

A
View
Of The
State Of Ireland.

WRITTEN
Dialogue-wise,

BETWEENE
EUDOXUS and IRENÆUS,

BY
Edmond Spencer, Esq.
In the Yeare
1596.

Dublin:
Printed by the Society of Stationers,
M.DCXXXIII.
REPRINTED AT THE HIBERNIA PRESS,
Temple-Lane,
FOR THE PROPRIETORS,
By John Morrisson.
1809.

Eudox. ... let us now passe unto the second part, which was, I remember, of the abuses of customes ; in which, mee seemes, you have a faire champian layde open unto you, in which you may at large stretch out your discourse into many sweete remembrances of antiquities, from whence it seemeth that the customes of that nation proceeded.

Iren. Indeede Eudox. you say very true ; for all the customes of the Irish which I have often noted and compared with that I have read, would minister occasion of a most ample discourse of the originall of them, and the antiquity of that people, which in truth I thinke to bee more auncient then most that I know in this end of the world, [1] so as if it were in the handling of some man of sound judgement and plentifull reading, it would bee most pleasant and profitable. But it may bee wee may, at some other time of meeting, take occasion to treat thereof more at large. Heere onely it shall suffise to touch such customes of the Irish as seeme offensive and repugnant to the good government of the realme.

Eudox. Follow then your owne course, for I shall the better content my selfe to forbear my desire now, in hope that you will, as you say, some other time more abundantly satisfie it.

Iren. Before we enter into the treatie of their customes, it is first needfull to consider from whence they first sprung ; for from the sundry manners of the nations, from whence that people which now is called Irish, were derived, some of the customes which now remain amongst them, have been first fetcht, and sithence there continued amongst them ; for not of one nation was it peopled, as it is, but of sundry people of different conditions and manners. But the chieftest which have first possessed and inhabited it, I suppose to bee [2] Scythians.

Eudox. How commeth it then to passe, that the Irish doe derive themselves from Gathelus the Spaniard ?

Iren. They doe indeed, but (I conceive) without any good ground. For if there were any such notable transmission of a colony hether out of Spaine, or any such famous conquest of this kingdome by Gathelus a Spaniard, as they would fame believe, it is not unlikely, but the very Chronicles of Spaine (had Spaine then beene in so high regard, as they now have it) would not have omitted so memorable a thing, as the subduing of so noble a realme to the Spaniard, no more then they doe now neglect to memorize their conquest of the Indians, especially in those times, in which the same was supposed, being nearer unto the nourishing age of learning and writers under the Romanes. But the Irish doe heerein no otherwise, then our vaine English-men doe in the Tale of Brutus, whom they devise to have first conquered and inhabited this land, it being as impossible to proove, that there was ever any such Brutus of Albion or England, as it is, that there was any such Gathelus of Spaine. But surely the Scythians (of whom I earst spoke) at such time as the Northerne Nations over-flowed all Christendome, came downe to the sea-coast, where inquiring for other countries abroad, and getting intelligence of this countrey of Ireland, finding shipping convenient, passed thither, and arrived in the North-part thereof, which is now called Ulster, which first inhabiting, and afterwards stretching themselves forth into the land, as their numbers increased, named it all of themselves Scuttenland, which more briefly is called Scutland, or Scotland.

Eudox. I wonder (Irenaeus) whether you runne so farre astray ; for whilst wee talke of Ireland, mee thinks you rippe up the originall of Scotland, but what is that to this ?

Iren. Surely very much, for Scotland and Ireland are all one and the same.

Eudox. That seemeth more strange ; for we all know right well they are distinguished with a great sea running between them ; or else there are two Scotlands.

Iren. Never the more are there two Scotlands, but two kindes of Scots were indeed (as you may gather out of Buchanan) the one Irin, or Irish Scots, the other Albin-Scots ; for those Scots are Scythians, arrived (as I said) in the North parts of Ireland, where some of them after passed into the next coast of Albine, now called Scotland, which (after much trouble) they possessed, and of themselves named Scotland ; but in processe of time (as it is commonly scene) the dominion of the part prevaileth in the whole, for the Irish Scots putting away the name of Scots, were called only Irish, and the Albine Scots, leaving the name of Albine, were called only Scots. Therefore it commeth thence that of some writers, Ireland is called Scotia-major, and that which now is called Scotland, Scotia-minor.

Eudox. I doe now well understand your distinguishing of the two sorts of Scots, and two Scotlands, how that this which now is called Ireland, was anciently called Erin, and afterwards of some written Scotland, and that which now is called Scotland, was formerly called Albin, before the comming of the Scythes thither ; but what other nation inhabited the other parts of Ireland?

