

Taking an Airing 1806

The stranger in Ireland

Sir John Carr

1806

AFTER quitting the Castle, as the day proved very fine, I mounted a jingle, and took an airing on the circular road which surrounds the city, and has been made on the scite of the old Danish wall, formerly erected for the protection of the capital : the view almost every where on this superb road is delightful, and well worthy of a stranger's early attention. The bridges which cross the river Liffey at Dublin, of which there are seven, are very handsome ; as they very soon attracted my notice, it may be as well to describe them all here. The most beautiful is Sarah's bridge, so called from Sarah, countess of Westmoreland, who on the 22d June, 1795, laid its foundation-stone ; it stands near the Phoenix-park, at the western end of the city, has one arch, extends three hundred and sixty feet, and is thirty-eight feet broad : the arch is an ellipsis, whose span measures one hundred and four feet, which is twelve feet wider than the Rialto at Venice : the key-stone is twenty-two feet above high-water mark ; and its breadth on the top within the parapets or plinths thirty-eight feet, including two flagged footways of six feet on each side. Near this bridge stood Island-bridge, built by queen Elizabeth, in 1557 ; and hence Sarah-bridge is called by some of the inhabitants Island-bridge. Barrack-bridge, formerly called Bloody-bridge, was built in 1671, being originally constructed of wood ; four persons lost their lives in endeavouring to pull it down ; it is not worthy of farther notice. Queen's-bridge stands upon the scite of Arran bridge, and was finished in 1768. It has three arches, is one hundred and forty feet in length, with flagged foot-passages, stone balustrades, and ornamental decorations, in a style of considerable taste ; the whole was executed under the inspection of general Vallancey. The old bridge is a crazy, dirty, wretched pile of antiquity, and was rebuilt in 1428 ; the sooner it shares the fate of its former hoary brother, called Ormond-bridge, which fell before the floods of December 1803, the better.

Fire, floods, and tempests, although not the most welcome, are in general the most powerful patrons of architectural improvements. Essex-bridge is very beautiful; it was commenced in 1753, under the direction of Mr. George Sempie : it is Westminster-bridge in miniature, which, upon a reduced scale, it resembles in every stone. The spans of the middle arches are to each other as three to five ; their length as one to four. The breadth of Westminster-bridge, from the extremities of the parapets or plinths under the balustrade, is forty-four feet ; at Essex-bridge it is fifty-one feet. Westminster-bridge was eleven years nine months and twenty-one days in building.; Essex-bridge was one year five months and twenty-one days. The former cost two hundred and eighteen thousand eight hundred pounds sterling, the latter twenty thousand six hundred and sixty-one pounds sterling. The breadth of Essex-bridge is well proportioned to its height, and counterpoised by a strong foundation built in coffer dams.

Carlisle-bridge stands in a noble situation, and concentrates in one view the finest parts of Dublin : it has three arches, the centre is forty-eight feet wide : the length of the whole is one hundred and fifty feet, and its breadth between the balustrades sixty feet, which is wider by ten feet than Westminster-bridge. The approach to it on either side is gradual. The arches are executed with bright mountain granite, and the cornice balustrade at top, with part of the piers, are composed of Portland stone, and form a contrast by their different tints. The structure is a noble one, and the whole was designed and executed by Mr. Gandon, to whose taste and genius the city is much indebted. The highly-merited celebrity of this gentleman

induces me with great deference to observe, that I think this bridge would be improved by the removal of the four obelisks, which are placed at each end of the sides as ornaments. From this bridge the passenger has a fine view of the shipping and custom-house, and from its south, the portico of the house of lords and the college present a magnificent appearance, and resemble the superb architectural view at the entrance of the Linden-walk in the beautiful city of Berlin, looking towards the opera-house.

The river is seldom enlivened by the appearance of boats : there is a ferry-boat which plies near the ruins of Ormond-bridge. It is in contemplation, I am informed, to embank the sides of the river, through the city, with granite ; should this be accomplished, it will be a beautiful improvement, and may perhaps lead to the river being frequented by pleasure-boats.

The largest square in Dublin is St. Stephen's-green, which is nearly an English mile in circumference. It is a fine meadow, walled and planted with a double row of trees, but is disfigured by a dirty ditch formed on every side, the receptacle of dead cats and dogs. In the centre is an equestrian statue of George the second, by Van Nort. The houses on each side are most of them very noble buildings ; their want of uniformity, owing to the vast space of the area, is not objectionable. If this square were handsomely railed round and planted, and the ditch filled up, it would be one of the most magnificent in Europe.

The Lying-in Hospital is situated in Britain-street, but the rotunda and contiguous apartments form a termination to part of Sackville-street, and are seen from Carlisle-bridge. The front of the hospital is built of the mountain-stone ; over the entrance in the centre is the chapel ; the remainder of the building is appropriated to wards for women, with apartments for the nurses, physicians, &c, &c. ; the centre of the hospital is finished with a steeple, and on each side of this building are colonnades of the Doric order ; that towards the east communicates with the entrance to the rotunda, which is seventy-two feet diameter : the inside is decorated by a number of fluted Corinthian pilasters : at one side a grand orchestra, between the pilasters are ornamented windows, and beneath are recesses between the pedestals of the pilasters. On the east side of the rotunda, and communicating with it, has lately been erected a very elegant building, ornamented with a rusticated basement : over the entrance in the centre are four columns of the Doric order, with its entablature and a pediment. There are several noble apartments, intended for card and supper rooms, &c, &c. The profits arising from the social meetings, which are held there as well as in the rotunda, are applied in support of this valuable institution. To make pleasure contribute to the consolation of the wretched, I found by no means unusual. The gardens behind the hospital have been lately surrounded with an iron railing, set on a low mountain-stone wall, connecting pavilions at the north-east and north-west angles, with columns of the Doric order, which, with the trees behind, produce a very pleasing effect.

