

## The Peregrinations of an *Emigré*

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INTREPID mortals who ventured upon a journey to Ireland in the eighteenth century regarded themselves as men of heroic mould, bent upon a very hazardous enterprise. Of this number was a certain individual named Bush, who visited Ireland in 1764, and gave his experiences to the world in a volume entitled ‘*Hibernia Curiosa*.’ He was impelled to this great enterprise, so he tells us in his preface, by the misrepresentations contained in certain books which had not long before appeared. “The greater part of these,” he exclaims indignantly, “appear to have been wrote implicitly from tradition or the hearsay of other people. Every gentleman who has been through the country knows that what they palm off upon us for natural history has no existence but in their own or the imagination of others, and even of such subjects as have some existence in nature are as much like the originals indeed as a sixpenny picture of KING-GEORGE & QUEEN-SHARLOT stuck up with a cat’s head in a pottage-pot against the walls of a cottage in Lancashire” resembles their most august Majesties, was no doubt what our author meant to say if his anger had not got the better of his literary style. By natural history the worthy Bush did not mean any description of the flora and fauna of the sister isle, but rather of the ways and manners of its inhabitants ; and to rectify the misconceptions caused by would-be tour-writers, whose longest journey he verily believed to have been from their own dwellings to the nearest chop-house, he set out from Chester by the turnpike road which had not long before been constructed to Holyhead. The stage-coach accomplished the distance very comfortably, so he tells us, in two days, and after “jumbling” up and down the Welsh mountains he reached Holyhead, that *ne plus ultra* of terra firma. There he began to feel some of his courage and his zest for the enterprise he had undertaken oozing away. He confesses that it was with apprehension, not unmix’t with fear, that he surveyed the yawning “gulph” before him and the floating carriage which was to convey him across it, and reflected that there would be but a few inches between his cabin and a bed of salt water. To reassure himself somewhat he sought out the captain, and that jolly mariner recommended a bottle of claret as the best specific, if not against the perils of the sea, at least for putting the terrors of it out of his mind. With or without the claret Bush got safely to the other side, though only after beating in the teeth of the wind for forty hours. His first impressions of the Irish metropolis were not very favourable, as it did not contain a single inn, so he assures us, where an Englishman with any sense of decency would have been satisfied with his quarters, and there were not more than two or three in the whole town into which an Englishman would have set foot at all. In his first hostelry, situated in Essex Street, Bush had to pay a shilling a night for a bed two feet wide, in a room not much more than double that width. Through the good offices of a coffee-house acquaintance he shortly found a clean and neat room for himself elsewhere, but he had to pay half a guinea a week for it, which he considered excessive.

In the country districts through which Bush journeyed the conditions were somewhat better. The inns were clean and reasonably comfortable, and the roads too were fairly good, though not equal to those in England. He added, however, that if his horse had been gifted with the powers of Balaam’s ass he would certainly have lifted up his voice in protest at the treatment he met with. The poverty of the people was so great that every handful of good hay and straw which was grown was expended not only upon their own bedding and the thatch of their dwellings, but also in making their horse-furniture, the whole of which, saddles, bridles, stirrups and all, was composed of *sugauns*—*i. e.*, straw ropes. The refuse at the bottom of the stacks and the spoil and rotted hay, of which, owing to bad methods of harvesting, there was

but too much, were considered good enough for horses. Only once during his journeying in Ireland did Bush succeed in obtaining a clean, dry bed for his horse, and that was when his host happened also to be a farmer. Bush arrived at the auspicious moment when his men were busy threshing, and he insisted on seizing upon as much of the straw as afforded his horse a good bed for that one night at any rate.

Unhappily the two characteristics which impressed our traveller most amongst the upper classes in Ireland were their predilection for duelling and for excessive drinking. It amazed him that a race so kindly and so hospitable should yet be ready on the smallest provocation, often for an offence given by sheer inadvertence, to run each other through the body, or to perforate each other's skulls with a brace of pistol-balls. Like most visitors to Ireland Bush met with unbounded hospitality, his only difficulty being to avoid swallowing five times more liquor than he had a mind for. The wine consumed was almost entirely claret, of which, in the year of Bush's visit, 8000 tuns were imported into Dublin alone. It was cheap, for the best claret procurable in Dublin cost but half-a-crown a bottle, whilst the price of that ordinarily drunk was only two shillings. Even a middling drinker, our author tells us, could carry off his four bottles without being in the least disordered thereby, and in Ireland a man was looked upon as a mere nincompoop with his bottle if he could not take off his gallon coolly. It was indeed impossible, so it seemed to him, to make an Irishman, who was anything of a drinker, drunk with claret. At the end of five or six bottles he might perhaps be a little flashy, but you might drink him to eternity, and he would never be anything more. Shortly after Bush's arrival in Dublin, one very hospitable individual, to whom he had just been introduced, said genially to him : " Well, sir, as you are come over quite a stranger to the country, it behoves us to make it as agreeable as we can. There is a company of us to meet at the Black Rock on a jolly party on Sunday next, and by —— there is to be five or six dozen of claret to be emptied. Will you give us the honour of your company ?" The number of the assemblage by whom this exploit was to be accomplished was not mentioned, but Bush declined the pressing invitation.

