

Society and Manners,  
in the  
North of Ireland,  
in the  
Summer and Autumn of 1812.

By J. Gamble, Esq.

*Author of "Sketches of History, Politics, &c.  
Taken in Dublin, &c. in 1810.*

“ Careless of censure, nor too fond of fame,  
Still pleas'd to praise, yet not afraid to blame ;  
Averse alike to flatter or offend,  
Not free from faults, nor yet too vain to mend.”

Pope.

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Advertisement.

THE favourable opinion which some have been pleased to express of a former volume on the North of Ireland, encourages me to lay before the public the present one. It is written nearly in a similar manner, and by hasty sketch, by short tale, and brief dialogue, rather than by formal dissertation, it endeavours to make better known to the inhabitants of England, a people well deserving to be known. It makes no pretensions to science, and touches but little on topography, or the natural curiosities of the country. Men and women, however, are of more importance than pillars or columns, and it gives (I trust) human passions, human actions, and human beings, with all their imperfections on their heads. I know not that I have any where extenuated, and surely I would not set down aught in malice.

The mingled gloom and levity of my manner, will doubtless be as disagreeable to some, as it may be agreeable to others. To the former I would remark, that I describe incidents as they arise, and that incidents do not arise regular and homogeneous, but sudden and changing, as the fleeting colours of the rainbow, or the transient hues of a summer's cloud. The business of the morning is followed by the banquet of the evening, and the ball of night. Sadly and wildly is the day of business and of pleasure, succeeded by the sorrowful bed of sickness, the last struggle of expiring nature, the long procession, the lighted taper, and funeral of midnight. Nature herself writes Tragi-comedy, and those who follow her will always please the longest, though there may be times when they will not please the most. The Tragi-comedies of Shakespeare, which for a season were displaced by the cumbersome pomp, and unnatural dignity of the French tragedy, are now almost universal favourites, and are the legitimate parents of the modern melodrama.

Should farther vindication be necessary, I have an apology to offer, which I dare say will be thought a sufficient one. I have somewhere mentioned that I am remarkably short-sighted—I am more—I was once assailed by almost total blindness, and am still liable to frequent attacks of it. Even at the best I can take little share in the business or the amusements of life, and while feeble is the light that shines on the present, I have the past to remember, and the future to apprehend. Inevitable blindness, like all other inevitable misfortunes, may be borne, and we know that Homer and Milton composed those grand works which, beyond all others, required the most perfect concentration of the mind, in that situation. But neither to be wholly blind nor entirely to see, to vibrate as it were between light and darkness, may well throw the mind off its balance, and cause joy and sadness, mirth and melancholy, to struggle together, and contend for mastery, like the elemental particles of chaos.

Having said this much, I commit my little work, without apprehension, to its fate, in the confident hope that its deficiencies will be overlooked, when the circumstances under which it was written are considered, and that if darkness sometimes shadows my page, it will be remembered that darkness often times shadowed myself, and that like the great names I have just mentioned, whom only in their defects I can ever resemble ;

So thick a drop serene had quench'd these orbs,  
Or dim suffusion veil'd.

I

*Newry.*

THERE is nothing more unaccountable than the fatality which at times governs men, and impels them into situations of danger in opposition to their judgment. I have all my life had a dread of the passage from Liverpool to this country ; and, guided by circumstances, have rarely come by any other. I shall, I trust, be wiser for the future and to make my experience of service to others, I shall give an account of my present voyage.

I went on board the ——, bound to Newry, about six o'clock on the evening of the second of July, and sailed immediately afterwards. There were three vessels in company, bound likewise to Ireland. I was hardly on board before I wished myself back again ; the evening was dark and lowering, the wind every moment becoming more unfavourable, and the captain evidently intoxicated. From that moment I had a presentiment of all that was to follow. The whole of the morning, indeed, I had felt a most extraordinary depression of spirits, and twice was proceeding to the Talbot to engage a seat and return to London. On the second of those occasions I met the captain—he laughed heartily at my fears said the weather was fine, and the wind fair—besides, he was a lucky captain, for he was once shipwrecked, and every body on board perished but himself—moreover, there was the Honourable Captain K—— had just taken his passage, who had been in three great battles in Spain, and was now going to join the second battalion of his regiment in Ireland. This latter argument was so powerful that I re-solved likewise to venture with this *lucky* Captain, and ran a greater risk than if I had been, Uriah like, placed in the front of the worst of the above mentioned battles.

