

*Ireland : The People.*

THE  
EARTH AND ITS INHABITANTS.

EUROPE.

BY

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In accordance with a tradition formerly often quoted, Ierne, or Ireland, is indebted for its epithet of *Insula Sacra* to the fact that at the time of the Deluge it floated like an ark upon the surface of the waters, and on its subsidence gave their first inhabitants to the neighbouring islands. The Irish, therefore, not only deny that their ancestors came from foreign lands, but they claim also to have peopled all the neighbouring countries. As to the ancient monkish “annals” of the country, they abound in so many legends that it is next to impossible to discover the truth which underlies them. Irish chroniclers, who have endeavoured to transform the mythology of their race into a regular history with dates and genealogies, speak of the Firbolgs, or “men dressed in the skins of animals,” as the aboriginal inhabitants of the country. These “beings of the night” were conquered by the “gods of day,” or *Tuatha-de-dananns*, who were the people of Dana, the mother of the gods.[1] These latter were acquainted with the metals, and they made arms, tools, and musical instruments. But the *Tuatha-de-dananns* were vanquished in turn by a third body of invaders, the warlike “Milesians” of Spain, who came into the country eleven or fourteen centuries before Christ, and overthrew the kingdom of Inis-Fail, the “Island of Doom.” The descendants of these Milesians, it is pretended, can be recognised, even at the present day, by having an *O’* or a *Mac* prefixed to their family names. It is only natural that a proud people like the Irish, in its day of humiliation, should take a delight in the past, and deify its heroes. The descendants of these ancient Irish still celebrate the glories of other days, and sing with enthusiasm the high deeds of their warrior ancestors, as if a share of the distinction achieved belonged to themselves. Fin MacCumhal, the legendary king, whose name has been changed into Fingal by the Ossianic muse, is ever present to the mind of the children of Erin, To him they dedicate the most beautiful sites of their island, and everywhere they see the remains of his castles. Quite recently those Irishmen who leagued together in order to free their country from English rule assumed the name of “Fenians,” in memory of Fin, or Fion, who commanded the national militia seventeen centuries ago. [2]

The similarity between Erse, or ancient Irish, and the Gaelic of the Scotch Highlands justifies us in the belief that at the dawn of history the inhabitants of Ierne, Ighbernia, or Hibernia were the kinsmen of the Caledonians of Scotland. But quite irrespective of the Spaniards in Galway and Kinsale, many strange elements have since those early days become fused with the Celtic population of the island. Danes, or “Northmen,” have frequently invaded the country. It is they who gave a name to Dan-na-n-gall, or Donegal, and for over two

centuries they were the masters of Dublin. Wexford and Waterford were likewise Danish towns. The geographical nomenclature of the country furnishes a rough guide to the relative importance of the constituent elements of the population. More than three-fourths of the names are Celtic, [3] but there are many whose origin is evidently Scandinavian. As a matter of course the largest bodies of invaders and colonists arrived from the neighbouring island of Great Britain, and not only the English and Scotch took possession of a part of the country, but the Welsh had their share likewise. The barony of Forth, at the south-eastern point of Ireland, is said to be inhabited by the descendants of Welshmen who came into the country with Strongbow, about seven centuries ago. Welsh was spoken there up to the close of last century, and the manners of the people conclusively prove that they are the kin of the English Cymry. They are said to be more orderly and peaceable than the native Irish around them, and also more happy, which may arise in a large measure from their being the owners of the land they cultivate. If Thackeray [4] may be believed, they took the most energetic measures for keeping possession of their land, for they killed every stranger whom they suspected of an intention of acquiring seignorial rights. Until recently there was not in these “ Welsh Mountains” of Wexford a single large estate.