Those ultra-convivial habits are attested and deplored by many other writers of the time. " Make your head while you are young," was advice frequently given by elders to their juniors. It was said that no man who drank ever died of drink, but that many died learning to drink. Many were the devices adopted by the ingenious to circumvent the endeavours of those who would fain remain sober. Some hosts had their decanters made round below like a soda-water bottle of the present day, the only stand for them being at the head of the table before the master of the house. Every one was therefore obliged to fill his glass at once and pass the bottle on, unless he desired to upset its contents over the table. Others adopted the simpler but quite as efficacious plan of knocking the stems off the wine-glasses, so that they would not stand, but had to be emptied as fast as they were filled. Nay, hospitality went to such lengths that a man who accepted an invitation to dine was very likely to have his boots and his horse locked up, and to be detained willy-nilly a guest for two or three days.

One young fellow about this time, being on his way to college in Dublin, was invited to spend a few days *en route* at the house of an old friend of his father's. The night of his arrival there was as usual a drinking-party, and he was plied with bumpers till he sank senseless under the table. Determined to escape this fate upon the second night of his stay, he waited till the company had well started upon their potatoes, and then endeavoured to steal unperceived out of the window. He was detected, however. The cry of " Stole away !" was immediately raised, and with loud and vigorous view-halloos the whole company gave chase. In the condition they were in it did not give him much trouble to evade the pursuit, and he found shelter for the night in a ruined chapel within the demesne. In the early morning he ventured back to the house, and as he approached the hospitable mansion the doors were flung wide

and a most extraordinary procession issued forth. Such of the company as were still able to walk had procured an old Irish low-backed car, on which they had laid the bodies of those who were insensible and thrown a white sheet over them. One or two of the guests had taken their places in the shafts, others pushed behind, whilst some walked on either side carrying lighted candles in imitation of an Irish wake, and the whole number raised the best imitation of the *keen*—the Irish funeral-cry—that they were capable of. In this fashion the victims of the night's debauch were conducted back to their respective homes by the survivors. When those who had been thus prematurely waked regained their senses, they forthwith sent challenges to their mourners, and a goodly crop of duels were fought as the outcome of this practical joke.

Richard Twiss, who visited Ireland some years later than the author of 'Hibernia Curiosa,' does not animadvert upon the drinking and duelling propensities of Irish society, but upon another custom even more reprehensible. He asserts that the accomplishment most cultivated by Irish ladies of that day was the forging of franks. It will be remembered that at that date, when postage was a very costly item, any letter which bore the signature of a peer or member of Parliament was carried free. In answer to Twiss's strictures some laughed the practice off as trivial and harmless, and declared there was no law against it. He was obliged to point out that so far from this being the case there was a penalty of no less than seven years' transportation decreed against all who indulged in this trick. Others averred that they had leave from the member in question to counterfeit his name ; and Twiss was told that some of the Irish members were so obliging as to give all the inhabitants of some favoured town permission to frank letters in their name. There were still others who assumed an air of conscious rectitude, and insisted that the revenues of the Post Office were so scandalously misapplied that it was a meritorious act to lessen them. Twiss assures us that he had seen more than one lady of rank, with her own dainty fingers, forge any signature she desired to copy so perfectly as to defy detection. No other writer mentions such a practice ; and we can but hope that Twiss was unlucky in his choice of acquaintances, both titled and untitled. It must also be said that his book when it appeared aroused a storm of indignation throughout Ireland which was not allayed for many years, and other travellers who came over, intending to write their experiences, found themselves received with scant favour.

Twiss found two coinages—the English and the Irish—current in Ireland. Irish coins consisted of fivepennies, tenpennies, and six-shilling pieces. The common people called an English shilling a hog and an English sixpence a pig ; but why these terms of opprobrium were given them he could not discover. The value of the currencies differed to the extent of a penny in the shilling, so that an English guinea was worth £1, 2s. 9d. Irish money a difference that must have been somewhat confusing in everyday life, one would imagine.

Notwithstanding this duplication of coinages, there was such a want of small change that many employers and tradesmen struck their own copper coins. These were called traders, and were generally inscribed : " I., A. B., promise to pay the bearer twopence on demand," whilst on the reverse there would be a beer-cask or some other emblem denoting the occupation of the issuer. These tokens were chiefly current in the northern parts of Ireland where industry and the circulation of money was more brisk.

Unhappily Twiss and all other travellers were painfully impressed by the wretched poverty of the peasantry. Scarce one cabin in twenty boasted of a chimney, and in many of them the smoke curled up from every inch of the rotten roof ; whilst here and there a pole projecting through the thatch, with a sod of turf at the end of it, proclaimed to those of understanding that native-brewed potheen was to be had within. If any one entered one of these shebeens in quest of refreshment, the top was immediately knocked off an egg, and its contents emptied

out to furnish a glass. Even in the houses of the better-to-do farmers the furniture generally consisted of only a few three-legged stools and the large iron pot in which the potatoes were boiled, which subsequently served as a table, the kish or flat basket into which the potatoes were thrown after boiling, being set upon it whilst the family squatted round, and after the meal a wooden mether containing milk, the only drinking vessel in the house, was passed from hand to hand. For light they used rushes dipped in melted tallow ; if a larger light was required they twisted several rushes together and fastened them into a slit stick, the end of which was afterwards stuck into a sod of turf to form a candlestick.

In most of the villages Twiss passed through he saw boards nailed up over some of the doors setting forth that “ dry lodgings” were to be had within. As pigs could not read, he concluded that the invitation could not be addressed to them, though in many instances the proffered accommodation seemed better fitted for them than for human beings. He supposed, however, that dry, as in the usual employment of that word, meant free from undesirable damp and moisture, and that these advertisements were in some sort a reflection upon other lodgings in the vicinity that were not so favourably situated. Later on it was explained to him that “ dry lodgings” meant only that no food or drink was to be had within, but merely sleeping accommodation. He was told that in a higher rank in society the same term was applied to a ball where no supper was provided.

