

Scenery Agreeable

The Tourists Illustrated Hand-Book for Ireland

1854

Fourth Tour.

WE now enter upon our last tour, and regret that space will not allow us to do it adequate justice, even as compared with the preceding trips ; though in the number and importance of the towns about to be passed through, scenic beauty, or past interest, double the limits already occupied would be needed to convey an idea of what the traveller should be apprised of. To the historian it is pregnant with materials of highest value. Fruitful as are most parts of Ireland in evidences of a remote and mystic antiquity, as well as of authentic proofs of pagan civilisation, in this region they are especially conspicuous. The earliest memorials of Christianity in the United Kingdom are associated with Downpatrick and Armagh. The Anglo-Norman invasion and the regime of the Pale are identified with Carlingford. With the annals of the Commonwealth and the Revolution, the names of Dundalk, Drogheda, and Londonderry, are interwoven ; while many of the more momentous events of recent times have also had their origin within the sphere about to be embraced.

A considerable portion of the region indicated in the foregoing paragraph is traversed by railway ; and all the large towns on the eastern Irish sea-coast, together with many others lying immediately inland, are linked in one continuous chain by viaduct across the Boyne at Drogheda. This great triumph of engineering science has been at length completed. A foundation, long deemed impracticable, has been secured for the centre pier of the viaduct in the midst of the deep and rapid tideway of the Boyne. Communication between the Dublin and Drogheda line, and that of the Belfast Junction, has been carried on, for some time past, over a temporary wooden bridge at the unfinished portion of the viaduct. This structure, admirably erected of massive beams of wood, has subserved the purposes of railway traffic between Dublin and Belfast most effectively and safely. It withstood, without the loss of a splinter, the frightful gales of last winter, although vessels of large tonnage were wrecked, and went to pieces, within sight of the bridge. Heavily-laden trains passed over it in safety. But now the permanent works have been nearly completed, and this noble viaduct remains a proud monument of scientific resource and engineering skill. The tourist, setting forth from his hotel in Dublin for the north, is, in the first place, conveyed to

THE DUBLIN AND DROGHEDA RAILWAY TERMINUS, designed by Mr. W. D. Butler, architect, built by Williams and Sons, Dublin, a handsome edifice, in the Italian style, situated on what was formerly a portion of the inner Custom-house yard, facing Talbot-street, at a considerable elevation, commanding the level of the entire line to Drogheda. At the commencement, the railway is carried over Sherriff-street, at a height of 18 feet, by a platform bridge on massive Tuscan columns of cast iron. At a short distance it crosses the Royal Canal, over a bridge constructed on a beautiful principle by Sir John Macneill, engineer-in-chief.

CLONTARF.—Traversing a wide extent of the Clontarf estuary by an embankment, and over a handsome bridge, the line passes by Clontarf, leaving to the left the Crescent, and Earl Claremont's splendid demesne of Marino, of which the Dublin citizens are extremely proud ; but only a glimpse of the mansion can be caught as we are whirled along ; and the same of the Casino, in the Italian style, much admired for the beauty of its proportions. In this neighbourhood was fought the celebrated battle of Clontarf on Good Friday, 23rd of April, 1014, the result of which was the total rout and expulsion of the Danes from Ireland—a triumph dimmed by the death of the aged regal chief, Brian Boroihme. Hence Clontarf has been

designated by J. Dalton, the antiquary, “ The Marathon ” of Ireland ; but its more recent celebrity arises from its being the site of the abortive monster-meeting with which terminated O’Connell’s agitation of that kind, in 1844. The greater portion of this district constituted the patrimony of a religious community. Erected into a manor, and granted, in 1641, to Sir Geoffrey Fenton, it subsequently came into the Vernon family, by whom it is still held. Clontarf Castle, built by Mr. J. E. Vernon, is a noble imitation of the Norman Gothic.

CLONTARF TO BALDOYLE.—The line crosses the Howth road by a metal bridge of 50 feet span. In this quarter Donnycarney-house, and some other fine mansions, are situate. Soon after the line enters a deep cutting through strata of black limestone 40 feet in depth, and two miles in length ; over which cutting are several bridges and viaducts—that at Killester being of iron, and very graceful. We now pass through Coolock parish, and approach the station at Raheny—the village of which name lies a little to the right. From the station-house can be seen Edenmore, seat of Mr. George Hoyte ; Manor-house, residence of Capt. Montgomery, R.N. ; and in the distance, Raheny-house, Mr. J. Sweetman’s : while farther on, towards Howth, is Raheny-park, Mr. Thomas T. Gresham’s. Next station is Kilbarnock, in whose vicinity are the ruins of an ancient abbey and cemetery. Traversing a level country, the line reaches Baldoyle, a pretty village six miles from Dublin, inhabited principally by fishermen, and in summer by bathing visitors from the metropolis. A little beyond, the railway gives off a branch to Howth, already described ; but we may here add, that a handsome and commodious hotel is now erected in Howth, under the patronage of the noble proprietor of the district. The vicinage of Howth, apart from its other attractions, is likely to become peculiarly interesting during this summer, particularly to scientific visitors. Advertisements have been issued to contractors willing to undertake the raising of the steamer, Queen Victoria, from the spot where she lies submerged in eight fathoms water, just beneath the rocks off the Bailey light-house, where she struck and went down, involving hundreds in sudden destruction.

