GLEANINGS

IN THE

WEST OF IRELAND.

BY THE

HON. & REV. S. GODOLPHIN OSBORNE.

The Queen reads.—"Can such things be,
And in my dominions?"

Play not yet published.

LONDON:
T. & W. BOONE, NEW BOND STREET.
1850.

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TO

HIS EXCELLENCY

THE EARL OF CLARENDON,

LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND,

ETC. ETC. ETC.

This little Work

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

BY ONE WHO IS AS SENSIBLE OF THE WORTH OF

HIS PUBLIC CHARACTER,

AS HE IS OF

THE VALUE OF HIS PRIVATE ESTEEM.

PREFACE.

SOME of the matter contained in the following pages has already been published, in the columns of the "Times" newspaper. I have added to it a good deal of detail, as to the condition of the people, in the West of Ireland; which I think it important to publish, but which would not have been acceptable to the generality of the readers of a newspaper. I desire, however, to place on record, in a form easily accessible, the results of the inquiries I have made into the nature of the treatment, to which the peasantry of the distressed districts are exposed, within and without the workhouses. A newspaper, when once read, is usually put aside, and then, very often accidentally, or purposely misquoted. Those who may attempt to refute the statements I have felt it my duty to make, and those who may desire to lend their aid to obtain redress for the grievances I have proclaimed, will, I trust, in these pages, find a ready source of reference to those facts, on which I ground my appeal for the consideration of all who love mercy and justice, to the oppression, and the suffering, of the people of this part of the Queen's dominions.

In reference to Irish readers, I will now touch upon a subject, which, had I reason to suppose my readers would only be English, I should have passed over. It has been more than insinuated in Ireland, that in my tours in that country, I travelled as a "Times Commissioner;" one paper pleasantly addresses me as a "penny-a-liner." A gentleman of some rank, has—although he had some acquaintance with me—put upon the books of his "Union," that "I visited the country in the twofold capacity of an anonymous correspondent of the "Times," and an accredited informer of the Government." To any of my readers who may feel any interest in so trifling a matter, I beg to say—that in the inquiries I have made in Ireland, as well as in the very many I have made and published elsewhere—I have ever travelled, wholly at my own expense, for my own pleasure; in no manner of connection with any public journal, or any public authority.

For many years the Editor of the "Times" has kindly indulged me with space in his journal, when it has pleased me to write, what it has pleased him to publish; I never yet touched one farthing, or received any personal favour from him, or the Editor of any other journal, beyond that simple favour of making public for me, what I wished to publish.

As to any connection with any Government, my line through life has not been one calculated to win for me any special countenance of that sort. In pur-

suing an object to which, circumstances, years ago, when I thought I had few to live, led me to dedicate my every energy, I have set aside all consideration of whether I might please or displease either those whose private friendship I valued, or whose official position could advance me in life. It is quite true, I have asked, and always obtained, introductions from persons in office, when I have needed them, to give me opportunity to see and judge for myself, as regarded the management of those matters under the control of Government, in which I took an interest; but I have ever reserved to myself the fullest liberty of opinion, and of right to make that opinion known.

I have no hesitation in avowing, that I am very grateful for the assistance the "Times" has afforded me in my efforts to ameliorate the condition of my poorer fellow-creatures. I feel no shame in being called a "correspondent" of that paper; I do not know one single rank or profession which does not furnish some who write occasionally for the Public Press. Except in the case of one who writes for an avowed philanthropic object, I own I can see no reason why a peer, a bishop, or any one, of any rank, should hesitate to receive pay from a newspaper, when it is well known pay is gratefully accepted by men of all ranks from the "Reviews."

As to the sneers of such little "Union" grandees as my friend, who, as if to make good his nationality, proclaims the writer of a series of letters, the first

of which had his name at full length, the rest his initials, as an *anonymous* correspondent, I can easily forgive him; small minds bear but little disturbance, though they are apt to exact no small amount of deference to the self-magnified value of their cleverness. He will continue great on his own little theatre; and even after the Board he adorns with his presence shall have made their male paupers decent—given them water to drink; I think it likely he may find, that, though holding no official position calling on me to represent the misdoings of the said Board, I may yet take the liberty of doing so, in other equally disgraceful matters; where there is no resident inspector, he must excuse a traveller, who may think it his duty to expose what no inspector would, I hope, suffer. If he will take a friend's advice, he will devote himself more often to a real inspection of the wards and yards of the parent and auxiliary houses of his Union, and less, to heavy facetiæ at my expense.

