

King William's Route

The Scenery and Antiquities of Ireland.

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THE prominent association with the name of Ireland, to one not daily conversant with English newspapers, is that of a prolific mother of orators, soldiers, patriots, and poets. Out of sight of the froth that is thrown up from the active cauldron of her political evils, and out of hearing of the squabble and fret, the jibe and jeer, the querulous complaint, and the growling reply which form the perpetual and most marked undertone of English news, the inhabitant of other countries looks at the small space Ireland occupies on the map, a little isle on the westernmost extremity of Europe and counts her great names, and reads her melancholy, but large and brilliant page in history, with wonder and admiration. Whatever horrors the close-seen features of her abortive revolutions may present, and whatever littleness may belong to the smaller machinery of her political intrigues, conspiracies and the like, the distant eye reads, in the prominent lines of the picture, an undying love of liberty, and an untamed and restless energy of genius and character. To America particularly Ireland is sympathetically, as well as geographically, nearer than the other countries of Europe ; and receiving thence, as we do, a long-continued and steady influx of population, we look to the general tone of her national sentiment, and the preservation of her heroic character with the interests of kindred. In a work like this, however, of a pictorial character, and intended for circulation among all parties, the great questions at issue in Ireland can only be thus far adverted to ; and, in recording my own observations while travelling in the country, I shall be excused, (from the evident necessity of omitting all political and religious inference or discussion,) if, with the superficial material that remains, I should seem to avoid topics of momentous and evident interest, and confine myself to those only which are entertaining or trifling.

I turned my face westward, after the “ splendid failure” at Eglinton Castle, and on the first of September followed the example of St. Patrick, and embarked at the narrowest point of the Channel for Ireland. Port Patrick was named, they say, after the saint ; who, besides being subject, like the uncanonized, to sea-sickness, evidently knew enough of geography to decide what point of Scotland was nearest to the opposite shore. It is consolatory to possess a weakness in common with great men ; and in taking a preventative glass of brandy-and-water, and going regularly into my berth for a two-hours' passage, I was pleased to remember a fellow-weakness, not only in St. Patrick, but in the “ Queen's Earl” of Desmond, who, in writing to Queen Elizabeth after his arrival in Ireland, to take possession of his father's forfeited titles, says, “ I was so sea-sick as, whilst I live, I shall never love that element, and I besought them to land me anywhere.”

We ran into the pretty harbour of Donaghadee, after a two-hours' passage, and I was a little surprised to find every thing very neat and Scotch-looking the street clean, the inn tidy and thrifty, and not a beggar to welcome us to Ireland. The piers are of a very white granite ; (the harbour, I believe, was the design of Sir John Rennie;) and with a couple of towers, used as powder-magazines, and crowning a very abrupt mound, the port has an air both picturesque and nourishing.

There were four of us to go on to Belfast ; and the landlady, a very stout and smiling person, came out of doors, and separated our baggage from that of the mail passengers, ordered a car out for our approval, and settled the *quo modo* of our conveyance with a good-natured energy that amused me. As the ride to Belfast was to be my novitiate in *car-travelling*, I looked at the machine, which a man drew out with one hand, with some interest. An Irish car has been often described, and most people know that it is the smallest possible quantity of wood, iron, and contrivance that will carry five people. The driver's seat is generally a tight fit, and the horse's tail and haunches answer for his foot-board ; but he has the advantage of riding face foremost. The passengers sit *dos-a-dos*, two on a side, and their legs are delivered over to the care of Providence ; the small shelf, which hangs outside the wheel for their support, offering no security against damage by collision with mile-stones or passing vehicles. As the shafts are raised, the car tilts backward ; so that you sit sideways upon a declivity, which, with the excessive motion of the car, keeps the upper passenger continually sliding down upon his neighbour. A narrow trough between the backs of the seats carries a common-sized portmanteau comfortably, and with this you have all the capabilities of the Irish car.

Our baggage followed us in a sort of decapitated hackney-coach, which I was told was an "inside car," and we made our exit from the neat town of Donaghadee at a pace that, if we could contrive to hold on to our seats, promised to bring us early to Belfast. I should suppose a gentleman sitting in a loose chair on the top of an American stage-coach would feel something the security of a passenger on an "*outside car*." My neighbour nearest the horse chanced to be an American lady, as new to "jaunting" as myself, and never having been instructed as to whether the top or the bottom of the inclined plane we occupied was the place of honour, I sat alternately above and below, and left Ireland, I am sorry to say, with this point of etiquette unresolved. It is a choice between the *roles* of cushion and fender.

The driver was very talkative, and assured us that up-hill or down-hill was all one to his horse, and he would take us to Belfast without drawing breath. When he did come nearly to a stand-still at the foot of a slight rise in the road, we reminded Pat of his brag at starting. "I think he *likes* to walk *just here* a bit, your honour ;—it's a *thrick* he's got coming the road so often !"—was the answer, made with a gravity that defied unbelief. The black mare in the other car was his chief topic, however, and for her "the *misthress* had refused *manny* a time a hunder guineas." To the imminent hazard of our legs, the other driver, who seemed quite aware of the subject of his friend's eloquence, kept up a continual show-off, by passing us at a hard gallop and pulling up to pass us again, and between whipping and a violent string-halt, the black mare certainly proved a beast of very high action.

It was market-day at Belfast, and the streets were thronged with the country-people, the most inactive crowd of human beings, it struck me, that I had ever seen. The women were all crouching under their grey cloaks, or squatting upon the thills of the potato-carts, or upon steps or curb-stones ; and the men were leaning where there was any thing to lean against, or dragging their feet heavily after them, in a listless lounge along the pavement. It was difficult to remember that this was the most energetic and mercurial population in the world ; yet a second thought tells one that there is an analogy in this to the habits of the most powerful of the animal creation the lion and the leopard, when not excited, taking their ease like the Irishman.