The English, no less than the Welsh, and others who preceded them, came into Ireland as conquerors. According to an old legend, the first invader, in his ardour to take possession, cut off his right hand before he landed, in order that it might seize upon the country a little earlier : hence the “ bloody hand” which figures in the coats of arms of many noble families of Ireland. Arriving during the latter half of the twelfth century, the English had to fight for more than four hundred years before they had secured their conquest. The “ pale,” or barrier of stakes, which formerly bounded the territories they held in Leinster, Meath, and Munster, expanded or retreated according to the fortunes of war, and even in the days of Henry VIII. the English pale of Dublin extended only 20 miles. But more than four centuries of partial occupation had done much to mingle the blood of the two peoples, and to spread the use of the English language. In a subsequent age, during the great religious wars, Ireland was once more subjected to devastation. The population of whole towns was either massacred or exiled in a body, and the conquered territories were divided amongst English colonists. Queen Elizabeth gave away 200,000 acres in the province of Munster ; James I. confiscated six entire counties in Northern Ireland (Armagh, Cavan, Fermanagh, Derry, Tyrone, and Donegal), with a view of “ planting” them with Scotch and English Protestants, and later on, by a legal quibble, possessed himself of an additional 500,000 acres in various parts of the island, which he likewise distributed amongst colonists drawn from Great Britain. [5] During the Commonwealth one of the first acts of the Parliament was to bestow 1,000,000 acres upon English clergymen, and when the Catholics had been definitely defeated they were compelled to move into the country districts of Connaught and Clare, as the towns of this territory were to become exclusively Protestant. Their southern boundary was to be the Shannon, and every Irishman found on the left bank of that river might be killed without fear of legal consequences. “ Go to hell, or go to Connaught” is a proverbial saying which originated at that time. There is no doubt that many Irish Catholics, or “ Tories,” remained in the provinces from which they had been legally expelled. This was more especially the case as regards the mountains of Tyrconnell, Galtymore, and Kerry, and the almost inaccessible bog lands. Besides this, the new landowners themselves kept about them a number of peasants to cultivate the soil. Nor were all the Protestants men of foreign origin. These latter, however, formed at that time a very considerable portion of the population of Ireland, and they were subsequently reinforced by the peaceable immigration of Scotchmen into Ulster, where they assimilated the manners of the people to those of the Lowlands on the other side of the Channel. As a result of all these immigrations, there must have occurred a strong infusion of Anglo-Celtic blood ; but in frequent instances the two races have lived side by side without intermingling, and the stock of the people of Ireland appears to be Celtic to this day. In Ulster

we meet with “triple” towns, like those which formerly existed in Greece and Italy. Downpatrick, for instance, has an Irish quarter, a Scotch quarter, and an English quarter. Amongst emigrants of various races there still remain to be mentioned the German “Palatines,” who settled near Galway at the commencement of last century, [6] It is, however, a curious ethnological fact, and one reminding us of analogous features in the fauna and flora of Ireland, that a gipsy has never been seen upon that island. These wanderers, who are represented in every part of the world, including even South America, have never yet crossed the narrow Irish Sea. Nor are Jews very numerous.

But whatever race element may preponderate in the Irish people, the ancient language, still spoken on Rathlin Island and in a few remote glens of Antrim, is now of very little importance. In Ireland it is understood by a majority only in portions of the west and south-west, and more especially in the counties of Mayo and Waterford. In 1851 the districts in which Irish was the language of the majority had an area of 9,325 square miles, with 1,328,938 inhabitants ; in 1871 their area was 5,293 square miles, with 545,658 inhabitants. [7] Altogether Irish was spoken in 1851 by 1,524,286 persons (23-26 per cent, of the population) ; in 1871 by only 817,875 persons (15-11 percent, of the population), and amongst these latter there were only 103,563 who were unable to speak English. Erse, which is written in the same characters as its predecessor *bérla feini*, no longer suffices for giving expression to all our modern ideas, and notwithstanding the efforts of resuscitation made by the Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language, English has become the language of civilised life, as in the other parts of the kingdom, and the days of Irish are numbered. Not a newspaper is published in that tongue, and the translations of the Iliad and of Moore’s “Irish Melodies,” recently prepared by the Most Rev. John McHale, are not works intended to meet a popular demand. The older Irish literature, however, is very rich. It includes amongst others a large number of manuscripts relating to the traditions of Ireland. Most of these works show that the manners which existed at the time of their composition have passed away. Amongst the many Irish documents and chronicles preserved in the library of Trinity College are the “seven times fifty” histories, which the old bards used to relate on festive occasions in the presence of chiefs and king. These “histories” deal with massacres, battles, invasions, sieges, navigations, voyages, visions, tragedies, and kindred subjects. [8]

But though Erse is on the point of being altogether superseded by a language possessing greater vitality, and better adapted to give expression to contemporary ideas, it will survive in the geographical nomenclature of the country. Mountains will continue to be known as *Slieve, Ben, or Knock* ; hills, mounds, and rocks will still remain *Duns, Carricks, Croaghs* or *Croghans, Cloghs, and Kens* ; the words *Lough* and *Innish*, or *Ennis*, will apply to lakes and islands ; a swampy plain will be known as *Curragh* ; a watercourse as *Ana*, or *Anagh* ; towns and villages will be recognised by the prefixes *Kill* and *Bally* ; while *More* (Great) and *Beg* (Little) will serve to distinguish neighbouring mountains, rivers, bogs, and inlets of the sea.