Iren. After this people thus planted in the North, (or before,) for the certaintie of times in things so farre from all knowledge cannot be justly avouched, another nation comming out of Spaine, arrived in the West part of Ireland, and finding it waste, or weakely inhabited, possessed it : who whether they were native Spaniards, or Gaules, or Africans, or Gothes, or some other of those Northerne Nations which did over-spread all Christendome, it is impossible to affirme, only some naked conjectures may be gathered, but that out of Spaine certainly they came, that do all the Irish Chronicles agree.

Eudox. You doe very boldly Iren. adventure upon the histories of auncient times, and leane too confidently on those Irish Chronicles which are most fabulous and forged, in that out of

them you dare take in hand to lay open the originall of such a nation so antique, as that no monument remaines of her beginning and first inhabiting ; especially having been in those times without letters, but only bare traditions of times and [3] remembrances of Bardes, which use to forge and falsifie every thing as they list, to please or displease any man.

Iren. Truly I must confess I doe so, but yet not so absolutely as you suppose. I do herein rely upon those Bardes or Irish Chroniclers, though the Irish themselves through their ignorance in matters of learning and deepe judgement, doe most constantly beleeve and avouch them, but unto them besides I adde mine owne reading ; and out of them both together, with comparison of times, likewise of manners and customes, affinity of words and names, properties of natures, and uses, resemblances of rites and ceremonies, monuments of churches and tombes, and many other like circumstances, I doe gather a likelihood of truth, not certainly affirming any thing, but by conferring of times, language, monuments, and such like, I doe hunt out a probability of things, which I leave to your judgement to believe or refuse. Nevertheless there be some very auncient authors that make mention of these things, and some moderne, which by comparing them with present times, experience, and their owne reason, doe open a window of great light unto the rest that is yet unseene, as namely, of the elder times, Cæsar, Strabo, Tacitus, Ptolomie, Pliny, Pomponius Mela, and Berosus : of the later, Vincentius, Æneas Sylvius, Luidus, Buchanan, for that hee himselfe, being [4] an Irish Scot or Pict by nation, and being very excellently learned, and industrious to seeke out the truth of all things concerning the originall of his owne people, hath both set downe the testimony of the auncients truely, and his owne opinion together withall very reasonably, though in some things he doth somewhat flatter. Besides, the Bardes and Irish Chroniclers themselves, though through desire of pleasing perhappes too much, and ignorances of arts, and purer learning, they have clauded the truth of those lines ; yet there appeares among them some reliques of the true antiquitie, though disguised, which a well eyed man may happily discover and finde out.

Eudox. How can here be any truth in them at all, since the auncient nations which first inhabited Ireland, were altogether destitute of letters, much more of learning, by which they might leave the verity of things written. And those Bardes, comming also so many hundred yeares after, could not know what was done in former ages, nor deliver certainty of any thing, but what they fayned out of their unlearned heads.

Iren. [5] Those Bardes indeed, Cæsar writeth, delivered no certaine truth of any thing, neither is there any certaine hold to be taken of any antiquity which is received by tradition, since all men be lyars, and many lye when they wil ; yet for the antiquities of the written Chronicles of Ireland, give me leave to say something, not to Justifie them, but to shew that some of them might say truth. For where you say the Irish have alwayes bin without letters, you are therein much deceived; for it is certaine, that Ireland hath had the use of letters very aunciently, and long before England.

Eudox. Is it possible ? how comes it then that they are so unlearned still, being so old schollers ? For learning (as the Poet saith) “ Emollit mores, nee sinit esse ferus :” whence then (I pray you) could they have those letters ?

Iren. It is hard to say : for whether they at their first comming into the land, or afterwards by trading with other nations which had letters, learned them of them, or devised them amongst themselves, is very doubtful; but that they had letters aunciently, is nothing doubtful, for the Saxons of England are said to have their letters, and learning, and learned men from the Irish, and that also appeareth by the likenesse of the character, for the Saxons character is the same with the Irish. Now the Scythians, never, as I can reade, of old had

letters amongst them, therefore it seemeth that they had them from the nation which came out of Spaine, for in Spaine there was (as Strabo writeth) letters anciently used, whether brought unto them by the Phenicians, or the Persians, which (as it appeareth by him) had some footing there, or from Marsellis, which is said to have bin inhabited by the Greekes, and from them to have had the Greeke character, of which Marsilians it is said, that the Gaules learned them first, and used them only for the furtherance of their trades and privat busines ; for the Gaules (as is strongly to be proved by many ancient and authentical writers) did first inhabite all the sea coast of Spaine, even unto Cales, and the mouth of the Straights, and peopled also a great part of Italy, which appeareth by sundry havens and cities in Spaine called from them, as Portugallia, Gallecia, Galdunum, and also by sundry nations therein dwelling, which yet have received their own names of the Gaules, as the Rhegni, Presamarci, Tamari, Cineri, and divers others. All which Pomponius Mela, being himselfe a Spaniard, yet saith to have descended from the Celts of France, whereby it is to be gathered, that that nation which came out of Spaine into Ireland, were anciently Gaules, and that they brought with them those letters which they had anciently learned in Spaine, first into Ireland, which some also say, doe much resemble the old Phenician character, being likewise distinguished with pricke and accent, as theirs aunciently, but the further enquirie hereof needeth a place of longer discourse then this our short conference.

