

**HISTORY OF THE CATHOLIC
ARCHBISHOPS OF DUBLIN,
SINCE THE REFORMATION:
VOL. I.-PART I. INTRODUCTION**

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History of the Catholic Archbishops of Dublin, Since the Reformation: Vol. I.-Part I.
Introduction by Dr. Patrick Francis Moran

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DR. PATRICK FRANCIS MORAN

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BY
THE REV. DR. MORAN,
VICE-RECTOR OF THE IRISH COLLEGE, ROME.

VOL. I.—PART I.
INTRODUCTION.



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TO THE
VENERABLE CHAPTER AND THE CATHOLIC CLERGY,
Secular and Regular,
OF THE
DIOCESE OF DUBLIN.

HAVING completed, after long and careful researches, the first volume of the History of the Catholic Archbishops of Dublin since the Reformation, I take the liberty of dedicating it to you, as a proof of my profound respect and veneration for the virtues and merits by which you are distinguished—virtues and merits which may be considered as hereditary, having been handed down to you by your illustrious predecessors in the ministry, who laboured so assiduously for the preservation of religion, and contributed so largely to the triumph of the true faith in Ireland,—thus securing for our country a name glorious among the Catholic nations of the earth.

During the period treated of in the part of the first volume now about to appear, the ancient church of Dublin passed through the most trying ordeal and suffered the severest persecutions, whilst at the same time it was deprived of the protection and guidance of legitimate chief pastors; but, through the zeal and devotedness of the Metropolitan Chapter and Clergy,

the flock was preserved from the ravages of heresy and the poison of error.

Intruded, in the year 1535, by Henry VIII., into the see of St. Laurence, without canonical election or sanction, Dr. Brown, previously an agent of Cranmer, and imbued with his heterodox opinions, employed all his influence and energy for nearly twenty years in laying waste and plundering the fold of Christ, and in vain attempts to pervert the Catholics of Dublin.

His career of rapine and destruction having been brought to an end, another Englishman, Hugh Curwin, though he had previously given his adhesion to the usurped supremacy of Henry VIII., was promoted to the metropolitan see of Leinster by Queen Mary, in the delusive hope that he would contribute to protect the true religion; but after a short episcopate of about three years, when Elizabeth came to the throne, that unhappy man betrayed the trust placed in him, returned to the principles which he had professed many years before, and preferring the smiles of the court to the discharge of his solemn engagements, fell away miserably from the faith.

When this apostate's unworthy conduct rendered it necessary to translate him to an English reformed see, Elizabeth, in the exercise of a power received from man, not from God, deputed another Englishman, Dr. Loftus, one of her own favourites, to establish the reformation in Dublin—a task to which he devoted himself for nearly forty years, manifesting in all his proceedings a spirit of avarice and rapacity, and a deeply-rooted hatred of everything Irish and Catholic, and marking his career by persecution and bloodshed, in a way sufficient to prove that he was no minister of the Gospel of charity.

After a vacancy of almost seventy years, during which the See of Dublin groaned under the usurped authority of the three first Protestant bishops, who, without any spiritual jurisdiction,

and as mere government agents, enjoyed its temporalities, Catholic prelates were again, through the paternal providence of the Roman Pontiffs, appointed to govern the diocese; but such was the violence of persecution near the seat of government, that for more than a century after the death of Elizabeth, the canonically appointed archbishops died either in prison or exile.

Whilst heathens had thus come into the inheritance of the Lord, and defiled His holy temple, and poured the blood of the faithful as water round about Jerusalem, is it not a source of great glory to the Chapter and Clergy of Dublin, that during those sad times they watched over and defended their flocks with heroic fortitude and self-sacrifice, and preserved them from all the open and perfidious assaults of their enemies. Though left without the watchful care and spiritual guidance of a bishop, and deprived of every earthly possession, and subject to the terror of penal laws, with the sword always hanging over their heads, nothing could make them flinch from duty, or consent to obey man rather than God. In his correspondence with the government, the great father of the reformation in Ireland, Dr. Brown, was repeatedly obliged to confess that he scarcely found an adherent amongst the Chapter and Clergy of Dublin, and that their courage and constancy rendered it impossible for him to carry out his views; and, at a later period, Dr. Loftus often declared that there was no chance of establishing Protestantism in your Metropolis except by stringent penal laws and persecution.

Is it not also a glorious privilege of the children of St. Laurence, that, whilst defending religion in their own district, they contributed largely to its preservation in other dioceses? One of the most heroic defenders of the faith in the days of Elizabeth was Dr. Leverous, dean of St. Patrick's, who, whilst retaining

that dignity, governed the diocese of Kildare and preserved it from the contagion of heresy. At the same period a dean of Christ's Church was Bishop of the faithful Catholics of Kerry; a priest of Dublin holding a parish in that city governed the diocese of Leighlin; and, a little later, a vicar of St. Mary's was Apostolic administrator of the diocese of Raphoe.

When the prayers of the faithful were at length heard, and God, who commands the winds and the waves and changes the hearts of princes, had restored peace to the Irish Church, were the Chapter and Clergy of Dublin found wanting to their ancient traditions, or did they show themselves unworthy of their glorious predecessors? On the contrary, as soon as persecution had ceased, they displayed the greatest energy in building up the walls of Jerusalem, and collecting the scattered stones of the sanctuary. How many beautiful churches now adorn your City and diocese? How many schools have you established? How many colleges, convents, and monasteries have sprung up under your fostering care? And, above all, what an impulse have you not given to deeds of piety and charity, and to the practice of every Christian virtue and good work.

Besides, how many zealous missionaries have been sent from among you to found or adorn new and distant Churches? Do not the archiepiscopal sees of Baltimore, St. Louis, and Halifax, and the episcopal sees of Toronto and Chicago, in America; of Capetown and Grahamstown, in Africa; of Adelaide and Queensland, in Australia; and of Bombay, in Asia, owe an immense debt of gratitude to Dublin for supplying them with pastors, who have rendered great services to them in the past, or are still toiling for their welfare? amongst whom may be mentioned one whose loss we had so lately to deplore, Dr. Kenrick, the Archbishop of Baltimore, whose name will be

ever in benediction in the Church of God, and whose works are a standing monument of his learning and piety.

Let me, then, conclude by again offering to you the work in which I am engaged, and which is closely connected with the history of the Chapter and Clergy of Dublin, though principally directed to describe the lives of those Prelates who presided over your diocese, and who fought the good fight, and preserved the faith. I regret the work is not more worthy of your acceptance. However, it contains many facts that will serve to illustrate the origin of Protestantism, and to show that it was propagated by violence, confiscation of property, penal laws, and cruel persecutions, and that the principal agents employed to establish it in Ireland, were men remarkable for their avarice and rapacity, their cruelty and immorality. What a contrast does its history present with that of the early Christians, who propagated the faith of Christ by prayer, by good works, by submitting to persecution, by deeds of charity, and by returning good for evil; not by force, or the confiscation of the property of others, or the terror of cruel laws! What a contrast, also, between the conduct of the first reformers in Ireland and the lives of your predecessors, who, in patience and suffering, preserved the lamp of faith during the long night of persecution, and who edified the world by their constancy and courage, and by the odour of their virtues, handing down a glorious inheritance, which your piety and zeal will, in turn, transmit pure and unsullied to future generations!

In fine, I trust that the chronological series of the Irish Catholic Bishops, during the reign of Elizabeth, given in the Appendix to this Introduction, will convince the learned and impartial Very Rev. Dr. Todd that he was mistaken when he asserted, in his preface to the life of St. Patrick,