Ogham inscriptions have been found far more plentifully in Ireland than in the sister island, and they have given rise to incessant discussions amongst the learned. This alphabet, which they succeeded in deciphering after bilingual descriptions in Latin and Old Irish had been discovered in the south of England and in Wales, [9] consists of lines, or groups of lines, attached to a single stem. Several of these inscriptions, and apparently those of the latest date, read backwards ; that is, from right to left. According to the ancient chronicles the oghams were introduced into Ireland by the Tuatha-de-dananns many centuries before the Christian era, and they certainly date back to a time when the inhabitants were heathens. These characters are in all probability of an age anterior to that of the Romans ; for we can hardly conceive that they should have been invented after the much simpler Latin alphabet had become known. [10] But however this may be, it can hardly be doubted that most of the stones with

ogham inscriptions were raised between the fifth and eighth centuries of our era, for they bear Christian emblems. As to the relationship supposed to exist between the oghams and the Scandinavian runes, the learned have not yet arrived at an agreement.

Ancient stone monuments, which were formerly for the most part attributed to the Danes, abound in Ireland, and this applies more especially to *raths*, or sepulchral mounds. There are districts in which every hill-top is crowned with a rath. The sixty-seven stones of Raphre, in Donegal, form an old temple similar to Stonehenge ; the extensive entrenchments of Grianan, near Londonderry, cover a whole hill. Elsewhere we meet with cromlechs rising above the heather. But the most remarkable, and at the same time most mysterious, monuments of ancient Ireland are the round towers scattered over the whole island. Of ancient structures of this kind eighty-three have been discovered, whilst in Scotland, where similar towers were probably constructed by men of the same race, there are but two, and in the whole remainder of Europe none at all. The round towers of Ireland bear some resemblance to minarets. Several of them are built of unhewn rocks, not touched by iron implements ; others are of hewn stone. Most of them rise singly. Their height varies between 70 and 128 feet, with a diameter of 10 to 16 feet, and the walls decrease in thickness with the height. Excepting four instances, the openings which give access to the interior are at a considerable elevation above the ground. [11] As in the case of the *nuraghe* of Sardinia, these towers have been ascribed to the most diverse peoples, and whilst there are some who look upon them as the work of Phœnicians or Carthaginians, others prefer the claims of fire-worshippers, Greeks, or Danes. History is silent as to their origin, but it is certain that the Danes were not the architects, for they raised no such monuments in their Scandinavian homes, and we can hardly conceive their doing so in foreign lands which they were about to colonise. These round towers were most likely the spontaneous product of Irish architects, and were probably built between the ninth and twelfth centuries, some as belfries and watch-towers, others as appendages to religious edifices. It is true that none of the ancient ecclesiastical documents refer to them, [12] unless, indeed, they are *clocteachs*, or steeples, as Mr. Petrie supposes. The towers of Kilkenny and several others stand on the site of Christian churchyards, which can only have been opened after the arrival of St. Patrick, for all the dead lie stretched out from east to west. [13] But whatever may have been the origin of these towers, there can be no doubt that the clergy held possession of them during the Middle Ages, for churches and chapels have been raised in their vicinity. At the present day Irish patriots look upon these round towers as the great national monuments of the country, and when they sought to render exceptional honour to their champion O'Connell, they raised one of these minarets over his grave in the cemetery of Dublin.

In many respects the Middle Ages, and even prehistoric times, continued longer in Ireland than in Great Britain. [14] Lake dwellings, such as are now being explored with so much curiosity in the lakes of the Alps, existed until quite recently in the vast lowland region of Ireland. The nature of the soil was favourable to their existence. After the great forests had been destroyed, an island, surrounded by deep water, afforded, in fact, the most secure retreat. Several *cranogues*, or wooden forts placed upon piles or artificial islands, continued to be inhabited up to the beginning of the seventeenth century. The more remote a district, and the less intercourse it had with strangers, the longer could ancient manners and customs survive in it. The island of Aran, which lies out of the world, from which it is defended by winds and waves, and abounds in cromlechs, raths, and barrows, was the “ Sacred Island” of the Irish Celts, as the islands of Sein, Mona, and Iona were sacred to the Britons of Armorica and Great Britain. Still more remote are the islands of Inishkea, in the open Atlantic, off the coast of Mayo. Their inhabitants, living far away from high-roads of commerce and ignored by their conquerors, were heathens in 1872, and probably are so still. When the wind blows a tempest and renders fishing impossible, the islanders carry an idol, dressed in wool, along the

strand, in the hope that he may calm the sea : their wishes are frequently fulfilled, when they respectfully restore their idol to its sanctuary. Seals are numerous along the coasts of Inish-kea, but the inhabitants take care not to kill them, for they believe that the souls of their departed relatives reside in them. [15] Inish Torragh, or Tory Island, near the coast of Donegal, has no gods of its own, but it has a fisherman, elected by his three or four hundred companions, for its king, and this potentate has power to exile those amongst the islanders who refuse compliance with the ancient customs. [16] On Slieve Callan, an almost insulated mountain in the county of Clare, on the Bay of Liscanor, there stands an altar raised in honour of the sun-god, and up to the close of the last century pigs were sacrificed upon it, and flowers scattered over the turf around it. [17]

