

The Glamour of Cork

D. L. Kelleher.

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Before The Glaciers Come.

THE fish on Shandon alive and swimming off gaily to Sunday's Well ; St. Luke's Church " full fathom nine" under the flowing stream ; Blackrock Castle itself too deep for any worm to find ; Monkstown, for all its beauty, as yet undreamed ; and, at last, out there three miles or so past Roche's Point that Lee River sparkling as it meets the sea ! Oh world, oh life, oh time, what charmers these geologists be ; who now with stratum and fossil and " shaft" can prove this aerial Lee in pre-glacial days of the infinite years B.C. !

An Avalanche At The Kerry Pike.

SNOW falling nightly in the valleys, ice upon the uplands of Montenotte, and Carrigaline—a beautiful hour indeed in the history of beautiful Cork. But none yet save the " angels of God" or Alastor himself to look upon the scene. Wonderful silent Cork, save for those snow-flakes tinkling down " like bells of muffled silver in the breeze." More wonderful out Carrigrohane way with the big glacier towering up, peace, utter peace, but for the plunge of a rare avalanche over the Kerry Pike, or the creak of the glacier cable when the infinite tonnage moves to sea.

As The Glaciers Go.

BY Glanmire bend a whitethorn throws its first foam as a lark swings song all round and over it, like a boy with incense at the altar : on the hill above Douglas a flower opens and stretches and stands beautiful and still, like someone waking to a day when he shall be loved ; from Silverspring the water dances for the sun, gayer than a girl who dreams life eternal when first she is admired ; oh rapture ! rapture now. The night is passed. The new green fields return ; new valleys, hills, sweet waterfalls—earth ! earth ! and Ireland born !

PATRICK STREET.

Sir Walter Scott.

A GREEN-COLOURED carriage and pair drives in from Blackpool and over the Bridge. In it Sir Walter Scott, a big, robust, red-cheeked, lame-legged man, very grey ; in the corner, beside him, Maria Edgeworth, tiny, plain, all brains and no beauty, too sensitive about it ever to be photographed, third on the seat, Captain Scott of the Hussars, a youth quartered at Dublin ; opposite them Miss Scott, pretty, 22, and Mr. Lockhart, her sister's husband, a tall manly fellow with masses of glossy black hair, the cut of an actor. Sir Walter is quizzical, talks of visiting Blarney. Lockhart is disappointed, says so, " The place is dirty, by no manner of means up to my expectations" a pessimist, Lockhart the Newcastle-on-Tyner appalled at the absence of geometry here. The costumes of the women and their ease claim Miss Scott ; Miss Edgeworth is the perfect bland, does not trouble ! So Scott in his mouse-grey trousers, spats and cutaway coat steps out, the others following ; a sandwich and a cider are swallowed ; the barouche is fetched for Blarney, and they are off to kiss the stone. Meantime Sunday's Well has heard it, St. Lukes rouses from its after breakfast restraint. The Marsh rises in alarm ! " What! Sir Walter Scott, the famous writer, in town ? Put on your hat, Julia, and run ! Tom, get

out of bed, I tell you, and don't mind the sick-pay ! Oh glory be to God, an* we'll never be in time !” Until they all are thronging up and down outside the hotel, the Marsh jostling rudely round the door, Sunday's Well and St. Lukes preening and pouting a little on the distant curbstone, for inquisitiveness become so democratised! And then, “ Gone to Blarney, yerra, he is ! Oh, law, 'tis easy to amuse him after all !” the proletarians turning on the traditional cold tap, and “ He wouldn't look at the New Wall ! the Old Show ! And I to leave my house-work behind for such a suck in !” Until, at last, “ Here they're back, look, again !” and, “ Who's that one in the corner, though ? Isn't she very small entirely ?” and, “ I wouldn't think much of that hat, would you, Lizzie Ann ?” So the party step down and into their hotel. The crowd breaks and forgets.

SPENSER'S WEDDING.