I had thought, among a people so imaginative as the Irish, to have seen some touch of fancy in dress—if ever so poor—a bit of ribbon on the women's caps, or a jaunty cock of the

“boy’s” tile, or his jacket or coat worn shapely and with an air. But dirty cloaks, ribbonless caps, uncombed hair, and not even a little straw taken from the cart and put under them when they sat on the dirty side-walk, were universal symptoms that left no room for belief in the existence of any vanity whatsoever in the women ; many of them of an age, too, when such fancies are supposed to be universal to the sex. The men could scarce be less ornamental in their exteriors ; but the dirty, sugar-loaf hat, with a shapeless rim, and a twine around it to hold a pipe ; the coat thrown over the shoulders, with the sleeves hanging behind ; the shoes mended by a wisp of straw stuffed into the holes, and their faces and bare breasts nearly as dirty as their feet, were alike the uniform of old and young. Still those who were not bargaining were laughing, and even in our flourishing canter through the market, I had time to make up my mind that if they had taken a farewell of vanity, they had not of fun.

Very nearly amputating the legs of a young lady who sat on an outside car, drawn up near the side-walk, Pat, cantering to the last, checked his horse at the door of the “ Donegall Arms.” It was a handsome house in a broad and handsome street ; but I could not help pointing out to my companion the line of *soiled polish* at the height of a man’s shoulder, on every wall and door-post within sight, showing, with the plainness of a high-water mark, the average height, as well as the prevailing habit of the people. We certainly have not yet found time to acquire *that* polish in America, and if we must wait till the working classes find time to *lean*, it will be a century or two at least before we can show as polished an hotel as the Donegall Arms at Belfast, or, (at that particular line above the side-walk,) as polished a city altogether.

Pat made us a very smiling and civil speech *after* he was paid, (not having learned his antecedents from an *English* grammar, apparently,) and, as we had breakfasted in Scotland at daylight, we ordered dinner in the next breath, though it was not far into the “ small hours” of afternoon. The landlord brought us a most tempting and voluminous bill of fare, among which were several French dishes, unexceptionably *spelt*. With a vague impression that I was about to take leave of luxuries, at least till my tour in Ireland was completed, and having full purveyor’s authority from my friends, I took the *carte* at its word, and wrote off a dinner to which (on paper at least) I might have asked a Frenchman. Off frisked the waiter with an alacrity that promised well. We contrived to wile away an hour with dressing and looking out of the window ; and, in consideration of an elaborate dinner, we relinquished the usual gratification of ringing the bell every five minutes to know if it was ready. As the second hour began rather heavily, I was taking a turn toward the kitchen-door, I cannot say entirely without some hope of a fragrant intimation of the soup, when the waiter met me in the passage.

“ Is the lady very hungry, sir ?” he asked, with the most eager appearance of a desire for information.

“ Yes, indeed.”

“ Then, sir, I think you’d bett~~her~~ have mutton-chops ; they’ll be ready so much quicker.”

The words were not out of his mouth before two covered dishes issued from the kitchen, and made their way to our parlour, paying, as they passed, a tribute to my nostrils, of most unequivocal mutton-chops and potatoes. I saw how it was. They had followed a *leetle* too soon for my friend’s diplomacy ; but the French *carte* was done into Irish, and meant mutton-chops. The waiter would have let us down easier if they had given him time. I was too much amused with the entire absence of any thing like discomfiture in his face to make any remonstrance, and we dined excellently well on chops and potatoes.

Our dinner, notwithstanding its long name on the bill of fare, having been despatched with the brevity of unornamented chops and potatoes, we had the “big end of the afternoon,” as the waiter called it, to dispose of. The landlord (a very well-dressed and well-mannered person, by the way,) offered us a “walking dictionary” to the objects of curiosity in the town ; but the dinner had made us cautious of Irish definitions, and we preferred to find out the curiosities by ourselves, and learn their names afterwards.

One of the first things we stumbled on, at the end of a street of very tempting and brilliant shops, was an exhibition of pictures. “ADAM AND EVE WILL SHORTLY CLOSE,” (so read the placard,) was certainly a very inviting announcement, and we were in haste to pay our money and get in. The exhibitor, to my surprise, called me by name, as he gave me my change, and reminded me of having visited his pictures at Boston, in the United States—a good memory that would have been a more serviceable talent to a politician, but not without its agreeableness anywhere. It is very pleasant to meet one who knows even your name in a strange land. Dubufe has painted “Adam and Eve” in the garden, and in another picture, “Adam and Eve” being driven forth from Paradise ; and very clever pictures they are. But it is curious to observe how particularly clean they are *before* they sinned, and how very dingy *after*. I presume the Frenchman has good authority for representing them as dirtied with their “fall,” but one cannot help thinking what a moral thing it would be if sinners were known now-a-days by their complexions.

Taking leave of my friend, the exhibitor, who was about to “close” our first parents in Belfast, and “open” them in Dublin, we strolled down to the quay, and admired the Irish carts with solid wheels and a structure altogether very antique and primitive ; read the advertisements, stuck on every wall, of vessels bound to “New York ;” (we took a pleasure somehow in reading them quite through ;) and having “done” that end of the town, returned towards the inn. The landlord was in search of us, with a permit, signed by himself as a subscriber, to visit the botanical gardens. Declining a guide again, we started on our discoveries in the direction he pointed out, and strolled through a succession of clean and spacious streets, to the other suburb of Belfast. The houses in this quarter were large and comfortable-looking ; but they had a kind of noseless and flattened aspect, which I could not immediately account for. They are built, it afterwards struck me, without projections either at the roof or over doors or windows, the front wall of the house being an entirely plane surface, from basement to eaves. I found the same fashion in most of the towns of Ireland ; but it impressed me more in Belfast, first, perhaps, because the nakedness it gave to the expression of the houses accorded with the lonely desertion of the streets in this quarter of the town. I was told in Dublin, that builders were compelled by law to raise a certain height of front wall above the edge of the roof, to prevent danger from the sliding off of slates and tiles; a law which quite obviates Tom Pipes’s objection to living on shore, though it is not very productive of the ornamental.