In the summer and early autumn, as soon as the turf-cutting and potato-planting were ended, the roads were covered with barefooted, half-clad wayfarers, bound for England or else for the cornlands about Dublin, to aid in the harvesting. They were known as *spalpeens*, and in general had no other possessions than a few oatcakes brought from home as sustenance for the journey, and the half-crown for which a passage was to be had in the hold of one of the crowded packet-boats which plied between Dublin and Liverpool, or Parkgate, hard by Chester. Their wives and children generally locked up the family cabin and maintained themselves by begging through the countryside till the potatoes were fit for digging.

Yet, poor as they were, the Irish peasantry were a happy and light-hearted people. In the evenings, when their work was done, instead of glowering by their own firesides, they gathered together ; the old gossiped, and passed the same pipe from hand to hand, each enjoying a whiff in turn ; whilst the young danced, either to the sound of their own voices, or to that of a bagpipe, if such could be procured.

One competent authority estimated that there were not less than a hundred thousand people—men, women, and children—subsisting by beggary, or who, in the more euphonious language of the country, “ carried the meal-bag and milk-can,” small contributions to those twin receptacles being collected from door to door from those who were but little better off than the recipients. In point of fact this multitude lived on the boundless hospitality of the country—a hospitality only made possible by dependence upon the potato,—being free to enter any house they pleased, to take a seat by the fire, and share the family meal.

### *The Peregrinations of an Emigre*

By far the most vivid and humorous picture which we get of Ireland in the pre-Union days, however, is contained in the writings of an *emigre*, the Sieur de Latocnaye. Latocnaye was a Breton noble who had taken part in the disastrous rising of La Vendée, and had had the good luck to escape across the frontier into Flanders. But when, after the battle of Fleurus, the hordes of the victorious Republican army overran the Netherlands, Latocnaye became alarmed as to what his fate would be if he were captured, and, deeming a further flight advisable, he crossed over into England. Here he spent some time, during which he saw George

III. hooted by the populace as he drove in state to open Parliament. Finding himself, however, with more leisure time on his hands than he well knew how to dispose of, he determined to spend some of it in making a walking-tour through Ireland, which if not the first altogether of such enterprises is certainly the first of which we have such a detailed description.

Our traveller crossed from Cardiff to the Suir in the packet-boat, and was charged a guinea and a half for his passage, which he deemed extremely dear, as the cabin was neither clean nor comfortable. He contrasted it very unfavourably with his voyage in the trading-smack which had brought him to England. The charge there had been only fifteen shillings, and for this sum, though they had been detained some days by contrary winds, he had been provided with food whilst on board, and been regaled twice a-day with tea.

Arrived at Waterford, he put himself and his luggage on one of the low-backed Irish cars, the only vehicle procurable, and for which he had to pay as much as he would have done for a post-chaise anywhere else. It was raining heavily, and the carman stopped at every way-side alehouse to drink and gossip, leaving the young French noble to sit outside in the wet. Irish rain seemed to him more icy and penetrating than any he had encountered before. At first he civilly requested the carman to proceed upon his journey, but finding this of no avail, he had recourse to some of the expletives which he had picked up from the sailors on board ship and from the loungers about the wharves and landing-stages. This proved much more effectual, and he had the satisfaction of hearing his driver say, in taking a hasty leave of his friends, “By —, I’m sure he’s a gintleman, for he swears confoundedly.” At Athy he very gladly bade good-bye to the jolting vehicle and its jehu, and transferred himself to a barge upon the canal, which had been opened for traffic about a year previously, and in this fashion he came on to Dublin.

Of Dublin itself Latocnaye did not form a very high opinion, at least as far as its social aspect was concerned. The only entertainments, he tells us, were what they called routs—that is to say, where a house could contain twenty persons comfortably sixty were invited, and so on in proportion. He was present at one such festivity where, from street-door to garret, every room was so crowded with handsome and well-dressed ladies that they could scarcely stir, and were obliged to speak through their fans. His inborn vivacity and natural good spirits, the exile informs us, were the only possessions which ill-fate had not been able to rob him of, but of those he seems to have had an unusually large share. Upon the present occasion, while fully sensible of all the beauty around him, he could not but think regretfully how much more agreeable it would have been to have spent the evening in a room with a few of the many charming women present, rather than upon a staircase amidst such a multitude of them.

Shortly before Latocnaye’s arrival in the Irish metropolis the passenger packet-service upon the Grand Canal had been inaugurated. Two very handsome boats, we are told, of which the one was named the *Camden* in honour of the Viceroy, and the other the *Pelham*, started simultaneously, at nine o’clock in the morning, the one from Dublin, the other from Kilcock, some twelve miles distant. They passed along amidst the cheers of the crowds gathered along the banks, and the acclamations were redoubled when at noon the boats met and passed each other half way at Lucan Harbour. “The construction of the boats,” said a newspaper of the day sententiously, “is such as to remove all fear of their oversetting.” A gratifying assurance truly to those who purposed travelling by them.

