

When the general conversion of those pirates took place after the battle of Clontarf, the national church of Ireland enjoyed a season of repose, as if to give the zeal of Malachy an opportunity of restoring the sacred cause of religion and discipline. But much as the Church of Ireland endured, while the fury of the Danish ravages desolated the land, yet, it seems the cup of Irish misery had not been drained, and to a perfidious nation, not indeed through any peculiar merit that is visible in her people, has been reserved in accomplishment rather of the divine will for the propagation of that faith which has withstood the storms of eighteen centuries, that infliction wherewith the sins of our fathers may have been expiated, rendering at the same time the faith of Ireland more resplendent, causing it to increase in other regions, nay, expanding itself within the very bosom of that perfidious country, which has shaken off its sweet yoke, and returning, as does the illustrious stranger, forgetful of the injuries he has received, to revisit that land which has been enriched with the blood of her martyred sons.

The Irish Catholic, who has sought a home in this land of the West, will be gratified to find the chain of the Episcopal succession of Ireland unbroken and unsevered from that Apostolic rock, which has protected the Irish Church in all her vicissitudes, and that apostolic bond, with the see of Peter, kept up in its integrity to the present hour; many of the Irish Prelates enjoying their sees without Parliamentary pretenders to contest those ancient landmarks, which their predecessors possessed from the remotest ages of their national Church.

In glancing over the records of Irish Missionaries and the monastic establishments of the country, and of those heroic men, whose blood has been shed by English persecutors, while instructed by the simplicity of their lives, as well as charmed with that sublime faith whose charity inspires such pious works, an idea will be conveyed to his mind of the fame and the splendor of the Irish church, as well as of that extensive robbery and spoliation which have been perpetrated in the name of religion; of those sanguinary murders which Protestant England, in the fullness of her religious vagaries has committed, which have inebriated her with the blood of the saints, which have consigned to every woe the faithful but suffering people of Ireland, who have made a sacrifice of everything which this world values, property, liberty, country, nay life itself, rather than forego the advantages which faith pure and unsullied procures. Vagaries which have consigned them to the rapacity of the greediest adventurers that ever plundered a country, whose souls have been dead to every sentiment that ennobles man; dead to every impulse but that of plunder and oppression; which have consigned the people of Ireland to the horrors of protracted famine, lest an English exchequer, which Irish plunder and misrule have too long replenished, should be burdened with the relief of Irish distress, and finally which have doomed them to the emigrant-ship, as the only hope of the oppressed Catholics of Ireland, bringing with them no riches but the invaluable ones of faith, which has taught them patience under privation, and forgiveness under injuries and insults.

In all the conflicts of the Irish Church there existed natural obstacles to the success of those who attempted its extinction; the mountain caverns and the marshes of the country provided the faithful followers of the ancient creed