

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

Honorary Member of the Societies of Dublin, York and Manchester; the Oeconomical Society of Berne ; the Palatine Academy of Agriculture, at Manheim, and the Physical Society at Zurich.

DUBLIN :

Printed by George Bonham,
For Messrs. WHITESTONE, SLEATER, SHEPPARD,
WILLIAMS, BURNET, WILSON, JENKIN,
WOGAN, VALLANCE, WHITE, BEATTY,
BYRN, and BURTON.

•

M.DCC.LXXX.

•

WOODLAWN.

September 3d, left Moniva, and took the road to Woodlawn, the seat of Frederick Trench, Esq ; passed many bogs of considerable size, perfectly improveable, and without the un-common exertions I have just described, none could be more anxious for my information than Mr. Trench.

Woodlawn is a seat improved entirely in the modern English taste, and is as advantageous a copy of it as I have any where seen. The house stands on the brow of a rising ground, which

looks over a lawn swelling into gentle inequalities ; through these a small stream is converted into a large river, in a manner that does honour to the taste of the owner ; it comes from behind a hill, at the foot of which is a pretty cottage hid by plantation, and flows into a large mass of wood in front of the house : the grounds, which form the banks of this water, are pleasing, and are prettily scattered with clumps and single trees, and surrounded by a margin of wood. The house is an excellent one, so well contrived, that the same disposition of apartments would be agreeable upon almost any scale of building.

Mr. Trench's improvements of bog made me solicitous to view them ; he was so obliging as to give me a full account, which is as follow. The first method of improving he took was with a bog of 12 acres, exceedingly wet, at the bottom of hills 16 feet deep to his knowledge, but he never yet was able to measure it to the bottom. A red bog, of a light fuzzy substance, like a bed of tow, which would not burn in turf ; no other product than bog berries. Part of it so very wet, that could not cut the drains at first wider than four feet and two spits deep ; repeated this before the hard frost of 1765 ; had yet made no progress, it being almost as wet as ever : but took advantage of that frost, to cover the ice two inches thick with clayey gravel ; when the thaw came, the gravel sunk, and pressed out the water. The expense of this manuring was 3l. 10s. an acre. This gravelling had such an effect, that in the May following about half of it bore horses with baskets, for carrying on dung, and where it would not bear them, it was carried on by men. The quantity six bushels to the square perch, and immediately planted with potatoes in the common trenching manner. The crop, per acre, 40 barrels each ; 44 stone, at 8s. each. Levelled the potatoe trenches in digging for barley, in doing which attended minutely to not burying the manure ; this digging cost 30s. an acre, and the barley covered with the spade, which they do very fast, and the expense included in the 30s. The crop of barley 10 barrels an acre, at 8s. After this crop, took no more trouble with it ; very rich and luxuriant grass sprang up directly, and would let readily in meadow, at 25s. but part of it in a few years would let at 2l. Two acres of it were not perfectly reclaimed ; it was of the moory nature ; dug and burnt it, and put in turnips, the crop very good : then dug it for barley, the produce 14 barrels an acre, and the meadow very good ever since. I was over it, and found it a perfect improvement ; the hay was fine, the herbage good, and carried the complete appearance of a meadow, except in the drains, where the heath still appears.

Number 2.

Twenty-five acres of spungy fungous bog, from 8 to 16 feet deep, had been cut into very great turf holes, which holes, though they held water, and had drowned many a cow, yet had so far drained the bog as to make the less draining necessary ; effected it, and then levelled the holes ; but as they sunk much, levelled them a second time. Upon this, took the advantage of a frost to manure it with clay and gravel, at 2l. 10s. an acre ; then dunged a part with the quantity mentioned already, and the rest of it manured with the ashes of moor, which burnt yellow. Upon this manuring, planted potatoes ; the crop 10l an acre, pretty equal being, as good after the ashes as after the dung. After the potatoes, levelled the trenches, and dug it and sowed wheat ; the crop 6 barrels an acre ; barley 10 barrels, oats 9 barrels : then left it for meadow, the value 2l. an acre.

