‘ what after all is seventy pounds given in charity, to a man who throws away hundreds yearly in

“ Mr Lane Fox thought much of public opinion, and on many occasions would have acted very differently had he been guided by his own feelings instead of the opinions of the world around him. This was his great weakness and his greatest failing. He gave me ten pounds towards the erection of my church, as he said he could not refuse giving something ; but he begged that it might be named as a personal gift to myself. But he could overcome this great failing at a push, as will be seen by the following incident.

“ It was on the occasion of one of his Park fetes, as they were called ; a large company of all the surrounding gentry and their visitors were invited, the then Protestant parson of Clifford (afterwards Father Lewthwaite of the Order of Charity) and myself being included. It was arranged that we should lunch at Bramham House and then all assemble at the Park, where

1. the dancing and every sort of

was announced ; about fifty sat down in the long room, the door being in the centre, thus the table ran right and left of the door. Opposite to the door with his back to the windows, in the very centre of the table, Mr Fox took his seat. Being naturally of a shy disposition I had waited in the hall until all the company had entered, so that I found on entering the only place vacant was face to face with Mr Fox. Towards the end of luncheon old Guy, the butler, came up behind the Squire with a tray covered with liqueur glasses, and offered him curacoa, on his suddenly turning round Mr Fox tipped the tray with his elbow, and glasses and tray were pitched into the air and came down with a crash on the floor. In the first moment of anger the poor old Squire gave forth in his most ringing tone, an oath, which from its fearful purport and expression I prefer not to repeat. No sooner had he uttered it, than, impelled by

ing in unmeasured terms the unscrupulous manner in which God's most holy name had been misused: I saw Mr Lewthwaite's face scarlet, and the whole company were in amazement at my rashness, wondering what would happen next. I myself stood there as one unconscious; I felt riveted to the ground, and the moments of suspense appeared interminable. Slowly and majestically Mr Fox rose to his full height, and stretching forth his hand across the table, with evident emotion in his tone he said, holding my hand the while, 'Clifford give me your hand; ladies and gentlemen I beg your pardon for what has escaped me; but at the same time I may say there is not another man in the land who would have dared to act as *my friend* here has acted.'

"The company broke up at once for the Park, and I being near the door thought I would make good my escape and return to Clifford; but this was not to be. Sir

... hurried after me and