BALDOYLE TO MALAHIDE.—From Baldoyle the line passes through St. Doulough’s, Portmarnock, Kensealy, Felham, See, leaving, right and left, several handsome residences, including Balyriffin-park, Portmarnock-house, Mr. Luke Plunkett’s, Limehill, &c. St. Doulough’s Church is one of the most ancient, characteristic, and best preserved religious edifices in Ireland. St. Doulough’s Well, in the vicinity, is quite in keeping with the unique character of the church. The spring, rising from a circular basin cut out a single stone, is walled in by an octagon building with a stone roof, the waters, of course, being supposed by the people to possess miraculous virtues. Passing Broomfield-house, seat of Mr. George Cash, and penetrating Malahide-hill through a cutting under a handsome bridge of 30 feet span, the line arrives at Malahide station.

MALAHIDE TO SWORDS.—The village of Malahide is prettily seated on an arm of the sea, with Lambay Island to the north, and Ireland’s Eye and Howth to the south. This locality has greatly improved of late. The terrace erected by Mr. J. Fagan is much admired. A spacious hotel, with well laid out pleasure-grounds, has been established, and the village seems fast growing into repute as a watering-place. At a short distance is the entrance to Malahide Castle, the extensive parks and pleasure-grounds of which almost surround the hamlet on the western side. This superb baronial keep is one of the finest of its kind in Ireland. Perhaps, with the exception of Mitchelstown Castle (a modern building), it is the very finest, as it is by far the most interesting in every other respect. It is superfluous to say that the name of Talbot figures prominently in the history of these kingdoms, from the time of Henry II. downwards. Malahide Castle, as improved by the father of the present lord, presents an aspect in the highest degree stately and noble, and such as would, perhaps, look out of place almost anywhere but amid such scenes as surround it. The great hall is one of the noblest things of its kind in the United Kingdom, roofed with grained oak paneling of vast age ; but the inner hall, still more splendid, is roofed and wainscotted with oak, carved in elaborate devices, each panel

representing incidents from Scripture. The chimney-piece is a fine specimen of Gothic decoration, the figures of the Virgin and Child being admired in a preeminent degree. The other apartments are decorated in corresponding style, the galleries containing many rare paintings by the best masters. Near the castle may be seen the ruins of an ancient church, wherein the Talbots of many generations lie buried. Crossing Malahide estuary, on a strong embankment, 8 feet over ordinary spring tides, the line traverses a wooden viaduct of 11 arches of 50 feet wide each, beneath which the sea flows up to Lissen Hall-bridge, 2 miles, where it meets the Swords river, whose banks are completely dry at low water, and it would require comparatively small capital to reclaim these wastes.

SWORDS TO RUSH AND LUSK.—We now pass within view of the time-honoured locality of Swords, 2½ miles off, on a small stream which runs into the Lissen Hall river, abounding in famous trout. It owes its origin to a monastery founded by St. Columb. Here the remains of “Brien the Brave” were conveyed with all honour after the battle of Clontarf, with those of his chivalrous son Murrough, and thence to Armagh. Here is a lofty round tower in fine preservation, and the bell-tower of the old abbey, the former 73 feet in height, 52 feet in circumference at the base, and its walls 4 feet in thickness ; the structure differing from all others in Ireland in being surmounted by a small cross, which, however, is supposed, and with good reason, to have been placed there long subsequently to the erection of the building. Here, also, are the extensive ruins of the archbishop’s palace, once a fortified building ; together with the remains of a priory and convent of nuns, one of the earliest institutions of the Presentation order in these countries. So that even from this brief enumeration it will be seen that Swords super-abounds in archæological and ecclesiastical attractiveness. Passing by the village of Corballis on the right, with the adjoining demesnes of Newbridge House, seat of Mr. Cobbe ; Seafield, Mr. Arthur’s ; and Newport, Mr. Despard Taylor’s, whose demesne incloses the picturesque ruins of Landerstown Castle, we arrive at DONABATE STATION, where may be seen the ruins of an ancient church dedicated to St. Patrick. Hereabouts is said to exist a vein of pure green porphyry. The next station is approached through Portrane, on passing which we obtain a view of Lambay Island, which is the only small island on the eastern coast of Ireland set down in the ancient map of Ptolemy. Lambay, which contains an old castle built entirely of stone, without any timber, was purchased from the Usher family, who had the original grant, by an ancestor of Lord Talbot de Malahide, the present proprietor. It is 2 miles in length by 1¼ in breadth, containing about 60 inhabitants, the rocky islets and caves, &c., in the vicinity being visited by numerous pleasure parties. Here it was that the melancholy occurrence took place last winter of the wreck of the emigrant barque *Tayleur*, bound from Liverpool to Australia, with over a thousand souls on board, including crew and passengers, of whom fully six hundred perished. The details of this disastrous event are doubtless too generally known to require any repetition of them here. This noble barque, iron-built and of 1,000 tons burden, still lies where she foundered, close beneath the northern cliffs of the island. The line now crosses a wide estuary by an embankment, in the centre of which is a viaduct of timber 335 feet in length, 15 feet above high tides. To the right lies the village of Rogerstown, a coast-guard station ; to the left the demesnes of Corduff and Whites-town ; and then we approach the station adjoining the villages of Rush and Lusk, close at hand ; the former famous as the site of a round tower, and its church (sadly decayed), a massive square structure, having three of its angles studded with circular towers of slender proportions ; whilst at the fourth angle, yet perfectly distinct and isolated from the comparatively modern building, stands a veritable round tower, in beautiful preservation, loftily rising above the adjoining building, to whose constructors, ages ago, this tower was as mystic as it is to us at the present hour. In the village stands a spacious Catholic chapel, with schools adjoining. Rush is celebrated for curing ling, cod, and other fish ; the manufacture of cod-liver oil also being profitable. Here was born a sort of Milesian Paul Jones, Luke Ryan, a buccaneer, remarkable for daring piracies and privateering exploits under commission of the French government during the American war.