I will only add, that ill-health, and other unavoidable causes, have forced upon me the putting these pages through the press, with a carelessness as to form and style scarcely pardonable. I am prepared to bow, in these respects, to all the criticism the work deserves; I am equally prepared to defend every statement made, as only made on good and sufficient grounds.

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CHAPTER I.

LINE OF TRAVEL—UNIONS VISITED—IN-DOOR PAUPERISM — LIMERICK — PARENT — AUXILIARY WORKHOUSES — GROSS MISMANAGEMENT—WRETCHED CONDITION OF INMATES — BOARD DAY — PERSONALITY OF DEBATES — TEMPTATION TO JOB—ACCUSATIONS OF JOBBING.

EARLY in the summer of the year 1849, I was much struck with an account I read in the "Times" newspaper, of the very large mortality from cholera, in the workhouses of the Balinasloe Union, in the County of Galway, in the west of Ireland; I was also, with many others, much shocked with a discussion, which took place about the same time, in the House of Commons, relative to the effects of the famine, in that part of the sister country.

Circumstances, early in life, turned my attention to the condition of the poorer classes in England, and I had for many years taken an active and somewhat public part, with those who were seeking to ameliorate that condition. I could not but feel, that having devoted myself to this task of seeking the good of my poorer fellow-creatures; I had no right to confine my work, to those of my own immediate country, if I could see any prospect of aiding the same class, in a country so closely connected with my own, and so easily accessible as Ireland. I therefore determined to go myself, and see how far

what I had heard to be the case was true and if true, to judge how far any individual effort could prove of benefit. The result of the tour I then made was kindly published for me in the columns of the "Times" newspaper; and I have reason to believe such publication proved at least of this much benefit; —it brought public opinion to bear on many of those matters of detail, in the treatment of the poor, on which, the effect of that opinion is always most valuable.

I this year again determined to devote my month's annual holiday to a second tour in the west of Ireland; I was this time accompanied by a friend, who wished to see for himself the state of things of which he had heard so much from myself and others.

Those only who have had to travel in a land, in which they were as strangers, who have had, day after day, to go through lengthened scenes of destitution, death, and misery, in every aggravated form; doing this *alone;* spending each day away from *home,* all its ties, and comforts, many hours, in close contact with the evidence and effects of famine, fever, and oftentimes cholera, besides all the attendant trials, physical and moral, of such a course of investigation; can enter into all I felt of comfort in this time having a companion, and in that companion, one who had no common powers of discrimination, in addition to a kind and generous nature.

I shall now proceed to give my readers some of the gleanings of my late tour; my route (I do not

relate any part of my travel which was not made with the purpose I had in view, to inquire into the social condition of the people *in the western districts of Ireland*) was—Limerick, down the Shannon to Kilrush; thence to Kilkee; retracing our steps to Kilrush; by the northern bank of the Shannon, Clonderlaw, Kildysart, Kilchrist, Clondegad to Ennis; from Ennis to Gort; by Loughrea to Balinasloe; from thence by Oranmore to Galway; from Galway by Oughterard, through Connemara to the "Fisheries" at Ballynahinch, (on the Martin property); thence to Clifden, through Joyce's country by Kylmore to Leenane; to Westport, Castlebar, by Pontoon to Ballina; thence returning by Castlebar to Tuam; back to Dublin by Athlone, Mullingar, and the Midland railway.

In this journey, which, with very little exception, and that only on our return, we performed by private conveyance, I visited eleven Union Houses, and most of their Auxiliaries, and except in one or two instances, I scarce left one department uninspected. It will be seen by reference to a map of Ireland, that, commencing with the capital town of the County of Limerick, we went through the centre of the County of Clare, and a very large proportion of the County of Galway and Mayo; these being, perhaps, the most distressed districts in Ireland.

The only way of performing the journey, so as to see with the greatest convenience, into those

matters into which I went to look, we adopted, viz. hiring outside cars, and thus travelling at the hours, and in the directions we thought best.

The population remaining in the west of Ireland are studied with more ease at this moment, by a traveller seeking to read man in men, women, and children, than perhaps in any country in the world; so large a proportion of the population being actually in the workhouses. I will here give a table of the population, according to the census of 1841, of the Unions we visited, with a return of the average number of persons relieved weekly in the workhouses, in the quarter ending March 30, 1850.

