

## The Fifth Day in Ireland

Sir Frances B. Head, Bart

1852

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“ Buried and cold, when my heart stills its motion.  
Green be thy fields, sweetest Isle of the Ocean !  
And may harp-striking bards sing aloud with devotion,  
Erin mavournin ! Erin go bragh !

CAMPBELL

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At the fag-end of this summer, among a motley crowd of Tourists, by the irresistible power of Steam, I was injected into the island of Ireland, which I had never before seen. For a week, almost without winking, I looked it steadily in the face. For a similar period, in various localities, immured by myself, I was poring over data I deemed it necessary to obtain.

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At five miles from Oughterard we saw, on our left, the Lake of Ross, which appeared to be about two miles and a half long, and on our right a mixture of heather and stones.

“ There’s a fine lime-kiln, yere Arnh’r,” said my driver, pointing to one before us, “ for putting out lime on thim bogs.”

In half a mile we came to the property of O’Flaherty (a Protestant), whose lofty lime-cemented park wall—in which there was a very handsome entrance gate—extended about two miles. Within it, among trees, I saw large spaces covered with waving corn, which a gang of reapers were busily cutting. On the right was a national school, from which, as we passed it, were exuding a number of healthy-looking children, dressed either in red petticoats or in corduroy jackets and trowsers. Several of them—principally little girls thirteen or fourteen years of age—began to run close to the tail of our car, and for more than a mile, scarcely panting, they continued, up hill and down hill, with merry faces and light tread. to run over a hard road, on parts of which the sharp stones of Mr. M’Adam had been newly laid. As they were doing so I kept my eyes carefully on their countenances, and I can truly say that the jagged metal did not in the slightest degree affect the pleasing innocent smile that, unsullied even by a cloud of momentary pain, testified to the sport they were enjoying.

It is no use any longer trying to conceal the fact that during my short tour in Ireland my prejudices against bare ankles and naked feet were considerably softened ; indeed, there can be no doubt that there is a freshness in this costume of Nature that cannot belong to a fine fashionable gown, which, from sweeping the ground, and from being tightly bandaged round the waist, forms a splendid unventilated palace, in which the architect has forgotten to insert either chimney, staircase, door, or window !

“ Yere Arnh’r,” said my driver to me, “ ought to have been in Galway last week. The Lord luftinant was there for three or four days.”

“ And how did he get on ?” said I.

“ There was grate rejoicemint,” he replied. “ Och ! he’s a simple-looking gintleman !”

“ What do you mean ?” I asked.

“ A plain marn, yere Arnh’r, and no afflictation. He’ll be apt to do some sarvice to Ireland. He went out on the salt say and come up on the canal, and the roads were a’ crowded, yere Arnh’r, with men, women, and chilthren.”

We next came to the park of Mr. Kilkelly (a Catholic), of Drimcong, the wall of which for nearly a mile and a half bounded the road on one side, and then to the park wall of Danesfield, the property of Mr. Burke (a Catholic), extending about two miles and a half, and shaded on both sides of the road by beautiful plantations.

We now entered Moycullen, a small village containing a large Roman Catholic chapel, blessed with a congregation, from all quarters, of about 200 persons ; also a national school, two stories high, with five windows in front.

In the constabulary barracks are quartered one constable (a Catholic), and five sub-constables (three Catholics and two Protestants).

“ Have these stairs been just planed ?” I inquired of the constable.

“ No, Sir ; only cleaned,” he replied.

They, as well as the floor of the rooms and table, had been scrubbed till they were literally almost white. The constable wore his side-arms ; his men, as usual, were dressed as for parade.

After seating myself at the table of his room, “ What is the population of this village ?” I inquired.

“ Seventy,” he replied ; “ there are about fourteen or fifteen families.”

“ Sit down, sergeant,” I said to him, pointing to a chair close to him.

“ No, I thank ye, Sir, I’ll just stand,” was his reply, remaining perfectly erect.

“ Whence do you get your provisions ?”

“ From Galway” (7½ miles off), he answered ; “ we get from thence grocery, meat, every-thing except potatoes and turf. When we are buying beef we get it about three times a month, so as to have it half fresh and half corned ; but beef is scarce, and we have therefore bought a flitch of bacon for the entire of this month.”

“ What is your principal duty here ?” I asked.

He replied, “ In escorting prisoners from Connemara and Oughterard districts to Galway county gaol.”

“ Has there been much crime here ?” I inquired.

“ Excepting a few cases of drunkenness, no offences for some time. Nothing can be more peaceable and tranquil than this neighbourhood.”

