

Dublin to Galway

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Few places in the United Kingdom have of late been more familiar to the general ear than the ancient town of Galway, and none associated with better founded hopes of a prosperous future. Much of this is attributable to its capability for the expected Anglo-American trade ; much to its being the headquarters of that district to which the prescient eye of the statesman of his age was turned, as the source whence the regeneration of Ireland was to be augured. But the chief and real cause is the energy and perseverance of its people—worthily led by their indefatigable representative, Mr. A. O'Flaherty, and his estimable brother, the Income Tax Commissioner for Ireland, Mr. Edward O'Flaherty, High Sheriff for the county during the last year, 1853. While making sanguine but sagacious provision for the coming of that better time which the natural resources of their geographical position warrant them in calculating upon, they have availed themselves of all means immediately within reach. Of these the chief is the Midland and Great Western Railway, dividing the island into two nearly equal portions. The country traversed, as might be expected in 124½ miles, is extremely varied—some districts presenting exquisite landscapes ; others grim and dreary ; then again, rich and beautiful ; and, approaching Galway, the traveller glances at the wild mountains of the once far west, where, until lately, the king's writ dare not pass. The construction through some bogs seventy feet deep, as between Enfield and Mullingar, was a matter of interest and difficulty, affording Mr. Hemans, engineer of the line, much scope for his skill. After the passage of the bogs, and the magnificent iron bridge across the Shannon, the next monument of engineering ability is the swivel bridge near Galway, the largest ever built, consisting in one length of 154 feet ; constructed with two steamboat ways of 60 feet each, leading into the splendid floating basin of Lough Athalia. The various stations and the termini, designed and erected by Mr. Mulvany, are remarkable for architectural excellence, no less than excellent accommodation.

Immediately on leaving the terminus, we enter a beautiful country, adorned with plantations and numerous villas. We shall suppose the traveller is seated face to the engine. Upon the right is the village of Glasnevin, famous for the residence of Tickell, Swift, Addison, Delany, Steele, Sheridan, and Parnell. Adjoining is the Botanical Garden of the Royal Dublin Society ; and a cemetery (visible from the line), the Necropolis, or Père-la-Chaise, of the Hibernian metropolis, where lie Curran, Steele (the politician of our own time, not of Queen Anne's), O'Connell, and other national celebrities ; and where shortly also will lie, we hope, the remains of Moore, towards whose memory a monument, that shall be worthy of the country and the man, is now being subscribed for by all classes of Irishmen, and by many Englishmen too—an example we would earnestly urge upon every one of our readers to follow as liberally as may be ; for though the author of the *Melodies* belonged essentially to his native soil, the genius of "Lalla Rookh" pertains to every country, and is "not for an age, but for all time." The monument we refer to is now being erected by the distinguished countryman and namesake of the bard, the well-known sculptor, Moore. The statue is to be in bronze, and will be placed in the space in front of College-street, facing the Corinthian portico of the entrance to the late Irish House of Lords, in Westmoreland-street. Glasnevin is further sacred to the names of mighty intellectual giants, inasmuch as Tickell, the poet, and friend of Addison (who frequently visited him here, as he did also Steele, who resided at Hampstead, a short distance), possessed the ground on which the Botanic Gardens now stand ; while in the vicinage is Finglass, of which the "Hermit" poet, Parnell, was vicar. Close by, likewise, is Delville, laid out by Delany, friend of Swift, who here not only wrote but printed some of his most satiric lampoons, which none would risk putting in type at a public press. Thirdly, the Botanic Gardens, already referred to—open Tuesdays and Fridays, and to strangers from a distance every day—are probably unsurpassed in Europe, and were greatly admired by the Queen and Prince Albert on the occasion of their late visit.

Dunsink, astronomical observatory of the Dublin University, residence of Sir W. Hamilton, Astronomer Royal, is on a wooded eminence. The pretty little village of Finglass is on the right, with the house on the adjoining hill, where James II. slept the night before the battle of the Boyne, and through

this village returned to Dublin, followed by his fortunate rival. The Phoenix Park and Wellington Testimonial can be seen in the distance, on the south.

Castleknock is four miles from Dublin. Here are remains of a castle, reign of Henry II., by Hugh Tyrrell ; looked upon as of the greatest importance, until about the Restoration, when it decayed. It was taken in 1316 by Edward Bruce, and in 1642 by the famous Colonel Monk, who, during the assault, killed eighty, and subsequently hanged many more, of the unfortunate enemy.