Union.	Population in 1841.	Relieved on an average each week in the Quarter ending March 30, 1850, in the Workhouse.
Limerick	132,067	6,790
Kilrush	82,353	3,327
Ennis	77,840	3,057
Gort	71,774	2,246
Balinasloe	99,026	2,284
Galway	88,973	3,712
Clifden	33,465	1,932
Westport	77,952	3,465
Castlebar	61,063	1,674
Ballina, including Belmullet, Dromore West, Killala	120,787	3,507
Tuam	74,974	2,627
Population	920,274	In the Workhouses on an average each week 34,621

The above table shews, that in the quarter ending March 30, 1850, nearly one-third of the whole population of these Unions were on an average in the Workhouse; but I would have the reader bear in mind, that the population has decreased in these districts, by death, and by emigration, not less than 25 per cent. since 1841; and also it must be borne in mind, that the quarter ending March, is not nearly so bad a quarter as to the pressure on the workhouses, as that which ends in June. We found in these eleven Unions indoor paupers to the amount of 44,000.

When then, the traveller has walked the wards and yards of these Leviathan workhouses, he has had the advantage of seeing, in the, *for him*, most convenient form, by far the largest portion of the peasantry of the several Unions; for, from the Population Census, we must deduct those classes who as yet are not come upon the Poor-rate.

The Irish workhouses are large, and in general well-built; of handsome outward appearance, and contrived with a good deal of care to meet the end for which they were erected: however, such, since the failure of the potato, and the progress of wholesale eviction, has been the increase of pauperism, that the Original Workhouses have been found quite incapable of meeting the demand for in-door accommodation. A very large number of places, called Auxiliary Houses, are now rented by the Guardians;

and into these they place different classes of their paupers, under officers appointed for each house.

I am quite satisfied in my own mind, that could any statesman have contemplated the possibility of the present pressure of pauperism, he would have hesitated before he passed a law, which in effect should have to find food and shelter for the numbers that are now to be fed and sheltered. The population of the whole of Ireland, taken in 1841, was 8,168,632; the estimated workhouse accommodation, March, 1850, was for 273,076 persons; the average number relieved weekly in the Union houses in the quarter ending March, was 227,627.

In the districts to which I am about to call the reader's attention, the estimated amount of accommodation, *i. e.* that relative proportion of inmates to the space in the houses, which the Poor-law Commissioners had sanctioned, was almost in every instance overstepped; the houses in many instances are most cruelly and disgracefully crowded.

The first Union-house we visited was that at Limerick. Last year, when I went over it, I found it clean and in good order; I now found it every way the reverse. In the parent and auxiliary houses there was no less a number than 8,000 paupers; every department, except the fever hospital, shewed evident symptoms of gross neglect. I have no words with which I can give any real idea of the sad condition of the inmates of two large yards at the parent house, in

which were a very large number of young female children; many of them were clothed in the merest dirty rags, and of these they wore a very scanty allowance; they were in the dirt collected on their persons for many weeks; there was not about them the slightest evidence of any the least care being taken of them; as they filed before me, two and two, they were a spectacle to fill any humane heart with indignation: sore feet, sore hands, sore heads; ophthalmia evident in the case of the great proportion of them; some of them were suffering from it in its very worst stage; they were evidently eat up with vermin —very many were mere skeletons: I know well what the appearance of a really famine-stricken child is; there were, it is true, some here who had brought their death-like appearance into the house with them; but the majority were as the type in which the one word *neglect* was printed, in no mistakeable characters—the neglect of their latter state, not the consequence of their former state.

The dirt and general filthiness of the yards, in which these barefooted, ill-clad children had to spend so many hours, made the whole affair more painfully offensive; dogs would have had more attention paid to them. The women, and those I saw of the men, looked, as far as clothes and flesh went, in far better condition.

I was kindly allowed to attend the sitting of the Board the following day, when I had the pleasure of

hearing a very eloquent address made by a Guardian to his brethren, founded on a report he read of the condition of their poor; a report, which really almost did that horrid condition justice. I had also the amusement of hearing an eloquent, personal, hard-hitting debate carried on, in connection with the simple question—whether the paupers, being without clothes, and the contractor unable at once to supply them, the Board should study the paupers' need, and get calico at once elsewhere—or the contractor's convenience, and wait *his* time? I had the pain of afterwards hearing the contractor's interest won the day.