In a few of the more remote districts the aspect of the inhabitants is almost that of savages, their small eyes, low foreheads, and tangled hair giving them the appearance of Tatars. But as a rule the Irish are a fine race, notwithstanding the small turned-up nose, which at once enables us to pick out a son of Erin amongst a crowd of Englishmen. [18] The natives of Joyce's Country, in Connemara, are of almost gigantic stature, with fine limbs and strong muscles. The men of Tipperary, though smaller, are no less strong, and are distinguished for their agility and grace. Comparative measurements made in the universities of the United Kingdom prove that the young men of Trinity College, Dublin, do not yield in stature or strength to their rivals of Oxford, Cambridge, Glasgow, or Edinburgh ; nay, that they are even slightly their superiors. Even Englishmen [19] admit that most Irishwomen who are able to lead a life of ease and nourish their beauty are of more distinguished appearance than their own countrywomen ; they are at the same time full of grace and open-hearted gaiety, and exhibit considerable taste in their dress. There are few countries in Europe whose women possess so much true dignity and self-respect. In many districts of Ireland even the peasant women, notwithstanding the arduous labour which has fallen to their lot, are indebted to their race for noble features and a proud carriage which would attract attention anywhere.

It is wrong to judge all Irishmen from those amongst them who have been depraved by years of oppression and hereditary poverty ; to reproach them with their obsequious language and the profuse flattery they lavish upon their superiors ; or to subscribe the cruel saying that you need only " put an Irishman on a spit, and you will always find another Irishman to turn it." Even the poorest Irishmen, notwithstanding their abject condition, still retain excellent qualities. They love each other, assist one another in misfortune, and always keep the door of their cabin hospitably open. Little suffices for their wants, and they are gay even when deprived of all that renders life easy. The least benefit conferred upon them lives ever after in their memory. Though great braggarts and not very careful of the truth, owing to an excess of imagination, they are nevertheless sincere and ingenuous at bottom, and religiously keep their word when once it has been pledged. They love fighting for fighting's sake. In many respects they have remained children, notwithstanding the hard experience of their lives. They are full of natural spirits, and subject to fits of transport ; easily carried away by their imagination, and addicted to idle fancies. They lack a sense of order, and are not sufficiently persevering in their enterprises. Drunkenness is a vice no less general in Ireland than in England. Between 1839 and 1845 there existed a prospect of all Irishmen taking pledges of temperance and forswearing the use of usquebaugh. At the time when the fervour evoked through the preaching of Father Mathew was at its height, about half the population of the country pledged itself to abstain from strong drinks. In a single day 13,000 persons turned teetotalers, and in several districts all public-houses were closed. But in a poor country the temptation to drink is strong, and the pledges were soon forgotten. Drunkenness received, indeed, a fresh impulse from the great famine. In many localities the persons charged with the distribution of the charitable funds were at the same time dealers in spirits, and what they gave with one hand they took back with the other.

To Englishmen Irish “ bulls” are often a source of amusement, but for all this, and notwithstanding their assumption of ingenuousness, Irishmen are, as a rule, very shrewd. They are cunning when in dread of violence, but respond frankly to kind words. Naturally intelligent and of inquiring mind, they attend the schools with diligence. Until recently there existed in Ireland, as in Greece, open-air or “ hedge schools,” in which the teacher, seated under a hedge, was surrounded by his studious pupils. This custom dated from a time anterior to 1830, up to which year all primary education, excepting that vouchsafed through the agency of the Established Church, was interdicted. [20] The Irish are vehement in their language, ardent in attack, and smart in repartee. They excel in flights of fancy, and readily find a word to sum up a situation. They are, in fact, born orators, and a greater number of truly eloquent speakers have arisen amongst them than in England. Their writers possess no less verve than their talkers, and the Irish newspapers are written with a persuasiveness which we look for in vain in the journals published on the other side of St. George’s Channel. Bravery is a quality common to all Irishmen ; they have supplied the armies of England with some of its most famous leaders, and from them its ranks are largely recruited. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries thousands of Irishmen died fighting in French regiments, for they turned lovingly to France as to a country which professed the same religion, and shared with them the hatred of England. The narrow bays on the south-western coasts were at that time the trysting-places where young Irishmen desirous of entering the service of France found vessels to carry them over the sea.