Our Frenchman was, however, present at a more imposing ceremonial connected with the inland navigation of Ireland. This was the opening upon St George’s Day 1796 of the floating and graving dock which united the Irish canals with the Liffey, and so with the sea. So im-

portant was the occasion deemed that even the Bench and the Bar forsook the law courts to witness the great sight. At eleven o'clock the Viceroy, the Earl of Camden, sailed into the dock in the viceregal yacht, commanded by Sir Alexander Schomberg. A fleet of craft of all sorts and sizes pressed in astern, and a park of artillery panted upon the bank thundered a royal salute. Arrived in the middle of the basin the yacht cast anchor and returned the salute, whilst the Royal Standard was broken at the masthead. The Lord-Lieutenant immediately went ashore, and was received upon the wharf by the chairman and directors of the Grand Canal Company. Having knighted the chairman, the Lord-Lieutenant sat down to a sumptuous breakfast in a tent by the waterside, where covers were laid for a thousand persons. Our author was not amongst this favoured throng. Together with an English acquaintance of his, he formed part of the crowd which lined the edges of the dock, and which was computed to have numbered some hundred and fifty thousand. So great was the enthusiasm exhibited by this concourse that Latocnaye was much alarmed lest some of them should fall into the water, and still more apprehensive that he might be pushed in himself. Two young ladies, separated from their friends in the press and terrified by the pushing and swaying of the crowd, clung to him and his companion for protection. The Frenchman looked at the girl who had caught hold of him, and seeing that she was very pretty he immediately kissed her ; the Englishman with equal promptitude clasped his pockets tightly,—this seemed to the former to be typical of the two nations.

In Dublin Latocnaye completed his preparations for the undertaking which he had in hand—or perhaps it might be more accurately said on foot,—and these, for their ingenious simplicity, deserve to be recorded. He cut the feet off a pair of silk stockings, and stuffed into them the entire outfit for his journey. This consisted of a pair of breeches, fine enough to be rolled up as small as a man's fist, two very fine shirts—the era of starched and glazed shirt-fronts was not yet,—three cravats, two pair of white silk stockings, three handkerchiefs, a powder-bag made of a lady's glove, scissors, needle and thread, and a comb and razor. A pair of dancing pumps was carried as a separate parcel. Upon the road our tourist tied his three bundles up in a handkerchief, and slung them on his sword-cane, to the end of which he had affixed an umbrella. This last article created much astonishment, and even merriment, amongst the country people as he walked along, being apparently an entire novelty to them. Upon approaching any house to which he had an introduction, he put his bundles into his pockets, and stepped out jauntily with only his sword-cane in his hand. The owner of the house, seeing him arrive thus unencumbered, made haste to offer him clean linen and a change of clothes, proffers which were invariably declined. It was the young man's great delight to witness his host's astonishment when he made his appearance at a later hour in the drawing-room, dapper and dainty as only a Frenchman of the old *régime* could be, and looking with his elaborately powdered hair, white silk stockings, and evening shoes as if he had arrived in a travelling carriage with several trunks, instead of coming on foot without visible luggage.

So great was the hospitality that he met with—his host of the previous night invariably furnishing him with an introduction which secured him a warm welcome at the next big house upon his line of march—that during the eight or nine months that his tour lasted our friend only slept at his own charges some half-dozen times. On one of these occasions, a day or two after his quitting Dublin, he lodged at the inn in Kilbeggan, and had the unusual experience of being waited on by a titled host. Some score of years before, Lord Townshend, the wild and dissolute viceroy—who signalised himself once by bringing his pack of fox-hounds with him into the council chamber in Dublin Castle,—whilst on a progress to the West, was compelled by the breaking down of his equipage to spend the night in Kilbeggan. Much to his surprise and gratification he was served with an excellent meal and with claret of most choice bouquet and flavour, for in those days most innkeepers, even of the smaller

country inns, had a store of good wine laid by for special occasions. Lord Townshend, according to his wont, did full justice to the vintage, and flushed with what he had drunk, insisted on summoning the landlord into his presence. He compelled the worthy man to kneel down before him, and despite the remonstrances of the more sober amongst his suite, he struck him with his sword, exclaiming, " Rise up, Sir Thomas Cuffe, prince of innkeepers !"

The next morning on being reminded of his exploit, of which he was himself totally oblivious, he felt some dismay, and called for the newly-made knight. " We were guilty of some follies last night," he said to him, " but I trust you understand that what passed was a joke and nothing more."

" For my part, my lord, I do not care," returned mine host, " but I must consult my wife on the matter."

Her reply was, " I never looked to find myself a lady, but since fortune has made me one, such I'll remain." And Sir Thomas and Lady Cuffe they were all the days of their lives, though by no means above attending to the duties of their calling.

It was not only from the well-to-do and the owners of country mansions that Latocnaye received hospitality. He turned in at all the cottages along the road to chat with the inmates, and was always made welcome to potatoes and milk, or anything else that the house contained. Once night overtook him before he had succeeded in reaching the residence for which he was bound, and he was obliged to take refuge in a cabin by the roadside. The owner, a widow, gave him a kindly welcome, and cooked the only food in the house, a few potatoes which she had got by begging, for his supper—a widow's mite indeed. She made him as comfortable as she could for the night by spreading a mat upon a wooden chest, the only piece of furniture which the house contained. The floor-space was already occupied by half a dozen children sleeping upon some straw in company with a pig, a dog, a cat, a duck, and two chickens. The young French *sieur* felt as though he were Noah in the Ark, surrounded by the animals. At daybreak this heterogeneous family were awake and astir, the animals greeted the first rays of the rising sun by making the noises individual to each of them, and immediately set about looking for something to eat. The dog smelt the stranger all over, he showed his teeth and growled in evident displeasure at finding such an unwonted inmate within the cabin, the pig put up its snout and snuffed at him, and the duck and the chickens began to eat his powder-bag, so that he deemed it well to get up, lest he should be devoured himself. It was only with the utmost difficulty that he could induce his hostess, when departing, to accept a shilling for the shelter that she had given him.