RUSH TO SKERRIES.—Leaving Rush station, we perceive to the right Penure Park, seat of Sir R. Palmer, Bart., formerly residence of the great Duke of Ormond, containing some fine old pictures, as also rare vases, and other antiques, from Pompeii. To the right, as we pass, is Lough Shinny, affording good anchorage for vessels. Passing through the deep cutting of the hill of Baldungan, we leave to the left the ruins of Baldungan Castle and Church, the former once a preceptory of the Knights Templars (twelfth century) ; and, in the sixteenth century, the castle passed to the Howth family by marriage. After a gallant resistance, under Thomas Fitzwilliam, it was burnt by Cromwell, in 1641. To the right are the beautiful demesne and mansion of Hacketstown ; and left, the equally beautiful mansion of Milverton, seat of Mr. G. Woods. The limestone quarries, belonging to Mr. J. Hans Hamilton, M.P., in this neighbourhood, are most productive. The rail soon after crosses the high-road by a handsome viaduct, and brings us to Skerries.

SKERRIES TO BALBRIGGAN.—Skerries, formerly Holm Patrick, from having afforded shelter to St. Patrick when pursued, as the tradition goes, by the pagans, is well situated and thriving, owing to the proprietor of the ground, Mr. Hans Hamilton ; its population, for the most part, are engaged in harbour and deep-sea fishery. Some distance seaward are the four Skerry Islands, on one of which are the ruins of an ancient church, of the epoch of St. Patrick. Passing through Chanon-hill, by a deep short cutting, the line runs along an embankment to BARNAGEERA, near which are two of those vast sepulchral mounds so numerous in Ireland. When opened in 1840, a stone coffin and some human bones were found. Emerging from a short cutting, the line brings us in sight of Ardgillan Castle, seat of Hon. and Rev. E. Taylor. We next pass Hampton Hall, residence of Mr. G. A. Hamilton, member for Dublin University, and late Secretary to the Treasury, who liberally throws open these grounds to the public. Perhaps no portion of the line presents richer features than this ; the fine woods of Hampton on one side, and the glorious sea view on the other, including Skerry Islands, Clogher Head, and in the distance the blue peaks of the Mourne mountains. To the left, about a mile, is BALROTHERY, on the high road from Dublin to Balbriggan ; its only celebrity at present being biscuits of great excellence. There is nothing very attractive in the adjoining ruins of Balrothery Castle, a square building of stone, roofed with thick flags. On an adjacent hill are the ruins of an ancient church, in whose graveyard are some remarkable monuments. We next (twenty-one miles from Dublin) approach the town of

BALBRIGGAN, familiar to English ears from its stockings, the demand for which productions is immensely increasing in London, forming the principle staple of the Irish Work Society in Regent-street. Balbriggan is a favourite resort for bathers. The Roman Catholic chapel is a fine building, and there is also a neat Protestant parochial church. A small stream, which, in its course, gives motion to the machinery of several cotton factories and flour-mills, passes through the town, and empties itself into the harbour—the only shelter for vessels between the bays of Dublin and Carlingford. The present inheritor, Mr. G. A. Hamilton, M.P., continues to lay out large sums in improvements. The Dublin Ballast Board built a picturesque little lighthouse on the pier-head. The disastrous wrecks on this coast last winter, attended with enormous loss of life and property, had the effect of rousing the proprietary gentry and nobility in the district to pray government for the appointment of a commissioner, to survey the coast and report on the most eligible point for the erection of a refuge harbour. Veins of micaceous spar, copper, and sulphur, are in the neighbourhood. The Balbriggan estate was held in fee by the Barnewall family previous to the civil wars in the seventeenth century. It afterwards passed to the celebrated Earl of Tirconnell. After the battle of the Boyne, William encamped his troops here.