For two hundred years the Irish have been a conquered people, and are so still. English rule, against which they have struggled so long, still weighs upon them, and Irish patriots have not ceased to claim “Home Rule” in one shape or another. The Isle of Erin is the only country in Europe which wholly escaped Roman conquests, and never suffered from the invasion of barbarians. The character of its civilisation was consequently more spontaneous, and although ardent patriots exaggerate its importance, it certainly did exercise an influence upon the development of Great Britain ; and Ireland, far from having invariably been England’s pupil, acted occasionally as her neighbour’s instructress. The conquest of Ireland by the English was virtually an irruption of barbarians, which arrested the free flight of Irish genius ; and in losing their independence the inhabitants of Erin lost, at the same time, the prerogatives which that independence had conferred upon them. From that day Ireland ceased to play a part in European history. All civilisation vanished during the atrocious wars which devastated the soil of Ireland and destroyed the population of whole districts. Sir John Norris, one of the English leaders during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, killed all the inhabitants of Rathlin Island, and the refugees who had fled to it for shelter, sparing neither women nor children, but driving all into the caverns, and killing them, as he states in his official reports, “ as if they had been seals or otters.” [21] But the Irish avenged themselves in 1641, when they massacred at least 20,000 Englishmen and Scotchmen. For this, however, Cromwell inflicted a terrible punishment upon them. We all know how he treated Drogheda, with what tranquillity of mind he caused fire to be laid to the church of St. Peter, within which the defenders of the town had sought a refuge. Cromwell thought of selling Ireland to the Jews, on their undertaking to pay an annual rent of £2,000,000. “ It is no felony to kill an Irishman” was a proverb of that period.

The greatest change introduced in Ireland by the English conquerors was that which revolutionised the tenure of lands. Up to the close of the sixteenth century there existed no individual property in the soil. The land belonged to the septa, or clan, whose chieftain, elected for life, distributed it amongst the members of the community, as was done in Russia until the abolition of serfdom. There existed no large stone buildings in the rural districts, and the agricultural nomads lived in miserable mud cabins, not superior to those of the present day. When James I. succeeded to the English throne, he offered to convert into feudal land-

owners the chieftains whom he found in possession, and few amongst them resisted this tempting offer. Subsequently many turned rebels or engaged in conspiracies, when the land was taken away from them, and handed over to Scotch and English immigrants. The dispossessed septas, however, never forgot that anciently the soil was the common property of all ; and even now, in many villages, the descendants of the old chieftains are treated with deference, and entertained at the public expense, as if they were the elect of the people.

Deprived of their land, the Irish were at the same time persecuted on account of their religion. Even after the law which compelled all Irishmen to live beyond the Shannon had become a dead letter, those amongst them who were Catholics were denied the protection of the common law. For many years a premium was paid to any one who turned Protestant, and the Protestant son of a Catholic father might at once enter into possession of his father's goods, though the latter was still living. The office of informer or "priest-hunter" became a profession which led to honours and fortune. Up to 1832 the Irish were represented in Parliament exclusively by Protestants, and quite recently they were obliged to pay tithes to the Anglican Church, of which they were not members. The mass of the Irish people are much attached to the Catholic priests, whom they look upon as the natural representatives of the national cause : they have forgotten that it was Pope Adrian IV. who gave Ireland to the English, and that the priesthood at that time zealously supported the cause of the invaders.

Poverty must naturally be very great in a country like Ireland, where most of the soil is in the hands of great landowners; where industry, except in a few favoured districts, is hardly known ; and where, during the eighteenth century, the development of various manufactures was stifled in the bud through the jealousy of avaricious English monopolists. Only in Ulster did the farmers enjoy security of tenure, for the privileges granted them by James I. made them proprietors of all the improvements they had effected on the land. As long as they paid their rent the landlord was not permitted to disturb them, unless, indeed, he was prepared to compensate them for their improvements. These privileges did not, however, extend to the other provinces. An absurd adherence to ancient routine and a too minute subdivision of the soil caused the agricultural resources of the country to be wasted. In Donegal and other parts of Northern Ireland large farms used to be leased to a number of persons, by whom they were subdivided according to the quality of the soil, a portion of each field being allotted to a separate tenant. When the father died, his separate lots were again subdivided according to the number of his children, until only a crumb remained to each. This method of subdivision, known as "rundale" or "runrig," could not, however, be applied to animals, which each of the tenants was called upon to feed in turn. It is easily understood that the soil produced but little under so pernicious a system, and notwithstanding its natural fertility and abundant rains, Ireland was incapable of feeding all her children. Famine became permanent, and the animals hungered with their masters.