THE wedding anthem sways down like foliage from the choir gallery; the procession moves from the altar, a white flower at its head in the bride herself. So that now, to his eyes and ears the whole church trembles to a tree-top and in the boys' voices, larks and thrushes “ lave their mouths with May.” For such is the miracle of this sixth sense, Love ! And so they are out through the porch of old Christ Church and to the water side (where now is the Grand Parade) as he helps her aboard the ribboned boat that, for a little, at least, they may have a Venetian wedding, the bubble-chimes breaking about the prow as if the bell-ringers of the coral deeps were making them greeting. The Lido pales away, and royal Baiae white with acolytes is dim to this as they step ashore and enter their house off the North Main Street of Cork in the Shakespeare day. Especially to him whose heart is all Hippocrene, oblivious how the springs shall grow turbid suddenly, then dry, and turn to acrid dust ! For this is Edmund Spenser, Raleigh's intimate, Elizabeth's flatterer, lord of Kilcolman, Sheriff of Cork, married now to Elizabeth Boyle from Youghal shore whom he courted out by the Point there as the wind took the silver sand and made a glory for her feet, himself beside her big handsome figure, five feet six, with the paint-brush beard, the close-cropped side whiskers, the half-Mephistophilian ears pricked up above the wide white ruff, an exquisite, irresolute half-lonely, mysterious man, hunted with fire and torture at last out of the lands he stole in the brave, ravishing days of Good Queen Bess.

THE FAMINE YEAR.

DOWN along the coast especially, and over the hills from Bantry to Kinsale the poor people are starving after the potatoes have failed. The red-coat garrisons are in barrack, as before, fed somehow by grace of God, or the devil, Babylon is only one day's journey with its bulging warehouses by “ Thames his side,” Empire flies its blood and bone flags as lavishly as ever from Greenwich to Mandalay. But over here a corpse is cheap and the anatomists grow impudent from excess supplies. So night and day the fugitives throng into Cork city, to see if there is any shelter in the big streets from this hunger and fever that cannot be turned away at all from cabins on the grey roads along the west. On the north side the charitable people give what help they can ; along Douglas Street as the overflow sets that way from the Union Gates many a one shares a literal crust. Even on the fashionable hills there is a stirring to alms and prayer. But the arrangements are woeful, as you might see along the Douglas Road, with many a fine woman's son stretch'd on the curb and a good priest anointing him before he'll die on the cold stone. For now the hospitals and sheds are full and there is no nourishment left for the poor creatures, or nurses to bring them a drink and they very dry. And look at the way they're treating some of the late-comers and the plight they're in. Putting them in the jail for that night and next day loading them into a van, to be taken fainting and frightened to a spot “ five miles from the boundary.” Oh, God forgive us the shame ! For the Councillors in panic for their townsmen's safety have invoked this statute by which all

“homeless people” found after dusk can be clapped in the prison that night and sent out at dawn to be dropped in a dyke at Ballincollig or gasping by the cross-roads at Carrigaline, there, in the mercy of God, to wander off and die quickly, or anything, so long as the town may forget.

COVE.

Queen Victoria Condescends.

THIS way the people have been fleeing ; out between the forts that shine with furze, till the sun coming up makes the clumps of it like gold brooches on the neck of Earth, the beloved. So the exile ships are sailing and the fields smile them away ; a happy journey for some at least, “bread and work for all,” as the song foretells in fatherly U.S.A., a better hope than famine and fever and the bailiff and rack-renter can offer over here. For it is 1848, anguish and grief and hunger down the wind.

Until, behold, the curtain rings up for an entrance ! Let exits be forgot ! White-funnelled, the suggestion of all things pure and holy, spangled down the mast-line with flags to which the villa-flags ashore make little pusillanimous curtseys, as though too loyal to wag vulgarly and roar in the wind, behold again the yacht ! Now it is up to the deep-water quay, and She steps down—ineffable day ! And her Irish, “My Irish” the humour of it, as Nym would signify—for ever after they may call the place Queenstown ! So blow yourselves out with cheers, good folk, and, Empire, go ravaging on ! And away with us all ecstatic, in small boats, on foot by the banks, in broughams and ass-carts along the road, away, away while she “clustered about by all her starry fays” (Keats the best anticlimax for it now), “Victoria the Good,” fozzling and fair, is past Blackrock and, at last, to the jetties of the “grand old rebel city.” And there while the riggings throb with shouting sailors and the quaysides ring to “rebel” cheers, by swift stagecraft call up Sarsfield and his hunted Irish wailing out to exile from the self-same spot. So louder, louder, Cork, with your cheers to drown that cry ! Till She smiles upon us all, God help us, and knows us not, how we can these years huzza for anything being, as failing bodies are, prone to all hysterias that enter through the eye. So farewell Victoria, the queen of our raree show. Farewell, and may the Lord have mercy upon us and all living fools !