Latocnaye visited many of the holy wells, which were places of great resort, and to some of which people came from long distances in hope of a cure for whatever complaint they were suffering from. Beside one of these wells there was a large black stone, which seemed to him to have been a tombstone, for three death's heads were still faintly visible upon it, though they had been almost worn away by much rubbing and kissing. The devotion consisted in going round the well and stone on bare knees seven times, repeating certain prayers the while, but the round being so long the devotees were allowed to assist themselves by two huge thigh-bones taken from an ancient graveyard adjoining. Our traveller saw several well-dressed people going the round amongst the peasantry, and in particular one exceedingly pretty young girl ardently kissing the death's heads. The gallant Frenchman could only wish with all his heart that she had taken him for her physician instead of the cold and unresponsive stone. Saturday was the day of general re-sort to the well, the devotions were all over by two o'clock, and the afternoons were given up to pleasuring and also to match-making, these pilgrimages being productive, he was told, of many marriages.

As he journeyed southwards he overtook a young countryman, and walked some miles in his company.

At length the young fellow said with a sigh that he was sorry, very sorry. Latocnaye inquired wherefore.

“ Ah, sir,” said his companion, “ I am sorry that I cannot treat your honour to a glass of whisky.”

Latocnaye took the hint thus subtly given, and at one of the roadside shebeens he and the young fellow partook together of a drop of the “ creature,” as potheen was and is still called. In return, his new acquaintance took him into an ancient graveyard, and showed him, standing upon a tombstone, a stone vessel, which Latocnaye recognised as the holy water stoup of the ruined church hard by.

“ That vessel is always full of water, and nobody ever put any into it. The water is good for every disorder, but,” added his travelling companion with another sigh, “ I brought my mother a bottle of it last week, and she is none the better.”

Latocnaye pointed out to him that the water was very dirty, and the vessel half full of mud. He suggested that if the stoup were cleaned out, the water might have a more beneficial effect. With a handful of rank grass, plucked from amongst the graves, they succeeded in scooping out the mud, whereupon, to the young man’s consternation, the water drained away, leaving the vessel empty.

“ Let us get away as fast as we can,” he cried, “ for if the people see what we have done, they will break our heads.”

The most celebrated of these places of pilgrimage, however, was not visited by Latocnaye, but by another traveller, Luckcombe. This was the Great Skelig, the rocky islet off the coast of Kerry that rises perpendicularly from the sea to a height of eight hundred feet. Only one slender and extremely perilous track led to the summit. The pilgrims commenced the ascent by squeezing themselves through a funnel in the rock which resembled a chimney, and was called the Needle’s Eye. Thence a narrow sloping ridge had to be crossed, and at its end was the Stone of Pain, a smooth wall of rock, some twelve feet in height, leaning out over the sea far below, with only a few shallow holes for hands and feet cut in it. Thereafter the path was somewhat less hazardous till the highest pinnacle of the crag was reached, upon which there was a stone cross, known from its elevation as the Eagle’s Nest, and affording a magnificent view of sea and coast to all whose heads were sufficiently steady to enable them to gaze at it. The last and most terrifying of the stations, however, still remained to be accomplished. This was a spit of rock, only some two feet in width, projecting sheer above the sea, eight hundred feet below. The pilgrims, men and women, had to seat themselves astride upon it, and so edge forward to another cross, rudely cut upon the rock at the farthest end of the Spindle, as it was called. When this had been kissed, and a Pater Noster said, the penance was completed, and the descent, which was to the full as dangerous as the ascent, was commenced. Pilgrims journeyed from all parts of Ireland to perform this penance, and especially at Michaelmas—the Great Skelig being dedicated to the Archangel—the concourse was very great.

Latocnaye found that this life of a wandering Jew which he led agreed so well with him, that though he was constantly drenched to the skin, and often tired out with the long distances he had to accomplish, yet he was becoming as fat as a friar. He admired the situation of the town of Cork when he reached it extremely, but he thought it would be well if the streets

were cleaned and if the pigs were not allowed to roam in them in search of food. In Cork there were a number of French Republican officers, prisoners of war, who were allowed to reside there on parole. Latocnaye was invited to a dinner to meet them, and did not find that, exiled compatriots though they all were, they were much in sympathy with each other. The Republicans abhorred the *émigrés*, and spoke with the utmost bitterness of those who had borne arms against France. Latocnaye pointed out to them that most of the emigres had had to bow to a *régime* more despotic even than that of Robespierre, and from which no flight was possible—hard necessity, namely. The officers admitted to him that the condition of the French finances was extremely bad, but as one of them cheerfully remarked, “Holland, Spain, Italy, His Holiness the Pope, and parts of Germany, have already contributed to our relief, and we hope soon to put England under requisition too.”

Irish wakes and funeral customs were a source of great astonishment to our pedestrian. “Every peasant who dies,” he says, “is sure of having his friends and acquaintance in his room, crying, weeping, drinking his health, and singing his praises extempore in Irish from the day of his death to that of his burial.” One woman in his hearing excused herself for not having sent for a doctor for her husband in his last illness by declaring that the expenses of the wake were as much as a poor woman like herself could afford; and he was further told that if any neighbour, or even any person who had the slenderest acquaintance with the deceased, failed to put in an appearance at his wake without good and sufficient reason therefore, it would produce an eternal feud between the families.