Famines [22] have been of frequent occurrence in Ireland. The most terrible famine of the last century was that which occurred in 1739-40, but more terrible still was the great potato famine of 1846-7, when over 1,000,000 persons perished, notwithstanding the £10,000,000 advanced by Parliament for its relief. The population became reduced by about 2,500,000, and out of the 1,180,409 persons who emigrated to America, 25 per cent, are stated to have died within twelve months after leaving. The wages paid to agricultural labourers from the close of the French wars up to the time of this dreadful visitation are variously estimated by political economists at 3d. or 4d. daily, a sum still further reduced by periods of enforced idleness. About the middle of the century, when the purchasing power of money had already considerably fallen, Irish labourers earned between 2s. 6d. and 5s. a week ! [23] And such a pittance was to suffice for the wants of a whole family. Need we wonder, after this, that the Irish peasantry were condemned to a potato diet ? That tuber had been introduced into the

island about the close of the sixteenth, or at the commencement of the seventeenth century. [24] Ordinarily it yields an abundant crop, but for that very reason has proved an affliction to the island, by rendering its inhabitants improvident. The cultivator trusted to his potatoes to supply the means of subsistence, and planted little else ; and when disease struck his staple crop he was reduced to the necessity of eating his pigs, and that last resource failing, there remained nothing for him but to die. Shan Nan Vocht—“ poor old Woman”— is the name which Irishmen mournfully bestow upon their native country. [25]

During the famine of the black '47 the unfortunate people sought to appease their hunger by eating fallen cattle and even grass. Some died quietly in their cabins ; others, wandering aimlessly about, fell down by the roadside, never again to rise ; even in the towns starving men and women sank down exhausted, but the passers-by, accustomed to the sight, sought not to raise them up. They waited for the police to remove the obstruction. In many districts the dead were no longer buried ; it was deemed sufficient to pull their cabins down upon the corpses to serve as a sepulchral mound. [26] About 3,000,000, or nearly one-third of the entire population, appealed to public charity for assistance ; but what availed ordinary means of relief in so unparalleled a disaster ? Entire districts, more especially in the west of the island, were almost desolated, and the population sank from nearly 9,000,000 to 6,500,000. The famine carried off many more victims amongst Celtic Catholics than amongst Anglicans and Presbyterians, most of whom are of Scotch or English descent. These latter were rich enough to emigrate, [27] whilst at the same time the embroidery of muslin, carried on in most of the cabins of Ulster, the least Irish of the provinces of Ireland, saved the lives of many of the inhabitants. [28]

In the course of last century only Protestant Irishmen emigrated to the United States, whilst Catholics remained at home, and appeared to have almost taken root in their townships ; [29] but after the great famine, Irishmen, of whatever religion or race, readily found their way to a country which appeared to offer them better chances of succeeding in life than did their own. Encouraged by England, which thus got rid of a starving multitude, and by the United States, anxious to secure labourers to till their uncultivated fields, emigration soon assumed the dimensions of an exodus. In 1871, notwithstanding the great mortality which afflicts the new arrivals during the early years of their residence, there already dwelt in the United States 1,850,000 natives of Ireland. At the present time the American citizens of Irish origin cannot be less than six or seven millions, and the enemies of England have often looked to this multitude when desirous of provoking a war between her and the American Republic. The Irish Americans maintain relations with their fellow-countrymen in the old country, even after they have become citizens of the United States, and during the seventeen years which followed the great exodus they sent no less a sum than £13,000,000 in order to enable their relatives to join them in their new homes.

Irishmen unable to emigrate can at least periodically migrate to the neighbouring island, where they assist in the harvest and other agricultural operations. During certain seasons of the year their help can hardly be dispensed with, and the wages which they receive in England are at least double or treble those which they could earn in their own country. They are consequently able to return to their families with a modest sum saved out of their earnings, after defraying the expense of twice crossing the Channel. Most of these migrants annually flock to the same districts, and are employed by the same farmers. But the number of Irishmen who migrate with their families to England and Scotland, with a view to permanently remaining there, is also large. [30] Indeed, the Irish element in the population of Great Britain is far more considerable than it appears to be from the census returns, which take note only of persons born in Ireland, and include the children of Irish parents born in England among the rest of the population. Every large town has its “ Little Ireland”— always an

inferior quarter, with wretched tenements and ill-kept streets. There poor Paddy, a hewer of wood and carrier of water, has established his new home. His services have become almost indispensable, for he is often the only labourer who will consent to carry a burden or to dig. He might grow wealthy, if it were not for his improvidence, and although he generally marries among his own kin, his presence must in the end displace the Anglo-Saxon element in our labouring class, which is almost daily sustaining losses through emigration.