Just at the edge of the town, we were compelled to charge through a phalanx of car-drivers, whose obliging distress at seeing us on foot was expressed with a variety of eloquence that was worthy of a better theme. We persisted in thinking that the dirt was good enough “for the like of us,” however, and walked them off their beat, taking with us a solemn assurance that the botanical garden, which they knew to be our destination, was “three miles off, and Irish miles into the bargain”—four English miles, that is to say, which we walked in the incredibly small space of five minutes ! Not content with this enterprising investment of eloquence and imagination, one of the drivers mounted his car, and gave us what I took to be a purely ostentatious display of the paces of his horse, driving backwards and forwards in every description of gait that could be got up by cries, kicks, whipping, chirruping, coaxing,

and other persuasives. As the man never looked at us even for applause between his flourishes, I had no idea that it was meant for our eyes particularly, till, within forty yards of our destination, he suddenly drove up, and with a smile of the most winning sincerity, recommended us to take his car to the botanical garden. "Where is the botanical garden?" I asked of a little girl who stood listening, without any apparent surprise, to Pat's proposal. She pointed to the gate, a few steps farther on. "*Thin*, sir," said the driver, (as little disconcerted as the waiter at the metamorphosis of my French dinner,) perhaps your honour'd like me to wait for you going back!" My natural resentment at the imposition was entirely absorbed in admiration of the boldness, fertility of invention, readiness and perseverance displayed by this ragged character. What would not such qualities achieve, (and they are natural to the whole nation, I believe, well regulated and directed into the proper channels? With the same outlay of thought, ingenuity, and assurance, as was expended in this fruitless endeavour to procure a sixpenny fare, what return would an American expect? Certainly enough to buy the car and horse, with a long lease of the driver.

The botanical gardens are laid out with great taste, and beautifully kept. We enjoyed our sunset stroll through the long alleys extremely; and spite of a cautionary placard, and the keeper standing under the porch and looking on, I plucked a *heart's-ease*, as an expressive remembrance of my visit. As the keeper made no objection, either by word or look, I inferred that heart's-ease, though planted among forbidden flowers, in Ireland, is at least not grudged to the stranger.

We strolled leisurely back to the inn, luxuriating in what reminded us more of our own country than of Great Britain—a clear and beautiful twilight. It seemed to me that it had rained without intermission for the three months since I landed in England, and I relished the sight of the blue sky. Fox's question to his Irish friend, "Is that shower over yet?" seemed a better joke to me before I left Ireland, but certainly I found sunshine of the very best quality at Belfast.

A bare-foot damsel, with very pink heels, was

"My grim chamberlain,
Who lighted me to bed;"

and in some fear of oversleeping the hour for the coach in the morning, I reiterated, and "sealed with a silver token," my request to be waked at six. Fortunately for a person who possesses Sancho's "alacrity at sleep," the noise of a coach rattling-over the pavement woke me just in time to save my coffee and my place. I returned to my chamber the moment before mounting the coach for something I had forgotten, and as the clock was striking *eight*, the faithful damsel knocked at my door and informed me that it was *past six*!

If the landlord's cleverness at a free translation of French did not entitle him to the character of "scholar," his manners and courtesy certainly gave him claims to that of "gentleman." He waited on us to the door with an abundance of smiles and good wishes, and a dish of cakes, which he insisted on the lady's taking (the cakes, not the smiles and wishes,) as provant for the road. As we were expected to dine with a brother Boniface at Newry, and a sack of cakes might endanger the appetite of an economical person on the road, our host's liberality must either be put down as an uncommon deficiency of *esprit de corps*, or a very great stretch of courtesy towards his guests. As we profited by the dilemma with both its horns, we may as well hang our belief on the latter.

We started off on King William's route to the battle of the Boyne, in a rain that would have damped the courage of Count Schomberg and his forty thousand men, more particularly if they had had my rheumatism. I had trusted to the sky as I had to the French *carte* and the chambermaid ; for a fairer promise of a bright morrow was never read in a sunset, and we had taken outside places to enjoy the scenery and the sunshine. I must record that one of the four gentlemen " insides," a stranger to us, offered the lady of our party his place—a politeness which, though a matter of course in America, is not thought at all necessary in old countries. The kindness was declined ; but it was pleasant to know that there are " bowels" in Irish " insides : " and this is but one among many points of resemblance between our two countries, which I recorded in my travels in Ireland. I am afraid there is a stage of " high civilization," at which several of these little eccentric virtues are polished away, under the names of " humbug" and " officiousness."

Our coach was well horsed for performance, and driven at ten miles in the hour ; and when we had once absorbed the water from our cushionless seats, and arranged our umbrellas so as to give and receive drippings as advantageously as possible, we began to enjoy the rapid motion and the County Down. There was something very graceful, I thought, in the shape of the hills and the general outline of the country ; though, to my eye, the scantiness of wood was a great drawback to its beauty. The hills were entirely denuded, and not a single tree stood in the fields, or anywhere but in the immediate vicinity of gentlemen's seats, and even there the planting seemed to have been but recent. I should have said of the same land-scape in America, that, within a very few years, it had been entirely burnt over, so complete was the nakedness, and such mere " brush" were the far-between plantations I speak of. The same impression has been made upon me since, in most other parts of Ireland ; though, in the southern counties, the very great number and extent of new plantations show an awakened attention to the subject, and promise soon to remedy the deficiency.