QUEENSTOWN.

The American Fleet.

TIME, the juggler, plays his latest trick : 1782—1918. Hey ! Presto ! Enemies, Friends ! Friends, Enemies ! For behold the big-sailed schooners tacking heavily past Beala Coneen, a coast-guard signalling from the shore. So month by month the “All clear” waves as the food-ships put out. Though this sick thing overseas will thrive now by no feeding. For these cargoes from the great victualling centre at Cork with food-stuffs for the 40,000 English fighting against American freedom must turn again and head home with fugitives only half-fed aboard ; the U.S.A. too strong to be enslaved any more to the Georgian stupidities of empire bursting with the weight of pride. And lucky for the old Empire as the sequel proves. For here now it is 1918 with steam and dynamo to diabolise the waters of old Cove, and such a flung down pallette of ships as makes the whole waterway a child’s delight for any who sees from Spy Hill the linked destroyers painted out into disguises of hulls, life-buoys, rocks, fish, anything such as later may confuse the furtive U-boat periscoping round and past the Heads outside in search of prey. For this ingenious, hybrid America, U.S. rather, has rushed in, by trick, force or any way at all to salve the sinking Anglo-Saxon world. A task

accomplished quickly as you shall hear soon with Queenstown dressed for peace and quiet again, a bell beating over the harbour from St. Colman's tower, white sea-gulls in and out of the little mills of waters whose overseers they are.

PATRICK'S BRIDGE.

Charlotte Bronte's Honeymoon.

THE little bride has been pleased, delighted even, by the Killarney scenery. But at Cork she is tired. The heavy hot-bath July air, the travelling she has done, the shock of dreams abandoned these things have been too much for her. For at 39 a woman of pride and great intellect, surrendering to a homely lover, will make bitter comparisons, remembering how her proud passionate hopes have come to nought. So she is preoccupied often, even during these days at Cork : perhaps it was foolish to have made the choice, perhaps not ! At best it would be protection, companionship, at worst well, he would always be faithful, fatherly. These to a woman are compelling; but there is something more. So she keeps thinking and forgetting, the latter in a half- resolute way; Heger at Brussels, beautiful Brussels, so beautiful and the ruin of her heart ! Till they are up to the Bridge for the view of Shandon and St. Mary's and the sun in evening silver behind ; an attractive couple, the man with rich dark hair and beard, medium-sized with the loveliest skin, plump and golden-ruddy colour, and such warm round fingers and half-liquid eyes as would make you guess how sensitive he is, how easily they can fill with tears for another's troubles. And his wife so frail, a nice face though without any beauty, her feet and hands more like a bird's than a woman's; the touch of the grave is in her, all snowflake and flutter as she is. For it is only her mind that is the powerful resisting part of her; as indeed you would know by the history of her courtship. For at Christmas, 1852, she had refused his proposal, in May, 1853, she had bid him good-bye " for ever" oh feeble " for ever" that has no permanent currency in the affairs of love ! Till in April, 1854, it all is made up. So they are at Cork turning back from the Bridge for tea at their lodgings on July 24th, the Rev. Arthur Nicholls, late curate at Haworth, Yorks, and his wife, Charlotte Bronte that was. And farewell, lovers, again, a long farewell ! For, in eight months only, in that lonely moorland parsonage at Haworth once more, made lonelier for its memories of her youth and her torturing hours, a wind blows over her and she fades away, hardly the consistency of a snowdrop at all in her body, bloodless and bleached so soon for death.

GRAFTON'S ALLEY.

Sarsfield.

IT is a couple of days or so since the defeat at Limerick. But, thank God, his soldiers play well their part. Eleven thousand elect for exile and only two thousand accept favour from Ginkle's side. So for many days their commander has watched his gallant fellows sail out the Shannon and thus to France. Until only a small force, four thousand perhaps, remain for the march to Cork and the transport guaranteed by Treaty there. And as they set off cutting across the line that O'Sullivan Beare had taken in that other retreat, it is well that they do not know what lies that Treaty will prove to be, utter lies even to the loose and inefficient embarkation arrangements at Cork.