BALBRIGGAN TO DROGHEDA.—The railway is carried over the inner harbour across a fine viaduct, on eleven arches. Facing the harbour is Turnerville, residence of Hon. St. John Butler, son of the late (thirteenth) Baron Dunboyne. The railway now, after passing through a

deep and lengthened cutting, crosses, by a viaduct of timber 180 feet long and 28 high, the Devlin river, dividing the counties of Dublin and Meath. On the right, jutting into the sea, lies the mount of Knockingen, whose curious and interesting history attracts the attention of the antiquarian, as the supposed scene of a great battle. The line, passing through some shallow cuttings, next brings us in view of Gormanstown Castle, seat of the viscount of that name, in whose family (now connected by marriage with the great English Catholic house of Jerningham, Lord Stafford), the property has been since 1357, when it was granted to Sir R. Preston, distinguished for devotion to the fortunes of the Stuart dynasty. The demesne is beautiful, the mansion magnificent. To the left is the village of STAMULLEN, and also the demesne of Harbourstown. Proceeding through Ben Head, and by Mosney, seat of Mr. G. Pepper, and crossing the Mosney, the railway reaches the Nanny river, a fine trout stream that never disappoints the angler. It is traversed by a solid embankment, in whose centre is a timber viaduct 304 feet in length, and from this point the view upwards through the Nanny valley is rich in the extreme. On the south is Ballygarth Castle, the ancient demesne of Col. Pepper, received from Charles II., comprising 500 acres, and furnishing the incident on which is founded Lover's inimitable "White Horse of the Peppers." Near the station are Mr. J. J. Taylor's beautiful pleasure-grounds of Corballis, open to visitors—its horticultural treasures being the richest perhaps in Ireland. After clearing the Nanny Water, the Line next reaches the station of

LAYTOWN, formerly a sea-port of some note, now of no importance. To the left is the village of Julianstown, the scene of a deadly defeat of the royal forces by the parliamentary army in 1641. Next is the station of

BETTYSTOWN, or Betaghstown, a small watering-place, twenty-nine miles from Dublin, on the sea shore, the seat of the proprietor of the estate, Mr. R. Shepherd, being in the vicinity. To the left is Pilltown, residence of Mr. T. Brodigan, at whose suggestion public enterprise was first directed towards the line. The sea view from this point along the rail, as it winds by the coast, is striking and beautiful. To the right is the small hamlet of Calpe, where is a bath said to contain the remains of Calpa (son of Milesius), drowned in the Boyne and buried here ; St. Patrick landed at this spot when proceeding to Tara. There are traces of a castle which was standing in 1641, when it was levelled during the war. Further to the right is Mornington, ancient seat of the Wellesley family—the stock whence, as the world knows, Wellington derived his title and race. Dangan Castle, the Duke's residence in boyhood, is about twenty miles further inland, near Trim, County Meath, and of which we speak elsewhere. There are some interesting ruins in Mornington, well worthy attention.

At the opposite side on the beach, entrance of the Boyne, stands the Maiden Tower, sixty feet high by twelve square ; crowned by a battlemented terrace, which is gained by a narrow, winding staircase, and commanding a most extensive view, inland and coastwise. A smaller tower of solid stone, next the larger, forty feet high and seven in diameter, is the Lady's Finger. These were landmarks, the Boyne at the entrance being very intricate. The rail now enters a deep cutting, emerging from which, and crossing an embankment, brings us to the terminus, where from a commanding height we look down upon the rich valley of the Boyne, and on its banks the renowned

TOWN OF DROGHEDA.—The view from the terminus begets anticipations by no means sustained as the stranger enters the squalid and craggy streets, especially at the southern or county Meath side, the northern or more improved portion being in county Louth, where general business is carried on. The history of the place belongs to remote antiquity ; its name in Irish signifying "the Bridge of the Ford," early historians termed it *Pons Vadi* and *Pontana Civitas*. Its antiquities are as numerous as interesting. The remains of the Dominican convent,

founded in 1224 by Lucas de Netterville, Archbishop of Armagh, bear about them all that can be well conceived of architectural beauty in decay. Its tower, known as Magdalen's Steeple, resting on a Gothic arch of most graceful proportions, gives a fine conception of what must have been the beauty and the harmony of the entire, despite sad havoc by Cromwell, the record of whose campaigns in this neighbourhood abounds in evidence of needless ferocity calculated infinitely to damp posterity's admiration of the otherwise heroic Protector. Immediately above the arch, which supports Magdalen's Steeple, are two chambers, with eight windows, carved and highly ornamented in most florid Gothic, testifying the perfection to which that style had been brought at a remote period in Ireland. In the hall of this church the northern chieftains made submission to Richard II., and within its walls many other incidents connected with the history of Ireland took place. The ruins of St. Mary's, founded in the reign of Edward I. ; steeple of the Augustinian Priory (ascribed to St. Patrick) ; St. Mary's Hospital, founded thirteenth century ; Priory of St. Lawrence ; the Gray Friary ; and the smaller foundations of St. James and St. Bennett, are the principal ecclesiastical edifices, and present an aggregate of antiquities seldom met anywhere, Ireland itself hardly excepted. St. Lawrence's Gate, the only remaining portion of the old walls, bears ample testimony—as does the picturesque ruin called the West Gate, or Butter Gate on the Meath side—of the original defences of Drogheda, which suffered more from the marauding plunderer and ambitious invader than almost any other town in Ireland, as recorded by Dalton. The linen trade has rendered it famous for upwards of a century, and is not only recovering, but springing into healthy life in this locality and throughout Ireland. Chevalier Claussen, by rendering flax capable of being manufactured in the ordinary cotton-spinning machinery, opened incalculable benefits to Ireland. Drogheda lies fifty-seven miles from Belfast, and twenty-three from Dublin ; population about 24,000. The export trade is considerable, particularly in cattle, corn, provisions, and country produce, generally supplied by the surrounding fertile districts of Meath, Louth, &c. A fine fleet of powerful steamers belong to the port and ply between it and Liverpool. Its principal attractions, many of which our volume incidentally notices, are in the immediate neighbourhood, which comprises some of the most pleasing and diversified scenery, exclusive of the field whereon was fought the famous battle, within a half hour's walk of the town, near the hamlet of Oldbridge, on the banks of the Boyne.