On getting round the rock, the Captains of our little fleet had a consultation whether to proceed or put back—three were of opinion it was wisest to put back—the fourth (ours) was obstinate, and swore he would go on by himself—the others I suppose, lest their courage should be called in question, resolved to follow him. I have remarked that in almost all consultations, weak or wicked councils generally prevail—no great argument by the bye in favour of popular assemblies.

The first two days the weather, though rough, was not very unfavourable, and at ten of the third morning we had a distant view of the mountain of Mourne, dimly seen through the dusky vapour that gathered round its head, and mocking us with a sight of the promised land which we were doomed to view afar off, and not to enter. I was standing, or rather endeavouring to stand, on the deck at the time, and gazed upon it with heart-sinking fondness ; gloomy and dreary as it appeared, I am sure it was dearer to my imagination than the most sun-decked hill or sheltered valley, ever feigned by a writer of romance. I would have given “ a thousand furlongs of sea for an acre of barren ground, long heath, brown furze, or any thing.”

About noon the wind suddenly shifted and blew a tremendous gale from the westward. At four we were driving rapidly to the southward, the sea in the common, but expressive phrase, running mountains high. As the evening advanced the horror increased ; the gale became still more terrific, and our frail bark laboured so much that each time she sunk, we thought she would never rise again. The sight, indeed, was shocking that I could witness it no longer ; I went below and threw myself into my little birth. Captain K—— was struck with my agitation and asked the cause. I desired him to go on deck. He returned an instant afterwards. I have seen many sights (said he) but never one like this.

“ Venit summa dies, et ineluctabile tempus  
Dardaniæ.”

said I to him on one occasion that the vessel received a fearful shock ;

“ Nudus in ignota, Palinure, jacebis arena ;”

he replied with a groan ; the first and the only-one I heard from him. The captain now came down, and, as well as he could speak, addressed the passengers—he told us that he was at a loss to know what to do that the gale was so dreadful, the vessel so crazy, and the men so exhausted, he was almost certain of foundering if we kept to sea ; that Drogheda river, which lay a little a-head, was, he understood, a very dangerous one, even to those who knew it best ; that he was utterly unacquainted with it ; but, as the lesser evil, would prefer venturing if we had no objection.

We told him we were incapable of advising, and begged him to do whatever he thought best for the safety of the vessel, and the preservation of all our lives.

We shaped our course (as we thought) for Drogheda river accordingly ; the sea roaring with a violence of which it is impossible to form an idea, though the darkness hid it from our view,—we saw nothing—we knew nothing of where we were, or where we were going ; we were ignorant of every thing except that danger surrounded us on every side ; that shoals and rocks were round us, and about us, and that little short of a miracle could save us.

The horrors of that night can never be erased from my recollection ; I am sure the agonies of death “ if any sense at that sad hour remains,” could alone equal it. It was so long—that night—often when the gust came violent and bore down the little bark that bore us and our hopes when I raised myself in the wretched birth where I lay, and by the miserable lamp that glimmered in the cabin, making “ darkness visible ;” I observed the slow progress of time—I exclaimed in the words of a German poet “ will this eternal night last to the day of judgment !”

If time is to be reckoned by succession of ideas ; that night was an age of misery ; nor would I spend such another for the sea’s wealth.

Strange as it may appear, my mind was active and busy—all the incidents of my past life passed before me with inconceivable rapidity ; many passages from our poets, presented

themselves to my memory with extraordinary distinctness, with a heart that vibrated to the sentiment I repeated, I am sure a hundred times,

“ O the cry did knock  
Against my very heart ; poor souls, they perished !”

At intervals the cries of the women in the hold mingled with the blast, and gave it new horrors ; more ear-piercing and heart-rending than the others were those of a female I had noticed the day before, for her extraordinary attention to an infant which she carried at her breast. She was an interesting-looking young woman about twenty, going to Ireland to her husband, who is a corporal in some regiment here ; if she were as affectionate a wife as she was a mother, his general would have had reason to be proud of her.

The stoutest seaman confessed, by his groans, by his short but energetic prayers, how terrible was the death that seemed to await us—maternal solicitude was *her* only feeling— for *herself* she had no care—she thought not of death—she thought of her child.

Even at the instant I write this—when the tempest thickens and the rain comes down, when, seated at a blazing turf fire, I contrast my present security with the danger of that night—I hear her agonized cry, “ O save my child, save my child !”—nor was I then, I trust, so absorbed in the selfish consideration of my own danger, as to be insensible to the heroism of this artless young Cheshire woman, who had probably quitted her father’s house for the first time, and experienced now so rough a sample of the storms we are all doomed more or less to meet with during the wearisome pilgrimage of life.