At their head rides Sarsfield himself, six feet tall, square and strong in the saddle ; behind him is O'Connor of Offaly, about to achieve military glory and a fascinating wife in France. At last they reach the little swamp-ringed city, cranes pensive in Patrick Street, wild duck and water-rats along the line of the South Mall. They make their way out of the walled town and

over the stepping-stones and dead wood to see Grafton's Alley where the Duke was killed in Marlboro's siege a year before. O'Connor is glad that they are to sail away from this place ; " a mean town compared with Limerick" he calls it. Their weary soldiers drift in and out of the southern suburb beyond Sullivan's Quay, the Irish town where " unregenerate Celts" can in fellow-feeling welcome the fugitives. Until now it is time for parting again. Sarsfield is on his way to superintend the sailing from the Lower Road. Suddenly, however, there is a sound as of cannon. O'Connor stops and clutches the General by the shoulder. This tragedy, fury, Erinnys, whatever it is, seems over their high and noble cause. The first shipload of the poor, footsore, faithful, daring fellows has been blown up at the wharf. For these five hundred, at least, there will be no revenge and wild cries of " Ireland ! Ireland !" as they charge down the lines at Ramillies !

THE COURTHOUSE.

Lord Macaulay.

THIS is the most brilliant automaton of his age, a fellow all memory and clockwork of quotation, running well without friction but with the unprincipled ease of a machine, a genius assuming the philosopher and historian, and producing lightning judgments, wrong and rapid but always interesting, whether he writes of " Romish" Ireland or of that " schoolgirl" who is herself step-daughter to the lamented Munchausen. Leaving London now he will read in the train between Euston and Bangor the " Lives" of half of the Roman Emperors and aboard the boat he will repeat to himself five books of " Paradise Lost" as he sits tucked up on deck scorning the rough sea until the lights of Dublin shine and he steps ashore to shoot his first arrow at the Metropolis, " City of raving Orangemen and raving Repealers !" After which via Killarney with its " almost sensual beauty" he is at last into Cork pausing in Washington Street by the new Court House, " A portico that would have done honour to Palladio."

And so exit again to weigh us up and kill us with phrases when he returns to London and resumes the secret life, playing with his friends children, walking little Miss Trevelyan round about Clapham Common, and telling her tales of the jumping red berries of Killarney, and the bantering men he found in Cork. So leave him, short, stout, a " tubby little man," with the big forehead, the half-shaved face, the touselled necktie, the fancy vest, full of Cork tricks, a hater of invitations, a lover of his own ego, with " no time" for marriage since all his love is for " words, words, words," out of which his fame now, like far-off telephony, fritters steadily to " buzz—buzz—buzz."

ELIZABETH FARREN.

Washington Street.

DR. GEORGE FARREN, of Washington Street (Great George's Street that was) is getting terribly uneasy, fidgety in himself something will happen to him if he doesn't get out of this place ! So up go the shutters, the apothecary will open for the sale of pills and ointment no more. This farce of prescribing at random, the exploratory and the experimental practise of the day—away with it once and for all ! So they pack up—the foolish man—to the tears, jeers and entreaties of the neighbours.

His poor wife, and she with her young family, oh some men are trials, surely indeed ! And off to England they are, the whole seven of them, poor dear children, dragged from place to place as their father turns actor, vaudevillist, anything at all, so long as it means movement and the stage ; taking to drink heavily now too and staggering on, many a night, to the delight

of the ribald village audience. Till this little sylph of a daughter, with lips for favour, and eyes of young winds and waves, a wisp of a creature, a nerve at every pore, receptive, heroic, plays the drum outside the booth and bad men recover their innocence a moment as they pass ; a picture for Pope or Francis Thompson, too elusive for prose. But soon the doctor has drunk himself out, poor soul, and when they have buried him the sylph and her sister must take small parts in less reputable shows. Though the angels are hovering with wings spread against any withering air. And so Lizzie Farren, the fairy that beat upon a drum with her heart when she struck with the stick, now but 18, is at the Haymarket, London, famed and feted. And, in a short while, playing at private theatricals in Whitehall, the fat, slobbery, Earl of Derby begins his siege. He is married and does not love his wife, a daughter of one of the “ beautiful Gunnings.” And for eighteen years he pursues Miss Farren who as tactfully fences him back. So that the spectacle of the panting, asthmatic earl trying to keep pace with the sylph as she walks scorning him all the way from Drury Lane to Grosvenor Square is the jest, though not quite the scandal of the town. For like Elizabeth O’Neill, Miss Farren fulfilled an Irish tradition and kept her fame unscathed. And when at 35 she married the Earl of Derby, a widower some months, her father somewhere between Washington Street and Valhalla must have smiled contentedly on it all.