Lucan, celebrated as giving the title of earl to General Sarsfield, was formerly a fashionable resort for its spa, and now affords a magnificent view over one of the richest districts in Ireland. In this neighbourhood are the Strawberry Beds, to which the citizens of Dublin resort in great numbers in the season. The valley of the Liffey possesses some of the prettiest possible scraps of wood and water scenery. On the left, as we proceed, we come to the hamlet of Blanchardstown, on the great north-western road from Dublin, containing a nunnery and some schools. Here the line crosses the great north-western road from Dublin, next to Clonsilla, where the canal passes through the “ Deep Sinkings,” a solid rock nearly three miles in length, and of very considerable depth. Confey Castle is a ruined tower, similar to several erected by the English colonists of Dublin, to protect the city from the attacks of the native Irish. Adjoining are the ruins of an ancient church. Near this part of the canal a large number of persons were drowned some years since, by a passenger-boat upsetting. There are few objects of great interest north of the line between Clonsilla station and Leixlip. Adjoining the latter, a little nearer Maynooth, the rail and canal cross the valley of the Rye by an embankment 100 feet in height, and, passing some delightful scenery of a subdued character, we find ourselves at the pretty town of Leixlip, where, if possible, the tourist should alight. The castle, still in repair, was erected by Adam Fitz-Hereford, one of the Anglo-Norman conquerors. Its antique towers, mantled with ivy, rise majestically above the surrounding trees and river ; and, altogether, the views are, of their class, as attractive as any in the kingdom. Immediately adjoining Leixlip is the Salmon Leap, where the Liffey, falling over a ledge of rocks, forms a beautiful cascade, up which the fish at certain seasons are seen to spring ; hence the name. For a proper contemplation of this spot, the tourist should proceed by the pathway by the Paper Mill (left bank of the river), from which point alone the best view of the waterfall can be obtained. Following a path leading up the river from the Salmon Leap, the tourist, after a walk of a mile, arrives at Newbridge, where the river is crossed by a bridge erected in 1308 by John Le Decer, Mayor of Dublin, the most ancient structure of its class upon the Liffey, and—since the destruction of Thomond and Athlone bridges, upon the Shannon—perhaps in Ireland. In the vicinity are the monastic ruins of St. Wolstans, founded about 1202 by Adam Fitz-Hereford, consisting of walls, which probably formed the dwelling-houses of the ecclesiastics, and some very perfect and most interesting gateways, bearing all the characteristics of the thirteenth century. The remains of ancient magnificence contrast strangely with that of modern times, as shown in Castle-town House, in the same neighbourhood. This noble residence of the Connolly family is popularly supposed to contain a window for every day in the year. All these places lie so close, that they may be visited without much loss of time. Between Leixlip and Fernlock, the country is well-wooded, studded with seats, and apparently closed in by the range of the Dublin mountains, affording views varied and beautiful. From near Fernlock, however, the line passes through a portion of the great Bog of Allen, a dreary tract, contrasting unfavourably with the glorious country just described. This bog was once a forest, covered with trees of largest growth, and probably uninhabited by other than the giant elks, whose bones the turf-cutters often find, or by other wild animals. Trees are met with at various depths ; and as many lie along the line, they cannot fail to attract attention. At the twenty-fifth mile post, south, may be remarked the ruins of the Church of Cloncurry, a place from which the late honoured nobleman of that name derived his title. Immediately adjoining is a large earthen mound, not uncommon in Ireland, and usually containing sepulchral deposits of the primitive inhabitants.

Returning to Leixlip station, we proceed along the line on our direct journey. In the distance to the right we see Carton, the princely residence of his Grace the Duke of Leinster, in the Grecian style, built about the close of last century, from designs by Richard Cassels, architect of Leinster House, now the Royal Dublin Society House, in Kildare-street, Dublin, and site and scene of the Great Exhibition of 1853. The demesne, comprising about 1,000 acres, extends by the side of the railway, separated only by the canal and public road, adorned with lakes made by barriers across the little Rye. We have already spoken of its contents in the southern tour. We may also repeat that her Majesty, in 1849, expressed herself highly pleased with the beauty of its natural position and the elegance of the internal decorations.

MAYNOOTH was anciently a chief hold of the Kildare Fitzgeralds. Of the Castle, erected or rebuilt in 1426 by John, sixth Earl, considerable remains exist, viz., a massive keep, which was defended by outworks of great strength and magnitude. Of the towers, placed at intervals along the outer fortifications, several remain in a state to give an idea of the strength of this great Anglo-Norman fortress, often the scene of fierce assault. In the reign of Henry VIII. it was taken by Sir W. Brereton, but restored, together with the estate (confiscated in consequence of the rebellion of "Silken Thomas"), to Gerald, eleventh Earl, but in the 17th century was suffered to decay. The present noble proprietor, the Duke of Leinster, is planting the sloping sides of the ancient fosse, now dried up, with trees suitable to the scene. A portion of the vast old castle extends inside the gates of Maynooth College, which stands at right angles with the front of the ruins. The caretaker is no bad specimen of an Irish expositor of his class ; and the tourist may derive, with little trouble, an account of some of the romantic incidents of which this great stronghold of the Geraldines was the scene. The Royal College of St. Patrick, Maynooth, was opened for students in 1795 ; since then many additions have been made, by increased grants. Further extensive additions are in course of erection. Until recently the College contained only about 450 students, but the accommodation is now much greater ; and there are apartments for professors, a noble hall, and a library, besides numerous offices. There is a magnificent cloister in the early English style of architecture. The visitor is at once admitted, on application, with courtesy and politeness, and what he will see there is described by Sir F. Head with tolerable truthfulness. The parish church is a fine quaint building of the 15th century, its windows remarkable for elegance of detail; and there is a massive tower at the west end, used as a belfry, and, no doubt, as a place of refuge in troublesome times. The round tower of Taghadoo, one of the finest in Ireland, lies about two miles south of Maynooth.