As it appears from the above statement of the constable that drunkenness is one of the offences that has been occasionally brought before him, I feel it right to state that, up to the period of my arrival at Oughterard, I had not, in Ireland, excepting in the police-cell in Dublin, seen one drunken person, either male or female.

The following comparative return, however, will accurately show how much less spirits are drunk in Ireland than in Scotland, the morality of which country is proverbial.

	Population.	Gallons of Spirits.
Scotland, in the year 1850 .	2,870,784 .	consumed 6,935,003
Ireland, „ „ .	6,515,794 .	consumed 6,973,333

In the above the number of gallons of spirits charged with duty for home consumption is taken from the Parliamentary Returns of 1850 ; the population from the census of 1851.

Our game little pony now trotted us into a large expanse of stony country, partly cultivated, and in those places divided by loose stone walls into rather small fields, among which were several unroofed cabins. From thence we drove through a village, every habitation of which was unroofed, excepting one, out of which tottered an old woman, who had no doubt heard the approach of our wheels. “ Harve pity on a poor widiw !” she exclaimed, as we passed her. From the dead village we emerged into a large space of heather, bog, and water, at the end of which we came to a park limed wall, a mile long, and a fine handsome house, the property of Mr. Browne, of Moongare. By the side of the road, in a scarlet petticoat, and with no covering on her head or feet, I observed a fine-looking woman breaking stones so intently that her loose black locks, at every blow she gave, kept dangling before her eyes as we passed.

A little further on we came not only to several cabins, but to a large farm-house and buildings, all unroofed ; indeed, in every direction, jagged triangular gables, of various heights, denoted that the hand of the destroyer had been at work. On our right was a limed wall about a mile long, enclosing rich grass and lofty trees, belonging to Mr. Comyn, of Woodstock (a Catholic). We here met eight women carrying heavy creels, each harnessed to her back by a rope of straw. After passing the park the country relapsed on our right into unroofed houses, surrounded by frail low stone walls ; and on our left, by an expanse of snipe-ground—miserable crops of oats—desolation—cart-horses without blinkers—red petticoats—and pretty children. The tenants were apparently nearly all gone, and their lands (without metaphor) were mourning in weeds !

At two and a half miles from Galway we passed near a small village, called River-view, on the banks of Lake Corrib. On the left, in a beautiful park, lives Lady Ffrench; on the right, opposite to a Catholic chapel, is Bushy Park, the residence of Mr. Robert Martin.

At the head of Lake Corrib there appeared a large milk-white building, of eighteen windows in front—a nunnery. Near it were three cabins.

The process of filling the nunneries that are growing up in Ireland is, I believe, very nearly as follows :—Young girls go first to nun-schools,—come home,—lose their appetites,— can’t sleep,—grow pale,—get restless. The parents send for the doctor, and eventually for the

priest, who advises the white veil, *merely* as an occupation, there being no necessity whatever to remain. The parents give the necessary bond, and the poor victims end by taking the *black veil* !

On reaching a slight eminence, a peep of the castle-towers and churches of Galway suddenly announced to me that I had at last nearly arrived at the end of a very rough journey.

The road, which now gradually descended, was still bounded by stone walls ; and although I was about to enter an opulent town, of great commercial importance, both on my right and left I continued to be haunted by little miserable fields, low tottering walls, and here and there by unroofed cabins, which continued until I almost reached the suburbs. But from such objects my attention was now attracted by a series of magnificent public buildings, and of large irregular streets, swarming alive with a population apparently of all sorts, of all sizes, and of all colours : in short, of a mixture of wealth, intelligence, industry, and squalid rags, that it would be difficult to describe. Indeed, on the car suddenly stopping before the door of an excellent-looking hotel, when I descended to the pavement from its bench I was so giddy and dizzy that I felt I could not describe my *own* feelings, much less the busy objects that were thronging around me. “ Thank Heaven !” I said to myself as my car drove slowly away, “ I have now done with jolting slowly through this world sideways !” An old woman stood between me and the door of my caravansarai. As the readiest way to drive her out of my way, I gave her the few halfpence remaining in my bag, for which she bellowed blessings after me as loudly as if I had at that instant robbed her of everything she had ever possessed.

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#### Fifth Day.

The seaport town of Galway, the capital of the West, and in point of population the sixth town in Ireland, from its peculiar position has always been a point of great commercial importance. Its bay, one of the finest in the world, is a magnificent funnel, intended by Nature for the reception of vessels from all quarters of the globe. By means of two short canals, already described, an inland water communication of great extent and value is on the point of being effected. Lastly, by the Midland and Great Western Railway, which as nearly as possible bisects Ireland, Galway and Dublin are inseparably joined together by a line of communication, which, besides being the nearest and speediest, is the shortest that could have been devised between the Irish Channel and the great Atlantic Ocean—Nature’s thoroughfare between the United Kingdom and the two continents of America.