But what shall I say of the *human habitations* in this (so called) most thriving and best-conditioned quarter of Ireland ? If I had not seen every second face at a hovel-door with a smile on it, and heard laughing and begging in the same breath everywhere, I should think here were human beings abandoned by their Maker. Many of the dwellings I saw upon the roadside looked to me like the abodes of extinguished hope—forgotten instincts,—groveling, despairing, nay, almost idiotic wretchedness. I did not know there were such sights in the world. I did not know that men and women, upright, and made in God's image, could live in styes, like swine, *with* swine,—sitting, lying down, cooking and eating in such filth as all brute animals, save the one " unclean," revolt from and avoid. The extraordinary part of it, too, is that it seems almost altogether the result of choice. I scarce saw one hovel, the mud-floor of which was not excavated several inches *below* the ground-level without ; and, as there is no sill, or raised threshold, there is no bar, I will not say to the water, but to the liquid filth that oozes to its lower reservoir within. A few miles from Drogheda, I pointed out to my companions a woman sitting in a hovel at work, with the muddy water up to her ancles, and an enormous hog scratching himself against her knee. These disgusting animals were everywhere walking in and out of the hovels at pleasure, jostling aside the half-naked children, or wallowing in the wash, outside or in—the best-conditioned and most privileged inmates, indeed, of every habitation. All this, of course, is matter of choice, and so is the offal-heap, situated in almost every instance, directly before the door, and draining its putrid mass into the hollow, under the peasant's table. Yet mirth *does* live in these places—people *do* smile on you from these squalid abodes of wretchedness—the rose of health *does* show itself upon the cheeks of children, whose cradle is a dung-heap, and whose play-fellows are hogs ! And of the beings who live thus, courage, wit, and quenchless love of liberty are the undenied and universal characteristics. Truly, that mysterious law of nature by which corruption paints the

rose and feeds the fragrant cup of the lily, is not without its similitude. Who shall say what is clean, when the back of the most loathsome of reptiles turns out, on examination, more beautiful than the butterfly ? Who shall say what extremes may not meet, when, amid the filth of an Irish hovel, spring, like flowers out of ordure, the graces of a prince in his palace ?

The Irish cabin, repulsive as it is, is not unsung. One of the most beautiful women I saw in Ireland, sang for me, with an expression and humour perfectly delightful, the following amusing description, of which I begged a copy, regretting that I could not set down the music as well. It was admirably suited to the words, which I was told, clever as they are, had never found their way into print.

Oh weep for the day we were forced from our cot,
From our praties and milk and our stirabout pot ;
When Judy kept every thing piping and hot,
 So snug with the cat in the corner.
 So snug, &c.

The pigs and the dogs, and the childer, agrath !
Lay down on the floor, so dacent in sthraw,
While the cocks and the hens, they were perch'd up ava,
 Just over the cat in the corner.
 Just over the cat, &c.

Our house was so tidily covered with thatch,
It looked like a harlequin's coat, patch for patch ,
And the door opened natly by rising the latch
 With a fong that hung down in the corner.
 With a fong, &c.

A scythe was stuck here, and a raping-hook there,
And Paddy's shilelagh, the pride of the fair,
Was placed in the chimney to sason with care,
 Just over the cat in the corner.
 Just over the cat, &c.

Our windows so clane, by an unlucky stroke,
Had three of the purtiest panes in it broke :
We fastened up two with the tail of a cloak,
 And the smoke went through one in the corner.
 And the smoke, &c.

Our dresser was *dicked* out in *illegant* style,
The trenchers and noggins your heart would beguile;
And the goose she was hatching her eggs all the while,
 Right under them all in the corner !
 Right under them all, &c.

Our haggard, my jewel, was not very great ;
We'd a pure chi of oats and a *thrifle* of whate :
We fastened up all with a bit of a gate,

And a car in a gap in the corner.
And a car, &c.

Och ! Paddy's the boy, with a stick in his fist,
With a spur in his head, and a bone in his wrist,
And a straw round his hat—you must call a gold twist,
Or he'll murd^{ther} you all in the corner !
Or he'll murd^{ther} you all, &c.

To pass suddenly from the bleak highway, and a row of Irish hovels into a gentleman's desmesne, following a road which, perhaps, for two or three miles runs through the woods of a highly preserved park, planted, walled, turfed, and laid out with the most expensive care and taste, is, indeed, the change from the desert to the oasis, and one that, in its full force of contrast, can be felt only in Ireland. The surface of the country is so beautifully varied, the rivers are so swift and bright, and the vegetation is kept so green by the constant moisture, that wherever ornament of this kind is attempted, the spot becomes a paradise of natural charms. Ravensdale, which we passed on the road to Drogheda, is one of these.

As we drove into Drogheda we entered a crowd, which I can only describe as suggesting the idea of a miraculous advent of rags. It was market-day, and the streets were so thronged that you could scarce see the pavement, except under the feet of the horses ; and the public square was a sea of tatters. Here, and all over Ireland, I could but wonder where and how these rent and frittered habiliments, had gone through the preparatory stages of wear and tear. There were no degrees—nothing above rags to be seen in coat or petticoat, waistcoat or breeches, cloak or shirt. Even the hats and shoes were in rags ; not a whole covering, even of the coarsest material, was to be detected on the thousand backs about us : nothing shabby, nothing threadbare, nothing mended, except here and there a hole in a beggar's coat, stuffed with straw. Who can give me the genealogy of Irish rags ? Who took the gloss from these coats, once broadcloth ? who wore them ? who tore them ? who sold them to the Jews ? (for, by the way, Irish rags are fine rags, seldom frieze or fustian.) How came the tatters of the entire world, in short, assembled in Ireland ? for if, as it would seem, they have all descended from the backs of gentlemen, the entire world must contribute to maintain the supply.

