

Researches

In

The South Of Ireland.

History And National Character.

“ All only for to publish plaine,
Tyme past, tyme present both :
That tyme to come, may well retaine,
Of each good tyme, the troth.”

Thomas Churchyard's Worthines of Wales.

INTIMATELY connected as are the Sister Islands of Great Britain and Ireland, it is an extraordinary fact that the latter country should be comparatively a terra incognita to the English in general, who, notwithstanding their love of travel and usual spirit of inquiry, are still contented to remain very imperfectly acquainted with the actual state of so near a portion of the British empire.

To the facility of its access may in some measure be ascribed the regal splendour of Tara, the scholastic learning of Lismore, or the achievements of Brian and of Malachi, that unfairly usurp the sympathies awakened in our childhood for magic banquets, enchanted castles and the chivalry of the Seven Champions ; although the veracity of these marvellous stories, aided by a deceptive precision of date, has been maintained by many Irish historians with a sophistry at once ingenious and absurd. Whether the matter of such old chronicles be false or true, there is now little to be gleaned from those repositories of monkish labour, either of an amusing or an instructive nature.

I have made use of the Journal of a Tour through some of the Southern Counties, as the most convenient means of combining and conveying information derived from various sources, with topographical remarks, and observations on the manners and superstitions of the peasantry. Taking the broad outline of rational and authentic history, since the connection of England with Ireland, my object has also been to illustrate the cause of existing distinctions between their respective children—a difference of so strong and peculiar a nature as decidedly to separate those who should feel united in one common interest, and which, under slight modifications, still threatens to render Ireland the scene of serious disaffection. My labours may be imperfect, and have unavoidably been limited to the districts treated on ; yet I can with confidence claim the merit of having been an impartial observer and a faithful narrator of such events as have occurred within my own knowledge.

A general review of the History of Ireland presents few features that will gratify the pride of a native or the feelings of an Englishman. Conquered, without being subdued, a wild and unruly spirit of in-dependence flickered amongst the chieftains from age to age, unextinguished by a deluge of blood :— the faith pledged to the victors was broken at every favourable opportunity ; revolt succeeded revolt, and what was by one party considered as treason and rebellion, was by the other regarded as just, or at least justifiable : this proceeded from an imperfect and individual, rather than an universal conquest.

The invasion of Ireland by Strongbow and Raymond le Gros originated more in private speculation than from public circumstances ; and it was not until Henry II. had observed the progress made by these adventurers, that he afforded them assistance, which even then was granted with jealousy and suspicion.

A series of centuries present numberless struggles on the part of the Irish to throw off their subjugation to England, the results of which were partial and ineffectual, while the invaders maintained their newly acquired dominion with unyielding grasp, and, confined within a district termed “ the Pale,” were continually harassed by “ the Irish enemy,” whose internal feuds rendered them unable to follow up any advantage which they obtained.

When Elizabeth ascended the throne of England, foreign invasion and domestic security rendered it necessary to end this protracted system of temporizing, and to complete the conquest of Ireland ; and those empowered by the English government carried this intention into effect with unrelaxed severity : “ These deputies, and the deputies of the deputies, were strangers and soldiers, needy and tyrannical—their duty, conquest,—their reward, plunder, their residence, an encampment, their administration, a campaign.”

It would seem that the utter extirpation of the native population was the object proposed :— those entrusted with the prosecution of this desolating policy declare in the public despatches of their proceedings addressed to the queen, that “ they have endeavoured to make Ireland as a rased table whereon her Majesty might write her own laws ;” and again, “ that nothing but the sword held over their heads could contain the remaining Irish in subjection ;”—but it is both needless and painful to multiply quotations, when a volume might be filled with similar effusions.

Scenes of massacre and bloodshed, too horrible for relation—of treacherous and wanton murder, where every bond and tie of nature, of honour and humanity were violated, were circumstances of so common occurrence in Irish history at the close of the sixteenth century, as scarcely to excite attention, or awaken feeling, in those who have detailed the events of that era, and who by familiarity with horror seem to have become callous to it.

In the historians of these times, and whose language has been adopted by latter writers, the epithets “ perfidious traitor” and “ notorious rebel” are applied to every Irish chieftain—terms that almost silence further inquiry ; but if the Irish were rebels and traitors, the English were at the same time plunderers and tyrants ; their rapacity awakened by the hope of spoil, and their ferocity increased by the view of that property, which violence alone could wrest from its original possessors.

This stage of unprincipled warfare was dignified by a crowd of illustrious men, amongst whom Spencer and Raleigh are conspicuous ; the latter commenced his extraordinary and ill-fated career in these scenes of butchery and carnage, and in almost the first action recorded of that young soldier his arms were sullied by the execution of a piece of deliberate cruelty, which called down the censure of his royal mistress on Lord Grey, and will ever remain a stain on the page of British history, notwithstanding Spencer’s vindication or rather apology for such conduct.

With the ground obtained from the native chieftains, who were literally hunted down for their possessions, the perpetrators of these atrocities were rewarded ; and on the accession of James I., Ireland laid “ breathless, exhausted and peaceable, only because incapable any longer to raise the arm of war.”

