

**THE PORTRAIT OF A PIOUS
BISHOP; OR, THE LIFE AND DEATH
OF THE MOST REVEREND
FRANCIS KIRWAN, BISHOP OF
KILLALA**

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The Portrait of a Pious Bishop; Or, the Life and Death of the Most Reverend Francis Kirwan,
Bishop of Killala by John Lynch & C. P. Meehan

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JOHN LYNCH & C. P. MEEHAN

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Portrait of a Pious Bishop

THE PORTRAIT OF A PIOUS BISHOP ;
OR,
THE LIFE AND DEATH OF
THE MOST REVEREND FRANCIS KIRWAN,
BISHOP OF KILLALA.

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN OF
JOHN LYNCH,
ARCHDEACON OF TUAM,
(GRATIANUS LUCIUS,—AUTHOR OF "CAMBRIGIENSIS EVERUSUS.")

WITH NOTES,
By REV. C. P. MEEHAN.

DUBLIN :
JAMES DUFFY, 10, WELLINGTON-QUAY.
M.DCCC.XLVIII.

TO
THE VERY REV. DEAN MEYLER,

Vicar-General of the Archdiocese of Dublin, P.P. of St. Andrew's, &c. &c.

VERY REV. SIR—I dedicate to you the translation of a work which, for a long time, has been inaccessible to the generality of readers.

I need not expend many words on the merits of the eminent author whose text is now republished after the lapse of more than a century and a half; nor is it necessary to call public attention to his interesting memoir. It is quite enough to state, that the pious Prelate, whose portrait has been painted by Archdeacon Lynch, lived at a period when the Catholics of this country made a gallant, though ineffectual struggle for nationality, and witnessed the horrors which Cromwell's unsparing sword inflicted on their altars, liberties, and homesteads.

Nor is it required that I should enter into a narrative of Archdeacon Lynch's life. The *Light of the West*, the venerable Hardiman, to whom I am under lasting obligations, has set forth all that could be collected regarding *Gratianus Lucius*; while Mr. M'Ghee, in the "*Gallery of Irish Writers*," has given us such an interesting relation as renders further biographical notices unnecessary. In fact, it is gratifying to reflect that owing to the diffusion of our Irish literature, very few with any pretension to learning can be found ignorant of the life and works of such an eminent ornament to his religion and country as was the man who triumphantly confuted Sylvester Giraldus.

While the author's great work, "*Cambrensis Eversus*," has been familiar to the student of Irish History, this little volume has remained comparatively unknown. Now and again, a copy has been offered to public competition in an auction-room; and a notion may be formed of the value set on it, when that sold amongst the late Bishop Heber's collection brought the large sum of eighteen pounds, ten shillings.

Having premised so much regarding the author and his works, I now turn to the more pleasing duty of expressing to you, Very Rev. Sir, the deep sense of gratitude and esteem which I entertain towards you, however feebly either may be shadowed forth in the following pages. Not to speak of the condescension and affability with which you have at all times personally treated me, I can assert that all who are anxious for the diffusion of religious education and liberal enlightenment will bear willing testimony to the discernment of Archbishop Murray in appointing you to such an exalted place in the government of his diocese. Need I say with what justice, firmness, and moderation you have discharged the important trust committed to you?—or is it necessary that I should wish you health and length of years to witness the blessings that must permanently flow from the wise and benevolent policy of our illustrious Metropolitan?

It would ill become me to particularize the virtues which adorn your character. Your sensitiveness would be pained did I essay to picture that kind and dignified deportment which marks your relation to the exemplary and talented clergymen whose immediate Superior you are; and the same consideration prevents me from giving utterance to all I that know of your unaffected zeal,—cultivated mind,—and unostentatious piety. Whosoever would have evidence that these high virtues eminently

exist in you, need but look to your church, so solemnly ornate in all that pertains to the splendor of the Catholic ceremonial,—to your schools, so manifestly indicating your solicitude for the education of the poor confided to your pastoral charge,—and to the constant attendance of the multitudes who frequent St. Andrew's for the purpose of hearing the Word of God, and enjoying the valuable facilities afforded of receiving the sacraments, through the unceasing attentions of the zealous coadjutors associated with you in the ministry. In truth, Very Rev. Sir, that harmony which exists between yourself and your domestic Priests—forming, as it were, a family circle of common life,—is the admiration of all, while it gives a valuable and great lesson to the clergy of the Diocese. Independent of all this, those who have enjoyed the happiness of your society will not fail to remember the charm of your conversation,—dignified without effort,—full of ingenuousness—and teeming with those grand requirements so well befitting a dignitary of the Catholic Church.