I went from the Board-room in company with the Medical officer, to visit an auxiliary-house in Clare-street, Limerick, there were about 800 able-bodied women in it—a few days before there had been 822—for whom the Guardians had provided 267 *beds!* Let me here observe, that a considerable space in the dormitories was occupied as an infirmary—very many of the cases were of a description which in any decent public asylum would be rigorously separated from communication with the other inmates; these beds had only, as far as I myself observed, one person in each, so that the division of the rest of the beds amongst the inmates must have been very minute indeed. The sick ward, including all cases, had, however, according to the Board's own admission, 115 patients in 88 beds, so that there were left

179 beds to 707 people, all adults ! ! It was acknowledged that many of the inmates had slept for weeks without beds or covering.

One would have supposed, with such crowding of the majority, and with such a number of sick, that sanitary measures—so far as regards the cleansing of the wards and linen, if not the persons, of the paupers —would have been strenuously enforced. Reader, it is but too true, that for weeks together neither soap or candles had been allowed to this house; for one month, at least, no linen was washed; for many months the matron had not been allowed any brushes, or any of the absolutely necessary articles to cleanse the wards. With regard to the house itself, it has already been the scene of one sad catastrophe; on an alarm of fire, a rush by the inmates was made to the staircase of a dormitory, and a great many lives were lost; such was the evident state of the walls, roof, and floors the day we visited it, that I did not let another day pass without communicating to the highest quarter my apprehension for the safety of the inmates; prompt inquiry was made, and, I believe, instant measures for safety ordered. I have read, since, in the public papers, that an architect had informed the Board, *he thought the roof might stand through August, perhaps September.*

The violence of the language of the inmates, their evident moral degradation, was too apparent; but who can wonder if human nature, even of the softest

natural character, should become hardened as brass, under a state of things which treats large bodies of women as mere animals, except in the matter of apparently caring less for their lives than most men do for their dogs.

At another auxiliary-house, called I believe Mount Kennet, I found a very large number of boys; here there was a state of things nearly as bad. Since I was at Limerick these youths broke into open rebellion, and the police force with fixed bayonets had some difficulty in subduing them. At another "auxiliary" the state of things amongst an immense body of children was most disgraceful; for weeks the bed linen had not been changed or washed, in fact, no soap had been allowed; the poor children had from time to time to lie naked in bed whilst their shirts, &c. were washed, when they were fortunate enough to have even this chance of cleanliness; we found some thus naked, and this was the excuse made. The infirmary, or sick ward, was a most piteous sight; to see these poor children suffering from dysentery and other diseases, the direct result of physical depression from want; in this suffering left so dirty, and so evidently neglected, was no small aggravation of the sense at which I had already arrived of the wanton abuse of their office shewn by the authorities of this union. The rain, as I stood by the side of one poor sufferer, called convalescent, was coming through the roof on the bed in which he was laid.

I had heard the excuse made at the Board in the morning, for the evident want of clothing at the parent house, amongst the children; "that they had none to put on them;" and yet, I found on strict inquiry, that shirts and shifts had been sent to one of the other auxiliaries, in which the children were, whilst I was at the Clare-street house. Can it be, that children were stripped at one establishment, and their clothes sent to hide from the visitor, the nakedness in another? If eloquence could clothe, I could easily believe in the power of this Board, with words to cover the naked; but in the absence of this extraordinary means, I am yet at a loss to know, whence came the shower of little shirts and shifts that afternoon.

As to the state of dicipline in which these 8,000 paupers are held, a short time before I was in Limerick, the women and children broke out of several of the houses, and actually marched bodily into the streets of the town; to the great disgust and terror of the quiet inhabitants.

I would wish now to state, that this Limerick Union, is by no means in any real financial difficulty; as a proof of it, at the time the "Rate in Aid" bill was passed, before it had received the royal assent, the Guardians actually struck a rate to carry them over two years, that *they might thus evade the provisions of the Act.* I will not argue on the honesty, or the policy of this measure; but I do argue from it, that

a Union which has now a very large amount in the course of collection, notoriously collecting the rate with little difficulty, has no right to plead poverty against an accusation of an amount of neglect of duty, to which any amount of poverty would be no answer. *At the end of last March, they had still* £33,435 *of the rate struck, yet uncollected.*

I took some pains to ascertain, how such a Union, with a resident nobleman for chairman, could get into such a state of shameless disorganization. I could get no satisfactory answer; my own impression, from all I heard and saw, is simply this—To feed, clothe, &c. 8,000 paupers, at the expense of a solvent Union, creates so large a demand, for the necessaries required; that a primary object of large firms and others has been to get themselves, or their friends, elected into the Board, with a view of influencing contracts for the supplies.