Number 3 .

Another piece of bog the same sort, light and spungy ; drained, and then manured with clayey lime-stone gravel, mixed with ditch earth. In the summer planted potatoes ; the crop 15 barrels an acre ; then dug for oats 6 barrels an acre, meadow ever since, and perfectly good, would let at 1l. 10s. an acre.

Number 4.

Another bog of the same sort perfectly well drained, manured with lime, 80 barrels an acre, at 4d. a barrel ; planted potatoes ; the crop not worth digging ; dug it for oats, the crop not worth reaping : then left it in grass, which was indifferent, not worth more than 5s. an acre.

Number 5.

Another experiment was on the same sort of bog, which, when well drained, was manured in spring with lime-stone gravel, and then with marle instead of dung, and planted with potatoes ; the crop 4l. an acre : then dug it for oats ; the crop 6 barrels, and then left to grass ; worth 1l. 5s. an acre.

Number 6.

Another experiment, the same as the preceding, except lime laid instead of marle : the effect in every respect on a par with the marle. Neither of them yielded half the produce which dung or allies would have done.

Number 7.

Another bog of the same sort was, after draining, manured with lime-stone gravel, and then with the scowering of ditches and earth, to the amount of 3½ inches deep on the surface : expense in all 4l. an acre. Then left, and nothing more done to it ; very good grass came the next season, worth for grazing 18s. an acre.

Number 8.

Another spongy bog drained, and then well gravelled, at 2l. 10s. Left so for three years ; scarce any grass came, the heath still remaining : planted potatoes on it without any dung or other additional manure ; the crop 4l. an acre ; then dug it smooth, and nothing sown in it, but came immediately to very good pasture, worth 15s. an acre.

Mr. French recommends, from his experience, the following mode of improving bogs : first, the great object is draining ; main drains must be made on each side the bog, near the firm land ; these cuts should be six feet deep and eight wide, and will cost 1s. a perch. Then cross drains from main drain to main drain, at from 5 to 10 perch from one to the other, at three feet deep and four wide, at the expense of three pence a perch. Here is the first year's work. The next year go into all the drains and sink them, which will cost 1d. a perch: if a frost comes, carry on the lime-stone gravel, let it be a coat of two inches thick ; if three it will be better ; two inches will cost 3l. if not carried farther than half a quarter of a mile ; if carried a quarter of a mile, it will cost 4l. 10s. if half a mile, 6l. 15s. if a mile 9l. Prefers the clayey lime-stone gravel to every other manure : if that is not to be had, clay ; and if not clay, other gravel ; if no gravel or clay, then lime ; if nothing else, then the light marle under bogs. Upon this manuring spread a compost, one-third dung, one-third ditch earth, and one-third lime-stone gravel, nine bushels to the square perch ; if dung only, six ; and upon that plant potatoes in the common manner. The crop will, on an average, be 30 barrels, at 8s. or 12l. an acre. The poor people will readily give three or four guineas an acre for liberty to plant them. Upon this crop of potatoes spread two bushels of dung more to the perch, and plant a second crop of potatoes, making the furrows where the ridges were, and make the ridges of both crops nine

feet wide, and the trenches four. This crop of potatoes will be full as good as the first. Then dig it, levelling the trenches, scooping the sides, to fill up with, and the manured part on the surface ; sow barley ; the crop will be 12 barrels on an average ; with this barley sow grass seeds, and it will immediately be worth for meadow 1l. 10s. Let this go on for seven years ; then give it a light gravelling, at 1l. 10s. an acre; dung it four bushels per perch ; plant potatoes, 12l. 1 an acre; then barley 14 barrels ; and then meadow worth 40s. In this circumstance of letting meadow it should be remarked, that they will hire it at great prices, such as minuted, but the same lands would not let at more than 18s. upon a lease ; for in one case you stand the chance of keeping the land to its present heart, and in the other the tenant has that chance.