I had been rather surprised at the scarcity of beggars in Belfast ; but the beggary of Drogheda fully came up to the traveller's descriptions. They were of every possible variety. At the first turn the coach made in the town, we were very near running over a blind man, who knelt in the liquid mud of the gutter, (the calves of his legs quite covered by the pool, and only his heels appearing above,) and held up in his hands the naked and footless stumps of a boy's legs. The child sat in a wooden box, with his back against the man's breast, and eat away very unconcernedly at a loaf of bread, while the blind exhibitor turned his face up to the sky, and, waving the stumps slightly from side to side, kept up a vociferation for charity, that was heard above all the turmoil of the market-place. When we stopped to change horses, the entire population, as deep as they could stand, at least with any chance of being heard, held out their hands, and in every conceivable tone and mode of arresting the attention, implored charity. The sight was awful : old age, in shapes so hideous, I should think the most horrible nightmare never had conceived. The rain poured down upon their tangled and uncovered heads ; seaming, with its cleansing torrents, faces so hollow, so degraded in expression, and, withal, so clotted with filth and neglect, that they seemed like features of which the very owners had long lost, not only care, but consciousness and remembrance ; as if in the horrors of want and idiotcy, they had anticipated the corrupting apathy of the grave, and abandoned everything except the hunger which gnawed them into memory of

existence. The feeble blows, and palsied fighting of these hag-like spectres for the pence thrown to them from the coach ; and the howling, harsh, and unnatural voices in which they imprecated curses on each other in the fury of the struggle, have left a remembrance in my mind, which deepens immeasurably my fancied *nadir* of human abandonment and degradation. God's image so blasted, so defiled, so sunk below the "beasts that perish," I would not have believed was to be found in the same world with *hope*.

Yet strangely enough, these desperate beings, snarling and howling like dogs upon each other, tried, upon those from whom they begged, every shape of flattery ; and often with a wit, that, though it was like wit from a skeleton, showed still that the nearly extinguished mind had been quick and penetrating ; and that amid all this apathy and despair, there was a memory of the springs of human action. I thought I should be able to recal many quick witticisms I had heard at Drogheda and elsewhere ; but it is a kind of memory that floats away in the cloud of unimportant events, occurring in so busy a life as travel ; and I remember but one—and that more from the hideousness of the speaker, than the excellence of her wit. I thought I had given away all my pence, when this woman, quite the weakest looking and sickliest I had observed, caught my eye. Another dive into my pocket brought forth a sovereign, a shilling, and a penny. "I won't throuble you for the gowld," said she watching me as I turned over the pieces in my hand ; "I don't like the colour of it." I laid my finger on the penny : "Och ! that's too black intirely," she cried again ; "something *batwane* : now, there's a *dilikit* white shillin', *the colour o'yer honor's hand*, plazes me more !" I was amused with their efforts, often successful, to penetrate and remove, by some apposite suggestion, any hesitation in the giver's generosity. "I'll change it for yer honour, and divide it among 'em," said a cripple to a young man beside me, who had drawn sixpence from his pocket, and held it doubtfully in his hand. The sixpence was thrown into the beggar's hat, who had well foreseen that the giver would not have the courage to falsify a creditable imputation before strangers. I am sorry to add, that the "division" was but a figure of speech ; and the sixpence was clutched with a flourish of the cripple's crutch, which promised to show fight for the lion's share.

Drogheda fills an important page in history, and probably has been the scene of more bloodshed than any other town in Ireland. The adherents of the Stuarts occupied its garrison after the death of Charles I., and, as the loyalty of the Irish was, during the protectorate, the chief hope of the exiled heir to the throne, Cromwell saw the necessity of checking it by a decided movement. "He landed at Dublin on the 15th of August, 1650, with 8,000 foot and 4,000 horse ; a great quantity of ammunition and a splendid retinue. He remained a fortnight to recruit his forces, and then marched with 10,000 men to Drogheda, which was bravely defended by Sir Arthur Aston ; but at length surrendered, in consequence of a proclamation from Cromwell, that quarter should be shown to all who would lay down their arms. The saintly protector kept his word for two days ; at the expiration of which time, having disarmed all the garrison, he ordered the whole to be massacred in cold blood ; and this inhuman butchery was so faithfully executed by the wretches who obeyed him, that only thirty escaped with their lives, and those thirty were transported to Barbadoes."

The "Battle of the Boyne" is the chief historical feature of Drogheda, however, and the ground I had travelled over since landing at Belfast, was the track of William's army on their way to this brilliant victory. I was very content not to have done it in the king's time, as he was six days marching from Belfast to Drogheda, a distance the coach does in about as many hours. He had the advantage of us in weather, however, for historians laud him for encountering the "*dust*" in reviewing the troops after his landing. It appears that William had a troublesome crown to wear ; and previously to his Irish expedition, had contemplated retiring