The Blue-coat Hospital forms a termination to Blackhall-street ; the first stone of this building was laid by the earl of Harcourt, lord lieutenant of Ireland, on the 16th of June, 1773 ; the centre contains apartments for the principal officers and their servants, a committee room, record room, and a handsome board-room for the governors to meet in. The front is enriched in the centre by four Ionic columns, supporting a pediment ; over this the steeple is intended to rise one hundred and thirty feet from the ground, enriched by Corinthian and composite pilasters. On one side of this building stands the chapel, and on the other the school, forming the two wings of the building ; the whole front extends three hundred and sixty feet. Both the wings are united to the centre building by handsome circular walls ? ornamented with a balustrade and niches : this building is from the design of Mr. Ivory.

The linen and yarn-halls form a building of considerable extent, composed of various squares, built at different periods, some of rough masonry and others of white mountain-stone, in a plain substantial style of architecture. The rapid increase of the linen manufacture, and the sales at this hall, have rendered the late considerable additions necessary, which are, with the other parts, well constructed for the purposes of their application.

At the west end of the town, and situated in a fine and conspicuous situation, stands the Royal Hospital of Kilmainham, a large commodious building, founded in 1695, for the reception of superannuated veterans, and those who have been, by sickness or by chance of war, rendered incapable of serving their country in a military capacity. On the opposite side of the river are the barracks, the largest building of the kind in the British dominions, and probably in Europe. They are capable of containing three thousand foot, and five hundred horse : the old, or principal part, is of rough stone, ornamented with cornices, and window-cases of cut stone. Within a few years, to the east, a new square of considerable extent, of white mountain-stone, has been added to the buildings ; its character is that of extreme plainness, but perfectly suitable and convenient. Near the barracks is situated the Military Hospital, on a fine healthy and commanding situation in the Phœnix-park : the front is built of the mountain-stone, and consists of a centre, and two wings with pediments, finished with a cornice and a small cupola ; the whole forming a pleasing and picturesque appearance : this design, with some little alteration, was made by Mr. Gandon.

The other public buildings are the Hibernian and Marine Schools, the Foundling, Stephen's, Swift's, Simpson's, and the Meath Hospitals, but none of these possess any superior architectural beauties.

The most distinguished private houses are those of the duke of Leinster and the lords Charlemont, Tyrone, and Powerscourt ; the two first of those houses are highly becoming the residence of a nobleman.

I did not observe that any of the churches possessed any particular beauty worth describing : that of St. Thomas's possesses the best front, which is said to be a copy of Palladio's celebrated church at Venice. St. George's, when finished, will be handsome.

As the weather was exceedingly beautiful, I resolved upon making an excursion into the county of Wicklow, and to leave the city for future observation and description. In this ramble I had the happiness of being accompanied by an enlightened and amiable friend, who augmented the pleasure of every scene. The summer still extended its sway beyond the ordinary period of its reign ; and although the season of autumn was arrived, not a leaf denoted decay. Having made an appointment to meet a gentleman, who undertook to be our guide to the most striking of the many scenes which adorn that favoured county, at an early hour, at Newry-bridge, we set off before the dawn of morning peeped upon us. Our driver, post-chaise, and horses, were not so neat as a posting equipage in England ; but, however, they were all well enough.

The Irish in this respect are much improved, I am told, although they are unquestionably behind us ; yet, after England, they are superior to any other country that I have seen in the comforts of conveyance. In one of the remote counties there was only one post-chaise for some years ; and as precious things, like good persons, are generally the objects of misfortune, an unlucky contusion disabled the door of this rare vehicle : the carpenter was called in to repair it, but it was beyond his art. The bricklayer was next applied to, and proud of the opportunity of displaying his skill, he very neatly bricked and plastered it up, and the chaise, with some little obliquity, performed its duty very well for some time after. In the very focus

of taste, in Paris, it was the fashion last year to paint the carriages to resemble stone and marble. Who would blush in rouge, if they could procure the rosy tint of nature ? Who would ride in a marble-coloured carriage, when they could move in one of real substantial brick ? I have seen, in our print-shops, a delineation of Irish posting. A knight of St. Patrick is represented in the act of setting off in a post-chaise with a thatched roof, upon which a cock is scratching for grain ; the knight's feet having pierced through the front and bottom of the carriage. He appeals to be impatient at the delay of the horses, and the following words are put into the mouth of a great brawny driver : “ Forward immediately, your honour ; but, sure, a'nt I waiting for the girl with the poker, just to give this mare a burn, your honour : 'tis just to make her start, your honour.” All this is very humorous, but happens to be very false.