There is a circumstance which must be mentioned, the skin of the turf should not be broken for some years by heavy cattle ; for wherever they make a hole, the rushes grow at once, which cannot be easily destroyed. Mr. French does not think it at all necessary to keep an improved bog under grass, as he has found by experience, that the more they are cultivated the better they grow. In the winter he feeds his reclaimed bogs with sheep ; they have a perpetual spring of grass all through that season, and are of a nature so contrary to that of rotting sheep, that they will recover those which are threatened with that distemper.

He has planted several large clumps in his reclaimed bogs, and has found that almost every kind of tree thrives well in them : I thought the spruce fir seemed to get up the quickest but all of them appeared perfectly healthy.

Mr. Trench buys in year-old bullocks and some spayed heifers, at 1l. 15s. each ; sells them out at three-years old, good stores, but not fat, at 6l. 3s. on an average. He has 930 sheep, consisting of 300 ewes, 180 lambs, 270 yearlings and two-year olds, and 180 fat sheep. The annual slaughter and sale is 180 fat wethers, at 1l. 3s.—60 culled ewes, at 15s. In order to save dung for his bog improvement, he has cut a large drain from his yards and stables through the garden, paved it, and keeps it filled with bog earth, and all the urine of the cattle, &c. running into it, makes an excellent compost for the gardener.

Average rent of the improved part of the county of Galway, 14s. an acre. About Woodlawn 14s. to 18s. The soil all lime-stone gravel, or lime-stone fine found land. The size of farms varies ; there are many small ones of from 30 to 100 acres, part grazing and part tillage ; also many stock ones, up to 1000 and 1500 acres ; and these graziers re-let to the cabbins part of it at a very high rent, by whom are carried on most of the tillage of the country. Mr. Trench remarks, that if good land is let to the poor people, they are sure to destroy it ; but give them heath, or what is bad, and they will make it good.

1 . Potatoes on the grafs. 2. Summer fallow. 3. Wheat. 4. Oats. 5. Oats. 6. Lay out.
— No feeds.

1. Potatoes. 2. Barley. 3. Wheat. 4, Oats. 5. Oats, 6. Oats.

1. Potatoes on grass. 2. Gravel and fallow. 3. Wheat. 4. Barley. 5. Oats. 6, Leave it for grass.

1. Potatoes. 2. Flax. 3. Wheat. 4. Oats. 5. Oats. 6. Lay out.

Average produce of potatoes, 30 barrels, at 42 stone, at 8s. or 12l. Of wheat, 8 barrels, at 20 stone. Of barley, 12 barrels, at 16 stone. Of oats, 12 barrels, at 14 stone.

Every poor man sows some flax, but still they do not raise enough for their spinning, for that is universal. Lime-stone gravel is the general manure. No lime, though it is every where to be had ; the price to burn is 4d. a barrel of 3 bushels roach. Every cabin has eight or nine acres, and two or three cows, or two cows and one horse ; and about half have horses, two or three pigs, and many poultry ; half a rood of flax, one acre potatoes, or half at a medium. They live on potatoes, oats, or barley bread, or butter ; like oats much better. Their circumstances are much improved in 20 years. They pay rent 12s. to 14s. an acre for their lands,

•

K I L T A R T A N

September 4th, to Kiltartan, the seat of Robert Gregory, Esq. who is engaged in pursuits which, if well imitated, will improve the face of the country not a little. He has built a large house with numerous offices, and taken 5 or 600 acres of land into his own hands, which I found him improving with great spirit. Walling was his first object, of which he has executed many miles in the most perfect manner : his dry ones, 6 feet high, 3 feet and a half thick at bottom, and 20 inches at top, cost 2s. 6d. the perch, running measure. Piers in mortar, with agate andirons complete, il. 14s. Walls in mortar, five feet high, cost 6s. a perch. He has fixed two English bailiffs on his farm, one for accounts and overlooking his walling and other business ; and another from Norfolk, for introducing the turnip husbandry ; he has 12 acres this year; and what particularly pleased me, I saw some Irishmen hoeing them ; the Norfolk man had taught them ; and I was convinced in a moment, that these people would by practice soon attain a sufficient degree of perfection in it. The soil around is all a dry found good lime-stone land, and lets E e 3 from ios. to 12s, an acre, some at more. It is in general applied to sheep, Mr. Gregory has a very noble nursery 3 from which he is making plantations, which will soon be a great ornament to the country.

