

**A LECTURE ON THE
HISTORY OF THE BISHOPS
OF CORK, AND CATHEDRAL
OF ST. FIN BARRE**

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A Lecture on the History of the Bishops of Cork, and Cathedral of St. Fin Barre by Richard Caulfield

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RICHARD CAULFIELD

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HISTORY OF THE BISHOPS
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A LECTURE
ON
The History of the Bishops of Cork,
AND
CATHEDRAL OF ST. FIN BARRE;

DELIVERED IN
THE LECTURE ROOM OF ST. PETER'S WORKING MEN'S
ASSOCIATION,

ON MONDAY EVENING, JANUARY 26th, 1864.

BY

RICHARD CAULFIELD, B.A.,

*Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, London; Membre Corresp. de la Société des
Antiq. de Normandie; and President of the Cork Civician
Society, for the promotion of the Sciences.*

"Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations; ask thy
father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee."

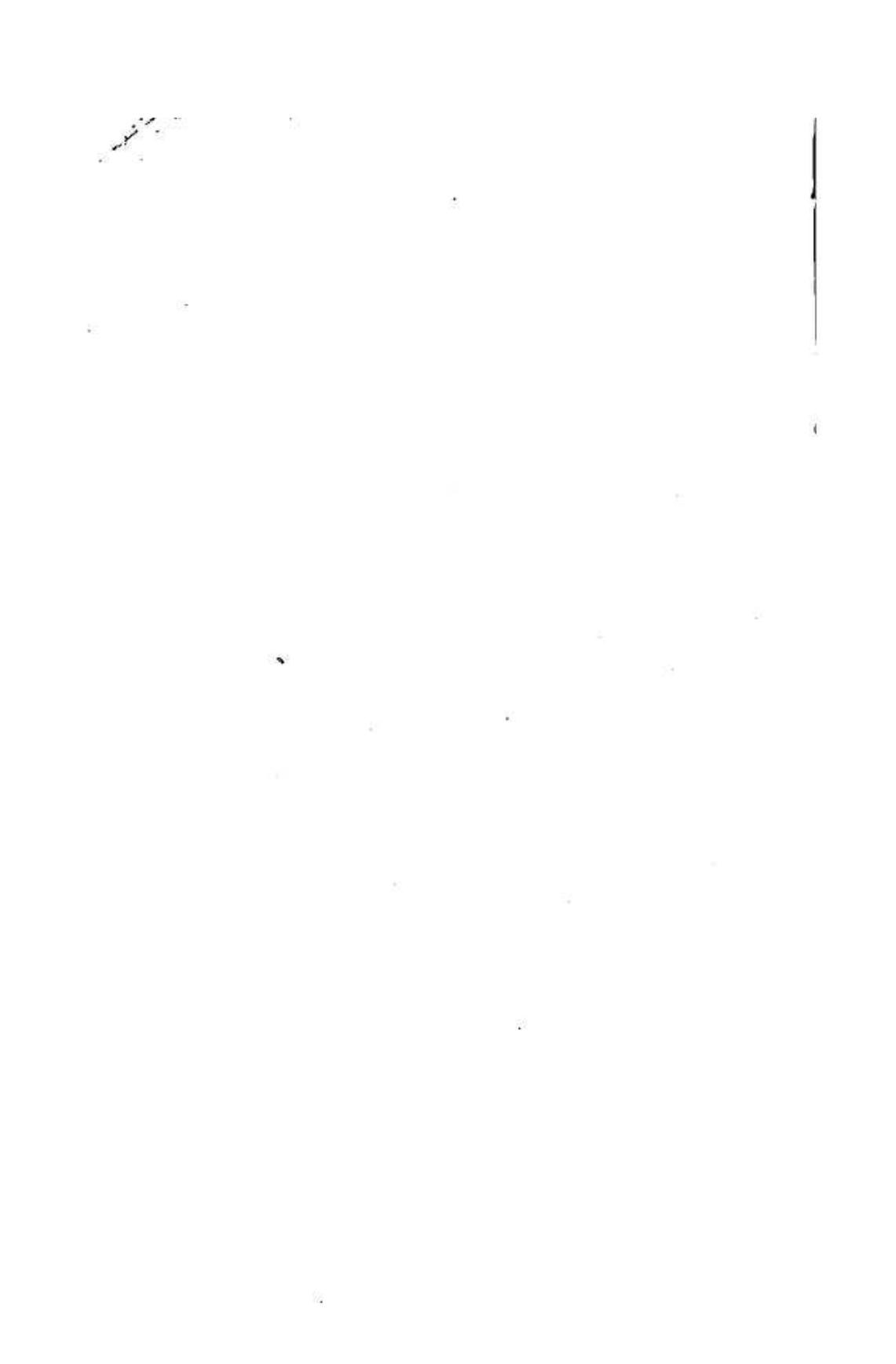
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1864.



Great Fund

TO THE
RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,
JOHN GREGG, D.D.,
LORD BISHOP OF CORK, CLOYNE, AND ROSS,
THE FOLLOWING LECTURE,
On the History of his Predecessors and his own Cathedral,
IS,
(BY KIND PERMISSION.)
MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,
BY THE
AUTHOR.