The laws of posting in Ireland require that one shilling shall be paid if one or two persons engage a chaise ; but if three, then eighteen-pence per Irish mile. Eleven Irish miles are equal to fourteen English. A *lucky* mile means a long one ; for the Irish miles vary not a little : why so called I could not learn. “ Now, Pat ! mind you drive the gentleman *beautiful*” were the farewell words of the waiter at our hotel, upon which Pat drove us furiously over the stones, whilst the iron steps within, but not fastened, kept dancing all the way to a clatter which rendered our tongues useless, and our ears burthensome, until we had passed the barrier, which was raised, with many others, at the entrance of the city, during the rebellion. Soon after which we saw

“ The grey-ey'd Morn smile on the frowning Night,
Checkering the eastern clouds with streaks of light :”

when we were enabled to discern a beautiful country, and one of the finest broad and level roads I ever travelled upon. Our first stage was to Bray. Our route lay through line plantations, embellished with elegant houses, and fields and meadows, in which every symptom of good husbandry appeared.

We passed through Dundrum, a very pretty village about three miles and a half from Dublin. Near the four-mile stone is Moreen, a very picturesque situation : it is remarkable for a desperate battle which was fought, some centuries since, by two neighbouring families, who, having satiated their revenge, very piously erected a church in the valley where the battle was fought ; but whether in expiation of their infuriated rage, or to perpetuate the history of it, ancient story does not tell. Not far from Moreen, is the castle and church of Kilgobbin. The frequent recurrence of names of places beginning with *kill* is not a little alarming to a stranger in Ireland, more especially if he be under the influence of those stupid prejudices which have been excited against that country. I have just enumerated, in my memory, no less than forty-nine of those kill places. The name produced the following ridiculous mistake : when some of our militia regiments were in Ireland during the rebellion, a soldier, a native of Devonshire, who was stationed at an outpost, stopped a countryman, and demanded who he was, whence he came from, and whether he was going. The fellow replied : “ And my name, my dear honey, is Tullyhog ; and, d'ye see, I am just been to *Killmanny*, and am going to *Killmore*.” Upon which the sentinel immediately seized him, expecting to receive a high reward for having apprehended a most sanguinary rebel, by confession, just come from murder, and going to a fresh banquet of blood.

The first grand and extraordinary object which we met with was a chasm which some vast convulsion of nature seemed to have formed, by having forced its way through a mighty mountain, and divided it into elevated ridges of detached grey rock and massy stones, which, projecting in a variety of forms, looked ready to roll down, with ruin and havock in their train, into the valley below, through which the road turned. This wonderful aperture is called

the Scalp, of which I made a sketch, more for its extraordinary appearance than picturesque beauty. Between its craggy slopes, a contrasted level country, well cultivated, gradually swelling at a distance, and closed by the mountains called the Sugar-loaves, pushing their dusky tops into the skies, presented an interesting and very singular view.

As we descended to the beautiful village of Inniskerry, on one side the eye reposed upon rich meadows ; on the other, a slope of trees presented a compact shade. Before us, as the road, enlivened by passing peasants, turned over a picturesque bridge, a neat farmhouse presented itself; and a village-school, standing in the bottom of the valley, just peeped with its upper windows above the level : whilst a hill, lightly clothed with young wood, extended a rich screen behind. Expressions of delight burst at the same moment from both of us : it was Auburn, in all its pristine loveliness.

As we wished to walk through the Dargle, we alighted from our chaise near a beautiful cottage upon the domains of lord viscount Powerscourt, and ordered our driver to go to the principal entrance of the Dargle, about two miles distant. We had scarcely measured one hundred feet from the cottage, before, as we stood upon an eminence, a new world of rural beauty opened upon us, of rich vallies and mountains covered with wood, melting into the air : whilst below a serpentine river glistened in the sun, until it lost itself in the Dargle, whither we followed its course. Impossible as it is to convey, by verbal painting, a just idea of this exquisite scene, I approach an attempt to describe it with considerable apprehension. The Dargle is a deep glen, or narrow valley, of about a mile in length ; at the entrance where we approached it, opposite to us a beautiful little pleasure-cottage peeped over the ridge of one of the hills which form the green-breasted sides of this glen ; it was just discernible in a little plantation which crowned the precipice upon which it stood : this elegant and romantic little summer retreat was raised after the tasteful design of Mrs. Grattan, the lady of the illustrious member of that name, to whom it belongs. As we descended by the paths which have been cut through the woods, new beauties opened upon us. The hill, on the sides of which we stood, and its opposite neighbour, were covered with trees, principally young oak, projecting with luxuriant foliage from masses of rock half green with moss, which reminded us of Milton's description of the

“ *Verdurous wall* of Paradise upraised.”

Here, concealed by over-arching leaves, the river, like fretful man in his progress through this unequal world, was scarcely heard to ripple ; there it flashed before the eye again, as if in anger at its concealment, rolled impetuously over its rocky bed, and roared down a craggy declivity ; a little further, having recovered its calmness, it seemed to settle for a while, resembling, in sullen silence and placidity, a dark mirror ; then, never destined to long tranquillity, it proceeded, and was again lost in arches of foliage, under which it murmured, and died upon the ear.

It was in this spot, under the green roofs of native oaks starting from their rocky beds, sequestered from the theatre of that world upon which he afterwards sustained so distinguished a character, that Grattan, when a very young man, addressed the tumultuous waters as his auditory, and schooled himself, like Demosthenes, in that eloquence which was destined to elevate the glory of Ireland with his own.

We lingered for some time in a rustic temple, whose back and seats were formed of intertwined branches, softened by moss, and whose arches opened upon one of the most favoured spots of the Dargle : it seemed to be suspended, like an æronautic car, from some vast impending oaks, which spread far over it an umbrella of leaves. In this spot the

imagination wandered through all the witcheries of fable, and invoked the naiad and the wood nymph ; and upon my memory stole the following exquisite, but irregular, lines of a brilliant fancy, which were written and presented to me by one of the friends of my boyhood, Charles Leftley, Esq., a youth of high and richly cultivated genius, who died in the bloom of life.