Those who would linger on the scenery of this river, for the sake of historic associations, should provide themselves with Mr. Wilde's " Boyne and Blackwater,"—it is much the latest and the best ; contains a plan of the field, and various illustrations of the most celebrated spots in the district. Another good one, not a little curious from its military opinions being rather different to those generally entertained, is that in Banin's novel of the " Boyne Water ;" though a work of imagination is not exactly an authority on such points, the reader will find much suggestive matter in it, and in a shape more attractive than mere dry narrative. But it is to the third volume of Macaulay (who has lately personally explored the whole *locale* of the conflict) that anticipation will necessarily be turned ; and, participating in the general eagerness, we do not trespass on the province of the historian in this respect.

The environs of Drogheda possess many attractions to lure the tourist from his road. Amongst the most remarkable seats is Slane Castle, residence of Marquis of Conyngham, where George IV. spent a few days in 1821. Near it are some famous ecclesiastical ruins : also two other structures, formerly of great feudal celebrity, now of vast beauty, in decay. Turn which way we will in this district, architectural antiquities of every order of attraction invite us, the mere enumeration of which would make a formidable encroachment on our space. The traveller, once he alights in Meath, either towards Trim on the Midland line ; or from Drogheda, rambling along the Boyne, as we are now doing ; or by the branch to Navan, which we shall presently traverse after returning to Drogheda : it is perfectly immaterial in which direction he moves, objects almost innumerable of the kind meet him. Three miles from Drogheda, on the left, are the ruins of the Abbey of Monasterboice ; two chapels ; a

round tower, now 110 feet high, formerly much higher (top struck off by lightning), beautifully diminishing from a base of eighteen feet, in the manner of a Tuscan pillar, its main circumference being fifty-two feet. The large stone cross, called St. Boyne's Cross, in the adjoining graveyard, is deemed the most ancient religious relic in Ireland. Should the tourist have at all a spice of the antiquarian, he will, either before or immediately after visiting Monasterboice, consult "The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland, anterior to the Anglo-Norman Invasion; comprising an Essay on the Origin and Uses of the Round Towers of Ireland, which obtained the Gold Medal and Prize of the Royal Irish Academy: by George Petrie, R.H.A., V.P.R.A.," who is received by many as an infallible authority on this much-disputed question. The remains of the crosses in this fine ruin are enclosed in a circle emblematic of the eternity of the faith. The largest, the Great Cross, is twenty-seven feet high, composed of two stones, a work of infinite beauty, as it stands mid the ruins of hallowed fanes and long-forgotten altars, presenting an object of most contemplative interest. The antiquity of these ruins is so remote, that all said or written about them is little better than mere surmise: but there can be small doubt of one portion of the building having been of a much later period than another. In the neighbourhood of Monasterboice is the no less famous Mellifont Abbey, once of vast magnitude and splendour, erected 1142, and granted to Sir. Gerald Moore at the dissolution of monastic institutions. St. Bernard's Chapel must have been one of the most elegant and highly embellished structures of the Norman or early English pointed style in Ireland. The tourist, on leaving the battle-field at Oldbridge, should visit Mellifont Abbey first, and then Monasterboice, although we have reversed their order here.

At either of the principal Drogheda hotels, Simcocks's or Keappock's, we may be accommodated, at ten minutes' notice, with a well-horsed car, and visit Ardee, Collon, Duleek, &c.—giving, if possible, one long summer's day to that section of the beautiful vale of Meath, extending from Drogheda east, toward Navan, Trim, and Kells. Far as the eye can reach, pastures, perhaps the richest in the world, are dotted with excellent tillage farms. These are the plains whence come the fat beeves which throng the quays of Dublin on their way to the English markets. In the centre of this plain rises the thrice-renowned Hill of "Tara of the Kings," in whose halls the chiefs of Ireland met in council, where princes feasted and bards sang, where Ollamh wrote and Patrick preached; yet of all its proud memories, there scarcely remains a vestige to tell of former greatness—Moore's immortal dirge, embodying the very spirit of desolation proper to the place.