Having taken a walk one day a mile or two beyond the town of Killarney, the young Frenchman was witness of a singular scene. A funeral passed him—that of an old woman, he was told. According to custom, the coffin was immediately followed by a number of women crying the *keen*, that wildest and most desolate of lamentations. The men slouched along behind, seemingly indifferent. Thus they proceeded till a cross-road was reached, and here a difference of opinion made itself manifest. The husband wished to convey his wife to the old Abbey of Muckross, where was the burying-place of his family, whilst her brother insisted vehemently that she should be taken to a burial-ground nearer the town, where her own people were laid. The relatives and partisans of either side laid hold of the coffin, each party endeavouring to drag it their own way. Finding that neither could succeed, they set it down upon the road and decided to settle the matter by a stand-up fight. Sticks were whirling and hostile cries ringing out when Latocnaye’s host, the parson of the parish, appeared upon the scene. Without an instant’s hesitation he bounded into the thickest of the *mêlée*, seized the brother and the husband each by the collar of their coat, and demanded to know what the disturbance was about. Upon the cause being explained to him, he decreed that a husband had the right to do what he pleased with his wife,—dead or alive,—and bade the cortège take its way abbeywards. The women during the fight had crouched upon the ground round the coffin and continued their *keening*, quite regardless of the affray going on beside them. Now, as the bearers lifted the coffin again, they followed, and the funeral once more set forward, the reverend arbiter, as a precautionary measure, retaining his hold of the brother.

Our hero, at the first outbreak of hostilities, had ensconced himself upon a low wall by the roadside, to be out of harm’s way, and have a vantage ground from which to view the conflict. He had expected to see the clergyman soundly trounced for his interference, and was much surprised at the unquestioning obedience with which the mourners submitted to the reverend gentleman’s ruling. Truth to say, he was somewhat disappointed at the tame ending to the affair, but what astonished him most in the whole matter was that any one should have thought a dead woman worth fighting about.

At Limerick Latocnaye made acquaintance with horse-racing and cock-fighting, both novel experiences to him, as such sports were unknown in his own country. Of cock-fighting he thought but little. He was present at one combat which lasted half an hour before one bird was transfixed by the enemy's spur, and the victor expired immediately afterwards from wounds and exhaustion. Latocnaye's one and paramount desire was that he were strong enough to put the spurs on those who set the cocks on, and to make them fight in the birds' stead.

It amazed the young Frenchman greatly to discover what a long and severe process of dieting and training both horses and jockeys had to undergo to fit them for the struggle on the racecourse. Races in those days were for the most part matches run for a wager, and for stakes privately arranged between the owners. It astounded Latocnaye still more to learn that if one of the horses should fall ill or die before the time fixed for the race, his owners and backers had to pay the stakes and bets in full, just the same as if the horse had run and been beaten, and that the most honourable and punctilious men would not have an instant's hesitation in accepting money under such circumstances. Very characteristically he could not imagine that the owner would not endeavour to find a loop-hole to evade such a penalty if possible, and he was confirmed in his belief by the following story which was told to him as having recently occurred.

A horse which had been entered for such a match met with an unlucky accident and broke its leg. The owner sought out his opponent, and, telling him that his horse had fallen sick and might not be able to run, proposed to forfeit half the stakes to be off the race. The other agreed with unexpected readiness, and the money was promptly paid over. When this had been done, the first owner said self-complacently, "I got out of that business pretty well, for my horse has broken his leg."

"I got out of it better," retorted the other, "for my horse is dead."

Our *emigré* had the good fortune to be in Limerick during the race week, which was the duelling season *par excellence*. The streets were filled with idlers and race-goers, and everything was in topsy-turvy confusion. No one dreamt of doing any work while the races were going on, and the country folk from miles round about flocked in to look on. He estimated that on one occasion there must have been 20,000 people gathered on the racecourse. The crowds were unusually great that year, he was told, because there were three peers amongst the jockeys. Several bucks who had come from the South went about the streets demanding truculently, "Do you want powder and shot? We will give you some." Eight duels were fought during the week, and an officer of the Irish Brigade was killed. Happily for the wellbeing of the country the races only lasted one week; had they lasted three, said the Frenchman pithily, the harvest would not have been gathered.

As Latocnaye went farther west he was much shocked by the poverty of the people and the wretchedness of their habitations. In Connaught the children played about the cabin doors "as naked as one's hand." They none the less seemed healthy and well-grown, and looked "as fresh as roses." As he passed along the women and children constantly came out upon the road to ask him the time, but whether this was for the pleasure of conversing with a stranger, or of seeing a watch, he could not determine. Poor as they were, too, their hospitality was wondrous. Every man's door stood open, and not only a neighbour, but even the veriest stranger passing by at meal-times, might walk in without ceremony and seat himself at the board to share what slender fare the family possessed.

Galway impressed our traveller more than any other Irish town which he had seen. The streets were properly laid out, and the houses not only larger and more imposing, but built upon an entirely different plan, their gable ends towards the street, with inner courtyards and wide coach-doors, reminding him much of old towns which he had seen upon the Continent, and bespeaking the Spanish origin of the Cité of the Tribes. The chief need of the town seemed to him to be a bedlam in which to confine the madmen, who for want of it were permitted to run wild about the streets, but were generally harmless, which must have been a consoling reflection for the rest of the population.