Zephyr, whither art thou straying ?
Tell me where :
With prankish girls in gardens playing.
False as fair.

A butterfly's light back bestriding,
Queen-bees to honeysuckles guiding,
Or in a swinging hair-bell riding,
Free from care.

Before Aurora's car you amble
High in air ;
At noon, when Neptune's sea-nymphs gambol.
Braid their hair.

When on the tumbling billows rolling,
Or on the smooth sands idly strolling,
Or in cool grottoes they lye lolling,
You sport there.

To chase the moon-beams up the mountains
You prepare ;
Or dance with elves on brinks of fountains,
Mirth to share .

Now seen with love-lorn lillies weeping,
Now with a blushing rose-bud sleeping ;
Whilst fays from forth their chambers peeping.
Cry, oh rare !

We ascended the Lover's-leap, a vast high grey rock, whose base is concealed by sloping trees : it rises higher than any other object, and commands a very extensive view of this verdant scenery, which travellers, who have visited Italy, pronounce to be equal to any spot in that benign climate.

Heavens ! what a contrast to the luxuriant richness of this scenery has Mr. A. Young given us, in his clear and invaluable account of Ireland, when he speaks of that vast, wild, and impenetrable tract of mountain and bog, called the barony of Erris. " It is no easy matter to get in or out of it in winter ; and very few persons ever attempt it from November to Easter, having impassable bogs in the way. There were eight hundred and ninety-six families in the barony in 1765, four hundred of which are inhabitants of the Mullet ; forty-seven protestant, and eight hundred and forty-nine popish. The bishop of Killalia has built a house in the Mullet for a clergyman, who resides there ; the living is between fifty and sixty pounds a year, and forty acres of land, which the bishop has given from the see-lands. This may truly be called a sphere for content and the philosophic virtues to exert themselves in. There is not a post-house, market-town, or justice of peace, in the whole barony, which is also the case

with another barony in this county, Costello. A post-house and a market are excellent things ; but a justice may very well be dispensed with. There are many herds of small cattle, and some sheep kept, which are sold from thence. There is *not a tree in the whole barony of Erris* : a man going out of it to pay his rent, his son with him, a lad of near twenty ; when he came near Killalia, and saw a tree, ‘ *Lord, father ! what is that ?* ’ But bare of wood as it is at present, it was, in the sylvan age of Ireland, completely covered: for in no part of the kingdom is there found more or larger in the bogs.”

The Dargle is part of the ample and beautiful domains of lord viscount Powerscourt, who, with a liberality worthy of his rank and mind, permits every one to visit it, and has erected seats in various parts of it for the accommodation of the public. We quitted this scene with mingled emotions of delight and regret, and entering our chaise at the principal gate, proceeded through a rich and romantic country to the town of Bray.

This town, which is near the sea, has a very neat and respectable appearance : it is about eleven miles from Dublin, and stands on the verge of the Counties of Dublin and Wicklow, which, as well as the town, are divided by a river abounding with excellent trout. This place has two annual fairs, at which black cattle and sheep, and large quantities of frize and flannel, are sold ; and is much resorted to during the seasons for drinking goat’s-whey and sea-bathing. It has a church, a Roman catholic chapel, good barracks, several lodging-houses, and, in its neighbourhood, are several elegant country seats. The post-chaises which belong to the principal inn here are the best in Ireland, and are inscribed, in great letters, with the word “ *Quinbray,*” which I thought was the name of the owner ; but, upon inquiry, I found that he was only entitled to the first half, and that the other half of the word belonged to the town.

Here we took a fresh chaise, and proceeded to Newry-bridge, where we found an old, but very comfortable inn. Our fish, meat, wine, beds, and waiters, all were good. This spot we made our head quarters, and strongly recommend them to every future Wicklow wanderer.

The first place we visited was Rosanna, the seat of Mrs. Tighe : the house appears to be a comfortable brick mansion ; the grounds, abounding with the most beautiful arbutuses, holly, and ash-trees, are perfectly Arcadian. Genius may advance considerable claims to share the celebrity of the spot with Nature : it was the residence whilst I was there, of a most amiable and elegant-minded lady, formed to embellish her sex with its purest attributes, and to enlighten society by the charms of a cultivated mind and rich imagination. Alas ! in the exercise of these precious endowments, she is destined to exhibit, to a wide circle of admiring, affectionate, and anxious friends, with what serenity the gentle spirit of innocence, supported by piety, can endure the pangs of sickness, and how the energies of genius can brighten in the gloom of affliction. An invincible timidity, and the dread of exciting the animadversions of those who have so much influence upon the public opinion through the channels of criticism, have at present confined to a small circle of friends, a printed poem which, although my perusal of it was limited, would, I can with confidence say, entitle the fair authoress to the admiration, without an appeal to the gallantry, of the candid reviewer, and would render the name of *Psyche* more memorable, and inscribe the name of Tighe high upon the roll of feminine celebrity. In the construction of this poem, Mrs. H. Tighe has displayed great fancy, and much richness and variety of language. If these few remarks should have any influence to induce the fair writer to a more diffuse publication of a work so interesting, I shall at least make some atonement for the errors of that by which it is recommended.

