

In a work like this it would be utterly impossible for me to give more than a mere sketch of the sufferings of Ireland; nor can more be required in a composition of such a nature. Those who wish to explore the history of that once prosperous land, and to ascertain the cause of its present fallen condition, will not seek for that knowledge in a poetical production. I have not deviated from the truth in my portraiture of the facts alluded to in the text; and if it be objected, that my language is too strong, or that history is distorted or perverted in the subsequent pages, I reply, that any person may satisfy his scruples or suspicions by referring to those authors to whom his attention is directed in the notes; and if, after reading them, he do not acknowledge that language much harsher than that used by me would be perfectly justifiable, I consider that he must be, to a very great extent, imbued with the leaven of prejudice or scepticism.

I am fully prepared to encounter the blustering denunciations and angry anathemata of the termagant Tory Press of Canada; and am equally ready to look with calm indifference—or rather with unaffected scorn—on the malignant maledictions of the public organs of ascendancy and monopoly in the Parent State, should this work reach to the other side of the Atlantic; but the vampire vituperation, ejected by rampant Toryism, or frothing Orangeism, I condemn as heartily as I would despise the venal flattery which they so frequently offer on the altar of prostitution.

Should I be indicted on the ground of plagiarism, I at once plead guilty to the charge; but if this crime should be numbered among the many faults contained in this book, it should not be forgotten that the few