Eudox. Surely you have shewed a great probability of that which I had thought impossible to have bin proved ; but that which you now say, that Ireland should have bin peopled with the Gaules, seemeth much more strange, for all the Chronicles doe say, that the west and south was possessed and inhabited of Spaniards : [6] and Cornelius Tacitus doth also strongly affirme the same, all which you must overthrow and falsifie, or else renounce your opinion.

Iren. Neither so, nor so ; for the Irish Chronicles (as I shewed you) being made by unlearned men, and writing things according to the appearance of the truth which they conceived, doe erre in the circumstances, not in the matter. For all that came out of Spaine (they being no diligent searchers into the differences of the nations) supposed to be Spaniards, and so called them; but the ground-work thereof is neverthesse true and certain, however they through ignorance disguise the same, or through vanity, whilst they would not seem to be ignorant, doe thereupon build and enlarge many forged histories of their owne antiquity, which they deliver to fooles, and make them believe for true ; as for example, That first of one Gathelus the sonne of Cecrops or Argos, who having married the King of Egypt his daughter, thence sailed with her into Spaine, and there inhabited : Then that of Nemedus and his sonnes, who comming out of Scythia, peopled Ireland, and inhabited it with his sonnes 250 yeares, until he was overcome of the Giants dwelling then in Ireland, and at the last quite banished and rooted out, after whom 200 yeares, the sonnes of one Dela, being Scythians, arrived there againe, and possessed the whole land, of which the youngest called [7] Slanius, in the end made himselfe Monarch. Lastly, of the 4 sonnes of Milesius King of Spaine, which conquered the land from the Scythians, and inhabited it with Spaniards, and called it of the name of the youngest Hiberus, Hibernia : all which are in truth fables, and very Milesian lyes, as the later proverbe is : for never was there such a King of Spaine, called Milesius, nor any such colonic seated with his sonnes, as they faine, that can ever be proved ; but yet under these tales you may in a manner see the truth lurke. For Scythians here inhabiting, they name and put Spaniards, whereby appeareth that both these nations here inhabited, but whether very Spaniards, as the Irish greatly affect, is no wayes to be proved.

Eudox. Whence commeth it then that the Irish doe so greatly covet to fetch themselves from the Spaniards, since the old Gaules are a more auncient and much more honorable nation?

Iren. Even of a very desire of new fanglenes and vanity, for they derive themselves from the Spaniards, as seeing them to be a very honorable people, and neere bordering unto them : but all that is most vaine ; for from the Spaniards that now are, or that people that now inhabite Spaine, they no wayes can prove themselves to descend ; neither should it be greatly glorious unto them ; for the Spaniard that now is, is come from as rude and savage nations as they, there being, as there may be gathered by course of ages, and view of their owne history, (though they therein labour much to enoble themselves) scarce any drop of the old Spanish blood left in them ; for all Spaine was first conquered by the Romans, and filled with colonies from them, which were still increased, and the native Spaniard still cut off. Afterwards the Carthaginians in all the long Punick Warres (having spoiled all Spaine, and in the end subdued it wholly unto themselves) did, as it is likely, root out all that were affected to the Romans. And lastly the Romans having againe recovered that countrey, and beate out Hannibal, did doubtlesse cut off all that favored the Carthaginians, so that betwixt them both, to and fro, there was scarce a native Spaniard left, but all inhabited of Romans. All which tempests of troubles being over-blowne, there long after arose a new storme, more dreadful then all the former, which over-ran all Spaine, and made an infinite confusion of all things ; that was, the comming downe of the Gothes, the Hunnes, and the Vandals : And lastly all the nations of Scythia, which, like a mountaine flood, did over-flow all Spaine, and quite drowned and washt away whatsoever reliques there was left of the land-bred people, yea, and of all the Romans too. The which Northern Nations finding the nature of the soyle, and the vehement heat thereof farre differing from their constitutions, tooke no felicity in that countrey, but from thence passed over, and did spread themselves into all countreyes of Christendome, of all which there is none but hath some mixture or sprinckling, if not throughly peopling of them. And yet after all these the Moores and the Barbarians, breaking over out of Africa, did finally possesse all Spaine, or the most part thereof, and did tread, under their heathenish feete, whatever little they found yet there standing. The which, though after they were beaten out by Ferdinando of Arragon and Elizabeth his wife, yet they were not so cleansed, but that through the marriages which they had made, and mixture with the people of the land, during their long continuance there, they had left no pure drop of Spanish blood, no more than of Roman or of Scythian. So that of all nations under heaven (I suppose) the Spaniard is the most mingled, and most uncertaine ; wherefore most foolishly doe the Irish thinke to enoble themselves by wresting their auncientry from the Spaniard, who is unable to derive himselfe from any in certaine.