•

D R U M M O L A N D

September 5th, to Drummoland, the seat of Sir Lucius O'Brien, in the county of Clare, a gentleman who had been repeatedly assiduous to procure me every sort of information. I should remark, as I have now left Galway, that that county, from entering it in the road to Tuam till leaving it to-day, has been, upon the whole, inferior to most of the parts I have travelled in Ireland in point of beauty : there are not mountains of a magnitude to make the view sinking. It is perfectly free from woods, and even trees, except about gentlemen's houses, nor had it a variety in its face. I do not, however, speak without exception ; I passed some tracts which are chearful, Drummoland has a pleasing variety of grounds about the house ; it stands on a hill gently rising from a lake of 24 acres, in the middle of a noble wood of oak, ash, poplar, &c. three beautiful hills rise above it, over which the plantations spread in a varied manner - } and these hills command very fine views of the great rivers Fergus and Shannon at their junction, being each of them a league wide. For the following particulars I am indebted to Sir Lucius O'Brien.

Average rent of the county of Clare, 5s. The bad tracts of land in the county, are the east mountains, part of the barony of Burrin, and the great peninsula, which forms the north shore of the Shannon. Great tracts are let at nothing at all, but there are 20,000 acres from Paradise hill, along the Fergus and Shannon to Limerick, which let at 20s. an acre. These lands are called the *Corcasses*. The soil of them is either a rich black loam, or a deep rich blue clay ; and all the higher lands are lime-stone, or lime-stone gravel. The mountains are

generally grit-stone. The size of farms is various, Captain Tim. Macnamara farms 7000 acres, but part in other counties. Mr. Singleton, 4000 acres. A farm of 300l. a year is a very small one ; 500l. a year middle; this is speaking of stock-farms. The tillage of the country is carried on by little farmers, from 20l. to 100l. a year ; but most of it by the poor labourers, who are generally under-tenants, not holding of the landlords. The courses of crops are,

1. Potatoes. 2. Bere. 3. Wheat. 4. Oats. 5. Oats. 6. Oats. 7. Lay it out to grass.

1. Beans. 2. Bere. 3. Barley. 4. Wheat. 5. Oats. 6. Oats. 7. Oats. 8. Lay it out, or beans again.

Of wheat they sow 10 to 15 stone an acre ; the crop, in the corcass grounds, 8 barrels, in the other lands 5 or 6 : 20 stone to the barrel.

Potatoes they measure by the barrel of 48 stone : they plant 6 to the acre, and the average produce 50 barrels. They never plant them on the corcass lands, for they will not grow there. Mr. Fitzgerald, of Shepperton, has had 100 barrels per acre ; the favourite sorts are the apple, the Castania, the Buck, being a species of the Howard. They fat pigs on them ; but what much amazed me, was fattening hogs on grass, which they do very generally, and make them as fat as a bullock, but put them up to beans for three weeks to harden the fat. Of barley they sow 14 stone an acre, and get six barrels, at 32 stone each. Bere, two rowed barley, called *English* here, and four rowed, called *Dutch*, and of these the bere yields best. Mr. Singleton has had 40 barrels of bere per acre, each 16 stone on the corcass land. Of oats they sow 21 stone to the acre, and get 12 barrels, on an average 14 stone each ; and on the corcass land 16. Of beans they sow 35 stone to the acre, sow them on the green sod soon after christmas, and plough them in ; never hand-hoe or weed them : the average crop 20 barrels, at 20 stone ; 30 the greatest ; they are used for home consumption in dear years, and for exportation in cheap. The poor people make bread of them, and eat them boiled, and they prefer a bushel of them to a bushel of wheat ; but they will not eat them, except in a scarcity. No pease sown, but rape in considerable quantities in mountain grounds, or boggy, both of which are burnt for it. They plough the furrow very shallow, and burn it : they never feed it. The crop of feed 8 barrels, at 16 ft. at from 7s. 6d. to 18s. a barrel, generally from 14s. to 17s. It is pressed into oil at the mills of six mile bridge and Scariff, near Killaloe ; but the greatest part is bought up by the merchants of Limerick for exportation for Holland, and last year some part of it has been sent to Great Britain, in consequence of the act which passed last sessions. The rape cakes are all exported to England for manure : the price of them at 45s. or 42s. per ton. The rape and the bean straw are burnt to allies for the soap boilers ; and Mr. Singleton has a kiln contrived on purpose for burning lime with it, collecting the ashes at the same time that the lime is burnt. No clover is sown, except by Sir Lucius O'Brien. Flax is sown in small quantities by the poor people for their own consumption ; and some yarn sold, but not much from the whole county. Spinning is by no means general ; not half the women spin. Some linens, handle-cloths, and Clare dowlas, for exportation in small quantities, and other sorts, enough for home consumption. Wool is spun for cloathing for the people, into worsted yarn for serges, and into yarn for stockings. Great quantities of frizes are sold out of the country.