The English settlers now became of advantage to the country which had been so long the field of contest and devastation, and during the tranquillity produced by this exhaustion important and beneficial changes were effected : agriculture received attention, manufactures were introduced, gloomy towers were replaced by comfortable mansions, churches were built, and boundaries constructed.

A wish to conciliate seems also to have existed amongst the English ; and Lord Baltimore, on his return from Ireland to the court of James I., is said to have replied to his Majesty’s inquiry respecting the state of that kingdom, “ That the Irish were a wicked people, but they had been as wickedly dealt withal.”

Still the ancient fire of hatred towards the conquering nation burned in secrecy and silence, nourished by opposing religions, and deriving fresh vigour from this new cause. The fatal dissensions between Charles I. and his people awoke the Irish from their trance of allegiance.

The history of this interesting period abounds with perplexity and misrepresentation : the most inhuman actions are charged by each party against the other, but a dispassionate review of these revolutionary events as they now appear mellowed by time into truth, will place some sanguinary points in at least a doubtful shape.

When the forgery of state commissions and other important documents is acknowledged on all sides to be no unusual practice ; when the solemnity of an oath was regarded a mere matter of con-

venience, or a form to serve some particular purpose, which might be absolved or abjured if necessary, and when the actors in these matters are viewed as animated by the irritation of party feuds and feeling, excited by political intrigue, and inflamed by religious rancour and bigotry, should we not pause and investigate every statement with the most scrutinizing strictness ?

The conduct of the Irish generally has been severely stigmatized and condemned, too often by those unacquainted with the niceties of the case. A long catalogue of cold blooded murders naturally excites horror, but a series of provocations may rouse the tamest spirit to measures of revenge and desperation ; and it will be found that there are various and contradictory evidences which require investigation before an impartial opinion can be formed.

“ That Ireland was never conquered has been her pride, but it has also been her misfortune ;” and I believe it will be found that her children have been alternately treated as allies, as rebels, or as slaves ; perhaps it may be urged that they have conducted themselves as such ; but have the measures of those who formerly governed them been unexceptionable, and has that faith, that honour, and that humanity been inviolably observed, which would call forth reciprocal virtues in a people whose traducers even have not denied their warmth of heart, and capability of ardent and devoted attachment ?

The circumstances of Charles I.'s reign contain many features of historical importance. It will be recollected amongst the charges most loudly urged against Lord Strafford was his arbitrary and rigorous administration in Ireland, regarding that island as a conquered county ; a position received with acclaim by the English parliament, and tacitly acknowledged by Charles himself.

The Irish shortly after took up arms and declared their independence, and were proclaimed traitors and rebels by the very same assembly for presuming to maintain the doctrine they had themselves first asserted ; nor is this monstrous inconsistency less remarkable for being slurred over and unnoticed by almost every historian.

A few words on the number and character of the parties in Ireland during the insurrection of 1641, emphatically termed by the natives, “ the troubles” may not be misplaced, as it is necessary to consider them collectively to form an adequate idea of the confusion which must have prevailed, and as they are oftener found treated in detail with a tedious minuteness than brought under one general view.

Charles had a small band of attached followers, headed by the Duke of Ormond, struggling with difficulties, and suffering the severest checks and privations, yet still loyal and faithful in an almost hopeless cause. Directly opposed to the Royalists were the Parliamentarians or Republicans, and midway between these were the Irish or Rebels, vindicating their independence and opposed to both, but more strongly to the latter : these were the three great parties. The subdivisions of the Irish are innumerable, and almost appear to be “ tot homines, tot animi.” The “ mere Irish,” or ancient Septs, had associated to throw off the dominion of England, and establish a monarch of their own nation and religion. “ The Lords of the Pale,” or the descendants of the English long settled in the country, who had intermarried with the Irish, less violent than “ the old Rebels,” having already too much, sought more power ; of these again some were more temperate than others, and, though siding with the Independents, would have readily maintained the cause of Charles on certain, and not unreasonable terms ; more were compelled to take up arms in their own defence ; and others, chiefly Scots and Northerners, were soldiers of fortune, and adventured their life in the speculative expectation of booty. These various factions were wrought on by the influence and promises of foreign courts, by the agency of papal missionaries, by the claims of kindred and the bond of feudal clanship. Such were the materials out of which that heterogeneous mass called the Confederate Assembly was formed—each jealous and suspicious of the other—influenced by private dissensions and fearful of reposing confidence in their associates.

Some of those who composed the league anticipated the result of this disunion. It is related that early in their proceedings one of the members who had seldom spoken stood up, and, after a profound silence and much expectation, gravely advised the meeting by all means to join with Cromwell and espouse his interest heartily, as the only expedient to ruin him ; and closed his ironical address by the deduction of former instances where the Irish defeated every cause in which they had embarked, and destroyed those joined with them by their internal contentions.