Eudox. You speake very sharply Iren. in dispraise of the Spaniard, whom some others boast to be the onely brave nation under the skie.

Iren. So surely he is a very brave man, neither is that any thing which I speake to his derogation ; for in that I said he is a mingled people, it is no dispraise, for I thinke there is no nation now in Christendome, nor much further, but is mingled, and compounded with others : for it was a singular providence of God, and a most admirable purpose of his wisdom, to draw those Northerne Heathen Nations downe into those Christian parts, where they might receive Christianity, and to mingle nations so remote miraculously, to make as it were one blood and kindred of all people, and each to have knowledge of him.

Eudox. Neither have you sure any more dishonoured the Irish, for you have brought them from very great and ancient nations, as any were in the world, how ever fondly they affect the Spanish. For both Scythians and Gaules were two as mighty nations as ever the world brought forth. But is there any token, denomination or monument of the Gaules yet remaining in Ireland, as there is of the Scythians }

Iren. Yea surely very many words of the Gaules remaining, and yet dayly used in common speech.

Eudox. What was the Gaulish speech, is there any part of it still used among any nation ?

Iren. The Gaulish speech is the very British, the which was very generally used here in all Brittain, before the coming of the Saxons : and yet is retained of the Welchmen, Cornishmen, and the Brittaines of France, though time working the alteration of all things, and the trading and interdeale with other nations round about, have changed and greatly altered the dialect thereof ; but yet the originall words appeare to be the same, as who hath list to read in Camden and Buchanan, may see at large. Besides, there be many places, as havens, hills, townes, and castles, which yet beare the names from the Gaules, of the which Buchanan rehearseth above 500 in Scotland, and I can (I thinke) recount neere as many in Ireland which retaine the old denomination of the Gaules, as the Menapii, Cauci, Venti, and others ; by all which and many other reasonable probabilities (which this short course will not suffer to be laid forth) it appeareth that the chiefe inhabitants in Ireland were Gaules, coming thither first out of Spaine, and after from besides Tanais, where the Gothes, the Hunnes, and the Getes sate down ; they also being (as it is said of some) ancient Gaules ; and lastly passing out of Gallia it selfe, from all the sea-coast of Belgia and Celtica, into all the southerne coasts of Ireland, which they possessed and inhabited, whereupon it is at this day, amongst the Irish a common use, to call any stranger inhabitant there amongst them, Gald, that is, descended from the Gaules.

Eudox. This is very likely, for even so did those Gaules anciently possesse all the southerne coasts of our Brittain, which yet retaine their old names, as the Belgæ in Somersetshire, Wilshire, and part of Hamshire, Attrebatii in Berkeshire, Regni in Sussex and Surry, and many others. Now thus farre then, I understand your opinion, that the Scythians planted in the North part of Ireland ; the Spaniards (for so we call them, what ever they were that came from Spaine) in the West ; the Gaules in the South : so that there now remaineth the East parts towards England, which I would be glad to understand from whence you doe think them to be peopled.

Iren. Mary I thinke of the Brittaines themselves, of which though there be little footing now remaining, by reason that the Saxons afterwards, and lastly the English, driving out the inhabitants thereof, did possesse and people it themselves. Yet amongst the Tooles, the Birns, or Brins, the Cavenaghes, and other nations in Leinster, there is some memory of the Britans remaining. As the Tooles are called of the old British word Tol, that is, a Hill Countrey, the Brins of the British word Brin, that is, Woods, and the Cavenaghes of the word Caune, that is, strong ; so that in these three people the very denomination of the old Britons doe still remaine. Besides, when any flieth under the succour and protection of any against an enemy, he cryeth unto him, Comericke, that is in the British Helpe, for the Brittain is called in their owne language, Comeroy. Furthermore to prove the same, [8] Ireland is by Diodorus Siculus, and by Strabo, called Britannia, and a part of Great Brittain. Finally it appeareth by good record yet extant, that [9] King Arthur, and before him Gurgunt, had all that island under their alleagiance and subjection ; hereunto I could add many probabilities of the names of places, persons, and speeches, as I did in the former, but they should be too long for this, and I reserve them for another. And thus you have had my opinion, how all that realme of Ireland was first peopled, and by what nations. After all which the Saxons succeeding, subdued it wholly to themselves. For first Egfrid, King of Northumberland, did utterly waste and subdue it, as appeareth out of Beda's complaint against him ; and after him, King Edgar brought it under his obedience, as appeareth by an auncient Record, in which it is found written, that he

subdued all the islands of the North, even unto Norway, and brought them into his subjection.