The open way in which I heard parties accuse each other, by what could scarcely be called insinuation, of gross jobbing, shewed me, the practice was pretty generally admitted to exist. The Board Room has, I fear, been mainly used as an *arena* for able debating on the merits of contractors; such merits being weighed in a balance, the equilibrium of which owed its disturbance, more to the friendship, or hostility, of the parties, who were to decide on the acceptance of the tenders, than on the comparative quality or value, of the samples tendered. I should much like to see

the result of an inquiry into the receipts and disbursements of this Union, for the last two years; I only know one power which could be applied, with any hope of success, to such an investigation—the same Committee, or the same accountants, employed on the great Hudson railway inquiry.

To give the reader some idea of the spirit in which the Board business is conducted, I will quote from a published Report of a meeting of the Board, Lord Clare in the chair, held, I believe, the very day after I left Limerick; the concluding sentence of the concluding speech of the day, being in continuation, or rather in conclusion of a spirited debate, in which accusations of jobbery were freely exchanged, it simply was—"it is a d—d infernal lie."

It is indeed time that some public notice should be taken of the manner in which a Board, entrusted with the responsible duty of supervising the relief of 8,000 poor, wholly at their mercy, abuse their position and neglect their duty; to the detriment of the ratepayer, the disgrace of the law, and above all, to the wanton injury of their poor fellow-creatures. Heavy will be the guilt of the Poor-law authorities if they do not quickly interpose, to secure the interest of those who can ill afford to pay rates, and those whose relief at best, is so narrowed, that they can less afford any further restriction to it.

CHAPTER II.

KILRUSH UNION—ADMISSION DAY—APPEARANCE OF APPLICANTS—FAMINE CASES—STARVED ADULTS—STARVED CHILDREN—NATURE OF DEATH FROM FAMINE—MORTALITY IN THIS UNION—KILKEE—JOURNEY TO ENNIS—EVICTIONS—THEIR CRUELTY AND EFFECT ON THE PEOPLE—HOUSE TUMBLING PROCESS—SCALPEENS—KILDYSART—INCONVENIENCE OF CHARITY—WHERE AND HOW THE EVICTED LIVE.

From Limerick I went by steamer down the Shannon to Kilrush; the day was stormy, but not sufficiently so to hide the beauty of this noble river; I fear, from all appearance, that it is but little traversed now by trading vessels.

When I reached the Union house at Kilrush, I had evidence at its very doors, of the awful amount of destitution for which it is the last refuge. It was "the admission day;" within the gates, and on the open ground in front of the doors, were collected in crowds, representatives of every species of extreme suffering. Here was ample evidence of the fact, that the workhouse test is in Ireland, a real test of destitution; for one's first impression was, why had not many of these hundreds applied for food and shelter and clothing, before famine, nakedness, and exposure had so defaced and degraded their humanity?

The debility of age, made worse by long borne misery; the debility of disease, aggravated by long neglect; hunger-worn countenances, telling the tale

which at once explained the efficient cause which had left the frame just a frame, and that all. Infants at the breast of mothers, with the skin and visage of advanced, careworn childhood; children, whose sores and dirt and squalid famished looks told of the loss of all the elasticity of their age, of their premature acquisition of that stolid care-blunted nature, which years of common suffering alone can give. Lazari, to whom the hated workhouse had come to be as the palace of a Dives, in which they hoped to hide their sores and satisfy their hunger, here waited in crowds longing at the gates: the whole picture was one of utter, almost hopeless misery.

The process of admission or rejection was conducted by one of the Vice-Chairmen of the Board, assisted by two other Guardians; the relieving officers calling out the names of the applicants, they were in turn ushered in by the porter and some assisting paupers, some of whom, I observed, had sticks in their hands. The cases were disposed of with such celerity, that I presume the relieving officers had taken no common pains to ascertain the different features of each applicant's case. I was shewn over the parent house and auxiliaries by the Clerk to the Union and the Medical officer; the numbers in the houses were 4,802. One of the first departments we entered was the Infirmary. I do not think my travelling companion will ever forget this his first introduction to the stern reality of famine. There were very many, of all ages, under medical treatment, whose cases were literally those of

simple starvation; many, evidently past hope; some, whose end was very near.

To those who have had any experience in the matter, there is no mistaking famine cases. I do not know how the case may be in other climes, with other races, but I can vouch for the fact, from my own experience last year and on the present occasion, that starvation in Ireland has its own distinct external physical phenomena.

