

A
TOUR
IN
IRELAND :
WITH
GENERAL OBSERVATIONS
ON THE
PRESENT STATE of that KINGDOM.
MADE IN
The YEARS 1776, 1777, and 1778.
AND
Brought down to the End of 1779.
By ARTHUR YOUNG, Esq ; F. R. S.

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DUBLIN :

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The circumstance which strikes me as the greatest singularity of Ireland is the rockiness of the soil, which should seem at first sight against that degree of fertility; but the contrary is the fact. Stone is so general, that I have great reason to believe the whole island is one vast rock of different strata and kinds rising out of the sea. I have rarely heard of any great depths being sunk without meeting with it. In general it appears on the surface in every part of the kingdom; the flattest and most fertile parts, as Limerick, Tipperary, and Meath, have it at no great depth, almost as much as the more barren ones. May we not recognise in this the hand of bounteous Providence, which has given perhaps the most stony soil in Europe to the moistest climate in it? If as much rain fell upon the clays of England

(a soil very rarely met with in Ireland, and never without much stone) as falls upon the rocks of her sister island, those lands could not be cultivated. But the rocks are here clothed with verdure ; those of limestone, with only a thin covering of mould, have the softest and most beautiful turf imaginable.

August 31st, to Newbrook, over a various country, part waste, and much cultivated. About Caisle-Burk, the road crossed a most remarkable stoney natural pavement, regularly surrounded with grass trenches, all on a flat. Passed the ruins of a very fine abbey ; reached Holymount, Mr. Lindsay's, a very considerable grazier ; about which place, the soil is in general, a stoney clay, from six inches to two feet deep, on lime-stone gravel ; it is quite dry sound land, and the stones are lime-stone. Lets from 12s. to 15s. an acre. Farms are very extensive, up to three or four thousand acres, all stock ones, with portions re-let to cottars, who are the principal arable men here. They are in the succession way, buying in year-olds at 40s. keep them till three or four year olds, sometimes only keep them two years, they pay about 20s. per annum, on a medium. They are sold, at whatever age, for stores to the graziers in the rich countries. Another system is, to buy in cows in May, at 2l. 12s. 6d. to 3l. and make about 1l. 10s. profit. A cow will take an acre, but there will be an after-grass, worth 5s. an acre, for sheep. The sheep system is breeding and selling three-year old wethers fat, the wool, and the culled ewes. Above half the county bog, mountain, and lake. Folding sheep, I suppose, will come in here, for they have got very near it. They drive their sheep to a spot of grass, which they let for giafs potatoes, at 3l. 1s. to 5l. an acre, doing this at night, till the land is well dunged. The crops are eight tons on an average :

1. Potatoes. 2. Bere, if sanded, 8 to 10 barrels. 3. Bere. 4. Oats, 8 to 10 barrels. 5. Oats, 8 barrels. 6. Oats, 8 barrels. 7. Flax. 8. Wheat. .9 Sand for the bere, if for potatoes the sand does hurt, unlets it lies two or three years on the grass. 3 cwt. the barrel of bere, the same, which is surprising. 4 cwt. of wheat.

September 1st. to Tuam ; dined with the Archbishop. All this country is a good sound lime-stoneland, and famous for sheep, but upon enquiry, I found it did not materially vary from the neighbourhood of Holymount, or Moniva, whither I was going in the evening. Reached Mr. French's, at that place, to whose very obliging attention I am indebted for the following interesting particulars : he has improved 60 acres of bog, and 290 of moor, which he began in the year 1744, with a great red bog, from 20 to 30 feet deep, so wet and spongy, that no turf, fit for burning, could be found to cut in it, so very wet and loose, that a man could not go on it without jumping from tuft to tuft ; no heath on it, except at the verge ; the only spontaneous growth red and white moss.

The following account of this great improvement, Mr. French lent to the Dublin Society. It was never published. I insert it therefore with the utmost satisfaction.

BOG RECLAIMED.

Copy of a letter to the Dublin Society, for which they granted him a gold medal.

Dear Sir,

Moniva, Jan. 24th, 1769.

ALTHOUGH I have not hitherto applied for a medal or premium, yet for above 20 years past, during which time the works I describe have been carrying on, I have observed the useful hints of the Dublin Society, tried many experiments recommended by them, and have followed their instructions, which have turned to my pleasure, profit, and advantage. I observe,

that it is necessary to lay before the Society the quality of the bog, and the method pursued in reducing it, but fear their patience may be tried upon the present occasion.