THE WESTERN ROAD.

Daniel O’Connell.

THERE is a great stir, especially in Blackpool and down the south side, on the evening of the 5th of October, 1843. The shopkeeping folk in Patrick Street and the villa-men up Montenotte are not, of course, very excited. They never have indulged the vulgar hysteria. But the shriek and rolling of fife and drum bands about seven o’clock shakes their dilute Irish blood a little all the same.

And when the musicians swing down from the Butter Exchange and famous Fair Lane the bourgeois drawing-windows rattle with the best. And no wonder this dancing delight should spread as the crowds pour along the Western Road and overflow into the fields about O’Neill Crowley Bridge, a big drum beating now and then like the heart of a thousand men, lost angels of boys whistling and crying along the edge of the crowds, until—look ! a cloud of dust rises up towards Carrigrohane. Hooray ! The horsemen have met the carriage that has been- travelling all day from Cahirciveen. And take up the cheering now, yourself, as we all sway and eddy with the hour ! For there he is ! The human appeal is in his figure, the very shape to win the heart of a multitude ; six feet high, broad-shouldered, with a mouth of extraordinary refinement, like a young girl’s or an old woman in her second radiance, his hair thick and clustering over his ears, a great coat and big loose muffler increasing the romantic appeal; a hero to answer all the immediate tests ; showman, saint and father complete. Behold then, Daniel O’Connell who has smashed into the British parliamentary machine, has achieved Emancipation, has killed one and wounded several in duels, has spent his days in picturesque penances and emotional deeds, and has been crowned now by the *Times* newspaper as,

“ Boundless liar, base detractor !
Nurse of murders, treason’s factor.”

Here they will unyoke the horses and draw him along : but he protests. They must not be slaves ; has he not won for them the status of free men ? So hooray and hooray ! as he triumphs on, cheer chasing cheer, “ fantastic, fickle, fierce and vain” this lyrical mob. For soon, his own fault partly, for his denial of the rights of Trades Unionism and his waver-

ing attitude towards the English Crown, he falls to be hooted through the streets of Dublin and hounded out of that Irish political world in which he had overstayed his brilliant hour.

GILL ABBEY.

St. Finnbarr.

A TRAVELLER, a scholar, a gentleman—the phrase outworn, but it serves. Such is Finnbarr, the Connaughtman, whom we meet now. Businesslike, as a Saint should be, daring, original, ambitious, but with a difference. So at the end of his anchorite years at Gougane Barra and Cloyne he begins to grow anxious for men's eyes again. This Lee river, beautiful in its windings, a lily-chain when the moon shines down on it, is about his heart. He will settle there on the soft southern hill looking down over the little mud and wattle clusters of huts in the valley. The curlew and wild duck calling all night out of the reeds and from the swamps and pools studded with their 365 islands are companionable music to his ears. A few, gentler, more inquiring than the rest, climb up the hillside to hear of his new faith and affection ; and the rumour spreads until even in Spain and France young men long to be on Gill Abbey Hill. And so, in a short while, the settlement spreads down the slope to the Lough and eastward almost to St. Mary's of the Isle, a church built and thatched, a round tower, the huts of the students everywhere ; already a university destined to send forth saints and scholars to give testimony of Learning and the Lord.

THE SOUTH CONVENT.

Nan O'Nagle.

To be known in every garret of the town is distinction little sought. For there is peril as well as glory in a wide beneficence of spirit, and only with the predestined can great kindness be altogether perfect grace. To Nan O'Nagle, however, it came as you would have known had you met her, stumbling on her stick, spitting blood sometimes in the deep puddled lanes below the North Gate, or toiling with her lantern later through rain and wind for some old woman's sake round Shandon way. Though indeed these are but her pastime, since already she has been teaching the ragged children for five or six hours in her schoolhouse in Douglas Street, built and endowed by her own endeavour. And though her heart labours she climbs the rickety staircases with a snatch of a song for her kings and queens that were once but carters or kitchen-maids in the world's eye ; a visit that is a smile and a surrender in the little broken thanksgivings from the bed :—

“ Wisha God love you, asthore, and aren't you good to me !” and “ You're son and daughter to me, ma'am, and I seeing your face !”