To perfect the knowledge of these discords and harmonies, the terms “claims of kindred and bond of feudal clanship” may require illustration. Amongst the ancient Irish there existed two laws, termed Tanistry and Gavelkind, well adapted to an uncivilized state of society, and therefore unfairly styled by Dr. Warner “absurd :” by the first of these laws, possessions descended not according to birthright but to the strongest and most skilful ; and by the other, women were excluded from any participation in the property of a deceased relative. These laws, amongst a barbarous people governed by “the strong hand,” proceeded from the necessity of possessing leaders with superior power and courage, and the clan or dependents of each chief were bound together by a double tie called Fosterage and Gossipred—customs that still prevail and affinities that are still acknowledged in Ireland.

The child of every chief was placed out as soon as born, to be nursed by some of his dependents, and the connection of fosterage was thus formed between that child and those of his nurse, who were termed foster-brothers and sisters to the young lord, and the nurse’s husband became the foster-father. Sir John Davies mentions that “fosterage was considered a stronger alliance than blood, and that foster-children do love and are beloved of their foster-fathers and their sept more than of their natural parents and kindred.” Campion also tells us, that “the Irish love and trust their foster-brethren more than their own,” and examples Turlogh O’Neale.

The sponsors of the child became likewise united in the relationship of gossip or godsips—a spiritual affinity acknowledged by the canon law.

Such were the ties which cemented clans or factions into an almost indissoluble combination, it being the invariable custom for fosterers and gossips to support each other in all quarrels of whatever nature.

With the Confederate assembly the Duke of Ormond temporized until the circumstances of Charles became desperate, when the Irish, with an indifference to the real merits of the question between the Sovereign and the subject, supported that unfortunate Monarch, because he was opposed by those whom they considered as their oppressors, and with a stipulating, yet careless, profligacy, ranged themselves under the royal banner, merging for a time their national views in a chaos of unaccountable contradictions. But the fierce and hasty strides of Cromwell awed the Irish spirit into submission ;—his commands were decisive and effective, for his cannon were his arguments ; and the shattered castles to be seen in every direction are memorials of his astonishing progress, or, to use the canting language of the times, are “evidences of the divine vengeance against such perfidious traitors as the Irish whose name and nation might, with a little more time and treasure, have been utterly extirpated.”

At the present day the common malediction in the mouth of every Irish peasant is, “the curse of Cromwell,” being their strongest expression for entire ruin and desolation ; and minute circumstances, that occurred nearly two centuries since, are as fresh in popular recollection as the events of the preceding year.

The contest between James and William is well known ;—William was victorious because he imitated the rapidity of Cromwell ; his own declaration was, “that he did not come to Ireland to let the grass grow under his feet ;” and by such cheering observations as “This is a country worth fighting for !” as well as his personal exertions, William inspired his troops with confidence and energy, while James, encircled by bigots, loitered over trivial and ceremonious details, and was overtaken by the day of action. By his individual example William gave a superiority to his soldiers which his enemies felt and acknowledged.—“Change Monarchs with us and we would fight the battle over again,”—were the emphatic words of one of James’s most distinguished generals.

The attainder and ruin of some of the ancient nobility followed each commotion ;—driven into exile, they became the miserable pensioners of foreign courts, and their confiscated estates were lavishly bestowed on English soldiers, from whom most of the present Irish families of distinction are descended. A nation, therefore, whose population is composed of two such distinct parts, requires ages and skilful treatment to become united and to feel a common interest : the one part drooping under the recollection of the loss of ancient wealth and honors, (for such was the feeling of clanship that the peasant identified with his own the fortunes of his lord,)—the other suspicious and unconciliating to those by whom they are surrounded, and fearing the reprisal of what their ancestors had violently

seized. It was an observation of the illustrious Bishop Berkeley, when speaking of the two nations, that “ although evidently their mutual advantage to become one people, yet neither seemed apprized of this important truth.”

The difference of relative situation which the English and the Irish have so long held towards each other, the former as conquerors, the latter as the conquered, mutually affected their national character, and both felt proud of marking their dislike to the other on every occasion.

“ The one in fear to lose what they enjoy,
The other to enjoy by rage and war.”

When Castle More, the residence of Barrett, a chieftain of some consequence in the county Cork, was pointed out to O’Neil as that of a good Catholic whose ancestors had been settled in Ireland upwards of four hundred years, his reply was, “ No matter, I hate the English churl as much as if he landed but yesterday !”

The present Irish character is a compound of strange and apparent inconsistencies, where vices and virtues are so unhappily blended that it is difficult to distinguish or separate them. Hasty in forming opinions and projects, tardy in carrying them into effect, they are often relinquished before they have arrived at maturity, and are abandoned for others as vague and indefinite. An Irishman is the sport of his feelings ; with passions the most violent and sensitive, he is alternately the child of despondency or of levity ; his joy or his grief has no medium ; he loves or he hates, and hurried away by the ardent stream of a heated fancy, naturally enthusiastic, he is guilty of a thousand absurdities. These extremes of temperament Giraldus Cambrensis has correctly depicted when he says, “ When they (the Irish) be bad, you shall no where meet with worse ; if they be good, you can hardly find better.” With a mind inexhaustible in expedient to defeat difficulties and act as a substitute for the conveniencies of life which poverty denies, the peasant is lively in intellect, ardent in disposition, and robust in frame ; nor does he readily despond under disaster, or yield to obstruction ; but moves forward in his rugged course with elevated crest and a warm heart : with a love of combat and of inebriation, he is fond of excitement and amusement of any nature.