The castle of Moniva, now part of my dwelling-house, is very ancient, and was built for a place of defence ; it stands upon a dry gravelly soil, which, like a peninsula of five acres, run between two very high, red, deep, wet bogs, impassable for any beast of burden, very difficult even for men to pass. The bog, on the north side, contained above 13 acres ; the other, on the south, is of a great extent. The east side of the castle was defended by a deep winding river, a few perch beyond which was a large extent of extreme wet red impassable bog, so high as to prevent, from the lower rooms of my house, a view of the country beyond it, and of a great part of an high island of land of about 15 acres, which lay towards the middle of the bog. A large old wood, which stands on 111 acres, in a semicircular form, partly round a lawn of 70 acres, upon a gentle rising dry ground, defended the west of the castle. The river, on every heavy rain, overflowed to the verges of the bogs, and very near to the castle. That I may not assume too much of the following improvements to myself, I must, let you know, that my father formed a scheme to turn the course of the river through the great east bog, which was from 26 to 28 feet above its level, and made a considerable drain through the bog for the purpose. He also made a deep mearing drain, near a mile in length from the river, through the large south bog, and divided about 90 acres thereof, by cross wide and deep drains, into 5 divisions, and by two drains through the north bog, laid out an approach, 7 perch wide, to his house, but his life proved too short to execute his extensive scheme.

Upon his decease, in the year 1744, I first pursued his plan to turn the course of the river, widened the drain made by him to 27 and 30 feet, according to the height of the bog, and sunk the drain to the gravel, where I could do so, and in some parts two and three feet deep into the gravel, which proved excessive hard. In other parts of the drain, the bottom of the bog was much lower than the level of the river, in which parts, as the water could not be drained off, there was no digging to the gravel. The sides of the drain were so high, that I was obliged to cut them in some parts into benches, in the form of stairs, to prevent the men at the bottom from being overwhelmed, which would once have happened, only that a man standing on the surface, observing the bog to burst, gave the alarm, by which he saved the lives of several men ; for in a few moments many perches in length of the drain were filled up to the top, more difficult to be again shovelled out, than if it had not been cut before ; it required sometimes four or five men standing upon different benches to convey what the lowest shovel took up to the top, besides the necessity of removing the stuff from the edge of the drain, to prevent the frequent burstings in of the bog. The greatest difficulty was to draw up prodigious large roots of fir trees, which lay firmly fixed and very sound, just over the gravel, at the bottom of the bog all along the drain. This I effected, by laying two large beams from the top, so as to form an inclined plain to the bottom : then drove down into the bog above, a strong beam perpendicular, and made it firm by stones ; to this, I fixed a great pulley, and another pulley to the root below, first separating it by hatches and iron crows from its large arms, which run under the bog : then by running a cable through the pulleys, the united strength of 16 or 20 men drew up the largest roots along the sliding plain. The men as they drew up the roots, usually stood upon the firm gravel at the bottom of the drain, the top being in many places too soft for footing.

Having completed the drain or water-course, which is above ninety perches in length, through the great east bog, I set about making a strong bank, from the east to the south bog, 20 perches in length, and from 15 to 50 feet broad across the old river, which was 16 feet deep. For this purpose I drove down a row of long wooden piles, and a second row across the river, and made the bank by filling up the intermediate space with sods well rammed and pressed down.

I had the satisfaction to observe, when I had made a second bank, at the lower or north end of the new drain, to prevent the water from returning back into the channel of the old river, but at much less expense than the former cost, that the river run its new channel, that I immediately gained about 10 acres of fine bottoms for meadows upon each side of the old river, and as the new river was three or four feet higher than the old, I obtained a sail for a mill, which I observed might be increased, by running a deep drain through the north bog for a tail race, which would also contribute to reclaim that bog : this I perfected, run it 11 feet wide down to the gravel, 94 perch in length, and in some parts into the gravel, to preserve the level. I built a bleach mill, the first built in the province where the fall lay, and the bog since reclaimed about it, is part of the green for bleaching linen.