Galway was a very pleasant sociable place in those old days. In the summer-time ladies flocked into it from every corner of Connaught for the sea-bathing—at least, so they gave out. Our cynical Frenchman took leave to doubt if they had not sometimes more important business in view. Such a muster of fair ones naturally brought a corresponding number of young men in its train, who came openly and avowedly for amusement, and often returned home provided with a partner for life. There were gatherings every evening to which admittance was had by a small payment, and they were designated routs, drums, or assemblies according to the price charged, and also according to whether the ladies attending them were dressed, half dressed, or undressed. The greatest gaiety and unconstraint reigned at these gatherings, and the young French noble deemed that in matters of coquetry the ladies of Galway had nothing to learn from his countrywomen—that in fact they might have given these latter instruction in the art.

He was somewhat scandalised, however, after the stricter decorum of France, to see in the mornings merry parties of young ladies, half a dozen or so, perched upon a low-backed car, with their feet dangling all round it, driving out two miles by the Sea Road, to refresh their charms with a dip in the waters of the bay. In the evenings, if there chanced to be no rout or assembly, the summer visitors and the residents promenaded the streets, going in and out of the shops, buying, chatting with their friends and acquaintances, and enjoying themselves.

The shopping had, however, a serious side to it, for the milliners were always willing to give the ladies credit for the ribbands and other articles of attire which they needed to enhance their looks, and to let the bill stand over till after the fair one's wedding, when the unfortunate husband in Latocnaye's judgment resembled a vanquished nation, compelled by its conquerors to pay for the cannon-balls and bomb-shells by which it has been enslaved.

So great indeed were the attractions of life in Galway, that they made some people oblivious even of the passage of time. "There are in this good city," further observes our author, "ladies who grow old without perceiving it, and who go on dancing, shopping, and bathing until they are upwards of fifty." He was convinced, however, that ladies of fifty could not have spent their time so agreeably anywhere else.

One fact Latocnaye mentions which may astonish many people. This was that the fervour for the House of Stuart had much abated of late years in the West of Ireland, and he believed that with the incoming of the new century it would disappear altogether. Be it remembered that Charles Edward had died nearly ten years before, after an old age melancholy in its degradation, and that of all that ill-fated race there only remained that most exemplary but entirely uninteresting figure, the Cardinal of York, for whom one can scarce conceive any fervour continuing to be maintained.

No small amazement and consternation were excited in Galway when Latocnaye announced his intention of continuing his journey into the farther wilds of Iar-Connaught and Connemara. He was told that it was the most abominable country in the universe, and even in

Galway, the only link between the outer world and those regions that lie shut away beyond Lough Corrib and Lough Mask, there seemed to him to be less known about them than about the islands of the Southern Pacific. Most of those he questioned could only return vague answers, whilst some begged him not to adventure himself into a country the inhabitants of which were as savage as the Iroquois, and where he would not find even a dry stone to sit upon. All this opposition, however, only made our pedestrian more determined to carry out his project, nor did he find himself beset by any of the perils and difficulties with which he had been threatened. What struck him most, indeed, was the almost total absence of population in those mountain wilds. There were no roads, only a few bridle-paths, and such population as there was was strung out along these, or else settled upon the coast, and they were all engaged in one and the same pursuit—that of smuggling.

The deep secluded harbours of the western coast, running far inland, afforded the most admirable facilities for carrying on this trade, which was so safe and so lucrative that many people had settled upon the coast for the special and avowed purpose of engaging in it. Even the gentry did not scruple to promote this traffic, and it was whispered that more than one titled family owed the wealth for which they had been ennobled to lucky importations of claret and madeira, and of the delicate and highly prized muslins, which Manchester had not then learned to imitate. Nay, one reverend incumbent had succeeded in obtaining a negligent diocesan's sanction to the purchase as glebe of a barren and seemingly profitless strip of land by the sea-shore. The parsonage had been built there, four miles from the church to which it appertained, but above an extensive range of cellars, and with spacious out-offices, all most convenient for the bestowal of “run cargoes.”

One landowner, who was more than suspected of being concerned in this illicit traffic, in order to clear himself of all such unjust imputations, assembled a considerable body of his tenantry, and in the presence of the preventive officer, specially invited to be present with his men upon the occasion, harangued them forcibly upon the evils and iniquities of the contraband trade, and assured them of his fixed determination to uphold the law. The officer was no less surprised than delighted at receiving such an unlooked-for promise of support. His gratification was very considerably lessened, however, by discovering upon the following day that, whilst he had been engaged in listening to this edifying discourse, those of the gentleman's tenants who had not formed part of the audience had been busily employed a few miles away, upon the other side of a sheltering headland, in discharging the cargo of a smuggler and conveying it to safe hiding-places inland.

Many and ingenious indeed were the devices adopted in those old days to outwit the customs' officers. Boat-loads of native-brewed potheen or of foreign claret and brandy were ferried across Lough Corrib and Lough Mask snugly stowed away beneath a harmless looking covering of turf or straw. Funeral processions might be seen wending along the rough mountain tracks, the hooded *keener's* trooping after the coffin and sending their cry echoing over those desolate wastes. The coffin instead of its ordinary dread burden was filled with tobacco, and the mourners carried parcels of the same valuable commodity beneath their capacious cloaks. The whole consignment having been safely disposed of inland, the party would return merrily homewards. Or else tobacco leaf would be put into sacks, carefully padded and packed, and slung across a horse's back, looking for all the world like sacks of oats on their way to be ground at the mill.

One woman sat shrieking and lamenting herself outside the door of a wayside cabin as the excise officer and his men passed. Her husband lay within in the last agonies of typhus fever. The gauger gave the fever-stricken abode a wide berth, but on his return a few hours later, the husband, miraculously recovered, sat by his wife outside, both grinning broadly in the know-

ledge that during those hours a rich prize had been conveyed safely beyond the enemy's grasp.