Eudox. [10] This ripping of auncestors, is very pleasing unto me, and indeede favoureth of good conceipt, and some reading withall. I see hereby how profitable travaile, and experience of forraine nations, is to him that will apply them to good purpose. Neither indeede would I have thought, that any such antiquities could have beene avouched for the Irish, that maketh me the more to long to see some other of your observations, which you have gathered out of that country, and have earst half promised to put forth : and sure in this mingling of nations appeareth (as you earst well noted) a wonderfull providence and purpose of Almighty God, that stirred up the people in the furthest parts of the world, to seeke out their regions so remote from them, and by that meanes both to restore their decayed habitations, and to make himselfe knowne to the Heathen. But was there I pray you no more generall employing of that iland, then first by the Scythians, which you say were the Scottes, and afterwards by the Spaniards, besides the Gaules, Brittaines, and Saxons ?

Iren. Yes, there was another, and that last and greatest, which was by the English, when the Earle Strangbowe, having conquered that land, delivered up the same into the hands of Henry the Second, then King, who sent over thither great store of gentlemen, and other warlike people, [11] amongst whom he distributed the land, and setled such a strong colonie therein, as never since could with all the subtle practices of the Irish be rooted out, but abide still a mighty people, of so many as remaine English of them.

Eudox. What is this that you say, of so many as maine English of them ? Why ? are not they that were once English, English still ?

Iren. No, for some of them are degenerated and growne almost mere Irish, yea, and more malitious to the English then the Irish themselves.

Eudox. What heare I ? And is it possible that an Englishman, brought up in such sweet civility as England affords, should find such likeing in that barbarous rudenes, that he should forget his owne nature, and forgoe his owne nation ! how may this bee, or what (I pray you) may be the cause thereof ?

Iren. Surely, nothing but the first evill ordinance and institution of that Common-wealth. But thereof here is no fit place to speake, least by the occasion thereof, offering matter of a long discourse, we might be drawne from this, that we had in hand, namely, the handling of abuses in the customes of Ireland.

Eudox. In truth *Iren.* you doe well remember the plot of your first purpose ; but yet from that (me seemes) ye have much swarved in all this long discourse, of the first inhabiting of Ireland ; for what is that to your purpose ?

Iren. Truely very materiall, for if you marked the course of all that speech well, it was to shew, by what meanes the customes, that now are in Ireland, being some of them indeede very strange and almost heathenish, were first brought in : and that was, as I said, by those nations from whom that countrey was first peopled : for the difference in manners and customes, doth follow the difference of nations and people. The which I have declared to you, to have beene three especially which seated themselves here : to wit, first the Scythian, then the Gaules, and lastly the English. Notwithstanding that I am not ignorant, that there were sundry nations which got footing in that land, of the which there yet remaine divers great families and septs, of whom I will also in their proper places make mention.

[1] “ so as if it were in the handling of some man of sound judgement &c] Since Spenser wrote this View of Ireland, the Antiquities of the Country have been explored and elucidated, by men “ of sound judgement and plentiful reading,” with so much patience and precision, as to afford the curious “ most pleasant and profitable” information indeed. When I mention the extremely valuable and important researches of the Royal Irish Academy, the labours of an Usher, a Ware, a Leland, a Walker, a Vallancey, a Ledwich, a Beaufort, an O’Halloran, an Ouseley, an Archdall; i (to which might be added the ingenious disquisitions of many others ;) I point out to the reader the true sources of elegant gratification in regard to the knowledge of Irish history, and topography, customs, and manners, Todd.

[2] *Scythians*] This discourse, from the word Scythians, unto the words in p. 59. “ of whom I earst spoke,” is directed by Sir J. Ware wholly to be crossed out, as being then agreeable to the best MS. copy; which passage is also omitted in the Manuscript of this View belonging to the Marquis of Stafford; in which likewise is added after “ to bee Scythians” the word *which*, thus connecting the words “ at such time as &c.” in p. 59. Todd.

Scythians.] Touching the Scythians * or Scotts arrivall in Ireland, see Nennius an ancient British author (who lived in the yeare of Christ 858.) where among other things we have the time of their arrivall. Brittonnes (saith he) venerunt in 3. ætate mundi in Britanniam, Scythæ autem in 4. obtinuerunt Hiberniam. Sir James Ware.

* *A regione quadam quae dicitur Scythia : dicitur Scita, Sciticus, Scoticus, Scotus, Scotia. Tho. Walsingham, in Hypodigmate Neustriae, ad an. 1185*

[3] *Remembrances of Bardes,*] Of the ancient Bards or Poets, Lucan makes this mention in the first booke of his Pharsalia.