Nineteen miles from Dublin is Kilcock, a small market-town on the borders of Counties Meath and Kildare, its annual horse-races, for several days, attracting many visitors. We pass Fernlock, where there is little of interest, save that at the station a coach meets the tram, and conveys passengers to Athboy and

TRIM, the county-town of Meath, which lies about twelve miles from Fernlock, and is full of highest interest to archæologist and artist, as well as the general tourist. It forms the centre of a most attractive district, rich in antiquarian and historic importance and pictorial beauty. Kells, Bective, and Newtown Abbeys, and the hill of Tara, all lie around it ; and though last, certainly not least, Dangan Castle, the birthplace, or at least the early home, of Wellington and Wellesley, is only four miles from the town, and will, of course, be an object of universal attractiveness, now more absorbingly than ever, since the demise of the last of the Gracchi, whose name and deeds have made it immortal. We shall give it not as it has been hypothetically delineated in successive Guide-books for the last quarter of a century, but as it actually stands and looks at this present moment, or at least as it did last year, when drawn for this volume by Mr. Mahony. Here also was the residence of a scarcely less distinguished Irishman, Laracer rectory, of which Swift was incumbent, and a portion of Stella's house. The London tourist, whom Mr. Thackeray's recent graphic, but not very complimentary, criticisms upon the Dean may have imbued with a stronger desire than that derivable merely from books, to explore the region consecrated to the memory of the great satirist's mystic and miserable loves, is strongly recommended to Mr. Wilde's delightful book, frequently alluded to, and to another by the same gentleman, wherein he has made the investigation of Swift's alleged madness one of the most charming "psychological curiosities" and interesting medico-metaphysical disquisitions in any language. Hereabouts, in every direction, the traveller treads upon enchanted ground, and objects of interest of almost every kind people the entire region ; so that we might almost at random stud our pages with illustrations of relics of a splendid past, and leave him, nearly at haphazard, to meet with the originals, for our space renders it wholly impossible that we should attempt any settled tour of route in our enumeration of these subjects, or dwell in detail on those presented. The first of the most conspicuous we now refer to is King John's Castle, founded 1180, by the De Lacy family, the finest remain of Anglo-Norman military architecture in the kingdom, on the south of the Boyne, and enclosing an area of three acres. Next is the tower of St. Mary's Abbey, built by "The Scourge of France," Sir John Talbot, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in 1415 ; the castles of the Nangles ; and Talbot Castle, until lately the Diocesan School of Meath, wherein Wellington received his earliest education; the parish church, a relic of the 13th century, containing most interesting monuments ; the town walls, with the two ancient gateways, the Sheep Gate and Water Gate ; an ancient Gothic bridge over the Boyne : and the beautiful monasteries and ancient bridge at Newtown, formerly the seat of the see of Meath. Four miles from Trim, north of the Boyne, are ruins of the magnificent Cistercian monastery of Bective, founded in the 12th century by Murchard O'Melaghlin, king of Meath. The hotel at Trim will accommodate the tour-

ist, who might make this the centre from which to visit the scenery of the Boyne, or Kells, eight miles distant, rich in monuments, and possessing three magnificent stone crosses, described elsewhere. There is no modern building at Trim worthy of especial note, except the County Gaol ; and the tourist, after viewing the Wellington Testimonial, a Corinthian column surmounted by a statue of the Duke, will visit the humble house in Trim wherein for some years resided the future hero.

Regaining the railway at the Fernlock station, we see—from the 26th mile-post, looking south—in the distance the ruined walls of Castle Carbury, a chief fortress of the Berminghams, from whom it passed to the Cowleys, ancestors of Wellington. The walls are of two distinct ages ; the older, probably a portion of the original castle, erected shortly after the invasion by Henry II. ; the remainder dates from the 16th century, built by Sir H. Colley, or Cowley. In a chapel are several monuments to this family, a member of which, Richard Colley, succeeding in 1728 to the estates of his cousin, Garret Wellesley, of Dangan, assumed the arms and name of Wellesley. The Hill of Carbury is famous for many a fierce encounter between the Anglo-Normans and the Irish, and retains several remains of pagan antiquity.