LECTURE.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

It is to me a privilege and a source of great pleasure to have the honour of introducing to your notice this evening a few fragments rescued from the devouring influence of time respecting the history of the Cathedral of St. Fin Barre, and what is known of his successors. I need hardly tell you that such information can boast of no originality, and must be collected from crumbling manuscripts, musty records, public as well as private, works now out of print, and, consequently, so rare and valuable as to preclude the possibility of public access to their contents, the kind assistance of correspondents in various places, combined with personal observation and research. Of such original materials, I regret to say, that our city is almost destitute. Everybody who is but slightly acquainted with the history of Cork must know how many internal dissensions and revolutions it was in former times constantly subject to, so that almost all traces of her Ecclesiastical memorials have long since been swept away. Much information is still, however, to be found among the MSS. in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin, British Museum, State Paper Office, Bodleian Library, Oxford, and the Chapter House, Westminster, &c. As regards the very early Ecclesiastical MSS., many are to be met with in the Burgundian Library, Brussels, and the Franciscan College at Rome. In times of persecution they were removed from this country and there carefully treasured. The enquiring spirit of the present age has opened up the hitherto sealed contents of these repositories to all who are considered capable of making a proper use of the privilege for historical purposes. May I, therefore, ask you to entrust yourselves

to my guidance for a short time, having had some experience as a traveller in the highways of the past, while I conduct you back, and endeavour to give you a glimpse into those ages now enveloped in the night of time, and lead you through the twilight of the middle ages, when the unwearied monk toiled, from the rising till the setting of the sun, in the solitary recess of his cell, many of whom have left behind them prodigious monuments of the power and capabilities of the human intellect; and as you advance down the stream of time, you will perceive how the world has ever been progressing, step by step, notwithstanding its countless tumults and revolutions.

There are probably no institutions, out of the many noble ones of which our country boasts, that are a greater source of pride to us than the Cathedrals of the British Isles. Ask the Anglo-Catholic inhabitant of some Cathedral town, what is the most interesting object and best worth seeing in his locality?—and he will forthwith point with significant meaning to the tower or steeple of the Cathedral, as it rises in triumphant grandeur amid the smoke and chimneys of his manufacturing town. If you should be fortunate enough to find him in a communicative humour he may, perchance, dwell on the remote antiquity of its founder, the unrivalled splendour of its architecture, the hallowed memories of many successions of bishops, abbots, deans, archdeacons, and a host of minor ecclesiastics who once ministered within its walls, and walked through those same aisles, beneath the shadow of those numerous stately columns that have stood for ages as sentinels under the lofty roof, and still, with undiminished splendour, direct the wandering eye to heaven. He will also tell you of the magnificence of the choral service and the choir. If you can induce him to accompany you to this gorgeous pile—with uncovered head and reverential gait—he will point to the founder's tomb; and, as on tip-toe he gently guides you through the lengthy nave, transepts, and side chapels, he will now and again whisper softly into your ear, as he points to some mutilated cross-legged effigy, "Here sleeps the dust of some famous knight who fought in the holy wars; in his day he helped to chase the infidel Saracen from Zion's Hill, trampled on and triumphed over the crescent, and in its stead set up the cross." This recumbent, mitred figure, with the crozier across his breast, commemorates some prelate who, tradition says, was present when the charter of British liberty and rights was signed at Runnymede. These clusters

of rudely carved roses call to remembrance the sanguinary struggles that were so long carried on under the emblem of that fair and fragrant flower. These kneeling figures, with the elaborately executed frills, represent the heads of some noble and illustrious family of the time of Queen Elizabeth. The soldiers of the Usurper mutilated the inscription and destroyed the Cathedral registers, so that all record of the owner's name has long since vanished. Wheresoever you turn something new and strange and wondrous meets the eye of the beholder, whilst soft beams of light break, with lustrous beauty, through the stained windows. Can you wonder at the worthy citizen being proud of such a temple as this? Moreover, perhaps, within the sacred and silent precincts of its close reposes the dust of his forefathers for many generations, and here he fondly hopes that he himself will one day sleep in peace when the troubles of life are over, and the glories of his own Cathedral shall close on his eyes for ever.

There is another most important light in which we must not forget to view our Cathedral Churches, namely, that they are often the precise localities where the first Christian missionaries planted the standard of Christianity and contended against very barbarous and cruel Pagan superstitions. It was not the practice of these early expounders of Divine Truth to seek shelter in remote and unfrequented places, but with a fearless and manly independence they braved the danger itself, and confronted the heathen priests on their own ground. Their faith, founded on the Rock of Ages, overcame difficulties apparently insurmountable; their hopes, though often frustrated, seldom failed in its noble object, and their charity, the essence of the Divine unction, turned "the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just." Thus Faith, Hope, and Charity, all three harmoniously blended and acting with perfect unity of purpose, struck at the root of the tree of Paganism; its leaves quickly fell off, its branches, which heretofore overshadowed and poisoned the land, dried up and withered, the trunk perished and decayed away, and from its ashes in due time sprang up our glorious Cathedrals, the land marks of Christianity, the honest pride of our national and Catholic Church and people, from whose altars have gone forth messengers of peace to all lands, bringing glad tidings to the end of the earth.

As the subject of our lecture is chiefly in connection with the history of the Cathedral of our own city, we shall commence at the time when