From Rosanna we proceeded to Glenmore-castle, through the most rich and romantic country. The castle, the seat of Francis Synge, Esq., has not yet received the hoary tints of

time ; some of its battlements were constructing at the time of my visit ; but when it is completed, and well coloured by the elements, it will be a fine object. At a little distance it seems to impend over a vast abrupt precipice, from which it commands a superb view of the country, and the entrance of the celebrated Devil's-glen, into which we descended through a well-planted shrubbery.

The glen is a valley, the bottom and side of which are composed of rocks : one side was till lately covered with trees, principally oak ; the other was always much denuded, which must have afforded a fine contrast. At the further end, the river Vartrey, after violent rains, falls with astonishing fury from a height of one hundred feet, and runs through the glen amongst the rocks that compose its bottom. During the rebellion, these unfrequented depths frequently afforded shelter and concealment to its routed followers. Groups of such figures must have augmented the gloomy grandeur of the scene, and rendered it a subject worthy of the pencil of a Salvator.

It was here, and in the neighbouring mountains, that Dwyer, a rebel chieftain, as celebrated as three-fingered Jack, contrived to elude the hot and persevering pursuit of justice for a period almost unexampled. Although the virtue of singular incorruptibility was displayed in a bad cause, yet it loses nothing of its intrinsic value on that account. The remuneration offered by the government for the discovery of this daring chief, who so long hovered near the capital after his followers had been routed and reduced, was very great, and presented a temptation to betray, which in another country would scarcely have been resisted ; but wherever this arch ruffian avowed himself, and claimed the protection of hospitality, his person was held sacred ; and, in the midst of rags and penury, a bribe, which would have secured independence to the betrayer, was rejected with scorn.

In Waller's time their secrecy and fidelity in all their engagements were remarkable ; that poet, when the *Sophy* appeared, said of the author, " That he broke out like the Irish rebellion, three-score thousand strong, when nobody in the least expected it." In no country in the world is treachery held more in detestation than in Ireland ; because in no region can be found a higher spirit of frankness and generosity. Upon the door of every cabin might be justly inscribed,

" Mistake me not so much,
To think my poverty is treacherous."

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" How do your countrymen contrive to have so many fine children?" " *By Jasus it is the potatoe, sir,*" said he.

Three pounds of good mealy potatoes are more than equivalent to one pound of bread. It is worthy of remark to those who live well, without reflecting upon the condition of others to whom Providence has been less bountiful, that one individual who subsists upon meat and bread, consumes what would maintain five persons who live on bread alone, and twelve who subsist on potatoes ; and if such individual keeps a horse, he maintains an animal for his pleasures, for whose subsistence more land is necessary than for that of his master.

In China the men are said to have nearly eaten out the horses, and hence it is usual for travellers to be carried along the high roads to the greatest distances by men. The mode of planting potatoes is as follows : the potatoe is cut into several pieces, each of which has an eye : these are spread on ridges of about four or five feet wide, which are covered with

mould, dug from furrows on each side, of about half the breadth of the ridge. When they dig out the potatoes in autumn, they sow the ridge, immediately before digging, with bere, and shelter the crop in a pit, piled up so as to form a sloping roof. Potatoes are said to be very propitious to fecundity ; and I have been told that some investigators of political economy, enamoured with the fructifying qualities of the precious vegetable, have clothed it with political consequence ; and in Ireland have regarded it like Cadmus's teeth, as the prime source of population ; so that hereafter, the given number of potatoes necessary to the due proportion of vital fluid being found, it will only be necessary to have due returns of the potatoe crops, in order to ascertain the average number of little girls and boys, which have for the last year increased the circle of society. It has been considered that the cultivation of rice was the most favourable to population, not only on account of its nutrition, but because it employed a great number of men, and scarcely any part of the work could be done by horses ; but it has been since admitted, that more persons can subsist upon potatoes. I am ready to acknowledge the nutritious quality of the potatoe, and that it may be sufficient for the purposes of mere existence with an Irish rustic. who, having little to do, does little : but an enlightened and experienced medical friend of mine assured me, that it could not supply the frame with its necessary support under the pressure of violent exercise. A workman in an iron-foundry would not be able to endure the fatigue of his duty for three hours together, if he had no other food than potatoes.

As the peasants and cabins, in the neighbourhood of Dublin, are more respectable and neat than those in many other parts of Ireland, I shall reserve any further remarks upon either, till they are suggested by the objects I meet with in the course of my tour.

Poor as the cabin is, do not, reader I think that hospitality and politeness are not to be found in it. The power of showing these qualities, to be sure, is very slender ; but if a stranger enters at dinner-time, the master of the family selects the finest potatoe from his bowl, and presents it, as a flattering proof of welcome courtesy.

After a day of high gratification, we returned to Newry-bridge, where we sat down to a couple of delicious fowls, for which, as for poultry of every description, and for its veal, this country is very famous : we had also trout, and excellent wine, particularly port. In England it is a very rare piece of good fortune to get good port-wine at any inn ; and the vilest stuff sold under that name, is to be found at the places of the greatest public resort : on the contrary, in Ireland excellent wine is to be had in the poorest public houses. A friend of mine, travelling in that country, came late at night to a little inn, which was so wretched that it had not a single bed for him or his servant, yet, to his surprise, the ragged host produced him a bottle of very fine claret.

After a refreshing repose in clean beds, we rose to renew our rambles. At our breakfast we had excellent honey and eggs ; the latter the Irish have certainly the merit of having introduced to the English tables. Not many years since, even their neighbours the Welsh were so unaccustomed to the sight, that upon an Irishman ordering some eggs for breakfast, the waiter asked him whether he would have a rasher of bacon with them.