From my new river, to a lake which lay about 230 perch to the east in the great bog, I cut a large drain of that length, to supply my mill with water from the lake, when the river should prove low in summer. This work was thought to be impracticable, the bog between being many feet higher than either the lake or the river, but I know that the lake was higher than the river ; indeed, for the first and second year, it proved impracticable, the drain, though laid out above ten feet wide, still filling up as it was made : but by perseverance, and still opening the drain at the end where the fall lay, at length the lake, to the surprise of many, run into the river, and gave me a new command of water. The whole bog, in ten years time, sunk amazingly, and disclosed to me, from the windows of my house, the prospect of a country which could not be seen from them before ; but works of this kind require patience and perseverance : for at the end of three years, when curiosity led me to see the effects of a great flood after a very heavy fall of rain, I had the mortification to see the great bank, which I made across the river, float away, like a boat before me. The neighbours, who for years past had insisted that my father and I had undertaken an impracticable work, applauded their own judgment upon the occasion, and endeavoured to dissuade me from any further pursuit ; but instead of following their advice, I immediately provided a boat, (for horses and cars could not, without great difficulty, be brought to the place) and with its assistance conveyed stones sufficient to fill up the channel of the old river, the breadth of the bank, and afterwards, by bog stuff brought by boat, and sunk in the front of the bank, I made it staunch ; then raised it by sod work, and planted trees on the top of it, by which means it has remained firm, and answered my whole design for these nineteen years past. When I erected my mill, and made sluices to keep up the water for it, I observed that my new river thereby became navigable for a boat, as well as the old river, and it might prove very advantageous for the conveyance of manures, if a communication was made from one to the other; but this was difficult, as the new river, in time of flood, was four or live feet higher in its level than the old yet I overcame the difficulty, by cutting a navigable line 16 perch in length, where was firm gravel at the bottom, from river to river, and built a water lock at the edge of the new river, where I found a firm foundation at the bottom of the bog. It answered my purpose, gave me a great command of water ; for by opening the sluices of the lock, I can at any time overflow my meadows, which lie on each side of the old river : it has stood now for about 18 years. When I observed the advantages which arose from being able to convey manures by boat, I proceeded, and cut a navigable line 30 perch long, 20 feet wide from the new river, above the great bank into the south great bog, and cut another navigable line 32 perch long, 12 feet wide, from the old river northward into the north bog, and another navigable line through the same bog west ward, in a winding direction, for the sake of beauty, 50 perch long, and 20 feet wide ; and cut another line 21 perch long, and 14 feet wide southward, from the western line, which brings my boat into my farm-yard, and enables it to proceed through all the navigable lines which communicate with each other. Several springs of water rose from the uplands, which lye west of the north bog, and probably were the cause of that bog in the before-mentioned navigable line, which run towards these springs. I built a second water-lock, and