to Holland, and relinquishing to his queen a sovereignty that was too vexatious for his impatient spirit. He changed his mind, however, and set sail to join his army under Count Schomberg, in June of 1630. The scene of the contest between the two monarchs, James and William, at the "Boyne Water," is too interesting for the traveller to pass without refreshing his memory with the story. William landed at Carrickfergus, attended by Prince George of Denmark, the young Duke of Ormond, the Earls of Oxford, Scarborough, and Manchester, and other persons of distinction ; was met by Duke Schomberg, the Prince of Wirtemberg, Kirk, and other officers ; received an address from the northern clergy, presented by Walker, and published his proclamation for the suppression of rapine, violence, and injustice. His military genius prompted him, and the present distracted state of England, together with the formidable preparations of France obliged him to a vigorous prosecution of the war. From Belfast he advanced to Lisburne and Hillsborough. Here he commenced the exercise of his civil authority, by an act highly acceptable to the inhabitants of the northern province. The teachers of dissenting congregations, which abounded in this province, had acted with zeal against the cause of popery and the late king. One of this order had the merit of first encouraging the populace to shut the gates of Derry. Several had patiently endured the hardships of the siege ; and in every part of Ulster these ministers had shared deeply in the distresses of war. William now issued his warrant, granting them an annual pension of twelve hundred pounds, to be paid by the collector of customs in the port of Belfast ; a pension afterwards inserted in the civil list, and made payable from the exchequer. His forces were ordered to take the field ; and when some cautious counsels were suggested by his officers, he rejected them with indignation. "I came not to Ireland," said he, "to let grass grow under my feet." At Loughbrickland, his whole army assembled from their different quarters, and were joined by the king and his train. William ordered them to change their encampment, that he might review the regiments on their march to the new ground. The officers imagined, that on a tempestuous and dusty day, he would content himself with a general view from some convenient station ; but they saw him dart quickly into the throne, riding eagerly from place to place, examining every regiment distinctly and critically. His soldiers were thus pleased and animated ; every man considering himself as under the immediate inspection of his royal leader, who took his quarters in the camp, was the whole day on horseback, at the head of an advanced party, viewing the adjacent country ; reconnoitring, or directing the accommodations necessary for his soldiers. When an order was presented to him to be signed for wine for his own table, he passionately exclaimed, that his men should be first provided. "Let them not want," said he, "I shall drink water." An army of thirty-six thousand men, thus animated, and excellently appointed, advanced southward, to decide the fate of Ireland ; while the fleet coasted slowly in view, to supply them with every necessary, and thus to increase their confidence.

Six days had elapsed from the time of William's landing, when James received the first intelligence that a prince, who, he confidently believed must be detained in England by faction and discontent, was already on his march to meet him. He committed the guard of Dublin to a militia, under the command of Lutterel, the governor, and marched with six thousand French infantry to join the main body of his army, which, at the approach of the enemy, had retired from Dundalk and Ardee, and now lay near Drogheda, on the banks of the river Boyne. His numbers were about thirty-three thousand. His council of officers reminded him, that the naval armament of France was completed, and the fleet, perhaps, already on the English coast ; that Louis had promised, as soon as the squadron attending on William should return, he would send a fleet of frigates into the Irish seas to destroy his transports, that he would be thus fatally detained in Ireland, while Britain was threatened by foreign invasion, and the domestic enemies of the reigning prince concerting an insurrection. In such circumstances, they advised him to wait the event of those designs formed in his favour, not to

hazard an engagement against superior numbers ; to strengthen his garrisons, to march to the Shannon with his cavalry and a small body of foot, and thus to maintain a defensive war against an enemy, which, in a strange and unfriendly climate, without provisions or succours, must gradually perish by disease and famine. James, on the contrary, contended that to abandon the capital were to confess himself subdued ; that his reputation must be irreparably ruined : that the Irish, who judged by appearances, would desert ; and what was still of more moment, his friends in England and Scotland must be dispirited, and deterred from their attempts to restore him. He expressed satisfaction, that he had at last the opportunity of one fair battle for the crown. He insisted on maintaining his present post ; and from such animated language, his officers concluded that he meant to take a desparate part in the engagement ; yet, with an ominous precaution, he dispatched Sir Patrick Prout, one of his commissioners of revenue, to Waterford, to prepare a ship for conveying him to France in case of any misfortune.

William was no stranger to the motions of the French, and the machinations of his enemies. Whatever was the proper conduct for James, it was evidently his interest to bring their contest to an immediate decision. On the last day of June, at the first dawn of morning, his army moved towards the river in three columns. He marched at the head of his advanced guard, which by nine o'clock appeared within two miles of Drogheda. William, observing a hill west of the town, rode to the summit with his principal officers, to take a view of the enemy. On their right was Drogheda, filled with Irish soldiers. Eastward of the town, on the farther banks of the river, their camp extended in two lines, with a morass on the left, difficult to be passed. In their front were the fords of the Boyne, deep and dangerous, with rugged banks, defended by some breast-works, with huts and hedges, convenient to be lined with infantry. On their rear, at some distance, lay the church and village of Donore ; three miles further was the pass of Duleek, on which they depended for a retreat. The view of their encampment was intercepted by some hills to the south-west ; so that Sgravenmore, one of William's generals, who counted but forty-six regiments, spoke with contempt of the enemy's numbers. The king observed, that more might be concealed behind these hills, and many be stationed in the town ; " But it is my purpose," said he, " to be speedily acquainted with their whole strength."

His army was now marching into camp ; when William, anxious to gain a nearer and more distinct view of the enemy, advanced, with some officers, within musket-shot of a ford opposite to a village, called Old-bridge : here he conferred for some time on the methods of passing, and planting his batteries ; when riding on still westward, he alighted and sat down to refresh himself on a rising ground. Neither the motions of William nor of his army were unnoticed. Berwick, Tyrconnel, Sarsefield, and some other generals, rode slowly on the opposite banks, viewing the army in their march, and soon discovered the present situation of the king. A party of about forty horse immediately appeared in a ploughed field opposite to the place on which he sat. In their centre they carefully concealed two field-pieces, which they planted unnoticed under cover of a hedge, and retired. William mounted his horse ; at that moment the first discharge killed a man and two horses on a line, (at some distance,) with the king ; another ball instantly succeeded, grazed on the banks of the river, rose, and slanted on his right shoulder, tearing his coat and flesh. His attendants crowded round him, and appeared in confusion. An universal shout of joy rung through the Irish camp at the news that Orange was no more. It was conveyed rapidly to Dublin ; it was wafted to Paris : Louis received it with ecstasy ; and the guns of the Bastile proclaimed the meanness of his triumph.