So much do the Irish consider their own eggs to be superior for sweetness and flavour, that some Irishmen will not allow that an English hen can lay a fresh egg.

Under a cloudless sky, we proceeded to Cronroe, about two miles from Newry, the seat of Isaac Ambrose Eccles, Esq., a gentleman of fortune, of considerable classical acquirements, and of the most amiable private character : this gentleman has edited three of Shakespeare's

dramas, upon a *liberal* and extensive plan. The great natural curiosity of Cronroe is a vast rock, which rises perpendicularly from some beautiful woods behind the house, to the top of which we ascended, and enjoyed an exquisite prospect of an extensive, undulating, and highly cultivated country, and the sea. One part of the view was enlivened by the busy movements of a crowded fair.

After a display of hospitality, which in Ireland is no novelty, although always charming, we parted with our enlightened host, and proceeded to our chaise, which waited for us in the fair. Here all was bustle ; shoes, stockings, hats, pigs, sheep, and horses, were exposed for sale to the best advantage.

It is always a source of pleasure to listen to the conversation of the lower Irish ; at these places, wit, drollery, or strength of expression, is sure to be the reward of it. “ I am very bad, Pat,” said one poor fellow, rubbing his head, to another. “ Ah ! then may God keep you so, for fear of being worse,” was the reply.

If Pat falls, his drollery is the first to rise up and laugh : the following instance of it was communicated to me by a very dear friend of mine, who personally knew it to be a fact. An Irishman, an assistant-labourer to a master bricklayer, who was building a house for a gentleman in England, fell through the well-hole from the top of the unfinished dwelling, and alighted very fortunately in a large quantity of mortar that lay at the bottom, which saved his life ; the moment he had recovered himself, the only observation he made was, “ By Jasus, I had like to have hurt myself.”

The approach to Rathdrum, our next stage, was very beautiful : the town has nothing in it worthy of remark, unless it is by way of caution to the traveller, to enable him to obviate a very probable inconvenience as far as he can, by previous arrangements with the inn-keeper at Newry :—there are only two post-chaises in the town.

In order to view completely the beauties of Avondale, formerly the residence of that great patriot, the late right honourable sir John Pamela now inhabited by lady Wicklow, we ordered our chaise to a spot a few yards out of the high road to Arklow, called the Meeting of the Waters, and walked through this exquisite demesne, which is about a mile beyond Rathdrum : it stands on the banks of the river Avoca, or Avonmore, which signifies, “ the great winding stream.” The sloping banks, curving with the river, are clothed with a full rich coppice, occasionally ennobled to the view by scattered oak and ash, of stately growth. The mansion is modern and handsome ; in front is a beautiful lawn, dotted with clumps of trees gently sloping from a hill crowned with fine beech and spruce firs ; there is great variety in the scenery ; the rich verdure of meadows or pasture is frequently contrasted with grey romantic rocks, of a great height, covered with old oak, the roots of many of which, from their beds, project one hundred feet perpendicular over the tops of others ; whilst the gentle current of the river is frequently broken into foam and cataract, by opposing rock and shattered granite, half-covered with moss. Our walk extended near three English miles through the woods, and every step afforded us some fresh gratification.

About midway we were attracted by a rustic arched entrance, which led over a little meadow to a sequestered and highly romantic cottage, which forms the summer residence, as I was informed, of one of the sons of the late sir John Parnell : it stands in a vale nearly embosomed on all sides. The scene was at once sweet and solemn. It was suited to console and refresh the mind of a statesman, in a few hours stolen from the toil and cares of the state. The appearance of Nature was too pensive for a man who had no mental resources to fly to. I have seen nothing to compare with it in character, but in the beautiful islands which abound

in the gulf of Bothnia. In this sequestered spot we heard the murmur of the Avoca, rolling at the base of a stupendous cliff, fringed with oak, holly, and quickset, and warmed by the red tint of a setting sun.

Previous to the union, sir John Parnell filled the office of chancellor of the exchequer, with great dignity to himself, and advantage to his country ; but in consequence of his resistance to that memorable measure, as conscientious opposition is a virtue only with its possessor and those who think with him in politics, he was removed from that dignified station, without losing any portion of his popularity. Although I have Dr. Arbuthnot's " God's revenge against punning," before my eyes, I cannot help relating a little compliment which flowed from one who has said many good things, but never an unkind one. When the union was effected, sir John Parnell was frequently the subject of a *toast* after dinner ; and being one day in company with Joseph Atkinson, Esq., the present treasurer of the ordnance of Ireland, in the course of conversation he sportively observed to the party who were present, "*that by the union he had lost his bread and butter ;*" to which Mr. Atkinson good-humouredly replied, " Ah ! my dear sir John, never mind it, " for you know it is amply made up to you in *toast*."

When we passed the gate that led out of Avonmore, a new scene of enchantment presented itself at " the Meeting of the Waters," and rivetted us in silent admiration. It was a scene of valleys, whose lofty sides were covered with the most luxuriant foliage, presenting a compact slope of leaves through which neither branch nor trunk of tree could be seen. Upon the top of one of these umbrageous mountains, a banqueting room or tower arose, the casement of which was brightened by the sun ; whilst below, dimly seen through over-arching beech-trees, a confluence of streams mingled with the river under the blue mist of approaching evening.