turned an arch over it, as it stands in one of the approaches to my house ; by shutting the gates of this lock, the springs which run into the river, being intercepted, a sheet of water overspreads near two acres in my lawn, which lies between the wood and my house, and the boats are thereby enabled to go to the highlands, where there is plenty of gravel to manure the bogs. I made my navigable lines by banking out the water, and keeping the drains empty by screw pumps of about 13 feet long, which were worked by two men relieving each other day and night, which my own carpenter made, and also built my locks before he had seen any thing of the kind, until he admired his own works. Whilst I was executing the works which I have described, I proceeded to reclaim the bogs adjacent to them. The lines I have mentioned divided the north bog into 4 parts, which I inclosed by smaller drains into so many little parks ; it is entirely reclaimed, and has been for several years past under tillage and meadow, and yet, now, though it has subsided considerably, an iron borer of 18 feet, does not in several parts thereof reach the bottom of the bog : it was full of holes, out of which turf for fuel had been formerly cut, the levelling of which added much to the expense of reclaiming. The east bog, from the island to the old river, is all reclaimed, except two or three acres towards the south, and has likewise been under tillage and meadow for some years past,, I reclaimed these two bogs, by covering the surface with lime-stone gravel, then laid a coat of dung over it, and planted potatoes upon the dung ; the next year sowed oats, or rye and grass seeds, and the following year mowed the produce : the bog was so wet, that I cut several small drains, which I since filled up, when they had performed their office. To lay the gravel on, I was obliged to make roads with hurdles, to bear up small horses, which carried the gravel in baskets upon their backs, and to remove the hurdles from place to place, as occasion required ; the boats laid the gravel and manures upon the sides of the rivers and the drains, from whence the horses conveyed them. The subsiding of this bog is remarkable; if I should lay from fifteen to twenty feet, I think that I should not exceed : when I first cut the new river, the bog rose in a hill between it and the old river ; there is now a fall the whole way, except where the hill stood, which is the lowest part. The bog is now so firm as to bear a loaded cart. I stopped the sides of the hollows, where for some years I had cut turfs ; being advised to cut the bog away, but that would be the work of ages ; and where the surface was cut off proved most barren, and required most manure : these hollows are now little green vales and posterity will puzzle, as some do at present, to find the cause of them. After the first crops were taken off, and mowed for two or three years, I observed little tufts of heath began to appear in the meadows; where these appeared, some parts I tilled again ; put dung upon others ; but lime effectually banished them ; and so did a mixture of kelp and ashes, the refuse of the bleach- green, which proved the richest manure. I spread river-mud upon one or two acres, which had little effect, only produced a sedgey spirey grass, until dung was laid over it ; marle had somewhat a better effect than the river-mud, but marle, mixed with dung, proved very good ; lime, dung, or kelp, broke fine into powder, proved the best. I reclaimed above one acre, by gravelling, and laying a coat of fresh lime over the gravel, and planted potatoes upon the lime, without any dung ; the potatoes were small, and lay thin when dug out, but the corn, which succeeded them, proved very good, and the bog was thereby well-reclaimed. It should be observed, that all the stone and gravel of this country is lime-stone. I tried to reclaim part by burning, but the red bogs, which mine were, proved too wet and spongy ; the ashes were white, and so light that they had little effect In the manner I have described, I reclaimed about five acres of the south bog, which lay within the navigable line ; but not being able to pursue my navigation into this bog, the gravel at the bottom of the bog rising above the level of my upper river, without considerable expense, and the addition of another water-lock, I made a firm gravel road into the bog, first dividing one of the large divisions, made by my father ; by two cross drains ten feet wide, into four divisions, which made the bog pretty dry ; I then laid dung, two or three inches thick, upon the surface of the bog, without any gravel or other manures under : I observe, that the crops of potatoes, corn, and meadow following, were full as good as those

where the gravel was first laid on, which in wet bogs sink too Suddenly, I would therefore advise, and intend to pursue, the laying on of gravel after the bog been mowed for two or three years : the expense of gravelling an acre at the first, is, at the least, from four to six pounds ; and as you proceed further into the bog, the expense must increase ; therefore where dung is to be had in plenty, it is the best material for reclaiming a bog ; but I think that composts made with lime and earth mixed, or lime and moor, may answer the end of dung, which I have not yet sufficiently tried, but intend so to do.

To enumerate several other drains which I made in the east and south bogs, to prepare them for reclaiming, would prove too tedious. I usually cut them ten feet wide ; but it is difficult in a wet bog to ascertain the depth of a drain until the bog has subsided for years. In making the drain, which I have mentioned from the lake to the river, 30 or 40 men working in the same part of the drain for four or five days without intermission, except at night, could not bring the drain, in the evenings, to be deeper than from one to two feet deep, and both the overseer and men were all so out of patience, that they were with difficulty persuaded to continue the work ; but as I rode round the bog, I observed that the bog was subsiding, and that they were gaining the level, though they did not perceive it ; for the slush flung by the shovels out of the drain pressed down the bog and squeezed out the water into the drain which ran off, as I begun where the fall lay ; the bog was so soft that the men were obliged to stand upon boards as they worked, to prevent them from sinking : the bogs which I first reclaimed are still subsiding. I had, the last summer, 32 acres of the bogs, which I have described all under tillage and meadow ; I also mowed ten acres of the bottoms on the river sides, between the reclaimed bogs ; and other ten acres of bottoms by the same river, made meadow by banks cast up round them, to guard against floods, planted with alder and willows : I have six acres more of the east bog reclaimed by a coat of gravel only, never tilled, but reserved for pasture ; but they are far inferior to the tilled bogs, and will not be meadow until covered with other manure, and tilled. I cannot ascertain the depth of several parts of my reclaimed bogs, as my borer of 18 feet long does not reach the bottom of the north and east bogs ; the south bog is all 12 and 13 feet deep : but towards the verge they are shallower. The navigable lines which I have described, encompass 31 acres, except on part of the west side, where my house stands ; these I call my garden or small farm, through which the old river winds ; clumps of spruce fir, beech and alder, grow well on the sides of the new river, where gravel was thrown on the banks from the bottom when it was first made ; the broad-leaved elm interspersed through the meadows reclaimed from the bog, also thrive ; I have two small groves on each side of the water lock, of a spontaneous growth, from the deep reclaimed bog, consisting of quicken or mountain ash, birch, holly, and willow, some of which are from 17 to above 20 feet high. In making my navigable line, which runs west to the edge of my lawn, I discovered by my borer that a bed of white marle, at the depth of 16 feet, lay under the north bog ; the bed of marle proved to be five feet thick, under which lay a stratum of gravel, from six to nine inches thick, under which stratum of gravel lay another bed of marle, four feet thick. In the last dry summer, by the aid of my screw-pumps, I raised a great quantity of this marle, which leads me to claim a medal for reclaiming dry heathy mountain, upon which, after ploughing, I spread the marle. But I fear that I have tired you, as I have myself, and shall for the present, only present my respects to the Society, and assure you that I am,