The contemplation of her fortitude served for a time to interest and occupy my thoughts ; they soon returned, however, to the scene around me and to myself. Death by ship-wreck is the most terrible of deaths. The spectacle of a field of battle, is lofty and imposing—its glittering apparel, its martial music, its waving banners, and floating standards, its high chivalric air and character, elevate the soul, and conceal from us the dangers of our situation.

Stretched on our death-bed, enfeebled by sickness, our sensibility becomes enfeebled also, and while heavy shocks shake the body and make it to the bye-stander seem to suffer, nature throws over the soul the kindly shroud of a happy insensibility—while the closed shutter, the tip-toe tread, and whispered attendance, shut out the world we are so soon about to leave.

But in a storm at sea, the scene is not more terrible than disgusting—in a miserable cabin, on a filthy bed, in a confined and putrid air, where it is as impossible to think as to breathe freely—the fatigue, the motion, the want of rest and food give a kind of hysteric sensibility to the frame, which makes it alive to the slightest danger ; no wonder, therefore, it should be so to the greatest of all. If we look round the miserable group that surround us, no eye beams comfort, no tongue speaks consolation ; and when we throw our imagination beyond—to the death-like darkness, the howling blast, the raging and merciless element, soon to be our horrid habitation, surely, surely, it is the most terrible of deaths.

About two in the morning, when we were beginning to flatter ourselves with some hopes, the vessel struck—of the scene that followed it is as painful to think, as it would be impossible to describe. The violence of the shock threw the vessel on one side, and the waves beat over her in every part. The rudder was unshipped, and the mast went by the board. The shrieks of the men and women passengers, the cries or rather shouts of sorrow of the seamen, formed a perfect chorus of misery.

————— crudelis ubique  
Luctus, ubique pavor, et plurima mortis imago :

After the first tumult was subsided, I observed a very general disposition to kneel down and pray ; there appeared to be no hope from man ; they therefore sought it from heaven, and ; prostrate on the deck, snatched the few moments they could call their own, to recommend their souls to God.

Captain K—— , after kneeling a few moments, got up, and putting on his great coat, which he carefully buttoned up to the chin, said to me (I shall never forget the words) “ now I thank God I am as ready to die as ever I was to go to hunt.”

One of the seamen only could be said to display either presence of mind or courage.

I asked the Captain if there were any hope.

“ Small hope (said he) small hopes,” jumping up and down, and clasping his hands like a frantic person—

“ Small hopes, you drunken ruffian,” said Captain K—— (indignation overcoming every other feeling) “ when the souls of these poor people you have murdered, arise in judgment against you, how will you answer it at the tribunal of God ?”

I repeated my question to the seaman.

“ Yes,” he replied, “ I think there is. I have tried the pump, and find that the vessel makes very little water she may hold together till we get assistance.”

He was, I believe, almost the only English sailor on board. There were several foreigners, and the Captain himself was a Welchman.

But, to have done with this painful subject as speedily as possible, let us briefly say, that as the man prophesied, it actually happened. The vessel kept together, and about six we got assistance. Some fishermen, belonging to the little town of Skerries, at the imminent hazard of their own lives, put off in a large boat, and carried us, men, women, and children (to the number of thirty-eight) on shore. To say the transports with which we hailed it were needless—a person who gets a reprieve at the gallows can only conceive them.

We proceeded to the only public house the village afforded. How they got victuals and drink for us, I cannot conjecture. Sorrow has been always known to be dry ; but beside drought, it gave us an appetite, We swallowed large potations of whisky till the breakfast was ready. It was so delicious—that breakfast—long before that hour I had expected to be at one, “ not to eat, but to be eaten.”

## II.

*Newry.*

" BUT to have done with this subject, on which perhaps I have dwelt too long, I shall just remark, that no beautiful belle ever contemplated her face with more pleasure than I did mine with pain in the little mirror that swung before me ; I would have given the world for a fine

ruffian like aspect ; a Salvator Rosa's head, or a Paris Septembrizer's ; something to have denoted a left-handed kind of destiny. But unfortunately there was no cordage in my countenance. I could not flatter myself I was born to be hanged, and therefore had no protection from being drowned."