Next station on the line is ENFIELD, formerly remarkable for its extensive hotel and posting establishment. Next is EDENDERRY, a post-town, the property of Lord Downshire, admired for the neatness of its houses, good accommodation, and quiet beauty of scenery. In the vicinity are remains of the monastery of Monastoris, built by Pierce de Bermingham, head of a great Anglo-Norman clan, who subsequently became “ more Irish than the Irish themselves ;” the Castle of Kinnafad, a massive quadrangular keep, a stronghold of the same people ; and the ruined church and castle of Carrick-Oris, the scene of the treacherous assassination of Murtagh O’Connor, king of Offaly, and his brother Calwagh, with 29 followers, invited here to a feast, and slain by Bermingham, in 1305. Hereabouts rises the Boyne, upon whose banks “ James and William staked a crown.” It has its source in the bogs south of Carberry, county of Kildare, and flows to the sea at Drogheda, passing through the towns of Trim and Navan. At Edenderry we cross the river, and catch a glimpse of the church of Clonard, once the seat of the most important see in the east of Ireland. Here, early in the sixth century, St. Finnian founded a monastery, a school famous even abroad for religion and literature. Hither, as Bede informs us, flocked students from the British isles, Armorica, and Germany, at one time about 3,000. For several centuries Clonard increased in fame ; the pagan Northmen frequently plundered and burned the city, carrying into slavery the inhabitants. Later, it was frequently sacked by the English, who at length fortified, and, in some measure, rebuilt it. In 1206, Simon de Rochfort, first Anglo-Norman Bishop of Meath, removed the see to Newtown, after which it gradually declined ; scarcely a vestige remains, save a magnificent earthwork called a rath, probably the citadel. The modern church contains an antique font of most beautiful workmanship. Adjoining is a mound of pagan times, exactly similar to that at Cloncurry. Soon after leaving Enfield, the line passes through the great Bog of Allen ; nothing but heath for some miles, till in view of Kinnegad Church, some miles south. KILDEAN station is a place of little importance at present, but in its neighbourhood is Rateen Castle, wherein the Lord-Lieutenant, who had been taken prisoner, was confined in 1450. The black flagstone quarries have built the Custom-house Docks, Dublin. There is little to attract now till we arrive at

MULLINGAR, an assize town of considerable importance, containing, among other public buildings, a barracks for 1,000 men. The one principal street is a mile in length, from which other streets and lanes branch off. Considerable trade in butter, wool, frieze, cattle, pigs, and horses, is carried on. The horse fair, in November, is attended from all parts of Great Britain and the Continent. Unlike most inland towns in Ireland, Mullingar contains no ancient remains. In 1227 and 1237, very famous monasteries were founded here by Ralph le Petyt and the Nugent family. A castle also existed from an early period ; and the town, originally founded by the English of the Pale, was fortified from time to time, lastly by General De Ginkel. The magnificent sheets of water in this neighbourhood have infinite attraction, and furnish the richest sport, being well stored with the finest trout of great size, pike, and other prey. The drive from Mullingar to Multifarnham, five miles, affords striking picturesque views of Lough Owel, where is the abbey, founded in 1236, by William de la Mar, or Delamere, for conventual Franciscans, who, until Charles II., had not been expelled by those to whom the abbey was granted at the dissolution of monasteries. Shortly after the civil war of 1641—the plans for which, it has been said, were settled within its walls—the building was suffered to decay ; and remained a ruin till 1823, when it again fell to the Franciscans, of whom several reside adjoining the old church.

The canal, which from Dublin to Mullingar runs parallel within a few yards of the railway, at Multifarnham branches off in the direction of Longford, and for the first time is completely lost sight

of. The country from this point to Athlone, though but thinly populated, was once the most thickly-inhabited part of Ireland, as may be judged from the number of raths, or circular works of earth, upon or within which the dwellings of the ancient Irish were placed. Derrivarra, one of the three great lakes in the vicinity of Mullingar, is left at a short distance to the north. About seven miles from Mullingar the line passes through Glamerstown, a wild, hilly district, wherein is a small circle of stones, about which many human bones and sepulchral urns have been discovered (particularly during the construction of this railway), doubtless marking the scene of some long-forgotten battle.

From Mullingar station a fine view is obtained of Lough Ennel, frequently called Belvidere Lake, from the beautiful residence of the late Earl of Lanesborough. The lake is four and a-half miles in length by one and a-half in breadth, stored with fish, the grounds containing some of the finest timber in the country. Near the shore of the lake, is a pile, built at enormous expense to represent a ruined castle. Rochfort House, seat of Sir F. Hopkins, Bart., adjoins Belvidere, in the midst of a noble demesne, but has not been occupied by him for some years, he being one day shot at. A man named Bryan Seery was convicted of this crime on circumstantial evidence, and died at Mullingar, declaring his innocence. This occurrence led to the abandonment of the place and of the improvements which had promised to make Belvidere one of the finest private residences in the kingdom.