The connection which formerly existed between Galway and Spain is not only recorded in history—is not only to be traced in the architecture of Lynch’s Castle, also in the wide entries, arched gateways, stone-mullioned windows, and outside stairs of several ancient mansions in the town, but the traveller, as he runs, can most legibly read it in the dark eyes, noble features, and high-bred demeanour, that in Galway in particular, and throughout Connemara in general, constantly remind him of the fact ; indeed, I repeatedly met men and women whose countenances, to say nothing of their garb, would anywhere have induced me to address them in Spanish rather than in English.

The town is now a medley of streets and buildings of various dates, forming altogether a strange, incongruous, but very happy family of narrow crooked alleys, broad thoroughfares, docks, churches, dispensaries, chapels, banks, gaols, court houses, nunneries, barracks, monasteries, storehouses, breweries, a union workhouse, distilleries, flour-mills, docks, bridges, a magnificent railway hotel just constructed, several ancient houses just falling, a

number of hovels of the most wretched appearance, evidently destined to be replaced very shortly by mansions of wealth and luxury. There are several streets composed almost entirely of immense warehouses, from four to six stories high, each with a small pent-house-covered crane affixed to its upper stratum. These vast receptacles are now nearly all empty ; and, on inquiring the reason, I was briefly informed that Galway, which used to import and bond corn in large quantities, now exports it.

Queens College, just completed on the outside of the town, is one of the chastest and handsomest public edifices I have ever seen. It is a pity, however, that the lowness of its position prevents it from contributing as much as it ought to the general beauty of the town. In its vicinity is a large poor-house, built eight years ago ; and about 100 yards from it, on an elevated plot composed of emerald-green turf and beds of beautiful flowers, stands a school-house, resembling very much a modern villa ; and yet, in their immediate neighbourhood are to be seen unroofed huts, miserable cabins, a confusion of tottering, crooked stone walls surrounding small enclosures, many of which are so full of rocks that they really resemble a rising crop of young tombstones, several, like children's second teeth, coming out all crooked.

As I was strolling through the suburbs I came to a potato-market, in which I found, squatted on the ground, a number of women, four or five of whom were suckling ravenous infants. Of the potatoes, which in heaps were before them, it was sad to observe many diseased, some quite rotten. The clothes of buyers, as well as sellers, were also, generally speaking, in the very last stage of consumption. The arms of the jacket of one old man beside me had each been replaced with a portion of a coarse grey worsted stocking, in holes ; and his corduroy breeches, which had no buttons at the knees, had been mended with pieces of cloth of various hues. Several of the women's red petticoats had likewise been patched with old flannel and rags of so many colours that the garment resembled altogether a printed map of modern Europe, the scarlet bit being, of course, the papal dominions. In a mantilla of old blanket, fantastically shrouded over her head, so as to show nothing of an aged face but an Arab nose, a pair of piercing eyes, and a very small portion of sallow complexion, there sat at my feet a regular Spanish beggar. Before me two fine little barefooted boys, of about five years old, stood for some minutes whapping each other on the head ; at last one tried to pull the hair of t'other one, but, as his mother had happened to cut it almost to the quick, the little urchin could grasp nothing, until he bethought himself of catching hold of the yellow side-locks of his comrade, which in dead silence he steadily pulled with all his force. " And that's the way," said I to myself, " that the Protestants of Ireland are said to deal with their Catholic brethren !" In the middle of this group stood erect a stout man, in official charge of an iron triangle, from the apex of which hung scales for weighing potatoes, diseases and all. As I was looking at him, a pretty half-naked child of about two years old tottled up, and in high glee whipped my leg with a stick. " Och ! ye blackguard," exclaimed an old woman sitting behind me on the ground with her legs sticking out, showing me, when I turned round, ten up-pointed toes and a pair of soles as hard as hide. In all directions was to be heard a deal of very rough female cackling, and occasionally laughter, but no quarrelling. In the midst of the whole stood here and there, with drooping head and motionless thin tail, a donkey, patiently bearing a pannier laden with turf, secured by straw ropes.