Like all travellers through Connemara, the young French noble was hospitably entertained by Colonel Richard Martin at his home at Ballinahinch, in the heart of that wild region. It was a great amazement to the vivacious Breton that a man of wealth should live in such a remote and desolate spot, for the grandeur of the surroundings, at the foot of the great Twelve Bens, had no attractions for him. There was no town nearer than Galway, forty miles away, and from it all household supplies, even bread, had to be procured. On coming into the property Dick Martin had commenced to build a residence suited to his vast estate upon the shore of one of the innumerable lakes which stud Connemara. Finding, however, when the walls were but a foot or two above the ground, that the project would be an extremely costly one, he had wisely abandoned it, and contented himself with adding to and enlarging a house which his father had originally built to be an inn.

“I never met a man so careless about the affairs of this world as Colonel Martin,” says our author. “He has the very best intentions, and his whole heart is set upon the improvement of his estate.” Unhappily, in his desire to benefit his property he had allowed himself to be duped by sundry adventurers who had undertaken either to search for minerals or to bring great tracts of that waste wilderness into cultivation, and who, after extracting large sums from the good-hearted and credulous owner, had departed leaving no results behind them.

The Martin estate at that time covered nearly a hundred square miles, and brought in from £10,000 to £12,000 a-year, an average of about fourpence an acre. One of the fierce religious conflicts, by which Ireland has been but too often disgraced, had broken out in the North just before this. Inoffensive Roman Catholic farmers, who hitherto had lived peacefully amongst their Protestant neighbours, received a card, bearing the following mandate, a parody of Cromwell's stern decree : “Peter, James, or so forth, you have so many days to dispose of your property and go to Connaught or to Hell, for here you may not dwell.” Those who disregarded the cruel behest ran the utmost risk of having their houses burnt over their heads, and it was not unusual of a morning to see a score of homesteads blazing, whilst the high-roads were covered with men, women, and children fleeing for their lives they knew not whither. Thus for the second time there was a forced migration from the more fertile parts of Ireland to the barren regions beyond the Shannon, but whilst it had been the chieftains and the aristocracy of the old Irish race whom Cromwell had banished to the West, it was now the humble tillers of the soil who came, bringing such poor remnants of their belongings as they had been able to carry away. Humanity Dick proved his right to his nickname by the kindly welcome which he gave to these unhappy victims of religious bigotry and of greed. He was only too glad indeed of settlers upon his unpeopled wastes. More than a thousand families established themselves upon his estate, and to each of them he gave an allotment of land rent-free for a number of years, after which they were to pay him a small sum yearly.

Unfortunately the dwellers upon the coast at that time added to their favourite avocation of smuggling the more nefarious one of wrecking. An established device of theirs for luring a ship to its destruction was to tie a lantern to a horse's collar and to turn it out to graze along the shore. The movements of the horse as it raised and lowered its head made the light, when seen from the sea, appear as though it were on board a vessel riding over the waves. The crew of some unhappy craft in the offing, seeing, as they deemed, another ship nearer in-shore, were not afraid to venture closer to land themselves, and were thus driven upon the rocks. During Latocnaye's visit to Ballinahinch the captain of a vessel which had gone ashore, but of which the crew were lucky enough to have escaped with their lives, arrived to demand justice from Colonel Martin, and to beseech him to prevent the people plundering his ship

and its cargo. Dick Martin immediately summoned a number of his more substantial tenants, and armed them. At the head of this improvised force he proceeded across the mountains and dispersed the looters, leaving a sufficient guard to protect the ship till she was ready to put to sea again.

When our tourist at length quitted the hospitable shelter of Ballinahinch, Colonel Martin insisted on providing him with a horse and a guide to conduct him the rest of the way through Connemara. This last was by no means a needless precaution, for beyond Ballinahinch even the bridle-paths dwindled away into narrow stony tracks very difficult to find or to follow. Every peasant he met took off his hat and bowed low, saying " God bless you, sir." Several times they followed him for long distances, for the pleasure, as it seemed to him, of showing off their English in conversation with a stranger. They carried their hats under their arms all the time, and no remonstrances of his could induce them to put on their headgear. As he was descending one rough mountain-side the horse trod on a loose stone and fell, flinging his rider over his head. All the while that Latocnaye was picking himself and his steed up, the guide did not cease to ejaculate piously, " God bless you, sir ! God bless your honour !" without, however, offering any more active help. When both were on their feet once more, the guide said with much satisfaction, " God bless your honour, you're hard to be hurt !"

Somewhat farther on the young Frenchman overtook another traveller journeying the same road, and entered into conversation with him. His business, he found, was that of an inoculator, and he went over the mountains of Connemara inoculating the children of the peasantry against the smallpox. He had been moved, in the first instance, to take up the trade by seeing the frightful ravages that the horrible disease made in those desolate regions, and he had followed his calling now for more than thirty years, not earning more than thirty or forty pounds a-year thereby. That year, he told Latocnaye with pride, he had inoculated no less than 361 children, and out of the whole number only one had died. This was as well for himself ; for if a child died whilst it was under his care, not only did he not receive his fee, but he had to fly with all speed from the locality to escape the sound thrashing which he was otherwise sure of receiving from the infuriated parents and neighbours. It was certain, therefore, that he would pay all possible attention to his small charges ; and our hero thought that this Connemara custom might with much advantage be introduced into more civilised regions, where it was matter of indifference to the faculty whether their patients recovered or not, since they were sure in either case of being paid and were never beaten.

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