While some squadrons of the enemy's horse drew down to the river, as if to pursue a flying enemy, William rode through his camp to prevent all alarms or false reports of his danger. On the arrival of his artillery, the batteries were mounted, and the cannonading con-

tinued on each side, not without some execution, till the close of evening. Some deserters were received, and gave various accounts of the strength and disposition of the enemy. One, who appeared of some note, spoke so plausibly, and, at the same time, so magnificently of their numbers, that William seemed disconcerted. To Sir Robert Southwell, his secretary of state, who had given him different intelligence, he expressed his suspicion that the enemy was really stronger than he imagined. Southwell communicated the king's doubts to Cox, his under-secretary, through whose channel the intelligence had been conveyed. Cox, with an acuteness which seems to have laid the foundation of his future fortune, led the deserter through the English camp ; and when he had surveyed it, asked to what he computed the amount of William's forces. The man confidently rated them at more than double their number. The king was thus satisfied that his reports arose from ignorance and presumption. Other deserters made reports more unfavourable to the enemy ; and the king was assured, that James, in expectation of a defeat, had already conveyed part of his baggage to Dublin.

About nine at night William called a council of war, not to deliberate, but to receive his orders ; and here he declared his resolution of passing the river in front of the enemy. Duke Schomberg, with the caution natural to his years, endeavoured to dissuade him from this hazardous enterprise ; and when he could not prevail, insisted that part of the army should be immediately detached to secure the bridge of Slane, about three miles westward of their camp, so as to flank the enemy, and to cut them off from Duleek, the pass through which they might retreat. It is generally imputed to the indifference with which his counsel was received, that this general retired in disgust, and received the order of battle in his tent, declaring that " it was the first ever sent to him." Nor did James discover more attention to this important pass of Slane. In his council of war, Hamilton recommended that eight regiments might be sent immediately to secure the bridge. James proposed to employ fifty dragoons in this service ; the general, in astonishment, bowed, and was silent.

William directed that the river should be passed in three different places ; by his right wing, commanded by Count Schomberg, son of the duke, and General Douglas on the west, at some fords discovered near the bridge of Slane ; by the centre, commanded by Duke Schomberg, in front of the Irish camp ; and by the left wing, led by the king himself, at a ford between the army and the town of Drogheda. At midnight William once more rode through his camp with torches, inspecting every post, and issuing his final orders.

Early on the succeeding morning, Count Schomberg with the cavalry, and Douglas with the infantry, which composed the right wing, marched towards Slane with greater alacrity than the troops sent from the other side to oppose them. They crossed the river without any opposition, except from a regiment of dragoons stationed over night at the ford, of which they killed seventy, before their retreat could be secured. They advanced and found their antagonists drawn up in two lines. They formed, ranging their horse and foot, squadron with battalion, till on the arrival of more infantry they changed their position, drawing the horse to the right, by which they considerably out-flanked the enemy. But they were to force their way through fields, enclosed by deep ditches, difficult to be surmounted, especially by the horse ; who, in the face of an enemy, were obliged to advance in Order ; beyond these lay the morass, still more embarrassing. The infantry were ordered to plunge in, and while the horse found a firm passage to the right, forced their way with fatigue and difficulty. The enemy, astonished at their intrepidity, fled instantly towards Duleek, and were pursued with slaughter.

By the time when it was supposed that the right wing had made good their passage, the infantry in the centre was set in motion. The Dutch guards first entered the river on the right,

opposite to Old-bridge. The French Protestants and Enniskilleners, Brandenburgers, and English, at their several passes to the left, plunged in with alacrity, checking the current, and swelling the water, so that it rose in some places to their middle, in others to their breasts, and obliged the infantry to support their arms above their heads. The Dutch had marched unmolested to the middle of the river, when a violent discharge was made from the houses, breast-works, and hedges, but without execution ; they moved on, gained the opposite banks, formed gradually, and drove the Irish from their posts. As they still advanced, the squadrons and battalions of the enemy suddenly appeared in view, behind the eminences which had concealed them. Five of these battalions bore down upon those Dutch who had already passed, but were received firmly, and repulsed. The efforts of the Irish horse were equally unsuccessful. Two attacks were bravely repelled, when the French and Enniskilleners arrived to the support of the Dutch, and drove back a third body of horse, with considerable execution.

In the meantime General Hamilton led the Irish infantry to the very margin of the river, to oppose the passage of the French and English. But his men, although stationed in the post of honour at the requisition of their officers, shrunk from the danger. Their cavalry proved more spirited. A squadron of Danes was attacked with such fury and success, that they fled back through the river. The Irish horse pursued, and, on their return, fell furiously on the French Huguenots, who had no pikes to sustain their shock, and were instantly broken. Caillemote, their brave commander, received his mortal wound, and when borne to the English camp, with his last breath animated his countrymen who were passing the river. As he lay bleeding in the arms of four soldiers, he collected strength to exclaim repeatedly, in his own language, “ A la gloire, mes enfans ! à la gloire ! ” “ To glory, my boys ! to glory ! ” The rapidity of the Irish horse, the flight of the Danes, and the disorder of the French, spread a general alarm ; and the want of cavalry struck the minds even of the peasants, who were but spectators of the battle, so forcibly, that a general cry of “ Horse ! horse ! ” suddenly raised, was mistaken for an order to “ Halt,” surprised and confounded the centre, was conveyed to the right wing, and, for a while, retarded their pursuit. In this moment of disorder, Duke Schomberg, who had waited to support his friends on any dangerous emergency, rushed through the river, and placing himself at the head of the Huguenot forces, who were now deprived of their leader, pointed to some French regiments in their front, and cried, “ Allons, messieurs ; voila vos persecuteurs.” “ Come on, gentlemen, these are your persecutors.” These were his last words. The Irish horse, who had broken the French Protestants, wheeled through Old-bridge, in order to join their main body, but were here cut down by the Dutch and Enniskilleners. About sixteen of their squadron escaped, and returning furiously from the slaughter of their companions, were mistaken by the Huguenots for some of their own friends, and suffered to pass. They wounded Schomberg in the head, and were hurrying him forward, when his own men fired and slew him. About the same time, Walker, of Londonderry, whose passion for military glory had hurried him unnecessarily into this engagement, received a wound in his belly, and instantly expired.