The virtues of patience, of prudence, and industry seldom are included in the composition of an Irishman : he projects gigantic schemes, but wants perseverance to realise any work of magnitude : his conceptions are grand and vivid, but his execution is feeble and indolent: he is witty and imprudent, and will dissipate the hard earnings of to-day regardless of to-morrow : an appeal made to his heart is seldom unsuccessful, and he is generous with an uninquiring and profuse liberality.

Such is an outline of the Irish character, in which there is more to call forth a momentary tribute of admiration, than to create a fixed and steady esteem. When excitement is withdrawn, a state of sullenness and apathy succeeds, and hence an Irishman surrounded by difficulties and dangers, associated with strangers in a foreign land, is full of energy and expedient ; but herding with his own countrymen he no longer appears the same person, and were it not for the occasional flash of wit or invention elicited by some unexpected occurrence the casual spectator would pronounce him to be an essence of stupidity and perverseness—yet the strength of attachment to their native land is wonderful, and in banishment or even emigration there is an air of romance thrown around every recollection of the country where they have toiled for mere existence.

In the secluded Irish mountaineer the nobleness of savage nature has merged into the dawn of civilization, that without conferring one ray to cheer or ameliorate his condition, affords him imperfect glimpses of the superior happiness enjoyed by the inhabitants of other countries.

When turbulent and disaffected men agitate such a body, it becomes difficult to tranquillize those who have only life to lose, and every thing to gain. Continued and petty insurrections render this sufficiently obvious. It is not personal dislike to the British monarch, or political objections to the British constitution that have induced the Irish cottagers to appear in arms against both ; but the want of superiors to direct and encourage their labours, and to whom they might with confidence look up for support and protection.

A Narrative in which some of the transactions of 1798 are detailed occupies many pages of this volume ; written at the time, it contains a faithful picture of the excesses committed by an intoxicated multitude, and the individual privations related in it will not appear singular or peculiarly severe to those who retain the painful recollection of the sanguinary events of that period. The Rebellion of 1798, however, was neither a momentary effort nor an unpremeditated proceeding of the Irish people ; it was the result of an organization of considerable standing, and two generations of the peasantry had been trained up to become actors in this event.

As far back as the middle of the last century the peasantry entered into a secret association in the North of Ireland, under the name of “ Heart of Oak Boys,” at first professing to resist demands which they considered oppressive and unjust ; and other associations soon sprung up in imitation of their example, as the “ Steel Boys” “ Defenders,” &c. In the South appeared the “ White Boys,” so called from their practice of parading the country at night in white frocks, committing acts of violence and destruction on the persons and property of the opulent and well affected. The formation of these lawless parties was followed by the Rebellion of 1798, which devastated large tracts and excited in all classes a temporary madness that rivals in detail of cruelty the horrors of the French Revolution, on which event the projectors seem to have modelled their plans, and founded their expectations of success on that of America.

The Political Creed of an “ United Irishman” is exhibited in a curious form of examination which took place in the Gaol of Wexford and is preserved in Jackson’s Narrative.

Question. Are you straight ?

Answer. I am.

Question. How straight ?

Answer. As straight as a rush.

Question. Go on then.

Answer. In truth, in trust, in unity, and in liberty.

Question. What have you in your hand ?

Answer. A green bough.

Question. Where did it first grow ?

Answer. In America.

Question. Where did it bud ?

Answer. In France.

Question. Where are you going to plant it ?

Answer. In the crown of Great Britain.

The associations of Caravat and Shanavest have since the Rebellion disturbed the Southern Counties. It would be difficult to discover the precise object which these wretched men had in view. The collection of arms appears to have been their principal aim ; and numerous instances might be mentioned of their refusal to possess themselves of other property when completely in their power. In the Central Counties, the Carders, on the contrary, (a name derived from their inhuman practice of inflicting punishment on the naked back with a wool-card,) were in a great measure inflamed by a desire to punish informers and those who took or let land at a high rent. Harassed by the unavoidable distresses of the times, and inflamed by “ spokesmen” who had travelled in England in search of harvest work, had seen, and invidiously compared the comforts of the English husbandman with their own privations, the Irish labourer, attributes his sufferings to a partial and oppressive government. “ Worse nor I am I can’t be” is the result of his reasoning on his present situation and future prospects. Various prophecies and mysterious bodings of the overthrow of the English dominion are also industriously circulated by secret agency throughout the country, that, with such causes, keep alive the embers of rebellion.

During my last visit to the South of Ireland (1821) it was not difficult to discover the lurking mischief which has since developed itself under the direction of the ideal Captain Rock—the modern representative of Captain Right, the Chief of the Whiteboys. Much distress is the natural consequence of such commotions, as those sources are neglected on which the population are dependent for subsistence ; and it is in vain to hope for produce where agriculture has not received attention, and where the labourer wields the sword instead of guiding the ploughshare.