“ Vos quoque qui fortes anima, belloque peremptas
Laudibus in longum vates dimittis ajvum,
Plurima securi fudistis carmina Bardi.”

The word signified among the Gaules a singer, as it is noted by Mr. Camden, and Mr. Selden, out of Festus Pompeius, and it had the same signification among the British. Sir John Price in the description of Wales, expounds it to bee one that had knowledge of things to come, and so (saith he) it signifieth at this day, taking his ground (amisse) out of Lucan’s verses. Doctor Powell, in his notes upon Caradoc of Lhancarvan, saith, that in Wales they preserved gentlemens armes and pedigrees. At this time in Ireland the Bard, by common acceptation, is counted a rayling rimer, and distinguished from the poet. Sir James Ware.

[4] *an Irish Scot or Pict by nation.*] Bede tells us that the Picts were a colony of Scythians, who first comming into Ireland, and being denyed residence there by the Scots, were perswaded by them to inhabit the North parts of Britaine. But Mr. Camden, out of Dio, Herodian, Tacitus, &c. and upon consideration of the customes, name and language of the Picts, conceives not improbably, that they were naturall Britons, although distinguished by name, Sir James Ware.

[5] *Those Bardes indeed, Cæsar writeth,*] Concerning them I finde no mention in Cæsar’s Commentaries, but much touching the Druides, which were the priests and philosophers, (or Magi as * Pliny calls them) of the Gaules and British. “ Illi rebus divinis intersunt, (** saith he) sacrificia publica ac privata procurant, religiones interpretantur. Ad hos magnus adolescentium numerus disciplinæ caussa concurrat, magnoque ii sunt apud eos honore, &c.” Sir James Ware.

* *Hist nat lib. 16. cap. 44.*

** *De bello Gallic, lib. 2.*

[6] ‘ *and Cornelius Tacitus doth also strongly affirme the same,* ’] Cornelius Tacitus in the life of Julius Agricola saith thus. “ *Silurum colorati vultus, & torti plerumque crines, & positus contra Hispaniam, Iberos veteres trajecisse, easque sedes occupâsse fidem faciunt.*” This he speaketh touching the Silures which inhabited that part of South-Wales, which now we call Herefordshire, Radnorshire, Brecknockshire, Monmouthshire, and Glamorganshire. And although the like reason may be given for that part of Ireland which lyeth next unto Spaine, yet in Tacitus we find no such inference. * Buchanan indeed upon the conjecture of Tacitus hath these words. “ *Verisimile autem non est Hispanos relictâ à tergo Hiberniâ, terra propiore, & coeli & soli mitioris, in Albium primùm descendisse, sed primùm in Hiberniam appulisse, atque inde in Britanniâ, colonos missos.*” Which was observed unto me by the most learned bishop of Meth, Dr. Anth. Martin, upon conference with his Lordship about this point. One passage in Tacitus touching Ireland (in the same booke) I may not heere omit, although it be extra oleas. “ *Quinto expeditionum anno (saith he) nave primâ transgressus, ignotas ad tempos gentes, crebris simul ac prosperis præliis domuit, eamque partem Britannia quæ Hiberniam aspicit, copiis instruxit, in spem magis quam ob formidinem. Siquidem Hibernia medio inter Britanniam aque Hispaniam, sita, & Gallico quoque mari opportuna valentissimam imperij partem magnis invicem usibus miscuerit. Spatium ejus si Britannia comparetur, angustius, nostri maris insulas superat. Solum cælumque & ingenia, cultusq; hominum haut multùm à Britannia differunt, meliùs aditus portusq; per commercia & negotiatores cogniti. Agricola expulsum seditione domesticâ unum ex regulis gentis exceperat, ac specie amicitæ in occasionem retinebat. Sæpè ex eo audivi Legionem unâ & modicis auxilijs debellari, obtinerique Hiberniam posse. Idque adversùs Britanniam profuturum, si Romana ubique arma, & velut è conspectu libertas tolleretur.*” Sir James Ware.

* Ber. Scot. Lib. 1.

[7] ‘ *Slanus in the end made himselfe Monarch.* ’] The Irish stories have a continued succession of the Kings of Ireland from this Slanius, untill the conquest by King Henry the second, but very uncertaine, especially untill the planting of religion by S. Patrick, at which time Lægarius, or Lagirius was monarch. Sir James Ware.

[8] *Ireland is by Diodorus Siculus and by Strabo, called Britannia,*] Iris is by Diodorus called a part of Brittain: but Ireland by neither of them Britannia. Sir James Ware.