Supposing the tourist has seen Drogheda and its environs, and is about journeying north, the first object is the

BOYNE VIADUCT.—Composed of fifteen arches of sixty-one feet span, twelve south, and three on the north side of the river, for which there are three openings, one centre bay 250 feet clear waterway, and two side bays 125 feet each. Between these openings rise light and lofty piers to support the super structure, which is at such a level as leaves ninety feet in the clear above high water for the navigation. The masonry is of calp limestone, quarried immediately beside the site of the viaduct, excepting the quoins and other smoothly dressed parts, and these are of the white limestone obtained at Skerries. The greatest load the bridge can ever have to carry would be a double train of locomotives, which would weigh on the three centre spans about 1,060 tons, and its own weight 740, total 1,800 tons; the weight, therefore, which the bridge is calculated to bear before breaking is 7,200 tons. The engineer-in-chief is Sir J. Macneill, the first to bring forward lattice bridges of wrought iron, and has constructed several on Irish railways of moderate spans. The preliminary investigations, and the working out of the detail of this design, were intrusted to Mr. J. Barton, acting engineer to the company; the execution is carried out under his inspection and that of Mr. Alex. Schaw, resident engineer, who lives at the works. The bridge will cost about £70,000, probably the

cheapest in the kingdom, considering spans, size, and materials. By this link the northern communication of Ireland is immensely facilitated, and Belfast placed within four hours of Dublin.

BRANCH TO NAVAN AND KELLS.—To view this district properly, it will be well to proceed by the branch to Navan, in about forty minutes. There is only a single line ; but it is intended to complete the double rail, and the extension of the line is progressing to Kells, whither we cannot accompany the tourist ; but we may assure him that there awaits him an antiquarian treat second only to that which he has already experienced at Mellifont. Navan—one of the earliest settlements by the English in Meath, or indeed within the Pale, situate at the confluence of the Boyne and Blackwater—is not very prepossessing, the streets being narrow and ill paved ; but a considerable trade in country produce is carried on, and there are also several mills and flax, wool, and paper factories. The produce of the district, and also the imports of necessary articles, are conveyed to Navan from Drogheda by the Boyne navigation. The antiquities comprise the ruins of Athlumney Church and Castle, and the Round Tower of Donaghmore, likewise some interesting ecclesiastical remains in the neighbourhood, together with the Bridge and ancient Church of Clady. Taking a car at Navan, and driving which way we may, fresh ruins—that is, others than those we have already inspected—meet us on all sides, each group, if possible, more picturesque than the former. Few, however, are more admired than those of Liscarton Castle, which, with the church and the thatched house, forms what Mr. Wilde truly calls “ a most charming picture ;” perhaps, indeed, the most charming of any in all this region of castellated antiquities—unless it be the inimitably graceful Scurloughstown Castle, within easy reach of the former, and whose interesting history, as well as that of all the others we have enumerated, will be found in the “ Boyne and Blackwater,” so frequently referred to. Four miles from Trim (*vide* Galway route) is what is left of Dangan Castle, which, in conformity with the hitherto popular belief, we have described as the birthplace of Wellington, though he really was born, April 29, 1769, in No. 24, in Merrion-street, Dublin, at present occupied by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, at the time the town residence of his father, the Earl of Mornington. That his infancy was spent at the County Meath family-seat is indisputable....According to the Rev. Cæsar Otway, this was the very land to have produced such a hero as the immortal Field-Marshal. “ No wonder the kings of Meath were so often monarchs of Ireland. No wonder the hills of Tara, of Usneach, of Skreen, were so famous. Here was the great fair of Tailteen, where all the Irish lads and lasses met to get married, and where, as now at Ballinasloe, was a splendid show of fine cattle. In those primitive days, along the sides of the hill of Tailteen were ranged pretty girls and brave boys ; and then, after the young people had tor a sufficient time cast sheep’s eyes at one another, and the parents had made proper bargains and arranged family settlements, matches were made ; then games and sports and feats of activity began, similar, and not perhaps inferior to the Isthmean, or Olympic games of Greece. Human nature is the same in all times and places ; the young must marry and be given in marriage.”

Returning to Navan by car, we obtain various glimpses of the Boyne, winding through a richly-wooded country, with the rising grounds here and there studded with handsome residences of the Meath gentry. Taking the return trains from Navan, we reach Drogheda in time for dinner, and start northward as convenient.