We next arrive at STREAMSTOWN, a decayed village, between which and Moate the line passes through a cutting in the limestone rock of a very considerable extent, and, by an embankment, crosses Lake Ballinderry, remarkable for great depth in parts, and for the size of its pike and trout. In 1800 during the drainage of a portion, were discovered remains of an artificial island, vast quantities of bones of extinct races of animals, with various antiquities, chiefly swords and spears ; also canoes, rudely fashioned, cut out of a single tree.

THE DESERTED VILLAGE.—Here again is enchanted ground, every inch of which, to be fittingly described, would need the genial pen and congenial spirit of him to whom the latest and best biographer has so fittingly and feelingly inscribed the “ Life and Adventures of Oliver Goldsmith.” [1] Referring to that delightful book for all and everything about immortal Noll, inexorable space, and the harder utilitarian necessities of a railway finger-post—for our little volume aspires to be no more—compel us prosaically to say that

AUBURN lies a few miles north of the line, from Mullingar to Athlone by Ballymahon. Its name originally was Lishoy ; and in the immediate vicinity is the ruin of the parsonage of the poet’s father, [2] the original “ Vicar of Wakefield,” whose son was here born. Mr. Mahony visited the place for us in April, 1853, and his graceful pencil testifies that “ the never-failing brook, the busy mill,” are at work as of old. “ The decent church” still tops the neighbouring hill. Close to the ruined parsonage is the ale-house known as “ The Three Pigeons,” where

Village statesmen talked with looks profound,
While news much older than their ale went round.

Of

The hawthorn tree with seats beneath, a shade
For talking age and whispering lovers made,

no vestige remains, though the spot where it is said to have grown is well remembered, and still pointed out. This tree was sold long ago, bit by bit, to tourists ; but we have Mr. Mahony’s unerring evidence, that within last few months the apple-tree in the garden of the vicarage was in the enjoyment of a lusty and vigorous old age.

Alack ! however, for the romance of topography, we have all this while been assisting the reader to the perpetration of the Irishism of being in a different place altogether, as he will soon see from Mr. Forster’s pages : —

“ Beautifully is it said by Campbell, that ‘ fiction in poetry is not the reverse of truth, but her soft and enchanted resemblance ; and this ideal beauty of nature has seldom been united with so much sober fidelity as in the groups and scenery of the Deserted Village.’ It is to be added that everything in it is English, the feelings, incidents, descriptions, and allusions; and that this consideration may save us needless trouble in seeking to identify sweet Auburn with Lissoy. Scenes of the poet’s youth had

doubtless risen in his memory as he wrote, mingling with, and taking altered hue from, later experiences : it is even possible he may have taken the first hint of his design from a local Westmeath poet and schoolmaster, who, in his youth, had given rhymed utterance to the old tenant grievances of the Irish rural population ; nor could complaints that were also loudest in those boyish days at Lissoy, of certain reckless and unsparing evictions by which one General Naper had persisted in improving his estate, have passed altogether from Goldsmith's memory. But there was nothing local in his present aim; or if there was, it was the rustic life and rural scenery of England. It is quite natural that Irish enthusiasts should have found out the fence, the furze, the thorn, the decent church, the never-failing brook, the busy mill ; it was to be expected that pilgrims should have borne away every vestige of the first hawthorn they could lay their hands on ; it was perfectly reasonable, and in the way of business, to rebuild the village inn, as Mr. Hogan did, and fix broken tea-cups in the wall, that pilgrims might not carry *them* away, and to christen his speculation by the name of Auburn."

The country, from Auburn to Athlone, is not remarkable. The tourist, stopping at Athlone, should not fail to make an excursion upon the magnificent Lough Ree, an expansion of the Shannon. Quaker Island, in that portion of Lough Ree included within County Longford, contains some most interesting primitive ecclesiastical remains ; and the ancient Anglo-Norman castle of Saint John's, eight miles from Athlone, on the Roscommon side, would amply repay a visit. It was erected in 1227 by Geoffrey de Marisco, and Turlogh, son of Roderick O'Connor, king of Connaught. and has often changed hands, and been frequently stormed and burnt by Irish as well as English. Lough Ree is an admirable field for the angler, containing the finest salmon, pike, perch, and other fish, some trout weighing nearly twenty pounds. Nothing further need now detain us till we reach