Ireland itself has grown in wealth in the course of the last twenty years. Many estates of impoverished landowners have been thrown into the market through the operation of the Encumbered Estates Court, and purchased by wealthy tenant farmers or English or Scotch colonists. And this new class of owners generally resides upon the land, instead of spending its revenues at Dublin or abroad. A further increase in the number of landowners has been brought about through the sale of a portion of the land formerly owned by the disestablished Irish Church. At the same time the number of occupiers has grown less, and the extent of their holdings more considerable, though even now the subdivision of the land, more especially in Galway and Mayo, is carried to a greater length than is compatible with good and profitable farming. [31] By virtue of the famous Land Act of 1870 tenants can no longer be evicted unless the landowner is prepared to compensate them for any "improvements" they may have made. This does not, however, hold good in cases where tenants are unable or unwilling to pay the rent agreed upon, and the evictions recently enforced have led to a renewal of the land agitation, and to a demand for the abolition of landlords, and the creation of peasant proprietors, or at all events for fixity of tenure at a rent considered fair by the occupier. This agitation has unfortunately resulted in agrarian crimes and murders, which it had been hoped were things of the past in Ireland. Yet, comparing the Ireland of 1841 with that of 1880, the great progress in its agriculture is undeniable. Since 1851 there has been a wonderful increase in the number of cattle and sheep, [32] and the supplies forthcoming for the English market are increasing with every year, whilst the sums received in return are divided amongst a smaller number of people. We are not, perhaps, wrong in assuming that the average income of Ireland is now about double what it was in the middle of the century. Erin, in its economical conditions, is, in fact, rapidly being assimilated with Great Britain.

In both islands, however, there are still thousands who depend upon charity for their means of subsistence. True, Irish towns in which the persons living in the workhouse are more numerous than those who are called upon to maintain them are no longer to be found ; nor, as was the case a generation ago, are there now parishes where 4,000 inhabitants own between them only 10 mattresses and 8 paillasses. [33] Hunger typhus no longer decimates the population, even though the potatoes should fail for a season ; but the want of proper nourishment and the almost total disregard of sanitary laws nevertheless shorten the lives of entire populations. Wretched mud cabins, filled with the biting smoke of peat, and inhabited by ten or twelve human beings, who sleep on the damp soil by the side of their pigs, are still numerous. Along many parts of the coast the inhabitants eat sea-weed, not by any means as a relish with their salad, as is done by the wealthy citizens of Belfast, but because their gardens and plots of arable land do not yield sufficient to satisfy their wants. Through a strange irony of fate, the poorest Irishmen take most delight in dressing in swallow-tailed coats and breeches, and in wearing black hats. Whole ship-loads of cast-off garments of this description are annually sent across the Channel. The clothing produced in the country itself is coarse, but exhibits in its cut a considerable degree of good taste.

All the large towns of Ireland lie on the sea-coast. Situated near England and Scotland, and at the western extremity of Europe, Ireland failed to create a great capital in the interior of the island. Her centres of civilisation naturally sprang up on that side of her seaboard which presented the greatest facilities for keeping up an intercourse with the commercial

countries from which a double channel separates her. In this feature of her political geography Ireland resembles Spain, but the causes which have had the same effect in both countries are different. In the Iberian peninsula the inhabitants principally crowd the sea-shore because of the cold and sterility of the plateaux and mountains which fill the interior of the country. In Ireland it is the necessity of commercial intercourse which accounts for the existence of busy seaport towns, the vast bogs of the central plain, which were formerly hardly passable, contributing, no doubt, in a certain measure to that result. The most flourishing seaboard is naturally that which faces England, and here, right opposite to Liverpool and Holyhead, on a spot marked by nature as the site for a great city, Dublin, the capital of the entire island, has arisen. Belfast, in the north, occupies relatively to Scotland a similar position to that of Dublin ; whilst the two towns of Wexford and Waterford, opposite to the estuary of the Severn, share in the commerce with Southern England. Cork, with its admirable harbour, has actually become the great Atlantic emporium of the islands. As to Limerick, Galway, Sligo, and Londonderry, in the west and north of Ireland, they have hardly more than a local importance as outlets for inland districts.