After proceeding some way I was gradually assailed by a very strong smell, and, summoning my eyes to the elucidation of this discovery of my nose, I perceived hanging on some rails before me a quantity of salted congor-eels, split open ; in short, I found myself in a fish-market, with mackerel, " hake," and other beings fresh from the vasty deep, of such guttural names that, although they were over and over again pronounced to me, I felt the alphabet had not consonants enough to repeat them. A gentleman who happened to stand near me, pointing

to a basket of young herrings about the size of sprats, observed to me, “ It’s a great shame they should be allowed to take them so young.” I replied, “ Why, there must be plenty of all ages in the sea !” “ And sure,” exclaimed an old fish-woman at our side, “ the *say* is richer than the land !”

For a few moments I stood gazing at a roofless and almost floorless building, of Spanish architecture, on the curiously worked front of which was inscribed, in old style,

Martíní Brown,  
1627.

A woman passing at the moment gratuitously informed me it was the oldest house in the town.

As I was crossing the great esplanade in front of Kilroy’s hotel, I suddenly heard the din of martial music, and soon saw approaching me, preceded by a crowd of ragged, barefooted boys, a regiment of soldiers, whose fine scarlet clothes and white crossed belts formed a striking contrast with the dingy, crooked, narrow street from which they had emerged.

After admiring for some time the dock, which appears to be most admirably constructed, I observed close to it, quite apart from the town of Galway, a little city of cabins, entirely inhabited by fishermen and their families. It is called “ The Claddagh ;” and as I had heard much of their strange habits, prejudices, superstitions, and of their being governed almost exclusively by their own laws, with considerable curiosity I slowly dived into it. I must own, however, I was wofully disappointed ; for although it certainly was strange to wander by oneself through winding narrow streets of huts, containing a population of nearly 1300 people, yet with this eccentricity there was mixed up so much filth and misery that the amalgam altogether was anything but attractive.

As might naturally be expected, the first thing I ran against in the city of The Claddagh was a tall dirty old woman, with a long fish dangling, as if it had grown there, from her right hand.

On each side of every street the doors of the cabins were wide open. On entering one of them I found, kneeling on the ground in the middle of her chamber, an old woman, with one tooth, preparing, in a wooden bowl, for two little pigs a quantity of potato-parings, which they were eyeing and she chopping very attentively. Around her were walking, and now and then interjectionally hopping, three hens. “ After the disorder,” said the aged creature to me, pointing with her bony dry chin to her two pigs, “ they’re very sick !”

In another cabin I found four women rapidly making nets, and a very old man, in rags, slowly combing his hair.

After passing through several streets of cabins, in which I usually saw, mixed up in different proportions. half-naked children, pigs, fowls, women, and nets, I heard an astonishing cackling of female voices, and on arriving at the hovel from which it proceeded I was suddenly surrounded by ten or a dozen women, of various ages, who—*nem. con.*—appointed me high-judge and arbitrator in a dispute of apparently extraordinary importance. As, however, they all addressed me at once, in a confusion of tongues that must very closely have resembled that of Babel, I am unable to impart to the reader, simply because I don’t know, what in the whole world it was all about. The only person in the group that said nothing was a poor woman, of about thirty, who, with eyes streaming with tears as she looked at me, and

with a countenance of excruciating grief, was bitterly crying. "Her husband has been just drowned!" observed to me one old wife. "That 'oman," exclaimed to me a stout girl, down whose flushed and violently-heated cheeks tears appeared to be almost hissing as one after another they rapidly fell on the ground—"that 'oman," yere Arn'r," said she, pointing to a female on her right, "horped I might be a cripple!"

"Oh, never mind," said I to her in a soothing tone; but as I only made her cry more violently, and as her sobs seemed about equally to excite the voices of plaintiffs as well as of defendants, I gave up the cause in despair; and accordingly, turning on my heels, and deferring judgment, I left the court, and in doing so nearly ran against a boy carrying a basket on a naked arm; his right leg was barely covered with blue rags, his left leg with brown cloth; and through both, as also through his jacket, sundry pieces of white skin were peeping at me.

As I wandered I hardly knew where, I entered a tarred-roofed cabin, in which I found hanging round a fire a quantity of drenched blue sailors' clothes, in rags; from the black rafters drooped, in form of a cone, a net which a sturdy woman was mending. While talking to her I heard something breathing apoplectically hard, and looking towards the sound I saw, on a little patch of straw, two very fat piebald pigs; close to them was a heap of muscle-shells, and a smoked wicker cradle containing a sleeping infant begrimed with dirt.

In the pea-green book, to which I have so often had occasion to refer, the English tourist is informed that the people of "The Claddagh will marry with no one but themselves." "I should like to know who'd marry *them*!" said I to myself, rather petulantly—principally because at the moment of the intemperate expression I felt something or another crawling on and occasionally biting my legs. In short, of all the dirty places in this world I have ever had occasion to visit. The Claddagh is the worst.