Much heath waste land, many hundreds of acres every year are brought in by paring and burning for rape, but use no manure for it ; after that wheat, and get good crops, and then two, three, or four crops of oats, good ones ; then left for grass, and comes tolerable herbage, worth 5 s. an acre.

The principal grazing system consists in a union of both rearing and fattening ; the rearing farms generally at a considerable distance from the rich lands on the Fergus and Shannon. The most profitable management of grazing, is to buy in year-olds upon this system, but it

can only be done, by hewing a variety of land, commonly at a distance. It is found much more beneficial than buying in bullocks in autumn, and cows in May, as the Meath graziers do.

The average price of the year-olds, is from 2l. 2s. to 2l. 10s. and the price sold at four and a half year-olds, weighing $4\frac{1}{2}$ cwt. $4\frac{3}{4}$, to $5\frac{1}{4}$ cwt. is on an average at 8l. For cows bought in in May, 3l. 3s. to 3l. 12s. and sell at 5l. 10s. An acre of the corcass land will fatten one of these bullocks, but then it must not be winter-fed at all. Sheep, on an average, shear three to a stone of 16lb. and sell at 1s. per. lb. Mr. Macnamara sold this year 55 bags, besides his lambs wool ; the weight is from six hundred, to seven and a half, fifty stone, and this year's price 17s. 6d. a stone. Upon the lime-stone sheep-walks of this county, they keep from one and a half to five ; on an average, three. The loss on stock-sheep, bullocks, &c. will not amount to more than one percent, on the value. For hiring and flocking a grazing farm, three rents are reckoned to do. Those bullocks that are to be fattened the summer following, they give hay most part of the winter, for four or five months, as much as they will eat, which will be half an acre of good meadow.

There are 4000 bullocks fattened annually in the county of Clare ; bought in at 6l. and fold out at 10l. and 3000 cows, bought in at 3l. and sold out at 5l. also 6000 fat wethers, sold out of the county annually at 20s. each.

This country is famous for cyder-orchards, the cakagee especially, which is incomparably fine. An acre of trees yields from four to ten hogsheads per annum, average six, and what is very uncommon in the cyder counties of England, yield a crop every year. I never beheld trees so loaden with apples as in Sir Lucius O'Brien's orchard ; it amazed me that they did not break under the immense load which bowed down the branches. He expected a hogshead a tree from several.

Land fells at twenty years purchase. Rents fell in the rearing lands 5s. or 6s. in the pound, but rich lands fell very little. Tythes are compounded by a composition made every year by the piece. Fat bullocks nothing. Sheep, 20s per hundred. Wheat, 5s. Barley 3s. Oats, 2s. Potatoes, 10s. Middle men, not common, but much land re-let, arising from the long tenures which are given of three lives, &c.