Our road lay through the same exquisite scenery, the effect of which was not injured by the abrupt appearance of two mountains of copper mine, which lie nearly opposite to each other ; the savage sterility of these mountains, varied by the green, red, and yellow stains of their vitriolic streams, which scantily dripped down their sides, presented a striking contrast to the soft verdure and luxuriant foliage which marked the termination of their desolate features.

By the time we reached Arklow, the night had closed in upon us. Our inn was not the most comfortable in the world, but tolerable ; one side of the lower part of it was occupied by a shop, for the sale of groceries, wine, whiskey, &c. This union of the characters of shop and inn-keeper, I found very frequent in Ireland. Here we got excellent wine. The waiter assured us that the beds, for we dined in a double-bedded room, were well aired, and added, " for one gentleman slept in both of them last night." I thought I had caught a bull here for the first time ; but upon a moment's reflection I found that the gentleman, after sleeping in one bed, might have been disposed to try the other, and so it proved.

A short distance from the town we passed by the spot where a very bloody and decisive battle was fought on the 9th of June, 1798, against the rebels, who were seven-and-twenty thousand strong, and who were routed with the loss of one thousand men left dead on the field. A brief account of the particulars, and of a very extraordinary character, who shone in all the splendour of high daring, will, I am sure, be interesting to my readers, as related by the reverend James Gordon. After speaking of the arrival at Arklow of the Durham fencibles, the rebels being in great force near it, he says ; " A few hours after, one of those ludicrous incidents occurred, which, amid the calamities of war, serve to exhilarate the spirits of military men. Two of the officers of this regiment, passing by the house of Mr. O'Neile, in Arklow, where general Needham was quartered, and where a great breakfast was prepared for

the general and his guests, were mistaken by a servant for two of the suite, and informed that breakfast was ready for them and their associates. This intelligence being communicated, the Durham officers came instantly in a body, and devoured the whole breakfast." One of them, the writer states, remained behind to settle with the drivers of the carriages in which the regiment had travelled from Dublin, and upon him devolved the unpleasant situation of hearing the complaints of the general and his officers, who arrived soon after and found all their breakfast vanished. He then proceeds :

" In some hours, more serious objects engaged the attention of the troops. The rebels, who, after the defeat of Walpole's army on the 4th of June, had wasted their time in burning the town of Carnew, in trials of prisoners for orangemen, the plundering of houses, and other acts of the like nature, at length collected their force at Gorey, and advanced to attack Arklow on the 9th, the only day in which that post had been prepared for defence. The number probably amounted to twenty-seven thousand, of whom near five thousand were armed with guns, the rest with pikes, which gave them in some points of view the appearance of a *moving forest*, and they were furnished with three serviceable pieces of artillery. The troops posted for the defence of this, at that time, most important station, consisted of sixteen hundred men, including yeomen, supplementary men, and those of the artillery. The rebels attacked the town on all sides, except that which is washed by the river. The approach of that column which advanced by the sea-shore was so rapid, that the picket-guard of yeomen cavalry, stationed in that quarter, was in extreme danger : a party of the rebels having entered and fired what is called the fishery, a part of the town on that side, composed of thatched cabins, before they could effect their escape, so that they were obliged to gallop through the flames, while the main body of this rebel column was at their heels. So great was the terror of this troop of yeomen, that most of them stopped not their flight till they had crossed the river, swimming their horses, in great peril of drowning, across that broad stream. The farther progress of the assailants was prevented by the charge of the regular cavalry, supported by the fire of the infantry, who had been formed for the defence of the town, in a line composed of three regiments, with their battalion artillery, those of the Armagh and Cavan militia, and the Durham fencibles. The main effort of the rebels, who commenced the attack near four o'clock in the evening, was directed against the station of the Durham, whose line extended through the field in front of the town to the road leading from Gorey. As the rebels poured their fire from the shelter of ditches, so that the opposite fire of the soldiery had no effect, colonel Skerrett, the second in command, to whom major-general Needham, the first in command, had wisely given discretionary orders to make the best use of his abilities and professional skill, commanded his men to stand with ordered arms, their left wing covered by a breast-work, the right by a natural rising of the ground, until the enemy, leaving their cover, should advance to an open attack. This open attack was made three times in most formidable force, *the assailants rushing within a few yards of the cannons' mouths* ; but they were received with so close and effective a fire, that they were repulsed with great slaughter in every attempt. The Durham were not only exposed to the fire of the enemy's small arms, but were also galled by their cannon. A piece of these, directed at first much too high, designedly, by a soldier taken prisoner by the rebels, of the name of Shepherd, appointed to manage the gun, was afterwards levelled so, by Esmond Kyan, a rebel chief, that it broke the carriage of one of the battallion guns, and obliged the left wing of the regiment to shift its ground, by advancing twenty paces, to avoid being enfiladed by the shot. One of the balls carried away the whole belly of a soldier, who yet lived some minutes in that miserable condition, extended on the ground, and stretching forth his hands to his associates." The historian mentions, that general Needham, after riding from post to post, exposed to the enemy's fire, at last came to the determination that a retreat would be the most prudent measure, in the then posture of affairs. The resolution of colonel Skerrett, on that occasion, saved Arklow, and, in the opinion of the writer, the kingdom.

His reply to the general, when addressed on the subject of a retreat, was in words to this effect : “ We cannot hope for victory otherwise than by preserving our ranks : if we break, all is lost ; and from the spirit which I have seen displayed at this awful crisis by the Durham regiment, I can never bear the idea of its giving ground.” This magnanimous answer was decisive ; and the rebels retired in despair, after having been repulsed in a most furious assault, in which father Michael Murphy, priest of Ballycannoo, was killed by a cannon-shot, within thirty yards of the Durham line, while he was leading his people to the attack.