"They really," I said to myself, improperly irritated by the tingling in my legs, "should be swept off the surface of the globe, and the easiest and least painful mode of putting them to death," I added, as with my umbrella I slightly scratched my left ankle, "would be suddenly to wash them, which, like oil on a wasp, or a drop of prussic acid on the tongue of a dog, would inevitably in an instant render them inanimate."

On extricating myself from this extraordinary congregation I observed close on the adjoining dock, whose admirable construction had already attracted my attention, a fine hewn stone building, three stories high, surmounted by a large statue or figure of a fisherman with his hat on, leaning with his left hand on an anchor, and holding in his right hand a flag-staff.

"He'd a fine green flag in thart hand," said to me with evident pride an old fisherman who had attentively been remarking what I was looking at, "the day the Lord Liftinunt was here!"

The building in question, on which was inscribed in large letters, "CLADDAGH NATIONAL PISCATORY SCHOOL, AN. MDCCCXLVI.," at a cost of 1200*l.*, had been constructed for the children, male and female, of the fishermen of the Claddagh, on a site where a few years ago salmon could be caught.

On entering it I found, barefooted, but with clean faces and in decent attire, about 130 children in narrow rooms, in which the girls were instructed to sew, spin, read, and write; and the boys, in addition, to make nets, &c. On the walls were several pictures, the most striking of which was a very large fish; there were also maps, the model of a ship, &c. The improvement in their appearance was certainly very striking. A very respectable-looking

priest, who was in attendance, earnestly solicited me to write my opinion of the school in a book which he presented to me for that purpose ; as, however, my object in my little tour in Ireland was to listen to opinions rather than impart them, as courteously as I could, I declined.

Moored to the wharf was a little black steamer with a small raised buff deck immediately abaft the black funnel, which was in midship.

On its stern was the word " O'CONNELL." At its prow, with wings extended, was a very large white fat bird with a pouting breast and a hooked bill.

" Is that an *eagle* ?" said I dubiously to a small group of the Claddagh fishermen, who, in blue jackets and weather-worn trousers, were standing indolently beside it.

" I don't know," replied one. " Yere Arnh'r can judge better than we can !" " Ut's *like* anagle !" said another. " I think ut's a doove !" said a third, " or a goole !"

" Where does this little steamer go to ?" I inquired.

" She's been doing nothing, divil a hap'orth, for months. Last wake she took the Lord Liftinunt and his lady up thro' the locks. They stood thegither alone on that deck. The ady-cumps were arl in front. Ivery soule cheered um. 'Twas a fine sight, yere Arn'r ! Ut was, indade !"

From the dock I went to the constabulary barracks, the force of which in Galway consists of one sub-inspector, one head constable, five constables, two acting ditto, 38 sub-ditto.

The sub-inspector was on duty at the Court-house, but from the head constable I learned that the particular duties of the force consisted " in protecting property, the docks, and the quays, on which arrive a quantity of sea-weed and goods from the country ; in attending to emigrant vessels, in keeping returns of emigration, &c."

During my tour, wherever I went, I had observed that Irish dogs are infected with a wooden log tied round their necks, and which bruises their knees if they attempt to go faster than a trot. " It's inflicted on um by the aristocracy of England !" said a man of whom I had modestly inquired on the subject. I certainly inwardly laughed at the idea, but, on asking the constable why the dogs of Galway were all tackled in this extraordinary way, he produced to me, to my astonishment, an Act of Parliament, authorising " all dogs within 50 yards of any public road to be logged ;" and, moreover, under a warrant from the Justice of the Petty Sessions district, any sub-inspector, head, or other constable to " seize or kill any such dog." It must, however, be recollected that this log is no doubt wisely intended by Parliament to balance the infliction upon English dogs of the income-tax ; and as an English dog runs about unfettered, but *taxed*, and an Irish dog lives untaxed, but *logged*, it would admit of argument, if " the twa dogs" were to meet, which was the freest animal of the two.

I had now a few questions to put to the constable on a subject of very great importance, on which I was particularly desirous to obtain accurate official information.

From the morning on which I had visited the great model National School in Marlborough Street, Dublin, to the hour of my arrival at Galway, I had remarked in the Irish female countenance an innate or native modesty more clearly legible than it has ever been my fortune to read in journeying through any other country on the globe.