In 1780, the Patriots of Ireland, at once numerous and endowed with superior talents, supported by a volunteer army fifty thousand strong, demanded a free trade and a free constitution. Lord North was then Prime Minister of England, humiliated by the success of the Americans, and feeling that it would be imprudent to resist claims so well founded, so well advocated in the senate, and so loudly called for by an armed people, acquiesced in the wishes of the Irish nation ; obnoxious statutes were repealed, and the independence of the country, as far as was consistent with the British connection, acknowledged. Ireland, after shaking off the chains that so long had fettered her, stood for a time upright, and wore a happy and rather a commanding aspect. It was supposed that she would become rich by commerce and well governed by her laws, and that such a season of prosperity would bloom over the land as should blot out the recollection of past miseries, and cause flowers to spring up where weeds and thorns flourished. These predictions were soon blasted, and her horizon became again overcast ; popular discontent again reared its head. The French Revolution encouraged faction to grow daring, and patriotism degenerated into rebellion, and rebellion was followed by the Union, which annihilated the constitution of 1780, took from Ireland her parliament, her nobles and her nominal independence ; and although it has been questioned whether it has conferred countervailing benefits, none can doubt that since the Union, England looks towards her with a more gracious aspect ; many abuses also in the mode of legislation have been removed ; and the measure having taken place it must be the wish of every honest mind that it will be made as beneficial to both as possible, and that the bonds of mutual interest and reciprocal justice, will cement the two countries.

Scenery And Travelling.

“ These high wild hills, and rough uneven ways,
Draw out our miles, and make them wearisome :
And yet your fair discourse hath been as sugar,
Making the hard way sweet and delectable.”

King Richard II.

THE fashionable attractions of Paris, the beauty of the Swiss lakes, and the classic richness of Italy, are inducements of so strong a nature for an excursion of amusement, that patriotism alone can venture to recommend the Sister Isle to the tourist's notice.

It must be acknowledged, when compared with other countries, that Ireland does not afford the same means of gratification ; yet the singular character of the people, the romantic tales of their former greatness, contrasted with their present abject state, and the spirit of chivalry, which still survives amongst them, seldom fail, when aided by novelty of situation and incident, to create enthusiasm in a stranger ; but the known difficulties of travelling, and want of accommodation, are of themselves sufficient to prevent its selection for the performance of a mere tour of pleasure.

The South of Ireland, to which the remarks in this volume are confined, contains many scenes that may with justice be termed picturesque and beautiful as well as stupendous and sublime. Although the immense tracts of barren or imperfectly cultivated country, which spread in wearying extent and impress the mind with melancholy ideas of neglect and dreary grandeur, are unfavourable to the pursuits of an artist, such tracts, by dividing the beauties, probably enhance the value of the scenery where it becomes closer and more rich.

The character of the coast is bold and steep, containing numerous bays and harbours formed by arms of land breasted by rocky cliffs, that proudly rebuff the angry waves which

“ Boil and gnash their white teeth on the shore.”

Dean Swift, in a Latin poem entitled *Carberiaë Rupes*, has left us at once a correct and poetical picture of the south-west coast of Ireland.

The neighbourhood of the rivers Lee and Blackwater are highly cultivated, and afford the most favourable combinations of objects and forms. Opposed to their delicious and woody banks, the western districts of the county Cork, and the entire of Kerry, are wild and mountainous ; and the Galtees, an extensive range of many miles, stretch along the borders of the counties Limerick, Cork, Tipperary,

and Waterford, conferring a dignity on the landscape, which level or unbroken ground cannot possess. The general outline of these mountains is happily varied ; though heavy and inelegant shapes are by no means uncommon, yet they are seldom found alone, and rather improve than injure the effect of the sharp and irregular forms with which they are combined.

“ Dame Nature drew, these mountaynes in such sort,
As though the one, should yeeld the other grace.”

Many of their glens and passes possess a sublime sterility that inspires feelings of awe and reverence. Masses of rock are heaped together in unprofitable barrenness, clothed only with the humble lichen, and unyielding to vegetation, receive from year to year in vain the alternate changes of rain and sunshine. A stream, broken into several little falls, often foams along the centre of these rugged defiles, or tumbles precipitately over a steep crag with ceaseless splash. In some places, vast stones, rounded by the action of the atmosphere, hang in fantastic elevation as if ready to be rolled down with over-whelming crash upon the spectator beneath, and have been poetically described in Irish song as the marbles that Time and Nature played with when they were young and the world in its infancy. Surrounded by some of the grandest of these mountains lies Killarney,

“ Where woody glens in sweetness smile
As Echo answers from their breast,
And lakes with many a fairy isle,
That on a mirror seem to rest.”

The beauties of this celebrated spot have been so often and so fully described as to render any thing I could say on the subject superfluous. Although the noble expanse of water and the vast hills that tower in giant strength and pride excite general admiration, to me the great magic of Killarney has ever been its seclusion and retirement. The quietude of sequestered dells—still, glassy lakes—and over-hanging woods dipping into the water, is unbroken ; and the silent spirit of the place diffuses a profound tranquillity over the senses.