ATHLONE, an important trading town and military-station, on the Shannon, which here separates Leinster and Connaught, and the counties of Westmeath and Roscommon. The castle is of great antiquity, but in perfect repair, strengthened with additional fortifications, some very recent. Once Athlone was the chief pass from Leinster to Connaught ; and, soon after the settlement of the Anglo-Normans, became one of their strongholds. Of the ancient walls portions remain ; and the north gate, a square tower of Elizabeth's time, was pulled down only a few years ago. Several relics are still preserved, one being the doorway of the residence of General de Ginkell at the siege in 1689. The renowned bridge of Athlone, which spanned the Shannon at the place of the ancient ford, rendered famous by the desperate encounter upon it between the army of King James, under St. Ruth, and King William's soldiers, under Ginkell, in 1691, was pulled down a few years ago, and replaced by the present graceful structure. The barracks, adjoining the castle, can accommodate 267 artillery, 592 infantry, and 107 horse; and there is an armoury of 15,000 stand of arms. Of numerous monasteries, scarcely any remains exist ; probably they were destroyed during some of the many sieges, the most memorable of which occurred in the Revolution, when in ten days Ginkell, in taking a portion of the town which held out for James, expended 12,000 cannon-balls, 600 shells, many tons of stone-shot, and fifty of powder ; the loss of the defenders being 1,200. In 1697 the citadel was struck by lightning, when 260 barrels of powder, 10,000 charged hand-grenades, besides other combustibles, exploded, destroying nearly the whole of the town. Besides the church of the Establishment, and several Roman Catholic chapels, Athlone contains Baptists' and Primitive and Wesleyan Methodists' chapels. There are no modern buildings worthy of particular notice. Immediately above the town the Shannon expands into Lough Ree, on which a regatta is held in August.

A sail down the Shannon in any of the fine steamboats belonging to the Shannon Navigation Company is a delightful trip ; and if the tourist wish, he may here diverge from his direct route to Galway, and proceed down the river to Limerick, thence on to Tarbert, Tralee, and Killarney. The Shannon scenery from Athlone to Limerick is in one place rocky and desolate ; in another, rich and exquisitely-wooded banks ; here the waters expand into an inland sea, so great is their extent, in some instances measuring in breadth ten or twelve miles. For those who may not have much time, and who would wish, nevertheless, to carry away some idea of the general appearance of the Shannon, &c., we would specially recommend a visit to Clonmacnoise, six miles by water from Athlone, and where boats may be hired. In the sixth century, St. Keiran the younger, who had received from Dermot MacCervail, king of Ireland, a grant of the site, founded here a monastery, whither came students from Great Britain, and, as at Clonard, from the continent. Clonmacnoise declined soon after the arrival of the English; who did not till Elizabeth's time remove the bells from the church towers. The ruins comprise the walls of seven churches of the highest antiquity ; two very perfect round towers ; a mediæval castle, within the bounds of a great pagan rath ; two most beautiful sculptured crosses ; besides inscribed stones, from the seventh and eighth century downwards. The ruins are in King's

County; the counties of Westmeath, Roscommon, and King's County, meeting at a point in the Shannon, nearly midway between Athlone and Clonmacnoise.

On the direct line to Galway there are few things to arrest us between Athlone and Ballinasloe, except the fine viaduct over the Suck, across which the train passes. Ballinasloe, a town of considerable size, partly in County Roscommon, but chiefly in County Galway, containing some handsome buildings, and remarkable for the great fair held from the 5th to 9th October, the largest cattle mart in the kingdom; attended from all parts of Great Britain and the continent. Garbally, seat of Lord Clancarty, in the immediate vicinity of the town (his lordship is proprietor), is beautifully laid out, and the house contains some fine pictures, and free access is generously granted to both. The ruins of a castle, of great strength in Elizabeth's time, are situated upon the Roscommon side of the Suck, and the fosse and several flanking towers remain. Four miles from Ballinasloe is the village of Aughrim, remarkable from the battle on the adjoining fields of Kilcommadan, in 1691, between James and William, when the former was totally routed, and St. Ruth, his general, killed. However, the point from which the tourist should start for the scene of this great and decisive conflict is Athlone; and it has been the cause of much wonderment that Mr. Creasey did not give this hand-to-hand fight precedence to his namesake (the battle). A very little consideration would have shown him that Aughrim was not a fight merely 'twixt James and William, but between the rival religions—between despotism and constitutional liberty, and which, if lost by William, would probably have prevented us now saying what we thought of the matter. A part of the ruins of Aughrim Castle can still be traced; and in the village are a church, chapel, and small Methodist meeting-house.

The next object of interest we meet is Kilconnel, a village where a monastery for Franciscan friars was founded about 1460. Nearly the entire shell of this most beautiful structure remains. A little further on we come to Athenry, a village also most remarkable for its ancient buildings, of which the castle, built in the thirteenth century by the De Bermingham family, is the most perfectly preserved. The Dominican Abbey is, perhaps, one of the finest ecclesiastical ruins in the whole country.