Of the pure and estimable character of English-women, I believe no one is a more enthusiastic admirer than myself: nevertheless I must adhere to the truth of what I have above stated, and I do so without apology, because I am convinced that no man of ordinary observation can have travelled, or can now travel, through Ireland, without corroborating the fact.

But I have lived long enough to know that outward appearance cannot always be trusted, and accordingly, wherever I went, I made inquiries, the result of which was not only to confirm, but to over-confirm, my own observation ; indeed, from the Resident Commissioner of the Board of National Education in the metropolis, down to the governors of gaols and masters of the remotest workhouses, I received statements of the chastity of the Irishwomen so extraordinary, that I must confess I could not believe them ; in truth I was infinitely more puzzled by what I heard than by the simple evidence of my own eyes.

I resolved, therefore, that before I concluded my trifling tour, the sole object of which had been to inform myself as correctly as possible of the real character of the Irish people, I would, instead of generalities, come to particulars on the subject in question, and I accordingly put to the constable the following questions, the answers to which I wrote as he pronounced them :—

Q. “ How long have you been on duty in Galway ?”

A. “ Above nine years.”

Q. “ Have you much crime here ?”

A. “ Very little ; it principally consists of petty larcenies.”

Q. “ Have there been here many illegitimate children ?”

A. “ Scarcely any. During the whole of the eight years I have been on duty here I have not known of an illegitimate child being reared up in any family in the town.”

Q. “ What do you mean by being reared up ?”

A. “ I mean, that, being acquainted with every family in Galway, I have never known of a child of that description being born.”

Q. “ Does that fact apply to the fishing village of ‘ The Claddagh ’ ?”

A. “ Particularly so.”

Q. “ Do you mean to say that, to your knowledge, there has never been an illegitimate child in the town of Galway ?”

A. “ I have *heard* that a servant-girl has had one, but at the present moment there is no such case in my mind. In the village of ‘ Claddagh ’ they get their children married very young.”

The above statements appeared to me so extraordinary, that I begged the constable to be so good as to conduct me to his commanding officer (sub-inspector), a well-educated and highly intelligent gentleman, whom we found at the Court-house, seated on the bench with the magistrates. As soon as the business was over I went with him to his lodgings, and, after some conversation on the subject, I asked him the following questions : —

Q. "How long have you been on duty here?"

A. "Only six months."

Q. "During that time have you known of any instance of an illegitimate child being born in the village of the Claddagh?"

A. "Not only have I never known of such a case, but I have never heard any person at-tribute such a case to the fisherwomen of Claddagh. I was on duty in the three islands of Arran, inhabited almost exclusively by fishermen, who also farm potatoes, and I never heard of one of their women—who are remarkable for their beauty—having had an illegitimate child, nor did I ever hear it attributed to them; indeed, I have been informed by Mr. —, a magistrate who has lived in Galway for eight years, and has been on temporary duty in the island of Arran, that he also had never heard there of a case of that nature. These people, however, when required to pay poor-rates, having no native poor of their own in the work-house, resisted the payment of what they considered a very unjust tax—in fact, they closed their doors, and the rate was only partially collected."

The officer, seeing that I took great interest in the subject on which I had been conversing with him, sent for some subordinates, who, he observed, had been longer in Galway than himself.

They arrived separately, and the information of the head constable (serjeant), in reply to the same questions I had put to the constable, were as follows:—

A. "I have been here better than two years, and during that time I have never known of any woman of Claddagh having had an illegitimate child—indeed, I have never even heard of it."

Q. "Have you ever known of any such case in Galway?"

A. "Oh, I think there have been some cases in *town*. Of my own knowledge I cannot say so, but I have *heard* of it."

The Serjeant in charge of the Claddagh station now arrived, and gave his opinion as follows:

Q. "How long have you been in charge of the Claddagh village?"

A. "I have been nine years here, for five years of which last March I have been in charge of Claddagh."

Q. "During that time has there been an illegitimate child born there?"

A. "No, I have never heard of it, and if it had happened I should have been sure to have heard of it, as they wouldn't have allowed her to stop in the village."

Q. "Have you ever heard of any that occurred *before* your arrival?"

A. "No, Sir."

Q. "During the nine years you have been in Galway, have you known of any cases that have occurred *there*?"

A. "Well, there were very few: only one that I know, of my own knowledge."

Q. "Are the Claddagh people always as slovenly in their persons as I have seen them to-day?"

A. "Oh, no! on Sundays the fishermen turn out clean and neat, in blue jackets and trowsers, and shoes. The women turn out with scarlet cloaks and white caps ; the young women with their hair trimmed and bound up very tastily."