Dear Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

ROBERT FRENCH.

It may be objected that the works were begun previous to the publication of the premiums; I doubt whether it be possible to reclaim such bogs in less than eight or ten years ; the water muft have time to ouze from sponges, which such bogs are: to reclaim them very expeditiously would exceed the expense of a private fortune.

To the Rev. Peter Chaigneau, assistant secretary to the Dublin Society.

Mr. French remarks, that the expense of improving bogs, equally spoigy and wet, with this, is very considerable, for the drains will for some time fill up admost as fast as made. When the draining is finished, the main drains should be left five feet deep, and the breadth just sufficient to keep the banks up : cross drains, of a smaller dimension, must be made, which, when the bog is perfectly drained, may be filled up again. As to the expense, he observes, that it must necessarily vary greatly : but the very worst sort may be completely done for 6l. an acre. Manuring with gravel, lime, or clay, may in general be estimated at 6l. Then Mr. French would by all means plant potatoes, in the trenching manner, for the sake of mixing the manure, which is laid on with the surface of the bog, and also for the use of the trenches, as surface drains. The crop of potatoes, if a moderate quantity of dung is spread for them, will be equal to any in the country, that is, worth 10l. an acre ; but if no dung, they will not more than pay the expense of iced, planting, and taking up. In the spring after, dig it slightly, level the trenches, and sow oats ; the digging will not cost more than 10s. an acre. The crop of oats will be 12 barrels, or rye, will be a great produce. With this corn, the grass seeds should be sown ; rye grass (*lolium perenne*) and white grass (*holcus lanatus*) do well ; common hay seeds good. The first year a car must not go on, but the hay brought off by men. The second year it will bear cars, and would then let for 10s. an acre, for three years only ; 21s. an an acre for hay. After that, a fresh manuring, with a compost of lime and earth, or lime and gravel, and then would let at 15s. It the land for potatoes is well dunged, the poor will pay 4l. an acre for it ; and the hay, instead of 21s. will let at 3l.

In relation to his mountain-moor improvement, the state of the soil before improving was that of continued heath, (*erica vulgaris*) with great quantities of lime-stones on the surface. Mr. French, in the first place, ploughed it with six bullocks, which did not do more than one-fourth of an acre a day, as the roots of the heath made it strong work. As they turned up the stones, or were impeded by them, they were drawn away in cars to make the walls. Left it after the ploughing from half a year to a year, and then broke it, cross-ploughed, and harrowed it ; in all four ploughings ; after the last, harrowed it smooth, and limed. Began with 60 barrels an acre, but increased it to one hundred, and to two hundred, and found the crops better and better, in proportion to the quantity. Upon the liming sowed the wheat, and harrowed it in. The crop has been generally from five to seven barrels an acre. The following year either barley or oats : of barley, the crops have been middling, about eight barrels, if oats, twelve barrels. After either the barley or oats, another crop of oats, equally good, and with that sowed hay, or rye grass and clover. Before the improvement it let at 4s. 9d. twenty-five years ago, and if the same heath was to be set out now, it would be worth eight shillings. After the oats above-mentioned, has set it readily at 14s. Dividing the lands into divisions of from fifteen to twenty-acred pieces, clears them of stones, and the expense of the walls, is

Drawing the stones	2s.6d.
Building dry	<u>1s.1d.</u>
	3s.7d.

If coped and dashed,
the additional expense will be 2s. 6d.
6s. 1d.