[9] *King Arthur, and before him Gurgunt,*] Concerning King Arthur’s conquest of Ireland, see Geffry of Monmouth, and Matthew of Westminster, at the year 525, where he is said to have landed in Ireland with a great army, and in a battle to have taken King Gilla-Mury prisoner, and forced the other princes to subjection. In our Annals it appeares that Moriartach (the sonne of Ercse) was at that time King of Ireland, of which name some reliques seeme to be in Gilla-Mury, Gilla being but an addition used with many names, as Gilla-Patrick, &c. But in the country writers (which I have seene) I find not the least touch of this conquest. Sir James Ware.

[10] *This ripping of auncestors,*] This *discovery* of ancestors &c. Ripping is metaphorically used. To *rip*, is to break open stitched things. Todd.

[11] *amongst whom he distributed the land,*] King Henry the 2. gave to (a) Richard Strongbow Earle of Striguil or Penbroke, all Leinster, excepting the citty of Dublin, and the cantreds adjoining with the maritime townes and castles. Unto (b) Robert Fitz Stephen, and Miles de Cogan he granted the kingdome of Corke, excepting the citty of Corke, and the Ostmans cantred. And unto (c) Philip de Bruse the kingdome of Limericke. But in a con-

firmation of King John to William de Bruse (or Braos) nephew to this Philip, wee finde that hee gave to him onely (d) honorem de Limerick, retentis in dominico nostro (as the words of the charter are) civitate de Limerick & donationibus episcopatum & abbatiarum, & retentis in manu nostrâ cantredo Ostmannorum & S. insulâ. Among other large graunts (remembred by Hoveden) which this King Henry gave to the first adventurers, that of Meth to Sir Hugh de Lacy is of speciall note. The grant was in these words.

“ Henricus Dei gratiâ Rex Angliæ, & Dux Nonnanniæ, & Aquitaniæ, & comes Andeganiæ. Archiepiscopis, Episcopis, Abbatibus, Comitibus, Baronibus, Justitiarijs, & omnibus ministris & fidelibus suis Francis, Anglis & Hiberniensibus totius terræ suæ, Salutem. Sciatis me dedisse & concessisse, & præsentî chartâ meâ confirmâsse Hugoni de Lacy pro servitio suo, terram de Midiâ cum omnibus pertinentijs suis per servitium quinquaginta militum sibi & hæredibus suis, tenendum & habendum à me & hæredibus meis, sicut Murchardus Hu-melathlin eam tenuit, vel aliquis alius ante ilium vel postea. Et de incremento illi dono omnia feoda quæ præbuit, vel quæ præbebit circa Duveliniam, dum Balivus meus est, ad faciendum mihi servitium apud civitatem meam Duveliniæ. Quare volo & firmiter præcipio, ut ipse Hugo & hæredes sui post eum prædictam terram habeant, & teneant omnes libertates & liberas consuetudines, quas ibi habeo vel habere possum per prænominatum servitium, à me & hæredibus meis, benè, & in pace, liberè, & quietè, & honorificè, in bosco & plano, in pratis & pascuis, in aquis & molédinis, in vivarijs & stagnis, & piscationibus & venationibus, in vijs, & semitis, & portibus maris, & in omnibus alijs locis, & alijs rebus ad eam pertinentibus cum omnibus libertatibus, quas ibi habeo, vel illi dare possum, & hâc meâ charta confirmare. Test, comitè Richardo filio Gilbeiti, Williehno de Braosa, &c. Apud Weisford.”

But above all other graunts made by K. Henry the 2. that to his sonne John is most memorable. “ Deinde (saith (e)Hoveden) venit rex Oxenford, & in generali concilio ibidem celebrato constituit Johannem filium suum Regem in Hiberniâ, concessione & confirmatione Alexandri summi Pontificis.” By virtue of this graunt both in the life time of his father, and in the raigne of his brother King Richard, he was stiled in all his charters Dominus Hiberniæ, and directed them thus, “ Joannes Dominus Hiberniæ, & comes Morton. Archiepiscopis, episcopis, comitibus, baronibus, Justitiarijs, vice comitibus, constabularijs, & omnibus ballivis & ministris suis totius Hiberniæ, salutem.” Thus we have it frequently (although sometimes with a little variation) in the Registers of St. Mary abbey, and Thomas-court by Dublin. How the Earle in Leinster, and Lacy in Meth, distributed their lands, (besides what they retained in their owne hands,) is delivered by Maurice Regan, (interpreter to Dermot Mac Murrough King of Leinster) who wrote the historie of those times in French verse, The booke was translated into English by Sir George Carew Lo. President of Mounster, afterwards Earle of Totnes, and communicated to me, by our most reverend and excellently learned primate. There wee finde that the Earle gave to Reymond le Grose in (f) marriage with his sister Fotherd, Odrone, and Glasearrig; unto Henry de Mount-marish, hee gave Obarthy unto Maurice de Prindergrast, Fernegenall, which was afterwards conferred upon Robert fitz Godobert, but by what meanes he obtained it (saith Regan) I know not. Unto Meiler Fitz Henry he gave Carbry; unto (g) Maurice Fitz Gerald the Naas Oselin (which had beene possessed by