The shore of Mucruss Lake is perhaps the most romantic. Worn by the action of the water into numerous grotesque caves, that repose beneath the leafy gloom of luxuriant trees, every irregularity out of which fancy has imaged forth a form is referred with a marvellous tale to O'Donoghue, and each object receives a local importance from antiquated legend. Nor should the less trodden shore of Glengarriff, about ten miles from Bantry, and seated at the head of that bay, remain unexplored by admirers of the “ magnificently rude” in nature, to whose attention it may be recommended without fear of disappointing their most sanguine expectation.

It has been remarked by more than one artist of eminence, as a comment on the Irish landscape, that the forms of the trees are more graceful and capricious than in England.

“ Your trees,” said a gentleman to me, “ partake of your national character, wild and irregular they both assume extraordinary ramifications, that treated with justice by a master hand appear noble features, but of which an unskilful delineator produces only clumsy caricature.”

The oak of Ireland in particular has long been famous. Popular tradition not only derives the cudgel of every Pat, or as it is figuratively termed, his “ sprig of Shillela,” from woods of that name in the county Wicklow, but also the roof of Westminster Hall, and other buildings of the same age ;— the timbers which support the leads of the Chapel of King's College, Cambridge, built in 1444, as well as the roof of Henry the VIIth's Chapel, in Westminster Abbey, are said to be of Irish oak ; and to these may be added the Wainscotted Chambers of the Royal Library at Paris, founded, in 1365, by Charles V. An extensive purchase of the timber of Shillela was made in Charles the IIId's time by the Dutch, to pile the ground on which the stadt-house is built ; and pipe staves were largely exported about that period from Dublin to London.

So late as the close of the seventeenth century, Commissioners were sent over to Waterford and Wexford by the English government, “ nigh which places, and in the county of Wickloe,” Dean Story tells us, “ there is good store of suitable timber and other advantages for building ships at easier rates than in England.”

Mr. Hayes, of Avondale, who has written a delightful little volume on Planting, containing much information on the growth and value of Irish timber, observes, that the superior density and closeness of grain, the character of the Irish oak, especially in high situations and a dry soil, (apparent from comparison of its specific gravity with that of other oak,) added to the inattention of the Irish respecting the article of bark, permitted the tree to be felled in winter when free from sap, which might have induced English architects to give it a preference in material works ; “ and it must be allowed,” adds Mr. Hayes, “ that the present unimpaired state of these roofs, after so many centuries, seems very well to warrant the conjecture.”

Notwithstanding this former abundance of timber in Ireland, trees are at present the grand desideratum of its scenery ; and the shattered tower and riven arch of “ works of old defence” are often seated in the midst of such unvaried bleakness, that they become worthless in the eye of a painter, as formal and unassociated objects—the general pictorial effect of the landscape is however much assisted by the numerous ruins of abbeys and castles with which it abounds.

To whom shall I dedicate my prints? once asked a publisher, about to produce some Irish views : — the reply was, If your dedication is prompted by gratitude, I know of no one more deserving it than Oliver Cromwell, whose cannon has made so many dilapidated buildings for you.

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Another subject of unceasing inquiry with the peasantry is the hour. It is generally allowed that those who make the least use of their time are most curious in time-keepers, and you never meet an idle peasant but his first question is—Would your honour be after telling me what’s o’clock ? No reciprocal information can be gained until satisfaction on this point is given.—And one of my companions used frequently to amuse us by taking out his watch on the approach of any person, and as soon as they arrived within speaking distance, would proclaim—It is two o’clock—how far are we from —— ? This was, however, a joke to be avoided in cases of emergency, as we found it difficult, with our *most engaging* manners, sometimes to make our way.

“ In the wild parts of Ireland the pictorial traveller will receive little assistance in his researches from the peasantry, and must rely on his own exertions and enterprize for the attainment of his object. Should he happen to have a slight knowledge of the Irish language, or can get the names of places translated to him, they will often convey a clearer and more correct idea of the spot than can be extorted by dint of cross-examination—“ *Conveniunt rebus Nomina sæpe suis.*”

Sometimes our united efforts to extort information met with no better success than the following dialogue :

“ Pray is this the nearest road to—— ?”

“ Is it to——you are going? *fait* and that’s not the nearest road—being ’tis no road at all.”

“ Then had I better go yon way ?”

“ Och ! indeed and I would’nt advise your going that way at all. ’Tis few people goes that way, for there’s a big black dog there, and he’ll *ate* you up entirely.”

“ Which way then can I go ?”

“ *Fait !* and the best way you’d go is just to be staying where you are.”

The lower classes are generally unwilling to serve as guides in the wild parts of the country, declining the offers made them for such service with all that indifference and quiet humour which Miss Edgeworth so admirably delineates ; and the difficulty of obtaining assistance appears to increase in proportion with the necessity of the demand.