They are all lime-stone lands, and make very fine sheep-walks. Before the improvement very many sheep died on these grounds, of the red-water, but since the liming this has not happened ; nor would it before give flax, but now very fine.

Mr. French burns the lime in perpetual kilns with turf, laying in the turf and stone in layers, the same as culm, and all expenses included, amount to 4d. a barrel roach, of 32 gallons. Two cubical yards of turf will burn one cubical yard of stone. If the turf is very-good, one and an half will do. He tried French kilns, in which he burned 1500 and 2000 barrels, but found it very uncertain, frequently having the stone come out unburnt. A kiln of 1500 barrels, comes to 25l. but often it ran to 40l. he has upon the whole, found it far better to use the other sort, which are cheaper, and more certain. Another sort of mountain land, is the wet, boggy sort, one to four feet deep, which he improved by digging off almost all the bog for lime ; then ploughed it with six bullocks, and let it to the poor from a guinea to thirty shillings an acre, for them to burn, harrow, and plant potatoes ; after which they pay as much more for a crop of oats. Then limes it, takes another crop of oats, and sows grasses with it ; after this improvement, lets as well as the other. White marle, from under a bog, Mr. French tried, for improving fourteen acres of dry mountain land ; the effect was much the same as that of lime, but more expensive, from the difficulty of getting it. In the year 1744, when Mr. French came to his estate, there was no other linen manufacture than a little *bundle* linen, merely for their own consumption, with no other spinning than for that, and even for this, there was not more than one loom in 100 cabbins. In 1746, he undertook to establish a better fabric, and with more extensive views. He first. began by erecting spinning schools, and sowing flax, twenty-one acres of which he sowed on his own account. The linen board gave at that time one penny a day to all children that went to any spinning schools, which was of use ; but the providing flax Mr. French found of the greatest use. In 1749, he established eight weavers and their families, and the same year built a bleach mill, and formed a green, and to carry it on to advantage, sent a lad into the north, and bound him apprentice there, in order to learn the whole business. Upon his return, he managed the manufactory for Mr. French, buying the yarn, paying weavers for weaving it by the yard, bleaching and selling it. In this manner it went on for fifteen years ; but as in this state it was dependent on Mr. French's life, he enabled this manager to take the whole upon his own account, binding him to keep every weaver on the estate employed, whatever might be the number. The progress of this undertaking, united with the agricultural improvements, will be seen by the following returns of the Moniva estate, at different periods.

In 1744. There were three farmers, and six or eight shepherds and cow-herds.

In 1771. There were two hundred and forty- eight houses, ninety looms, and two hundred sixty-eight wheels.

In 1772. Two hundred and fifty-seven houses, ninety-three looms, and two hundred eighty-eight wheels.

In 1776. Two hundred seventy-fsx houses, ninety-six looms, and three hundred and seventy wheels.

Here, in a few words, is the progress of a most noble undertaking ; and I should observe, that it is doubly beneficial from one circumstance. All these weavers are mere cottagers in a town without any land, except a cabbage-garden, by which means they have nothing to do with farming, but become a market to the farmers that surround them, which is what all manufacturers ought to be, instead of spreading over the country, to the destruction of agriculture. Another circumstance in which Mr. French has given a new face to Moniva, and its

environs, is by planting ; he found a considerable wood of birch, which being a shabby tree, and not improving, he cut them gradually down, and planted oak, elm, and beach, with various other sorts ; he began this thirty years ago, and no year passes without his making some new plantation. By properly managing this wood of 111 acres, he has made it pay him 150l. a year, ever since, and there is now more than thrice the value of timber in it, to what there was when he began. Whatever he has planted has answered well, but the growth of the beach is the greatest. That of the oak is very great, and more flourishing than ever Mr. French expected to see them at the time of planning. The broad-leaved elm thrives very well upon the bogs, after they are cultivated. Mr. French has tried most sorts of trees in rows along the hedges, but none of them have succeeded, the west winds cut them in pieces ; since which he makes inclosures, and plants them thick.