- [1] D'Arbois de Jubainville, "Esquisse de la Mythologie irlandaise" (*Revue archéologique*, June, 1878).
- [2] Sullivan, "New Ireland."
- [3] Chalmers, "Caledonia."
- [4] "The Irish Sketch-Book."
- [5] Lingard ; Hallam ; Gustave de Beaumont, "L'Irlande, sociale, politique et religieuse."
- [6] J. G. Kohl, "Reisen in Irland."
- [7] Ravenstein, "On the Celtic Languages in the British Isles," 1879.
- [8] Brian O'Looney, "On Ancient Historic Tales of the Irish Language," *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, December, 1875.
- [9] Sam. Ferguson, *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, August, 1874.
- [10] John Rhys, *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, December, 1875.
- [11] Mr. and Mrs. Hall, "Ireland, its Scenery and Character."
- [12] J. Bourke, "The Aryan Origin of the Gaelic Race and Language."
- [13] Dunraven, "Notes on Irish Architecture."
- [14] O'Curry, "On the Manners and Customs of the Ancient Irish."
- [15] *Journal of the London Anthropological Institute*, ii. p. 447.
- [16] A. M. Sullivan, "New Ireland."
- [17] Ferguson, "Evidences of Sun-Worship at Mount Cullan," *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, December, 1875.
- [18] Roget de Belloguet, "Ethnogénie Gauloise," ii.
- [19] Thackeray, "Irish Sketch-Book."
- [20] Sullivan, "New Ireland."
- [21] Fronde, "The English in Ireland."
- [22] Years of famine in Ireland since the birth of Christ : — 10 — -15; 76 ; 192 (first notice of emigration) ; 535—38; 664; 669; 700; 759; 768; 772 (famine from drought); 824-5; 895 — 97 (invasion of locusts) ; 963-4 (parents sold their children) ; 1047; 1116 (people eat each other) ; 1153 ; 1188; 1200 1209 ; 1227 ; 1262 ; 1271 ; 1295 ; 1302 ; 1314 ; 1316 ; 1317 ; 1332 ; 1339 ; 1410 ; 1433 ; 1447 ; 1491 ; 1497 ; 1522 ; 1565 ; 1586 (consequent on the wars ; human flesh eaten) ; 1588-9 (human flesh eaten) 1601—3 (cannibalism) ; 1650-51 (sieges of Limerick and Galway) ; 1690 ; 1727—29 ; 1739-40; 1765 1801 ; 1812 ; 1822 ; 1831; 1845 (£850,000 expended by Government in relief of sufferers) ; 1846-7 1879. (Cornelius Walford, "On the Famines of the World," *Journal of the Statistical Society*, 1878.)
- [23] Buckle, "History of Civilisation in England."
- [24] Dufferin, "Irish Emigration, and the Tenure of Land in Ireland."

[25] Sullivan, "New Ireland."

[26] Sullivan, "New Ireland."

[27] Decrease of the population of Ireland, 1834 — 1871 : —

|                               | Total Population | Catholics | Anglicans | Pryesbyterians |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-----------|-----------|----------------|
| 1834                          | 7,954,100        | 6,436,060 | 833,160   | 643,058        |
| 1841                          | 8,175,125        | 6,614,000 | 874,000   | 652,000        |
| 1861                          | 5,798,967        | 4,505,165 | 693,357   | 523,291        |
| 1871                          | 5,412,377        | 4,150,867 | 667,998   | 558,238        |
| Decrease per cent, since 1834 | 32.0             | 38.6      | 21.7      | 13.0           |

[28] Dufferin, "Irish Emigration and the Tenure of Land."

[29] Arthur Young, "Tour in Ireland."

[30] Natives of Ireland residing in Great Britain : —

|          | 1841.   | 1871.     |
|----------|---------|-----------|
| England  | 292,935 | 566,540   |
| Scotland | 126,321 | 207,770   |
| Ireland  | —       | 5,306,757 |

In the latter year there were 50,140 holdings of less than an acre, in addition to the above. The total number of "occupiers" was only 528,275, for in many instances landholders occupy more than one farm.

[32] Live stock : —

|                  | 1851.     | 1879.     |
|------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Horses and Mules | 543,312   | 596,890   |
| Cattle           | 2,967,461 | 4,067,778 |
| Sheep            | 1,122,128 | 4,017,903 |
| Pigs             | 1,084,857 | 1,072,185 |

[33] George Hill ; Mr. and Mrs. Hall, "Ireland ;" Amédée Pichot, "L'Irlande et le pays des Galles."

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