Till to the Sister's eyes those rafters spin to gold bars, the peeling walls flower down, through the dim skylight incense falls. Such light and colour and perfume as never unrolled when she danced those other nights at Versailles at the Court of the molten Louis Quinze. For Nan O'Nagle of the wealthy Mallow family, kinswoman to Edmund Burke, had often floated through Sèvres and past shining Clichy in her carriage with silk to bind her lovely hair, and eyes of adoring boys to lap her in heraldry if she will but consent. Until, one immortal morning—the tale often told—Christ waved to her amid a group of working folk awaiting early Mass as her carriage rolled home through the Faubourg St. Germain. So that she flung Paris and all love and laughter of its glittering salons aside for the ecstasy of wind and rain, and secret haemorrhage from the lungs, and her ulcerated knees, and the opposition of bishops

and bigoted aldermen and the rivalry of religious, all borne here in Cork without a murmur and with constant jest and smile, for Christ's sake.

BLACKROCK.

Henry Sheares Elopes.

THE moon is all velvet and cream, the white narcissi of the stars pranked round about it. Underneath, the river shining and soft, like a woman's arm, runs smooth and luring, the very symbol for lovers. And, hist ! they are coming now along the avenue, the gate is creaking, they have turned and are gone without a word, magical, touched themselves with the wand of illusion, protean from shape to shape of delight as they travel the road from the Ursuline Convent to Cork. So that the sky is all a great chandelier with every star of cut glass and the moon itself, risen up midway, the central light for the world reduced to room-size in the miracle of visioning love. A plucky girl, quicksilver and fire in her veins ; for eloping now with Henry Sheares before yet the Ursulines have come to her father's house Mary Swete has rejected a far more prosperous and banal match. She will fly with Henry Sheares, the philanthropist banker's son of Glasheen and scorn that other Fitzgibbon, the barrister with money to burn, an apostate's son from Clare, who will soon reach the infamy of the wool-sack, will spit upon his kith and kin, and will go to his grave with riots and curses in Dublin while still comparatively young, Lord Clare indeed a master-excrescence which Mary Swete of Cork trampled early upon for that finer flower that grew in Henry Sheares.

THE LOWER ROAD.

Sarsfield's Flight.

WHOEVER has heard the wailing of the women as the emigrant in the sixties and eighties of the last century left his native valley, or their cry as the tender swung away from the wharf at Queenstown for the liner outside, must know what the anguish of mothers and wives can be and they losing their men. For this then the low fire was blown red upon a hearth in Donegal as a son came shining through the blue twilight home ! Is their rearing worth no more than the Pittsburg furnace and docks of St. Louis will give them, mixed with the negroes and the rest ! Woe and grief, indeed now when " there won't be anyone in the long nights after Samhain " to be breathing in sleep for an old mother's ears in her cabin in the West. Oh close your eyes, Ireland, and stop your ears from a worse agony even ! For this cry here is terrible, loud and long as if all the generations in one were wailing on the river road by the fishery slip here at Cork ! Men have been stumbling up the gangways for hours ; fine strapping men who have staked all for Ireland and have come to exile only ! And clustered about the decks and underneath, crushed back still along the jetty, the women, and children even, are jostled too, poor wives and mothers who have followed their men from Limerick, fainting often only for the strength of love that is in them. And oh, God ! to think that this is the way they are treated now ! For, look, the hawsers are cast away, the last boat is loose on the tide, these, shrieking and moaning, are they to be left behind ? " Wirra ! Wirra ! and oh, will you go from me ? " the suddenness, the horror of it stabbing and ripping their bosoms. Till they rush out into the river, clutching at the ship's ropes trailing loose, wailing, screaming up to the great hull, as if it had a human heart and human ears that would open to pleading. Oh, heartless ship, indeed, as it sucks them down in the swell of waters behind it, while others are pounded by its sides till they sink and are drowned. Rave, rave upon the deck and curse and make your solemn vows that shall be kept, oh gallant fellow, tortured with this last sight of wives and mothers drowned before thine eyes ! Until at Steenkirk and Landen in the stirrup beside thee, on the saddle before thee urging thy war-horse on, the ghosts of them

shall stand in fire and flower as the Wild Geese “ with ringing, with singing of swords”
cleave down the English line.

SUMMERHILL STATION.

The Fugitives.