Such was the conclusion of the Honourable Captain K——'s account of the perils we had undergone. It was given the evening of our deliverance, at the house of an elderly clergyman, to him and a small party of ladies. He afterwards related several adventures which I shall pass over in silence. To render however intelligible what follows, I must remark that they were all love adventures, and as a soldier's ought to be, *toujours comme chevalier sous la rose*.

"What a low-bred young man," said an elderly lady, the instant the door closed upon him, and the family at whose house he was to sleep.

"High-bred rather," I said, "but breeding is a kind of circle, and high and low often touch."

"High," repeated she ; "high !—I will never believe it."

"Oh it is ton, dear mother, it is ton ;" exclaimed a fine animated young woman ; "I have read it all in books a hundred and hundred times—and to think I should hear and see it myself—Oh, how lucky it was we came here at this time—one might have lived one's whole life at the foot of Carantagher and seen nothing like it." "Even at the foot of Carantagher it appears," I said, "you have heard of it."

"No, read of it," said she, "only read of it in a novel, where one does not know whether it is truth or lies but I have now seen and heard it, and shall be at no loss in future to know a man of fashion whenever I meet with him."

"I should be sorry," said the clergyman, "that such were the manners of an Englishman of fashion—for what must the manners of the people be ?"

"It is unfair to judge Captain K—— rigorously," said I, "elevated as he is with wine, and still more exhilarated with the contrast between this hospitable and cheering party, and the gloomy and sepulchral scene we have quitted. He is not, I dare say, as wicked as he wishes to be thought—there is an affectation of vice as well as of virtue."

"It is an odious affectation," said the clergyman, "and depraved must the people be where decency even is not attended to, and where to obtain consideration, hypocrisy assumes the garb, not of virtue, but of wickedness. I pronounce the downfall of that people to be nigh."

"God help us," said the old lady, "if those are to be our defenders, in place of our own brave Militia whom they robbed us of."

"Fashion," said I, "and courage, or even foppery and courage, are by no means incompatible. The knights were the flower of the Roman army, and the French noblesse, who fluttered round the toilets of the ladies, and, essenced and painted, seemed like ladies themselves, advanced to the cannon's mouth without shrinking. This frivolous young Englishman, as he now appears, displayed beyond all others, the most composure in our late perilous situation ; nor was his liberality less than his resolution : nearly the whole of the sea-store of the passengers in the hold was laid in at his expense, and he paid for the passage of several who were unable to pay for themselves."

We were now summoned to supper, and the conversation ended. How I became so unceremoniously seated at it, it is almost needless to say. Those who know the Irish least, know their hospitality ; those who know them best, know their kindness of heart. We had scarcely finished our repast of the morning, when a multitude of people, in jaunting cars, on horse-back, and on foot, surrounded the house. “ The wild Irish,” said Captain K—— , jocularly, “ are coming down upon us ; they have done plundering the wreck, and now they will murder us for the sake of our wearing apparel.”

It was very true. The wild Irish were come down on us, wild with joy, with congratulation, and kindness. There was actually a scramble for us. Captain K—— went with a gentleman who had two handsome daughters—I fell to the lot of the worthy vicar.

“ I was once in Ireland (I recollect hearing a gentleman in London say) and was so tormented with Custom-house officers and boatmen, that I thought it the worst country in the world to land in.”

It may be so. I am sure it is not the worst country in the world to be shipwrecked in. I am sure to adversity who gazes on it with eyes suffused with tears, it ever shows its bright side ; though I do not deny, but that, like the pillar of fire which conducted the Israelites through the wilderness, it of tenturns a dark one to prosperity, who views it with a contemptuous glance. Englishmen, therefore, see only the half of the Irish character; not the better half ; and even what they see they distort, unconscious that, in degrading it, they are degrading their own, and that with folly worse than that of Noah’s sons ; it is their own daughter’s nakedness they have exposed to the world.

On the effects of this caricature I shall say little, because it is probable time will say enough. I shall therefore dismiss the subject with one brief, yet not very cheering observation. The Romans, in a time of danger, were told by the Sybilline oracle, that the republic would fall, if the Idean mother of the gods were not brought to Rome. It is not, alas ! requisite to be an oracle to foretel, that unless England seeks out and brings home wandering Irish affection, her own situation is nearly as desperate a one.