“ Och ! I’d have no objection in life to go *wid* your honour if supposing I could just *lave my troat at home,*” is no uncommon reply to your request, and is intended to express a doubt as to the safety of the expedition ; which, considering the period of this visit being that immediately preceding the late disturbances, may be readily supposed to have some foundation ; but in vain you seek to learn the cause or extent of their fears, or, in short, to dive below the surface of their thoughts.

“ Do you then fear any danger?”

“Och ! indeed, no particular danger, your honours—only ’tis an ugly way that way, any way I’m thinking—but your honours knows best to be sure *if ye ’ve bisness* there—I’m just *contint* to stay in a whole skin—and there’s *ould* Judy, your honours, and the *childer* all looking up to me, and small blame to them—sure its much pace I should get *wid* them in regard of risking their bread, not to mention my own, and maybe I’d be *laving* my bones to whiten out yonder. Och! its out of the way entirely.”

It is not easy to detect the real degree of fear here expressed from the evident exaggeration ; yet it would appear there must be some strong motive to deter these very poor people from earning a sum so easily, something more powerful than *the want of taste* for exploring—though it is certain they are, to use their own expression, “*contint*,” without much exertion. Nothing can be more difficult than to obtain information in point of road, distance, or situation of any object. You seldom arrive within five miles of the truth. When crossing the mountains from Gougaun Lake to Inchegeela, I was told that village was “worse” (more) than three miles from me. After walking about an hour and a half I again inquired—“it was worse than four miles.” The actual distance was about ten. The contradictory answers you get as you proceed are not a little annoying, and at times made us almost hopeless. One of my party, more from curiosity than the prospect of gaining a satisfactory reply, accosted a man respecting the length of a glen from a road on which we met him, and where we had reason to believe were some fine waterfalls.

“How far is it up yonder glen before you come to the waterfalls?”

“The waterfalls is it? indeed, and its a cross way, and your lady-ship would never be getting there.”

“We heard they were within half-a-mile.”

“Och ! they are not—and no road.”

“Is there a great fall of water ?”

“I never was there myself, but I know ’tis a great way.”

“Is it three miles?”

“Fait! and three miles would see you but a small part of the way.”

“Is it six miles, do you think ?”

“Och ! ’tis up entirely !”

This up entirely, or out of the way entirely, is the conclusion at which you arrive ; it seems to imply beyond reach or knowledge, and is frequently used instead of “*I don’t know*” to which the Irish cottager has a peculiar aversion, perhaps from the phrase being applied as a term of reproach to any stupid or simple person, coupling it with the Christian name, as Shane Neather, literally John I don’t know, implies John the Fool.

The higher classes in Ireland are ever willing to entertain the traveller and assist in the advancement of his journey, *when he has clearly proved it absolutely necessary to proceed*, for it is not a matter of question how to get admittance to the first houses in the country, the dilemma is, how to leave them. To a tourist, with sufficient time at his disposal, this may be agreeable enough ; if otherwise circumstanced, he will find it requisite to avoid the delivery of letters of recommendation ; for however gratifying a warm and hospitable reception may be, the sacrifice of time to be made in return is beyond all calculation. The over-abundant kindness of the host (for an immediate invitation always follows an introduction) seldom permits his guest the free use of his own senses, and to expostulate is vain. If, Dr. Syntax like, he travels with a sketch-book, and states himself in search of the picturesque, he is hurried from one eminence to another, and assured it affords the best view in the country, as extent and beauty, when applied to the landscape, are generally confounded. A party is arranged to meet him at dinner, each of whom requests a visit ; one assures him that a most celebrated castle is on his grounds, while another urges the charms of a glen near his residence in a tone it is impossible to refuse. After a journey of some miles and the loss of an entire morning, this renowned castle may prove but the naked walls of an old tower, dismantled of even its ivy garb, and the “charming glen” perhaps turns out to be neither more nor less than the best fox earth in the country. Thus the circle of acquaintances caused by a single introduction, every one leading to others, goes on increasing like the circles produced by a stone when flung into the water.

Letters, however, are needless in obtaining all the attention and assistance requisite ; a respectable appearance is a sufficient recommendation to the nobility and gentry, but towards the cottagers a cer-

tain courteousness of approach must be observed, ere you can win them to usefulness. If you seek information, the tone of interrogation must be conciliatory, not dictatorial ; if shelter or protection, throw yourself at once on their hospitality and you secure a warm and welcome reception.

The most romantic parts of Ireland are little frequented and travellers unlooked for, hence it becomes necessary to study the art of pleasing, which is in this case more valuable than “ house and land.” The poorest peasant will freely offer to share his cabin and divide his potatoes with you, though at the same time eyeing you very suspiciously, inasmuch as, being unable to account for your appearance, he usually supposes you belong either to the army or to the excise—two bodies equally disliked by them. Yet their greatest fears never destroy the national spirit of hospitality.

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The appellations of Tory and Rapparee frequently occur in the periods of Irish history connected with Limerick, and as the former is one by which a political party is at present distinguished, some account of these terms may not be unacceptable.