Of this extraordinary man, sir Richard Musgrave observes, in his Memoirs of the Rebellion, that a column “ was led on by father Michael Murphy, the priest of Ballycannoo, who endeavoured to animate them (the rebels) by every argument and exhortation that could work on their bigotry. Many of their chiefs, who led them on to successive attacks, were killed within a few yards of our guns. Murphy, who had hitherto escaped, headed the column at the Charter-house, which was still very great ; but as they showed a reluctance to advance, he took out of his pocket some musket-balls, which he said were fired by the enemy, and some of which had hit him without wounding him, and others he had caught in his hands. He assured them, at the same time, that the balls of heretics could not injure them, as they were under the protection of the Almighty, in whose cause they were fighting, provided they were steadfast in their faith. By that stratagem, he prevailed on many of his deluded admirers to follow him, and they successively became victims of their superstition and temerity. Father Murphy, after many escapes, fell himself by a cannon-ball (which he could not catch), within a few yards of a barricade, whilst shouting to his followers, and waving in his hand a fine standard with a cross, and *Liberty or Death* inscribed on it. The fall of this church-militant hero had an immediate effect in damping the ardour of the enemy, which from that moment began to abate.”

Another famous fanatic, father John Murphy, who figured away in the rebellion, was also supposed to be bullet-proof. This man’s journal is curious ; it was found on the field of battle at Arklow by lieutenant-colonel Bainbridge, of the Durham fencible infantry, and sent by him to general Needham.

“ Saturday night, May 26, at 6 A. M., 1798, began the republic of Ireland, in Boulavogue, in the county of Wexford, barony of Gorey, and parish of Kilcormick, commanded by the Rev. Dr. Murphy, parish-priest of the said parish, in the aforesaid parish, when all the protestants of that parish were disarmed ; and, among the aforesaid, a bigot, named Thomas Booeby, who lost his life by his rashness.

“ 26. From thence came to Oulart, a country village adjoining, when the republic attacked a minister’s house for arms, and was denied of; laid siege immediately to it, and killed him and all his forces ; they same day burned his house, and all the orangemen’s houses in that and all the adjoining parishes in that part of the country.

“ The same day a part of the army, to the amount of one hundred and four of infantry, and two troops of cavalry, attacked the republic on Oulart-hill, when the military were repulsed with the loss of one hundred and twelve men, and the republic had four killed, and then went to a hill called Corrigrua, where the *republic* encamped that night, and from thence went to a town called Camolin, which was taken without resistance, and the same day took another town and *sate* of a bishop. At three in the afternoon, the same day, they laid siege to Ennis-corthy, when they were opposed by an army of seven hundred men, then they were forced to set both ends of the town on fire, and then took the town in the space of one hour, and then encamped on a hill near the town, called Vinegar-hill.

“ BRYAN BULGER,
“ DARBY MURPHY, his hand and pen.

“ Dated this 26th.”

Some of the rebels who escaped this bloody conflict, by which Ireland was saved, in their forcible mode of expressing themselves, said, speaking of the slaughter produced by the soldiery amongst them : “ *By Jasus, they mowed us down by the acre.*”

As it is always a gratifying circumstance to find the military, in times of trouble, when their services were wanted, uniting humanity with duty, I cannot restrain the pleasure of inserting what Mr. Gordon has said upon a particular instance of this union. “ On the arrival of the marquis of Huntley, however, with his regiment of Scottish Highlanders, in Gorey (near Arklow), the scene was totally altered. To the immortal honour of this regiment, its behaviour was such as, if it were universal amongst soldiers, would render a military government amiable. To the astonishment of the (until then miserably harassed) peasantry, not the smallest trifle, even a drink of buttermilk, would any of these Highlanders accept, without the payment of at least the full value. General Skerrett, colonel of the Durham fencible infantry, who succeeded the generous marquis in the command of that post, observed so strict a discipline, that nothing more was heard of military depredation.”

Upon the sands at Arklow, colonel sir W. W. Wynne, at the head of his regiment, displayed great bravery and judgment. A whimsical circumstance happened here during the rebellion. A soldier, who was on guard, got into conversation with a raw countryman, and taking advantage of his simplicity, agreed with him for the sale of his sentry-box : the simple clown paid the amount of the purchase, and came the next morning with his car and horse for it. “ What are you doing there ?” said a fresh sentinel. “ And, by Jasus, I’m come to remove this *little bit of shelter* and plaze you,” said the boor. The same spirit of simplicity is displayed in the following instance, which occurred not long since : a letter was received at the general post-office, London, directed, “ To my son in London.” The next morning a gawky thumped at the post-office window, and said, “ Has my mother sent me a letter ?” of course the letter received was immediately delivered to him.

We saw nothing particularly worthy of notice at Arklow except the castle, which is ancient and in ruins. The morning after our arrival we crossed the bridge, which has nineteen arches, through which the Avoca flows into the sea, which is close adjoining : it was low water, and a number of fishing vessels lay on the yellow sands. The learned bishop Pococke, who has distinguished himself for his Travels in the East, has observed that Arklow, with its sands, steeps, and glens, seen from the promontory, where the prospect has the best effect, presents a striking resemblance to the hill of Mount Sion at Jerusalem,

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