DROGHEDA TO DUNDALK.—The Belfast Junction, fifty-five miles in length, from Drogheda to Belfast, was constructed by Sir J. Macneill, who resides near Dundalk. The Great Boyne Viaduct connects this with the Drogheda and Dublin railway, and thus admits of direct transit to Ballymena, and thence at once to the Causeway. The Belfast Junction train, on leaving Drogheda, will scarcely have come to its full speed when we find ourselves in Louth, the smallest county in Ireland, fertile, scenery agreeable, and abounding in many remnants of antiquity as the centre of the privileged region known as the Pale. Throughout, it contains old

castles, forts, raths, and other memorials of by-gone greatness, which bring vividly before us the stirring events recorded in mediæval Irish history ; but of these the English or foreign reader will now have had a superabundance ; so proceed we on our journey without further inquiry. Eight miles north of Drogheda is Dunleer, a place of little importance, belonging principally to Mr. R. Montesquieu Bellew, descended from one of the first Anglo-Norman settlers in Ireland. Next comes Castle Bellingham, famous for ale, and one of the model villages of Ireland. The magnificent demesne of Mr. A. E. Bellingham contains groups of yew trees, the equals of which are scarcely to be found in Ireland, save perhaps in Hollybrook and Kilruddery, County Wicklow, as already described. We next approach

DUNDALK, the county town of Louth, commanding a considerable export trade. Several large steamers ply to Liverpool ; and there are two breweries, a distillery, and a pin manufactory, besides a flax-spinning factory, which gives employment to a number of children. The scenery around is peculiarly beautiful, though Dundalk is built upon low marshy ground, bounded north by the estuary of Castletown River, and flanked on the west by the demesne of Earl Roden, the excellent lord of the manor, who has a fancifully-constructed cottage in the town. Dundalk, anciently Dundelgan, in the poems of Ossian, and even later, claims high antiquity. Passing over the wars of the Anglo-Normans, we find that in the reign of Edward the Second it was a royal city. Edward Bruce stormed Dundalk, which he afterwards made his chosen residence ; and here he was solemnly crowned King of Ireland, and maintained for two years the pageantry of a court, until, in 1318, on the hill of Foighard, he lost crown and life. It successfully resisted sieges from the Irish, under the O'Neills. In 1649, Monk (Lord Albemarle) held it for the king, but insubordination in the garrison forced its surrender to Lord Inchiquin. In 1689 it was garrisoned for James II., but abandoned on the approach of Schomberg. The family of Hamilton were created Barons of Claneboy and Viscounts Limerick in 1719, and Earls of Clanbrassil in 1756 ; and Robert, first Earl of Roden, married the sister and heiress of the last Earl of Clanbrassil, and so became the proprietor of Dundalk. His beautiful seat of Tollymore Park, in the neighbourhood, is one of the most celebrated in Ireland, and rendered readily accessible to the public, in conformity with his lordship's unvarying courtesy and kindness in all the relations of private life. The town is prospering, as the commercial spirit of its people so well entitles it to do ; Mr. Thackeray, for instance, devoting a far larger portion of his book to its position and prospects than to any other section of Ireland he visited.

DUNDALK TO NEWRY.—Leaving Dundalk, the whole way to Newry is extremely pleasant, and Newry itself is a worthy terminus to such an introduction, it being one of the most agreeable towns in any part of Ireland, look at it in what light we may. Newry is far too important a place to be dismissed in a page or two, which is, unfortunately, all our space affords. We would, therefore, recommend the tourist who may make the place his head-quarters for an excursion through the beautiful Mourne district, of which it is the capital, to put himself in the hands of Mr. Greer, bookseller, in the Market-place, and for a very trifling outlay he will be provided with information, addressed to mind and eye, that will leave nothing to be desired. It is, however, from its proximity to Rosstrevor, that Newry is chiefly resorted to. Rosstrevor is reached within a couple of miles (as far as Warrenpoint) by the short rail from Newry, the line being owned, and also the steamers in connexion with it, plying to Liverpool, by Mr. W. Dargan, who, as the contractor for that truly noble work, the Newry Navigation, takes a peculiar interest in this locality. As an evidence of such interest, it may be remarked that, for the first time in his life, notwithstanding his deserved preeminence in the railway world, he has consented to become a director of a company—one for the formation of a line between Newry and Armagh, and which will complete the obligations he has imposed on this important locality. Mr. Dargan has been longer prominently connected with the neighbourhood of Newry, and has perhaps a larger amount of his private fortune embarked in the immediate district, than in any other part of Ireland.

ROSTREVOR contains about 200 well-built houses, cottages, and villas ; bounded on one side by the thickly-wooded Sliev Ban and minor mountains, on the other by cultivated slopes and rich meadow holms, covered with plantations, and studded with elegant villas. There is no trade and no bustle here. It has, altogether, an aristocratic and exclusive appearance, and is a spot of surpassing attraction. Near the centre of the town stood the massive castle of Rory M'Gennis, kinsman of one of the Lords of Iveigh, who formerly owned this region, and to whom Rosstrevor owes its origin. Scarcely a vestige remains, where stood, within the memory of the present generation, the ruined walls that once re-echoed to the wassailry of the bold M'Gennis and his clan. Yet it has not passed away without a lament from the harp of one so worthy to sing its dirge—the “ Wizard of the North :” —

Ah, Clandeboy ! thy friendly floor
Sliov Donard's oak shall light no more,
Nor Owen's harp, beside the blaze,
Tell maiden's love, or hero's praise !
The mantling brambles hide thy hearth,
Centre of hospitable mirth !