The poor live upon potatoes ten months of the year ; but if a mild winter, and a good crop, all the year on them. They keep cows very generally, but not so many as in the list of Sir Lucius's tenants. Labour is usually paid for with land. Working-days of roman catholics may be reckoned 250 in a year, which are paid for with as much land as amounts to about six pounds, and the good and bad master is distinguished by this land being reckoned at an high or a low rent. The state of the poor, on comparison with what they were twenty years ago, is that they are much increased in numbers, and better clad then they were, and more regularly fed, in being freed from those scarcities which were felt before the laws for the increase of tillage.

Lucerne, Sir Lucius cultivated for some years, and found while it was attended to, and kept clean, that it was of great use for horses, but his absence and neglect destroyed it. Relative to smuggling wool from Clare, he gave me several strong reasons for believing that there had not been any for some years ; that county is well situated for it, and some ships smuggled brandy and tobacco, and could carry it away with great ease, yet not one goes. Sir Lucius was executor to a man who made a fortune by it twenty-five years ago, but he would never smuggle when above 10s. a stone ; I had the same account in Galway. The cause of the high price of wool, is the admission of woollen yarn in all the ports of England, and

the increased demand in the Manchester fabric for that yarn, which demand would have operated in England as in Ireland, had the cheapness of spinning been equal. Another cause, the increase of population, and the people being better clad. Sending a pound of wool to France, smugglers compute to be six-pence, which is fifty per cent, on the present prime cost. Thus the French could get wool much cheaper from England, where the prime cost is lower. There is none from Cork, for being a manufacturing town, the people would not allow it. A duty of 4d. per stone of 18lb. on woollen and worsted yarn exported, marks the quantity which Ireland grows beyond its own consumption. Raw wool, two thousand to 10,000 stone, the rest yarn, which is nearly doubled in value by the manufacture. The quantity of broad-cloth and serges, that is, old and new drapery, imported from England, equals the export of woollen yarn. It is remarkable that upon the corcass lands in this county, there are several tools in use, which are called *Dutch*, a *Dutch* spade, a *Dutch* plough, &c.

Sir Lucius O'Brien introduced me to two of the most considerable graziers in the county, Mr. Singleton, and Mr. Fitzgerald, and rode through a part of their farms, Mr. Singleton's corkass meadows were one continued bed of rushes, till he destroyed them by a method which alone proved effectual, which is digging up the rush, and turning it topsy-turvy into the hole again, this he finds effectually destroys them, and the expense is not so great as might be imagined. This gentleman has more tillage-land than common upon grazing farms ; he shewed me a haggard, well filled with wheat stacks ; seventeen acres of that grain yielded him 196 barrels. Mr. Fitzgerald is a very attentive farmer, and in several particulars, conducts his business upon principles different from those which are common in Ireland. He has built excellent farming-offices ; particularly a barn, exceedingly well contrived ; the corn may be thrown at once from the part of the barn where it is flowed on to two threshing floors, the one over another, and from the stacks through a window into the barn. His hay is also thrown in the same manner, down into the cow-house, and his potatoes into a vault. These conveniences, which are a great saving of labour, are gained by the buildings being raised on the side of a steep hill, cut away for the purpose. His cows he keeps in the house all winter, by which means they are better wintered, and he raises a great quantity of manure. The chaff of his corn crops he saves carefully, which is directly contrary to the country ; and what is much more, cuts much hay and straw into chaff, with an engine, which he finds to answer perfectly well ; the man works it with one hand, and supplies it with the other, being fixed against the wall.

A tour in Ireland ; (1780)

Author : Young, Arthur, 1741-1820

Volume : 1

Subject : Agriculture — Ireland ; Ireland — Description and travel

Publisher : Dublin : Printed by G. Bonham for Whitestone [etc.]

Language : English

Digitizing sponsor : MSN

Book contributor : University of California Libraries

Collection : cdl ; americana

Source : Internet Archive

<http://www.archive.org/details/tourinireland01you>

Edited and uploaded to www.aughty.org

January 17 2011