I ought not to forget observing that Mr. French supports a charter-school at his own expense, wherein are from twenty to forty children, constantly supported, cloathed, and taught to read and write, and to spin and weave,

Farms around Moniva consist, principally, of large stock ones, from 200 to 500 acres, with very few cabbins upon them ; the tillage of the country is principally carried on by vil-lagers, who take farms in partnership. Mr. French's are generally from 20 to 130 acres. There will sometimes be from ten to thirty families on a farm of 200 acres ; but Mr. French finds that they do not thrive well if there are more than six families to one farm. The soil to the west of Moniva, is a lime-stone gravel, mixed with a clay, some of it upon clay : to the east it is a deeper and richer clay, and lime-stone all the way to the Shannon. The whole county lime-stone, except the mountainous tracts on the west, beyond Loch Carril, and the mountains to the south of Loch Rea. Rents in this neighbourhood rise generally from 12s. to 16s. except old leases, which are 6s. or 7s. The richest part of the county is between Lochrea and Portumne, thence to Eyre-court, Clonfert, and Aghrim. The third of the county is bog, lake, and unimproved mountain ; but most of the latter yields some trifling rent, the whole third, perhaps three-pence an acre ; the other two-thirds, 12s. at an average. The isles of Arran contain 7000 acres, belong to John Digby, Esq ; and let at about 2000l. a year. The great tract of mountain is the three Baronies of Eyre Connaught, Ross, Ballynahinch and Moycullen ; they are forty miles long, and fifteen broad, and are in general un-cultivated. The principal proprietors are, Robert Martin, Esq ; Thomas French, of Moycullen, Esq ; and Patrick Blake, Esq ; of Drum ;—Lynch, of Barna ; ——— Geohagen, Esq ; of Bowown ; ——— Lynch, Esq ; Drumrong ; Sir John O'Flaharty, &c. Mr. Martin has the largest tract ; he has let to Mr. Popham, 14,000 Irish acres, for three lives, at no rent at all ; then three lives more at 150l. a year ; and after them for sixty-one years, at the same rent ; and Mr. Popham has some men at work upon improving, from England and Leinster. There is lime-stone gravel upon a part of the land, but not generally in Eyre Connaught, any more than lime-stone ; at least according to common report.

Courses of Crops about Moniva.

1. Potatoes. 2. Bere. 3. Oats. 4. Oats.

1. Potatoes. 2. Flax. 3. Oats. 4. Oats.

There are some good tillage farmers towards the Shannon, who sow grass seeds. They also sow successive crops till the land is exhausted, and leave it for some time to graze itself. No ploughing or harrowing by the tail, nor any burning the corn instead of threshing, but these practices were very common 30 years ago. The measure of potatoes is the barrel of 42 stone ; five plant an acre, the average price 6s. or 8s. at the beginning of the season ; to 10s. or 12s. at the latter end. The average produce 25 barrels, or 10l. Oats yield about 8 barrels. Of flax, a hogshead sows 2 acres. It is but lately that they have saved their seed, but it is now coming

in ; a rood common crop is 4 cwt. of scutched flax, and the medium price 40s. a cwt. There are considerable improvements of mountain, and some of bog, that have been carried on by the poor villagers. They dig and burn the mountain, and get by that means very fine potatoes without dung, paying 20s. an acre for it. If they have the land to themselves, they will, after the potatoes, get good wheat, and after that, several crops of oats, till the land is exhausted. These village farmers, I remarked, as I went through the country, were industrious in forming composts of boggy moor, turf, and lime-stone, with what dung they can raise. They were now making ready against the winter's dung ; these are for potatoes the following spring, and they find it answers so well that the practice increased very fast. Such of them as are near the bogs, Mr. French gives the bog to them for 10 years rent free, and then they pay him 10s. an acre for it. They drain them, manure with lime-stone gravel and a little dung, and plant potatoes, getting fine crops, and good corn afterwards. In one of the bogs which a village was cutting away, the men called Mr. French to it, to shew him the old ridge and furrow at the bottom, and he found them perfect. It, was 4 feet deep : that this country was once generally cultivated, there are other signs. There are vast numbers of lime-stone gravel pits among the mountain heathy lands, though there is not the least tradition when they were used,

The principal stock in this country is sheep for breeding, the sale being wethers, which they sell fat at Ballinasloe ; and wool, of which they clip from the ewes 41b. and from the wethers 5lb. sells now at above 1s. a lb. Mr. French remembers the price of wool, 50 years ago, at 6s. and 7s. a stone ; 1744 was reckoned a very high year, and he sold 27 bags, at 10s. 6d. a stone : but as he got out of stock, he has not since had more than two bags. In 1745, &c. it fell to 8s. a stone. The great rise of the price of wool, Mr. French attributes to the low price of spinning and the increase of tillage. The stock farmers who are good managers, all have two farms, one as a dry one, in this neighbourhood for winter, and another in the deeper richer lands in the eastern part of the county, for summer feeding and fattening. Three year old wethers, from the light soils here, sell at from 15s. to 25s. each. It is reckoned good land here that will support three sheep per acre the whole year round. The system of grazing is to buy yearlings, at from 35s. to 3l. 3s. and fell out at four year old, at from 4l. 4s. to 6l. 6s. They sometimes sell them at three year old.