"And yet," said I to myself, "what ornament can these poor young people put on equal to that virtuous character which they wear wherever they go, and which, in spite of their poverty, it appears no human power can deprive them of !"

He added, "But they are very improvident; they make much money in summer. I have known them catch 260 pair of soles in one haul."

The officer here stated, and the last witness (the Serjeant), who had been in charge of Claddagh for the last five years, subsequently of his own accord repeated the assertion, that until lately "the crime of theft had been utterly unknown among the fishermen, and was almost so now ; in fact," added the serjeant, "no theft has occurred in Claddagh during *my* time."

From the officers; quarters I hastened to The Claddagh, and, hiring a boat, I desired a couple of boys, who evidently looked upon me as the best fish they had caught for some time, to take me aboard an emigrant ship heavily laden with passengers (they had only yesterday taken leave of all their friends), and lying in the bay, about a mile and a half off.

There was a nice fresh side breeze, and after rolling about for a few minutes, while the youngsters were hauling up the sail, the 15-year-old pilot took the helm, and I and his comrade, aged 17, sat down close by him to windward.

Of course it was the interest and object of these lads to make the most of the haul they had got, and accordingly, said the youngest,

"The *lighthouse* is a very nice place. Would your Arn'r like to see ut ?"

"*Art-fry*, there," said the other, pointing to a desolate-looking spot, more than 12 miles by road from Galway, "is the nicest place in a' the town. Will your Arn'r go to *ut* ?"

"No, I thank you !" I replied, "I want only to go to that ship ; do you know what sort of emigrants are on board of it ?"

"They're all from this neighbourhood," he replied. After pausing for a few seconds, he added, "They're distroyed out of this land, and must go to Ameriky !"

"How long have you been a fisherman ?" said I to the eldest of my crew.

"We're been to *say*," ejaculated the youngest, "yere Arn'r, since we were four years awake !" Pointing to the stone ballast in the centre and at the bottom of the boat, he added, "That's our bed ; we're aften out a week wet through in these little boats ; for winter we have big boats, of from twelve to fifteen tons ; this little one is but four."

"What do you subsist on while you are out ?" I inquired.

"We ate bread, and cook mackerel with turf, and we arlways carry two kegs of warter with us."

“ But,” said I, “ will the fish you catch for sale keep for five days ?”

“ Oh yes, yere Arn’r,” he replied ; “ we take the goots and liver out o’ um, and then they’ll keep a week.”

But by this time we had got close to the black vessel, a “ bark,” over whose stern I observed hanging by the heels and gently vibrating twenty-five flaccid-looking cabbages, among which there appeared, written in large white letters,

#### THE ALBION OF ARBROATH.

Over the gunwale were ranged a line of rustic faceSj male and female, all quietly looking at us. In a few seconds, however, we were alongside, and I had scarcely stepped among the crowd when, the interest of my arrival having completely ceased, no one took the slightest notice of me ; however, on one of the crew passing me, I begged he would tell the captain I would be glad to see him. In about five minutes he came up from below, told me he was very busy serving out provisions, but that I was quite welcome to go over the vessel, and he desired a sailor-boy to accompany me.

On the deck, besides a number of steerage passengers, were three or four women of superior garb, sitting rather indolently, reading. The boy told me the bark was registered at 302 tons ; and he then led me down below between decks, which, as soon as I could see—for at first I fancied I was in almost utter darkness—appeared completely thronged with country people, very poorly but clean and decently dressed ; in fact, it was evident they were all in their best clothes.

On each side throughout the whole length of the vessel, without any curtains or compartments to separate them, were, one above the other, two tiers of berths, each 4 feet 8 inches broad by 5 feet 10 inches in length. Each of these beds was nominally for two people.

“ What do they pay for them ?” I asked the boy.

Those of full age pay 3*l.* 10*s.*, under age 3*l.*,” he replied.

“ Whart *I* pay,” exclaimed a female voice from a berth on my right, “ for myself and two chilthren, one three and the other five, is 8*l.* 5*s.* I have here, myself, my two chilthren, and another woman !”

Although I was thus loudly addressed, no one noticed me ; in fact, they had not room to do so. In several of the berths I saw powerful-looking men lying indolently ; the distance from their faces to the deck above them was 2 feet 7 inches.

After worming my way through a number of women, some of whom were erectly arranging their berths, others stooping to ferret into trunks, and others sitting placidly mending extremely old clothes, I came to the hold, down which a small gleam of sunshine from above was illuminating the red moist face of the captain, who, in a blue superfine jacket, blue foraging cap, and in a clean shirt, but without his stock, was very busily occupied in weighing out, and noting down in a book he held in his hand, meal for his passengers.