All undistinguished in the glade
Thy sire's glad home is prostrate laid ;
Their vassals wander wide and far,
Serve foreign lords in distant war,
And now the stranger's sons enjoy
The lovely woods of Clandeboy !

The sail from Warrenpoint is inexpressibly charming, combining, in infinite perfection, every clement of beauty, if not of actual sublimity, in marine and pastoral scenery. But it is the bay—the inimitable Bay of Carlingford—which is the great lion of the scene, for all other beauties sink into insignificance beside the bright blue of these deep transparent waters. Right across it, directly opposite to Warrenpoint, is the beautiful little Church of Omeath, with a School-house nestling beside it.

CARLINGFORD—abounding in some splendid memorials of an important past, and, on that score, most deserving of inspection, but quite out of our tourist's ticket track just now—belongs to the Marquis of Anglesey, and is celebrated for its oysters, superior to every other teustaccous or crustaccous dweller in the deep. The fish is indescribably delicious—piquant and luscious—at once an incentive and a sedative to the stomach, simultaneously awakening and appeasing hunger, and almost realising the aspiration of the epicure in Pelham, when he sighed for “ perpetual appetite—a digestive houri that should renew her virginity every time she was embraced.” If any one doubt this, all we say is—let him try.

The sea scenery around the whole Mourne coast, up to Belfast Lough, has long been famous ; and the inland beauties of the district, commencing at Newry, and extending as far and all about Lough Neagh, is of corresponding attractiveness. Newry, Warrenpoint, and the various towns, of which there are probably not less than fifty all round the coast and in the inland of the fine county of Down (in which we are when we have crossed the Newry Water), is the subject of an useful illustrated volume, entitled, “ Carlingford Bay, and the Watering Places in its Vicinity,” to be had at Greer's, in Newry. Among the places therein noticed are Newcastle, Banbridge, Tandragee, Rathfriland, Castlewellan, Dundrum, Seaforde, Ballynahinch, Downpatrick, Ardglass, Strangford, Portaferry, Comber, Newton Ardes, Bangor, Hollywood, Antrim, Shane's Castle, Randalstown, Dungannon, Charlemount, Armagh, and Markethill. All these and many more (north) might be fairly included in our present tour, as entitled to more or less consideration ; but as it is impossible we could bestow the smallest

paragraph upon each, and no adequate particulars on even the more prominent, we must beg the reader to hurry forward to Belfast, first taking another view of the next largest town to it, and one which, when the bar at the mouth of Carlingford Bay shall be removed, as it long ago ought to have been, will fully keep pace in prosperity with the great Northern industrial capital of Ireland.

BELFAST. —Our arrangements not permitting of municipal details, we can attempt no description of so large and important a town as Belfast, on the Lough of the same name, and at the mouth of the Lagan. Every reader is aware that, owing to its being the seat of the linen manufacture—but chiefly because of the self-reliant, public-spirited energy of its inhabitants, who overcame every disadvantage of an imperfect maritime position—it has become the most prosperous of all the towns in Ireland, and in bustle, activity, and methodical despatch of business, may challenge comparison with any of equal population in Great Britain. Its mills and factories, its crowded docks and wharves, impart an aspect combining the commercial and mercantile features both of Liverpool and Manchester ; while there is an air of cleanliness, health, and breadth, that give decided advantage over the great Lancashire foci of trading animation. Its streets are, for the most part, well-built, and, as the modern Irish Athens, it necessarily has numerous edifices, worthy of its repute, devoted to educational and intellectual purposes, while its religious structures are many and fine. At almost any hotel the tourist will obtain, either gratuitously, or for a few pence, little books containing copious particulars of its rise, progress, population, and commercial and other statistics ; and some of these publications embrace the leading peculiarities of the whole county of Antrim, from the shores of Lough Neagh to the extremity of the coast for many miles around, of course including the Causeway. With these facilities, it would be an unjustifiable waste of space here to give details which, at best, would be meagre and imperfect ; and accordingly we commit the reader to the economic information just indicated, there being much more elaborate publications for those who can afford money to purchase or time to peruse them. We may add, however, that, generally speaking, the inhabitants being proud of their flourishing town, and all that pertains to it, and not less so of the beautiful scenery in its vicinage, are ever willing to put the visitor in possession of all local experience that may be of gratification to him. This is the case, too, with the manufacturers in the neighbourhood, and, indeed, of all engaged in flax preparation in the remarkable district of which Belfast is the head-quarters. The stranger, if not already familiar with it, as he ought from its publicity in industrial circles, will soon find that, like Atkinson's in poplins and tabinets, in Dublin, the leviathan name in the Belfast linen trade is Mulholland's, which family carries on the manufacture in all its gradations, except the weaving. An inspection of their establishments is the great object of the majority of visitors to Belfast, and at the inns the means of accomplishing it may be ascertained.

The tourist's illustrated hand-book for Ireland (1854)

Publisher : London : D. Bryce

Language : English

Digitizing sponsor : Internet Archive

Book contributor : University of California Libraries

Collection : cdl ; americana

Notes : narrow margins

Source : Internet Archive

<https://archive.org/details/touristsillustra00lond>

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November 22 2013