They plough with horses, but the gentlemen, mostly with oxen ; they have not the Mayo custom, of walking backwards before them, nor do they harness them all abreast, but two and two. They winnow all their corn in the field to blow away the chaff. They will take a grazing farm, with three years rent, for stock. Land sells at 21 years purchase. The rents have fallen since 1772, but are now rising from the greater price of wool, black cattle, and linen. Tythes are compounded by the proctors with gentlemen, but they screw up the poor people to the utmost. There are still many men who make it their business to hire large tracts of land in order to re-let at advanced rents. Population increases greatly, yet many of them live very poorly upon potatoes and water, with some oatmeal. There are many that have no cows, only a house and a garden. The grass of a cow is 30s. This is not the case, however, at Moniva ; there they have all cows, and are very rarely without milk. Rent of a cabin and an acre, 20s. building the cabin for them selves ; and 30s. if it is built for them. There were many emigrants from Galway to America, but only of the loose idle people. The general religion is roman catholic, but about Moniva chiefly protestant.

Mr. Andrew French, of Rathone Galway, who I met at Moniva, favoured me with the following particulars. At Galway there is a salmon fishery, which lets at 200l. a year ; and in the bay of Galway they have a considerable herring fishery. There are belonging to the town 200 to 250 boats, 40 or 50 of which are employed in the spring fishery, for cod, hake, mackarel, &c. &c. These boats are from 4 to 6 tons, some 9 tons. They cost building, 20l, a boat, and the nets and tackle, 15l. the nets are of hemp, tanned with bark. There are five or six

men to a boat ; they fish by shares, dividing into sixty : they have had this fishery time immemorial. The plenty of fish has decreased these 15 years. A middling night's take is 5000 fish ; all they get is sold into the country, and the demand is so far from being answered, that many cargoes are brought in from the north. The fish sell at is. 4d. to 2s. 2d. a hundred ; but the men are far from being industrious in the business : some weeks they do not go out twice.

On the coast of Conna Marra there is, from the 10th of April to the 10th of May, a fishery of sun-fish, which is done by the herring boats. It is not by shares, but the owners of the boats hire the men for the fishery. One fish is reckoned worth 5l. and if a boat takes three fish in the month, it is reckoned good luck. There are 40 or 50 boats employed on this. Along the whole bay there is a great quantity of kelp burnt ; 3000 tons are annually exported from Galway : the present price is 40s. to 50s. a ton. The more is let with the land against it, and is what the people pay their rent by. They use a great quantity of sea weed, drove in by storms for manuring land. In November they carry it on, the field being ready marked out in beds for potatoes, and leaving it on them, it rots against the planting season, and gives them great crops. They also do this with fern, cutting it in autumn, and laying it on to the beds, get good crops. The poor people near Galway are very industrious in buying the sullage of the streets of that town ; they give 3d. for a horse load of two baskets, and carry it three miles.

One circumstance, relative to the progress of the linen manufacture in this country, the town of Galway can instance. Mr. Andrew French of that place, sixteen years ago, imported the first cargo of flax feed of 300 hogsheads, and could only fell 100 of them, whereas now the annual importation rises from 3,500 to 2,300. Twenty years ago there were only 20 looms in Galway, now there are 180. They make coarse sheetings seven-eighths wide, at 9½d. to 11d. a yard ; dowlas, 28 inches wide, at 7d. Osnaburgs at 7d. also. There are eight or nine bleach greens in the county, but they bleach, generally speaking, only for the country consumption : the great bulk of the linens are sent green to Dublin. In the town and neighbourhood of Loch-rea, there are 300 looms employed on linens that are called *Lochreas*, of 28 inches in width, which fell at 7d. a yard. All the flax worked in the county is, generally speaking, raised in it. The yarn spun is pound yarn, not done into hanks at all. Very many weavers are in the towns, without having any land more than a cabbage garden. The linen and yarn of the whole county has been calculated at 40,000l. a year.

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