### III

*Newry.*

I QUITTED the house of the old clergyman, mounted, he said, on his best steed. He gave me a letter of introduction to a friend who lived in the county of Armagh. It was sealed, yet I had no fear it would be a Bellerophon’s letter, nor in truth was the steed I bestrode a Pegasus. He seemed more a-kin to the earth than the sky, and required a pretty tight bridle hand to keep him from falling. Great evils, however, reconcile us to lesser ones. A man escaped from ship-wreck does not greatly mind a stumbling horse.

I arrived in Balbriggan about ten o’clock. A few moments afterwards, the Newry coach drove up to the door. There was a vacant seat, which I engaged. The company stopped to breakfast, and a most excellent one we had. The price, as formerly, was twenty pence. A young Englishman did not express more admiration at the goodness of the fare, than at the reasonableness of the charge. It was a long time, he said, since he had eat so cheap a break-fast. This wise observation was made before the landlord, who, I suppose, will leave no room for a similar one.

The distance from Balbriggan to Drogheda, is twelve miles, which we drove in less than two hours. The coach was heavily laden. It carried ten inside and a still greater number of outside passengers. A coach behind us was equally loaded. It was an opposition coach, and called the “Cock of the North.” Ours was called the “Old Cock,” and certainly it was not a young one. The fore wheel was all shattered, nor did the body seem in a much better condition. The coachman, however, drove never the easier for the outside passengers vociferating these circumstances to him. The priority he had obtained he was determined to maintain (to use an old Scotch phrase) “though he should die for it.”

A gentleman who seemed strongly impressed with the danger of this unwieldy chariot race, threatened him with a prosecution if he did not desist. This menace had no other effect than to make him drive the faster. The law in Ireland is the same as in England ; but, either from greater milkiness of disposition, or the dread of being accounted an informer, hardly any person stands forward to have it put in execution—of course, coachmen in general do, like the Israelites before they had a King,—“that which seems right in their own eyes.”

Immediately on quitting Drogheda, we turned to the right. This is the great north-eastern road. The road straight forward is the north-western, which I formerly travelled. We passed through Dunleer, a little town remarkable for the antiquity of its church, and through Castle Bellingham, a pretty little village, formerly celebrated for its fine ale. The brewery is thrown down, or converted into a distillery. Whiskey, like Aaron’s rod, seems to swallow every other liquor. There is a fine old spreading elm near the centre of Castle Bellingham, said to be the largest in the kingdom.

A few miles from Dundalk, the road runs along the beach. The sky was without a cloud. The sea was calm and unruffled, and its blue bosom reflected the image of repose. It was very different from the merciless element I had so lately witnessed.

“What a beautiful day this is,” I said.

“And what a beautiful country !” said a passenger, “had it but met with good usage.”

“It has met with good usage,” said I.

“Really !” said he, ironically.

“With good and bad usage,” I proceeded, “like every other country under the sun.”

“It has had rather a Benjamin’s portion of the latter, I should think,” said he.

“I fear it has,” said I ; “how far its own struggling, with a broken limb, may have caused this, I will not take on me to determine.”

“You mean, I presume,” said another, “that we should have submitted to be roasted in quietness ; and that when done on one side, we should have meekly desired to be turned on the other ?”

“I mean,” said I, “that we should have submitted to inevitable necessity, and accommodated our minds to our condition. The one half of the energy, which, like the Cyclop in the Odyssey, we exerted in groping for the stranger who put out our independence, would, wisely directed, have long since given us respectability and happiness.”

“Preach that doctrine,” said the gentleman who had first spoken, “to the people of England, it will go down with them ; it wont do here.”

“I will preach no doctrine to the people of England,” said I, “that I do not believe ; nor will I to the people of Ireland ; and while I lament so much of evil is in their cup, I must re-member that evil is in the cup of all. Our sufferings are not so much greater than those of England, as they are of later date.

“When she was assailed by the Romans, Saxons, Danes, and Normans, we enjoyed uninterrupted tranquillity. What has since befallen us, perhaps, was inevitable. The new-fledged eagle, which is led by its dam to her own lofty regions of glory, must expect to have its wing tired with the flight, and its eye dazzled with the splendour of the meridian sun.”

This language would have been too poetical for an English coach ; but an Irish one is different ; my sentiments excited wonder, but their clothing excited none. The native Irish are a nation of poets, and therefore, I fear, doomed to be an unhappy nation—for no matter what may be its occasional levity, the essence of a poetic mind ever was and ever will be gloom.