After saying but a few words—for I did not like to interrupt him—I proceeded onwards with the boy, who told me that in the several adjoining berths “ cousins, friends, and families go together,” until I came to a crowd, which for a few seconds obstructed me. “ Come along out o’thart and let hum pass !” exclaimed the fine manly voice of an emigrant who had

observed my predicament. Very shortly another poor fellow, fancying I belonged to the ship, came up to me and asked me something about meal. “ This man,” replied the sailor-boy, “ has nothing to do with *you* !” and my friend accordingly turned aside.

Affixed to one of the berths I observed a placard of printed regulations, which I own appeared to me to have been concocted by some one not very conversant with the various indescribable *désagrémens* of a gale of wind ; for instance, it ordained—

“ That all the passengers must be out of bed by seven o’clock a.m. ; the children to be then washed and dressed : all to be in bed by ten p.m.

“ That, when the emigrants victual and cook for themselves, the overseer will see that each family has its regular hour at the cooking place.

“ That there be issued to each passenger three quarts of water, not less often than twice a-week. Bread, biscuit, flour, oatmeal, and rice—in all, seven pounds per week. One-half of the supply to consist of bread or biscuit ; and if potatoes be used, five pounds to be reckoned equal to one pound of bread-stuff.

“ That the washing-days be on Monday and Friday.

“ No smoking, gambling, swearing, or improper language to be allowed.

“ No sailor to be allowed between decks, except on duty,” &c. &c.

After reading these regulations, and gazing on both sides, and as far as between decks my eyes could reach, at the men, women, and children, who in numerous groups, active, passive, and neuter, were apparently blocking up the thoroughfare, I could not help feeling very keenly how little they were aware of the discomforts of being jumbled together during a sea voyage, and, above all, of the tragic catastrophes that have so often in one relentless gulf buried the cares, sorrows, hopes, and lives of shipload after shipload of poor Irish emigrants—such as were now around me and before me, nursing infants, unpacking and repacking boxes, making beds, and engaged in numberless other little domestic arrangements. On a curtainless berth beside me, in extreme lassitude, sat a slight, elegant-looking girl, of about seventeen, very poorly dressed ; her elbows nearly touched each other—the backs of her hands rested on her lap, on which her eyes also listlessly reposed—her whole attitude appeared collapsed and unstrung. In fact, she was the personification of the word “ EVICTION !”

“ Erin, my country ! though sad and forsaken,  
In dreams I revisit thy sea-beaten shore ;  
But, alas ! in a far-distant land I awaken,  
And sigh for the friends who can meet me no more.

“ Where is my cabin-door, fast by the wild wood ?  
Sisters and sire ! did ye weep for its fall ?  
Where is the mother that smiled on my childhood ?  
And where is *the bosom friend*, DEARER THAN ALL ?”

The picture before me was on the whole so distressing that I was glad to find myself again in my boat ; and as the distance between it and the emigrant bark gradually increased, my mind became engrossed with one simple, single, and natural subject of inquiry—namely. WHY ARE THESE GOOD PEOPLE LEAVING THEIR NATIVE HOMES ? “ Why,” Said I to myself, as I finally closed the note-book of my little tour—“ why, for so long a period, have the inhabit-

ants of Ireland been centrifugally ejected from their country, as if its lovely verdant surface were a land blasted by pestilence, or as if its virtuous and intelligent peasantry were malefactors who had been sentenced to transportation ?”

From the year 1620, when the pilgrim fathers went out, up to the present time, not less than 9½ millions of Irish have emigrated from England, Ireland, and the Canadas to the United States of America.

From 1806 to 1851 not less than 4½ millions of the Irish people have emigrated from their country.

From 1841 to 1851 upwards of 1½ million have left Ireland.

In the single year 1851 Irish emigration amounted to no less than 257,372 ; and even from the Clyde, of 14,435 emigrants who in 1851 sailed to America, above one-third were Irish !

In London there are more Irish than in Dublin. In Manchester and Salford more Irish than in Cork. In Glasgow as many Irish and descendants of Irish as in Belfast. There are more Irish (born in Ireland) now living in Glasgow than there are living at Belfast Irish who have been born *there*. Of the Anglo-Saxon and Celtic races abroad, nearly one half of the whole are Irish.

Now, in the sacred names of Mercy and of Justice, who, I ask, are the guilty authors of this awful desolation ? And, as the answer to this query is an easy one, I will at once proceed to its consideration.

A fortnight in Ireland (1852)

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