Besides the castle and its religious houses, the old town retains a great portion of its wall, and one of its ancient castellated gateways. The former, which is of considerable height and thickness, is defended at intervals by round towers of great strength.

We have now almost accomplished our journey to Galway, near the seventh mile-post from which we pass the ruined Castle of Derrydonnell; and from about the twenty-first, we see Oranmore Castle, built by the great Earl of Clanricarde. The splendid swivel bridge at Lough Athalia, said to be the largest in the world, next arrests attention, when the tourist finds himself before the magnificent railway terminus and hotel of the ancient town of Galway, the head-quarters for all tourists making the journey into the regions of Connemara.

TOWN OF GALWAY.—As we said at the beginning of this tour, Galway, the western metropolis of Ireland, is full of interest. Situated upon the finest Atlantic harbour, and connected by rail with all parts of the kingdom, it is destined to assume a proud position among the ports of the British empire. Of its history, before the arrival of the English, little is known. In 1132, the castle was levelled by Connor, king of Munster, and again in 1149. In the thirteenth century it was strengthened by walls and towers, and soon grew to rival Limerick. In 1396 a charter was granted, and a mint established. It continued to flourish till about the close of the sixteenth century, when its trade appears to have died out. There are many points possessing peculiar attraction for the antiquarian, the historian, the politician, and the artist. Numberless old buildings to interest the first; historical associations to engage the attention of the second; memorials and passing scenes to set on the *qui vive* the thinking powers of the third; and ever-changing views, at almost every street-end, to rivet the eye of the fourth. Among the few modern buildings, the most conspicuous is Queen's College, and is distinguished, among many other characteristics, by having for its librarian the venerable James Hardiman, whose labours in familiarising the reading world with the archæological glories of the noble old town that claims him as one of its worthiest citizens, have justly endeared him to his countrymen in particular, and to the republic of letters generally. What the Rev. Mr. White has done for the natural history of Selborne, Mr. Hardiman has accomplished for the civic history of Galway—he has left nothing untold; and what he has told, has never been so well told before. Half the labour of his life has been exhausted on legal antiquities for the legislature, and the other half has been devoted to a work of love—the resuscitation of the antiquarian treasures of his country. His “Irish Minstrelsy” compliments his taste; his “History of Galway” establishes his erudition. Fortunately, Queen's College is now profiting by

his personal services. From him we learn, curiously enough, what Galway anciently was. Looking out upon the Atlantic, from its harbour, a ship could sail right on for Spain, which supplied the wine the Irish chiefs loved, while Ireland cured pork and butter best, for warm climates and the West Indies ; and a profitable trade was the consequence. Strength first offered security to merchants, and consequent wealth augmented the capacity to protect. High walls and strong gates forbade the approach of the “cruel O’Flahertys,” whom the legends on their portals denounced ; and the citizens, who delighted to record on their tombs the fact of their being “real Englishmen,” made a history and a prosperity for themselves. They often found it more convenient to buy the enemy off than fight them. Athenry, the English capital of the province, more bold, was less fortunate ; and its remarkable ruins, fourteen miles distant, tell the story of its greatness and its fall, as we have seen ; whilst Galway still flourishes, a pleasant town, and a hopeful mart of trade. The impress of Spain is still upon the place, for the houses and the customs are Spanish. It was night when we arrived (says the chronicler of the party, of which Lover and Liebig were two), and strolling out with a foreign gentleman and a Liverpool friend, from Kilroy’s Hotel, we were surprised to find the principal street full of pleasure-seeking people at eleven o’clock ! It is the same here as at Seville ; the “mall” was crowded with all classes, Operatives and ladies, gentlemen, “half-sirs,” and “spalpeens.” They were right merry and audibly happy. Inglis, Lord John Manners, and Sir F. Head, three travellers well conversant with Spanish usage, testify strongly to this Iberian similitude, of which, indeed, the Galwegians are not a little proud.

Anciently Galway was more prosperous than at present. The old buildings show this. The houses of the Lynchés and the Blakes remain to testify to a prudent pursuit of wealth—the dwelling, store, and counting-house, being in juxtaposition. Elaborate carving demonstrates taste and pride ; and the marbles of the vicinity enabled the architect to impart strength, durability, and grandeur to the merchant’s home. The obtusion of the gable end on the street is peculiarly Spanish ; but it must be confessed that the modern houses, with plate-glass windows, indicate an improvement in taste and comfort. In brief, there is no town in Ireland with so decided a *promise* about it, and certainly not one with as great capacity for advancement. It is the capital of Connaught ; and although Connaught is poor, still a capital is something. Then there is a prodigious motive-power in the town ; Lough Corrib can turn some hundred under-shot wheels, and suitable manufactures will soon, we trust, call them into operation. Labour is cheap, and the people have infinite intelligence, if rightly interrogated.