After an uninterrupted firing of an hour, the disorder on both sides occasioned some respite. The centre of the English army began to recover from their confusion. The Irish retreated towards Donore, where James stood during the engagement, surrounded by his guards ; and here, drawing up in good order, once more advanced. William had now crossed the river at the head of Dutch, Danish, and English cavalry, through a dangerous and difficult pass, where his horse floundering in the mud, obliged him to dismount, and accept the assistance of his attendants. And now, when the enemy had advanced almost within musket-shot of his infantry, he was seen with his sword drawn, animating his squadrons, and preparing to fall on their flank. They halted, and again retreated to Donore. But here, facing about vigorously,

they charged with such success, that the English cavalry, though led on by their king, were forced from their ground. William, with a collection of thought which accompanies true courage, rode up to the Enniskilleners, and asked, "What they would do for him?" Their officer informed them who he was: they advanced with him, and received the enemy's fire. But, as he wheeled to the left, they followed by mistake; yet, while William led up some Dutch troops, they perceived their error, and returned bravely to the charge. The battle was now maintained on each side with equal ardour, and with variety of fortune. The king, who mingled in the hottest part of the engagement, was constantly exposed to danger. One of his own troopers mistaking him for an enemy, presented a pistol to his head; William calmly put it by. "What!" said he, "do you not know your friends?" The presence of such a prince gave double vigour to his soldiers. The Irish infantry were finally repulsed. Hamilton made one desperate effort to turn the fortune of the day, at the head of his horse. Their shock was furious, but neither orderly nor steady. They were routed, and their general conveyed a prisoner to William. The king asked him, whether the Irish would fight more. "Upon my honour," said Hamilton, "I believe they will; for they have yet a good body of horse." William surveyed the man who had betrayed him in his transactions with Tyrconnel, and in a sullen and contemptuous tone exclaimed, "Honour! YOUR honour!"

Nor was this asseveration of Hamilton well-grounded. The right wing of William's army had by this time forced their way through difficult grounds, and pursued the enemy close to Dunleek. Langan rode up to James, who still continued at Donore, advising him to retreat immediately, as he was in danger of being surrounded. He marched to Dunleek at the head of Sarsefield's regiment; his army followed, and poured through the pass, not without some annoyance from a party of English dragoons, which they might easily have cut to pieces, had they not been solely intent on flying. When they reached the open ground, they drew up and cannonaded their pursuers. Their officers ordered all things for a retreat, which they made in such order, as was commended by their enemies. Their loss in this engagement was computed at fifteen hundred; that of William's army scarcely amounted to one-third of this number.

Here was the final period of James's Irish loyalty. He arrived at Dublin in great disorder, and damped the joy of his friends, who, at the intelligence of William's death, every moment expected to receive him in triumph. He assembled the popish magistrates and council of the city; he told them that in England his army had deserted him; in Ireland they had fled in the hour of danger, nor could be persuaded to rally, though their loss was inconsiderable; both he and they must therefore shift for themselves. It had been deliberated, whether, in case of such a misfortune, Dublin should not be set on fire; but on their allegiance he charged them to commit no such barbarous outrage, which must reflect dishonour on him, and irritate the conqueror. He was obliged, he said, to yield to force, but would never cease to labour for their deliverance; too much blood had been already shed; and Providence seemed to declare against him; he therefore advised them to set their prisoners at liberty, and submit to the Prince of Orange, who was merciful. The reflection on the courage of his Irish troops was ungracious, and provoked their officers to retort it on the king. They contended, that in the whole of the engagement their men, though not animated by a princely leader, had taken no inglorious part. They observed, that while William shared the danger of his army, encouraging them by his presence, by his voice, by his example, James stood at a secure distance, a quiet spectator of the contest for his crown and dignity. "Exchange kings," said they, "and we will once more fight the battle." Their indignation was increased, when they saw the prince, who inveighed against Irish cowardice, fly precipitately to Waterford, breaking down the bridges to prevent a pursuit, and instantly embark for France. They, who did not impute this conduct to a defect of spirit, at least, complained, that his Irish adherents were shamefully sacrificed to his interests and designs in England. Nor did the officers of William

express entire satisfaction at his conduct. They complained, that the enemy were not pursued with sufficient vigour, without weighing the disadvantage sustained by the loss of Duke Schomberg, or the danger of pursuit through a difficult pass, and an unknown country. They contended, that at the very moment of victory, ten thousand men should have been detached to Athlone and Limerick, to seize these important places, and prevent the Irish from re-assembling. But they were strangers to those anxieties which oppressed the king's mind. He every moment looked for an invasion in England, and expecting to be recalled, deemed it imprudent to divide his army, or to remove to any distance from the coast. Drogheda was summoned ; the Irish governor hesitated ; but being assured, that if the cannon were brought up no quarter was to be expected, he surrendered on condition that the garrison should be conveyed, unarmed, to Athlone ; and William now advanced slowly towards the capital.

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