We changed horses at Dundalk. I stepped into Lord Roden’s gardens, which join the town. I had been in them several years before. They belonged then to the late Earl of Clanbrassil—his Lordship was a great botanist, and spared no labour or expense in collecting rare and exotic plants. His gardens, therefore, were among the finest in these kingdoms, and strangers came to see them from the most distant parts. The day I visited them, I had the honour of his Lordship’s company. He was a highly-dignified gentleman. Though he was most minute in his communications, he never forgot that he was a nobleman ; and it might be said of him, as of Virgil, that he even tossed the dung about him with dignity. As I was then unacquainted with botany, I was apprehensive I should betray my ignorance, and ruin myself in his Lordship’s opinion. Luckily, however, the vanity of a botanist is fully as near-sighted as that of an author ; and I passed through my four hours’ ordeal with as much success as the courtiers Chrisel and Zoram did that of the genius Phanor, when he insisted on heir hearing him read his play in the palace of truth.

The gardens at present seem almost entirely neglected. For some time after leaving Dundalk, we got along very happily ; but, on descending with more haste than good speed, a steep hill that overhangs the little town of Jonesborough, the calamity we had so much dreaded in the morning, took place. The wheel broke, and we were fairly overset in a ditch. The shock was violent, and for an instant I gave myself up for lost. Yet there was little injury, and in a few moments we were able to proceed on our journey on foot.

The evening was delightful, and the deep repose of the valley, through which we walked, afforded a sweet and soothing contrast to the rugged mountain landscape which bounded our horizon.

“Is’nt this better,” said one of the party, “than to be smothered *alive* in that crazy old coach ?”

“Smothered dead, I think it should be,” exclaimed the young Englishman, with a laugh.

This led to a wrangling kind of argument which carried us on to Newry. I stopped at an inn, called the White Cross kept by a woman of the name of Mackintosh, called, by a barbarous contraction, Tosh. It was not the house where the coach stopped ; but the young man above-mentioned promised me, on the authority of information obtained in Dublin, a good dinner and excellent accommodation. The good opinion of Mrs. Tosh’s accommodation must

have been general, as the house was crowded with company. The consequence of which was, that every thing was in confusion, which our impatience did not lessen. At nine at night dinner is necessary, and bells were ringing, and oaths swearing innumerable. I suspect my guide, who probably in England was accustomed to a two o'clock dinner, began to think he had bestowed his praise too freely. Dinner, however, was at length served. The bill was six shillings, including ale, and six shillings for a bottle of wine. Wine is as much dearer as it is worse since I was last in Ireland. From the satisfaction expressed in the countenance of some gentlemen who were drinking punch, at hearing us complain of its badness, I suspect they considered us as coxcombs for having ordered it ; and when I cast my eyes on the group of beggars that surrounded the windows, and considered how happy the shillings thrown away on this execrable liquor would have made them, I confess I was of the same opinion.

A man who travels in Ireland should, above all things, arm himself with good humour. He must reconcile himself, during the day, to manners more plain and familiar, than refined or considerate—nor can he always escape from them at night. There are generally two beds in a room. I was shewn into one where there were three, and, not as a special favour, was put in a press one. I had lain down about an hour, when my two colleagues came in whistling and singing. Whiskey sometimes makes men musical, and always makes them noisy. Those two continued conversing a long time after they had lain down. I kept quiet, though many of the speeches were directed at me. “ Our friend in the press bed,” at length said one of them, “ is strangely silent.” “ At one in the morning, and in bed, silence is not so extraordinary,” said I, perceiving that those drunken young gentlemen, like the sober old English law, were determined to press me to speak. I was awaked at an early hour by the bustle of the people preparing to go with the coaches. They were laughing, conversing, and scolding, with apparent forgetfulness of any one being in bed near them. They “ murdered sleep” as effectually as a guilty conscience could have done. I therefore got up and walked quietly away, perfectly sensible, that in no country in the universe, is an humble pedestrian of much consideration with chambermaids or waiters.

I walked about the town until the shops were opened. I then waited on a respectable merchant, who invited me to breakfast, and insisted on my passing a few days at his house. It is there I write this chapter, which I cannot conclude without remarking, that it would be un-fair to judge the Irish character by what we see at inns. The people most frequently met with at them, are young men just escaped from control, who think noise and impudence proofs of courage, and knowledge of life. The greatest and most valuable part of the community live at home, and are seen to most advantage in their own houses. It is there I like to see them ; and though sometimes I may have experienced slight inconveniences, rarely ever was I in an Irish private house that I did not feel myself at home.

A view of society and manners in the north of Ireland : in the summer and autumn of 1812  
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