Enlightenment like yours, to which I hold myself indebted, has a right to acknowledgment; and, having no medium save this whereby to make it, I gladly seize the present opportunity of adding my humble tribute of esteem to that of the honest and intelligent men who appreciate your character as it deserves.

As to this translation, which amused some of my evenings during the last winter, I am free to confess that it is not so much condensed as I could wish it; but the peculiarities of the Latin idiom will be my best excuse. The translation does not pretend to be literal, yet, I should hope that I have not in any instance distorted or suppressed the *animus* of the author. It is absurd to suppose that a translation, to be a good one, must be literal; the very structure of a foreign tongue will often nullify

the attempt to make it such, and no matter what pains a translator may be at to render *verbum verbo*, he must still continue to be what Hudibras Butler describes him—"one who dyes an author like an old stuff into a new colour, but can never give it the beauty and lustre of the first tincture." If, however, the shade of the Archdeacon should wax wrathful at my version of his very elegant Latin, he need but recal the epigram provoked, I presume, by that liberty-taking with an illustrious original to which my translation may bear some resemblance,—

"Cum recitas meus est, O Fidentino, libellus,
Sed male dum recitas, incipit esse tuus,"

The notes, though few, will, I trust, serve to elucidate the text, and throw some additional light on the Ecclesiastical history of Ireland in the seventeenth century.

To those who may be disposed to judge this book by the title, and conclude that it is a dry and uninteresting narrative, I will briefly observe that they are mistaken, and that in the pages now presented to them they will find

"Dreams that the soul of youth engage
Ere fancy has been quelled;
Old legends of the monkish page,
Traditions of the saint and sage,
Tales that have the rime of age,
And chronicles of old."

In conclusion, I beg to assure you, Very Rev. Sir, that I will deem myself more than remunerated for whatever trouble this little volume may have cost me, if my humble exertions only tend to convince you of the gratitude and respect with which you shall be always regarded by your obedient servant,

THE TRANSLATOR.

SS. MICHAEL AND JOHN'S,
Dublin, April 7, 1848.

DE VITA ET MORTE
RMI. D. FRANCISCI KIROVANI.

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF
THE RT. REV. FRANCIS KIRWAN.

EPISTOLA,
ADMODUM REVERENDO DOMINO
D. GREGORIO JOYCE,

S. GUDULÆ PRIMI ORDINIS CANONICO,
ET MARCHIONI CARACENÆ, BELGARUM GUBERNATORI A SACRIS.

QUÆ singulæ causæ (Reverende admodum Domine) scriptores ad patronos suis lucubrationibus adsciscendos inducunt; eadem univèrsæ ad me impellendum concurrunt, ut sub fausto tuorum auspicio- rum astro partus ille meus in lucem edatur. Nam tuorum erga me beneficiorum magnitudo exigit ut monumentum aliquod exstet, quo tuæ beneficentiæ memoriam animo meo penitus infixam esse mon- stretur. Facultas verò mihi non suppetit aliud tibi quam hoc levidense munusculum deferre, extimam nempe sermonis mei sportulam, cui tamen gratiam tuam inde conciliatam iri confido, quòd institutoris tui vitam tanquam pretiosam gemmam inclusam habeat; quæ scripturæ meæ laciniis hactenus involuta nunc comptiori typogra- phiæ amictu tuis impensis ornata in publicum prodit. Unde illam tuo tibi jure vindicas, ita ut piaculo me non expiabili maculare viderer, si tuo nomini cui multis nominibus adstrictus sum, eam non inscriberem, qui ejus disciplinæ alumnus pius ejus institutiones cumulatè imbibisti, et in pectus tuum altè demisisti. Adeo ut quæ in hoc libello de illo referuntur, mutato narrentur nomine de te, qui viva ejus imago, quem orationis penicillo delineare aggredior. Quia enim, sacra testante scriptura, gloria patris est filius sapiens; pii antistitis gloriam plurimum obscurarem, si quas in te (quem insti-