WHO are these, beasts of burden in the disguise of men, the “ wild Irish” of the “ history”-books, outcasts, or what ? They toil up Summerhill with heavy loads, a mattress often, a carpet bag with a shirt and a coat and a rosary beads, a couple of tins rattling in their hands ; the vision of *Empire* reflected in a glass darkly as the funeral climbs. For funeral it is with Ireland every day going to her grave, the young and fair from every valley in those emigrant gangs vomited out of trains at the Glanmire Station, and who pass now in this frightful cinema of Summerhill. And so again in train-jolts to Queenstown and the tender that shall swing them out to be swallowed into the stinking hold of the big ship between the forts. Now they stretch out upon the platform for a minute’s rest at Summerhill, distracted and dumb, baffled by this confusion of travel after the slow-going days in Leitrim and Clare, buzzed about by dealers in those tin cups and plates that the emigrant himself must supply for the cynical steerage-table, tormented by the touts from the Queenstown lodging-houses crying the claims of their Stygian hotels. So farewell, island of saints and scholars ! Now art thou become a stricken place with flesh and blood kicked and beaten and driven off while my lord Suck-blood, the leaseholder, lives lecherous days at Cairo or with his most recent mistress in the corner of Park Lane ! And drop your head, reader, who climb singing this year to laburnum villa on Italian Montenotte ; and passing that old site of the Summerhill Station, dull now as the socket in a skull, drop a prayer for those who went that way of the Cross to the agonies that were half the chronicle of life then in the mills and quarries of monopolist U.S.A.

The Butter Market.

WAKING in the night, west, at the foot of the Boggeragh Mountains, you would hear the horse and he being tackled in the yard outside, a strip of lighted bog-deal kindled at the constant turf-fire flaring up here and there as the servant-boy stoops and searches for a piece of the harness mislaid on the day before. At three o’clock there comes every five minutes or so a butt rattling and lurching through the Square and along the Main Street of Macroom, or a horseman with three firkins slung, since there are as yet no roads cut for wheeled traffic from about Adrigole. Until everywhere the day is coming up to that soothing rhymeless music of hoof-beats and rumbling wheels, and the stagger and strain of unsprung axles down the roads. And now near six, they are climbing old Mallow Lane or by the Watercourse for those travelling from the north, a greeting exchanged, that undiplomatic ease and courtesy of men who are wise to sunsets and dawn ! “ There was a shower only and I near Fermoy,” and, “ ’Twas cold and the horse wheezing on me and we passing Ballea,” and, “ That cock at Minane—he’d crow and we coming whatever kind the weather would be.” So in the year 1770 and after, the high ground about the Butter Market is rich with the morning voices of all the brogues of County Cork and even of Kerry itself. And the fame of the place spreads with its spreading merchandise in 1800 already sought as a luxury in Holland and Spain.

And now at 7 a.m. the merchants are up and to their offices in the Dickensian streets about Mallow Lane. They are an easy, oily folk, fair-skinned, as though the softness of the butter was blended in their faces, the Cork plutocracy of their day. So peace and plenty to ye ! merchants and tasters and weigh-masters and packers, here in this Grecian-patterned place with the salt wind blowing up to you out of the bay and old Shandon ringing health and

benediction above. And good luck to ye, fanners, as ye drink a pint with the buyers in the taverns round good luck and God speed ! my sugar-and-caution fellows that can keep a “ stocking” as cutely as any in the corner of the cupboard in the “ guileless open” West !

SHANDON CASTLE.

Sir Walter Raleigh.