At present, the people of Galway anticipate much from their harbour ; it is, indeed, a fine one : the royal commissioners libelled it, for it can accommodate the “Great Britain.” This, and others with it, will enter Galway Bay when there is trade for them, and that will not be long coming, according to all present appearances. A packet-station established, manufactures would assuredly suggest themselves, even if they did not lead the way. Galway is, therefore, right in contending for the appointment of a packet-station, and a packet-station in some form it will be. Just now, perhaps, news come quick enough from the United States ; but let there be a transatlantic war or an insurrection, let Russia make good her threats of plundering our Australian merchantment in the Pacific, and even the swiftest ships of Collins or Cunard will be considered as tedious as a hag that limps as she moves. A stoppage at Galway will then relieve anxiety by two long days. A telegraph to Dublin, already established, across the Channel, and on to London [long in operation], will tell Lord Aberdeen what has been done in Quebec or New York seven days after the transaction. In England we never anticipate ; we wait upon events ; but, when the exigency arrives, we stir ourselves. When things unpleasant take place on the other side of the Atlantic, Galway will be a packet-station, or at least some port will be on the southwest shores of Ireland.

We have said that Galway has been equally fortunate in its historian as he in his theme. The “City of the Tribes” is as unlike any other place in Ireland as Chester is any in England ; and perhaps there is greater similarity between these two spots at the opposite extremes of our tour than could be found if the respective countries were searched from one end to the other for a parallel. The slightest glance at Galway suffices to show how prominent and distinctive is that foreign aspect which all travellers have immediately recognised, not only in its architectural, but in its human features. For instance, it might readily be imagined that Mahony’s street view was taken on the shores of the Mediterranean or the Bay of Biscay. And who can doubt that the human corresponds with the architectural aspect of the place, when looking upon Lover’s delineation of one of the itinerant street celebrities, long familiar to most of the inhabitants of that city, but now dead ? Or take Lover’s specimen of the opposite sex—one of the fisherwomen of the Cladagh, a district as peculiar in Galway as Galway itself is peculiar to Ireland. Might not those Arab-visaged beings be the actual effigies of some gipsy instrument in one or

other of the dark and romantic deeds of other days and other climes, which the old structures all around are continually prompting reminiscences of, and some of which indeed have witnessed tragedies as thrilling as any the annals of the Moor or the Andalusian supply ? One of those edifices, in particular, is always pointed out as pre-eminent, the occurrences of which it was the principal theatre having been repeatedly appropriated by the fictionist and the dramatist, and of course by the local annalist. It is commonly called Lynch's house ; but the incidents whence it derives that appellation we must leave the reader to gather on the spot, which he may do with very little trouble, for all the men of the West are full of the data on which is founded the " Warden of Galway." Without dwelling on that peculiar district of Galway called the Cladagh, sacred to the fishermen, and governed in a great measure by their own laws and observances, we must linger no longer in this fine and famous old town and prosperous new one, but must hurry off to that noble land of promise on whose confines it is situate, and of whose speedy well-doing its own is, we trust, assuredly significant

[1] TO CHARLES DICKENS.

Genius and its rewards are briefly told :
A liberal nature and a niggard doom,
A difficult journey to a splendid tomb.
New-writ, nor lightly weighed, that story old

In gentle Goldsmith's life I hero unfold ;
Through other than lone wild or desert-gloom,
In its mere joy and pain, its blight and bloom.
Adventurous. Come with me and behold

O friend with heart as gentle for distress,
As resolute with fine wise thoughts to bind
The happiest to the unhappiest of our kind,
That there is fiercer crowded misery
In garret-toil and London loneliness
Than in cruel islands 'mid the far-off sea.— JOHN FORSTER.

[2] The Rev. Charles Goldsmith was a Protestant clergyman, with an uncertain, stipend, which, with the help of some fields he farmed, and occasional duties he performed for the rector of an adjoining parish, who was uncle to his wife, averaged £40 a-year. A new birth was but a new burden ; and little dreamt that humble village preacher, then, or ever, that from the date of that 10th November, 1728, on which his Oliver was born, his own virtues and very foibles were to be a legacy of pleasure to many generations of men. For they who have loved, laughed, and wept, with the Man in Black of " The Citizen of the World," the Preacher of " The Deserted Village," and Doctor Primrose in " The Vicar of Wakefield," have given laughter, love, and tears, to the Rev. Charles Goldsmith. — *Forster's Life and Adventures of Oliver Goldsmith*, 1848.

The tourist's illustrated hand-book for Ireland (1854)
Publisher : London : D. Bryce
Language : English
Digitizing sponsor : Internet Archive
Book contributor : University of California Libraries
Collection : cdl ; americana
Notes: narrow margins

Source : Internet Archive
<http://www.archive.org/details/touristsillustra00lond>

Edited and uploaded to www.aughty.org
July 18 2011