In the civil wars under Elizabeth the epithet Tory is supposed to have originated, and was applied only to the peasantry. Sir Henry Sydney, the Lord Deputy, according to Sir Richard Cox, “ cursed, hated and detested Ireland above all other countries ; not that he had any dislike to the country, but that it was most difficult to do any service there, where a man must struggle with famine and fastnesses, inaccessible bogs and light-footed Tories.” During the rebellion of 1641, the name was bestowed on such individuals as at first professed to remain neutral in the contention, but who ultimately—perhaps urged by their loss of property and consequent distress—took up arms with a view of reprisal or revenge on those by whom they had been reduced to absolute ruin. English and Irish—Protestant and Catholic—Republican and Loyalist, were alike their common enemies ; and Tories, being joined by men of desperate fortunes, united themselves into bodies ; and, in fact, became formidable gangs of freebooters, who harassed the regular troops of all parties without distinction. The name, therefore, was one of reproach, and “ Tory hunting” was almost viewed in the light of a pastime. An old rhyme in allusion to this sport is still orally current in the South of Ireland, and a decided favourite in the nursery collection.

“ Ho ! Master Teague—what is your story ?
I went to the wood and I killed a Tory.
I went to the wood and I killed another.
Was it the same, or was it his brother ?

I hunted him in, and I hunted him out,
Three times through the bog about and about ;
When out of a bush I saw his head,
So I fired my gun, and I shot him dead.”

Defoe has accounted for the introduction of the name into England, by telling us that the famous Titus Oates may be considered as its real godfather, and relates the following anecdote respecting it.

“ There was a meeting (at which I was present) in the City, upon the occasion of the discovery of some attempt to stifle the evidences of the witnesses (about the Popish plot), and tampering with Bedlow and Stephen Dugdale. Among the discourse, Mr. Bedlow said, he had letters from Ireland, that there were some Tories to be brought over hither, who were privately to murder Dr. Oates and the said Bedlow. The doctor, whose zeal was very hot, could never hear any man talk after this against the plot or against the witnesses, but he thought he was one of these Tories, and called almost every man who opposed him in discourse, a Tory—till at last the word Tory became popular.”

Rapparee has much the same meaning as Tory, and is derived from an Irish word signifying a half-stick or broken beam resembling a half-pike, from whence the name was given to such as carried this weapon and did not belong to the regular troops of either army, but provided themselves, in the best way they could, with pikes, daggers or skeins, and such instruments of offence as could be readily manufactured.

The Tories in the time of Charles I., however, appear to have originally received more provocation, and their conduct can be better vindicated than that of the Rapparees of William's. It is asserted, (and with strong claims to belief,) that the Irish commanders of James's army encouraged, by written protections, the Rapparees to surprise and plunder the straggling and detached parties of William's forces particularly during the winter, when general hostilities were suspended, by which means they not only harassed them extremely, but accumulated a supply of horses and muskets that enabled the Irish to bring an additional number of men into the field the ensuing season.

When a Rapparee became a prisoner, the gallows instantly terminated his fate, and it is stated by Mr. Lesley that many poor harmless country people became victims to military legislation ; but the necessity is obvious that no quarter should be given to men who lurked in ambush, ready to spring on their prey at every favourable opportunity, and whose acquaintance with the country enabled them to lie concealed in the most artful and treacherous manner.

“ When the Rapparees have no mind to show themselves upon the bogs, they commonly sink down between two or three little hills grown over with long grass, so that you may as soon find a hare as one of them ; they conceal their arms thus— they take off the lock and put it in their pocket, or hide it in some dry place ; they stop the mussel close with a cork and the touchhole with a small quill, and then throw the piece itself into a running water or a pond ; you may see an hundred of them without arms, who look like the poorest, humblest slaves in the world, and you may search till you are weary before you find one gun ; and yet when they have a mind to do mischief they can all be ready in an hour's warning, for every one knows where to go and fetch his own arms though you do not.”

This account, although ridiculed by some writers, I see no reason to question, as, during the years 1793 and 1794, the disaffected in the north of Ireland concealed both themselves and their arms from the soldiery sent to disperse their meetings in a similar manner.

The White Serjeant, Galloping Hogan, Redmond O'Hanlon, Ned of the Hills, and Iron Mac Kabe are the names and titles by which some of the most noted Rapparee leaders were distinguished.

“ A History of the Irish Rogues and Rapparees” is at present one of the most popular books amongst the peasantry, and has circulated to an extent that almost seems incredible ; nor is it unusual to hear the adventures and escapes of highwaymen and outlaws recited by the lower orders with the greatest minuteness, and dwelt on with a surprising fondness.

Researches in the south of Ireland, illustrative of the scenery, architectural remains, and the manners and superstitions of the peasantry. With an appendix, containing a private narrative of the rebellion of 1798 (1824)

Author : Croker, Thomas Crofton, 1798-1854

Subject : Ireland — Description and travel ; Ireland — Antiquities

Publisher : London Murray

Language : English

Digitizing sponsor : MSN

Book contributor : Robarts - University of Toronto

Collection : robarts; toronto

Source : Internet Archive

<http://www.archive.org/details/researchesinsout00crokuoft>

Edited and uploaded to www.aughty.org

January 17 2011