Mackelan) and Wickloe; unto Walter de Ridelesford he gave the lands of Omorthy; unto John de Clahul the Marshalship of Leinster, and the land betweene Aghabo and Leghlin; unto Robert de Birmingham Ofaly; and unto Adam de Hereford large possessions. What these possessions were, are thus noted in the Register of Thomascourt abbey, where speaking of the Earle, “ Postea Lageniâ perquisitâ, erat quidam juvenis cum eo quem multum dilexit, & dedit eidem pro servitio suo terras & tenementa subscripta, viz. tenementum de saltu Salmonis, Cloncoury, Kill, Houterard, & tenementum de Donning cum omnibus suis

pertinentijs.” Thus the Register. This Adam de Hereford was founder of St. Wulstan’s Priory neere Leixlip in the county of Kildare. But we proceed with Regan. Unto Miles Fitz David who was one of his chiefe favourites, he gave Overk in Ossory ; to Thomas de Flemming, Arde ; to Gilbert de Borard, Ofelmith ; to a Knight called Reinand he gave 15 knight’s fees adjoining to the sea; and to one Robert (who was afterwards slaine in Connought) the Norragh. What partition Lacy made in Meth, he thus delivers. Unto his speciall friend Hugh Tirrell he gave Castleknock : and unto William Petit Castlebreck. I have seene an ancient deede made by Sir Hugh de Lacy to this William Petit wherein among other things he graunts unto him Matherethirnan “ cum omnibus pertinentiis suis, exceptis Lacu & villâ quæ dicitur Dissert, &c.” Unto the valiant Meiler fitz Henry (sayth Regan) he gave Magherneran, the lands of Rathkenin, and the cantred of Athnorker. Unto Gilbert de Nangle all Magherigallen ; unto Jocelin the sonne of Gilbert de Nangle, the Navan and the land of Ardraccon ; unto Richard de Tuite he gave faire possessions ; unto Robert de Lacy Rathwer, unto Richard de la Chappell he gave much land ; unto Geffry de Constantine Kilibisky and Rathmarthy : unto Adam de Feipo, Gilbert de Nugent, William de Misset, and Hugh de Hose, he gave large inheritances. In Lacyes graunt to Feipo, we finde that he gave him Skrine, “ et præterea (sayth the (h) deede) feodum unius militis circa Duvelinam, scil. Clantorht & Santref. &c. In his graunt to Gilbert de Nugent, (the originall whereof I have seene, with an impression upon the seale, of a Knight armed and mounted,) he gave to him Delvin, “ quam in tempore Hibernicorum tenuerunt O-Finelans, cum omnibus pertinentijs & villis, quæ infra prædictara Delvin continentur, exceptâ quadam villâ Abbatis Fouræ nomine Torrochelasch pro servitio 5. militum.” Thus the charter. To Misset hee gave Luin, and to Hussey or Hose Galtrim. Regan proceeds. Unto Adam Dulbrd hee gave the lands of Dullenvarthy, unto one Thomas he gave Cramly. Timlath began northeast from Kenlis, Lathrachalim, and Sendevonath ; and unto Richard le Flemming he gave Crandon at twenty Knights fees. Sir James Ware.

(a) *Gir. Camb. Hib. expugn. lib. 1. cap. 28.*

(b) *Vid. Rog. de Hoveden, pag. 567. edit. Franc. 8s Camd. Brit. p. 379.*

(c) *Rog. de Hoveden, ibid.*

(d) *Chart, an. 2. Io. in arce Lond.*

(e) *In Hen. 2. pag. 566.*

(f) *Consul. Gir. Camb. Hib. expugn. lib. 2. cap. 4.*

(g) *This Maurice soone after deceasing at Wexford, King John then Earle of Moreton confirmed to his sonne William Fitz Maurice cantredum terræ quern Makelanus tenuit, ilium sc. in quo villa de Naas sita est, quam comes Richardus dedit Mauritio patri ipsius Willelmi. Thus the charter, habetur in ros. com. placit. an. 10. Hen. 6. in turri Birminghamiano.*

(h) *Magn. regist. mon. B. Mariæ iuxta Dublin, fol. 76.*

A view of the state of Ireland (1809)

Author : Spenser, Edmund, 1552?-1599

Subject : Ireland — Description and travel

Publisher : Dublin Reprinted at the Hibernia Press

Language : English

Digitizing sponsor : MSN

Book contributor : Robarts — University of Toronto

Collection : toronto

Source : Internet Archive

<http://www.archive.org/details/viewofstateofire00spenuoft>

Edited and uploaded to www.aughty.org

August 9 2010