INTO the little walled city in February, 1580, a memorable time when young Shakespeare is “ finishing school” at Stratford (as likely as not with the Jesuit master there) a new gang of English enters ; Devonmen, about a hundred in all, with one Captain Raleigh, 24 years of age, at their head, just arrived by transport from the Isle of Wight. For this is the age of discovery, piracy, expropriation—the Elizabethan frenzy for easy wealth quick-acquired. And since food and fortune seem suddenest here England makes her most concentrated descent upon us to destroy, as the advertised motive runs, our fratricidal ways and so to convert us into good bovinities such as may accept the oligarchs of the Thames and the roast beef culture for ever more. So here the most skilful sorcerers, the “ men possessed” of their epoch are over to bedevil us, Sussex, Sydney, Grey, Mountjoy, Carew, Spenser, Raleigh himself ; the poet rejoicing that we starve off the face of the earth, the Captain writing to Cecil that “ it can be no disgrace if it were knowen that the killinge of a rebel weare practised,” Lord Deputy Sussex swearing in “ upon the Bible” his hired assassins, Sir Peter Carew, Knight, sticking children and pregnant women with his sword because they have a “ treasonous air,” Grey himself the exquisite disemboweller of Smerwick. But our tryst is with the latest of them now as he steps up from the river to Shandon Castle there at the President’s office to present his credentials ; a commanding figure, the forehead a little too high, a touch of cunning in the arch of it, the nose shapely, lips pouting, a full moustache and the tapering beard in the fashion, confident, a demon of observation and energy, electrifying even when he walks out in his ruffs and shining hose. So in and out of Cork and the world for forty years he will garotte and gamble and seduce and achieve murder, lies, munificence, valour all into the Walpurgis fire wherethrough he whirls. Until behold him on a day again, lousy and palsied, gibbering, spitting phthisis out with every breath, shaking with fear of this plague that is going in rigors over the prisoners near him ! Well done, Fate, thou art conqueror still ! Come now, Erinmys, thou didst not die with Greece overthrown ! So watch reader, watch how the destinies do the trick. And one fine morning, scars and kingdoms nothing worth, he gives a little kick, throws out his arms and is dead in the Tower of London, this Walter Raleigh who wrote those letters all love and cajolery and consent from his house below the Cedars at Tivoli to darling “ Bess” the dear decoy-duck of seventy diplomatic years.

OLD MALLOW ROAD.

Oliver Goldsmith.

HIMSELF and his horse—well, I declare ! if you were to see them and they all covered with dust on the Old Mallow Road ! A small little man, nice and stout, and a kind of a thickened upper lip and a sort of a dimple, you’d say, in the middle of his forehead and he humming to himself as if he hadn’t a care in the world. Though you couldn’t believe your eyes when you looked closer at him and saw that he was no more than a boy and the signs of the small pock only that make him look old, and when he dismounts, falls off you’d nearly say, so free and easy he takes it, you’d never suspect that he is a most “ misfortunate” child and will yet be the most “ misfortunate” man of his day. So, “ Keep on south till you come to the river and then turn east, and good luck to you !” And he is up in the saddle then again and cantering away for Cove. Though when he reaches there ’tis cardplaying he goes and loses the

passage-money for the States and goes picking shells too with the children. God love us ! he hasn't a splink of sense. And then sure he's off home again with only a shilling or two now for the road. So that soon he swops his young mare for a withered old nag and a couple of pounds, and oh, laughter and love and the comic Muse, such riding was never seen ! Until he's back to his mother at Ballymahon in the west where, poor woman, she has little welcome, since this is already the second time he has left her " for good " and returned in a month or six weeks ! Oh, Oliver Goldsmith, you playboy, ere ever Christy Mahon was dreamed of, you champion "Playboy of the Western World" in this year of grace, 1751, and you only twenty-two !

The Great Island.

2000 B.C.

IN Heliopolis, burning with its frame of sand, the sun flutes the temple pillars to gold. At night, while the great owls hoot, a glamorous moon to which all the sky is ocean without a cloud, throws a spectral pencil of shadow from the obelisk. Far away in Memphis a Pharaoh walks with his hundred painted slaves at high noon. At Thebes itself the mighty culture grows. Poets, sculptors, chroniclers, voluptuaries of art throng the schools and theatres. Nothing, surely, shall ever be seen like this, they dream, exalted with the pride of their newest civilisation. It is a mighty year 2000 B.C. in mighty Egypt. And, lo, there is a voice crying in the Far West the strange land, the luminous land where the mountains shine with gold and the rivers are enchanted in the very south of it even, a swift plague has broken out. And over the great Island of Cork the people die, so that this whole tribe of Nemed is destroyed who came hither from some land of Europe or the East, hearing on the wind, or by incantation, word of the ten regions there that are mined with gold and of the rivers that are gold-bedded in the uplands guarding Baile atha Cliath.

Farewell and Remember !

So through the lit silver of a summer evening the last picture shines new Cork of the shafts and the factories challenging the dying day to life again. The old riverside plumed with steam and light as the silver dims, fires roaring in the forges of the wonderful motor-mills, Finnbar and Fursey and Thaddeus himself looking down with curious eyes upon it all ; curious and longing now again that through the smoke and the flame and the great fires of progress that shall rage the high gold of inspiration they gave may be purified and shaped to new use in the golden town.

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