In grown-up persons, besides an amount of attenuation which seems to have absorbed all appearance of flesh or muscle, and to have left the bones of the frame barely covered with some covering, which has but little semblance to anything we should esteem to be flesh; the skin of all the limbs assumes a peculiar character, it is rough to the touch, very dry, and did it not hang in places in loose folds, would be more of the nature of parchment than anything else with which I can compare it; the eyes are much sunk into the head, and have a peculiar dull painful look; the shoulder-bones are thrown up so high, that the column of the neck seems to have sunk, as it were, into the chest; the face and head, from the wasting of the flesh, and the prominence of the bones, have a skull-like appearance; the hair is very thin upon the head; there is over the countenance a sort of pallor, quite distinct from that which utter decline of physical power generally gives in those many diseases in which life still continues after the almost entire consumption of the muscular parts of the body.

In the case of the starved young—and we saw many hundreds—there are two or three most peculiar characteristic marks, which distinguish them from the victims of other mortal ills; the hair on a starved child's head becomes very thin, often leaves the head in patches, what there is of it stands up from the head; over the whole brow, in very many instances; over the temples, in almost all, a thick sort of downy hair grows, sometimes so thickly as to be quite palpable to the touch. The skin over the chest bones and upper part of the stomach is stretched so tight, that every angle and curve of the sternum and ribs stand out in relief: no words can describe the appearance of the arms; from below the elbow the two bones (the radius and ulna) seem to be stripped of every atom of flesh; if you take hold of the loose skin within the elbow joint, and lift the arm by it, it comes away in a large thin fold, as though you had lifted one side of a long narrow bag, in which some loose bones had been placed; if you place the fore-fingers of your hand under the chin, in the angle of the jaw-bone, you find the whole base of the mouth, so to speak, so thin, that you could easily conceive it possible, with a very slight pressure, thus to force the tongue into the roof of the mouth; between the fingers there are sores; very often there is anasarcous swelling of the ancles; in the majority of famine cases, there is either dysentery or chronic diarrhœa.

There is one comfort to be found in these sad

cases, there does not appear to be great present pain; I have now walked in the course of my two tours, I should suppose, some miles of Infirmary wards in the Union Houses in Ireland; wards often very thickly crowded, almost always sufficiently full. It has never been my lot to hear one single child, suffering from famine or dysentery, utter a moan of pain; I have seen many in the very act of death, still not a tear, not a cry. I have scarcely ever seen one endeavour to change his or her position. I have never heard one ask for food, for water—for anything; two, three, or four in a bed, there they lie and die, if suffering, still ever silent, unmoved.

The death, however, of the adult is often of a very different character. I will give a description of it nearly in the words of one, whose position, and opportunity of observation, has been great. "Men often come into the Workhouse in the last stage of famine. I have seen them," he said, "after they have been in the house some little while, of a sudden, assume a sort of talkative cheerfulness; they will sit up in bed, talk of their coming recovery, and their hope in a week or two, to go again on *out relief*; whilst thus talking, and eating between their sentences, they will fall down, *dead*." He added, "The doctor has sometimes said to me, as he has stood by, if you wait a quarter of an hour, you will see that man, (pointing to one of these cases) die." Such cases have not met my own eye, but I can easily believe them, for I have again and again had proof,

that men will hold out to the last on insufficient food, and then having made up their minds to go to the Union, they have walked miles straight to it, and died, before they could eat their first meal after their admission.

No one has yet I believe been able to explain, why it is, that men and boys, sink sooner under famine, than the other sex; still, so it is; go where you will, every officer will tell you, it is so. In the same workhouse, in which you will find the girls and women, looking well, you will find the men and boys, in a state of the lowest physical depression; equal care in every way being bestowed on both sexes.

The whole of the hospital arrangements at the Kilrush Union do the utmost credit to the medical officer and the authorities of the establishment; the wards were it is true sadly crowded, still every possible ingenuity had been exercised, to secure ventilation. The arrangements in detail for the distribution of medicine; for all the various aids the sick require, were most satisfactory. To shew what care will do to prevent disease, I narrowly examined, I believe, more than 1,000 children, I did not find one case of ophthalmia; there were only 10 cases in the whole establishment.

There are some twenty acres of ground under cultivation, by the paupers, apparently with good success, but the labourers were sad objects. The mortality in this Union is very great, though I hope decreasing; at the end of the month of May last,

the number in the house was 3,765, the deaths during the month 197. In June, number of inmates 4,366, deaths 144.

I cannot dismiss my notice of the Kilrush Union houses, without stating my belief, that it is mainly owing to the indefatigable exertions of the Inspector, Captain Kennedy, aided by Dr. O'Donnell, that so large a number of paupers, coming into the houses in the condition they do, are preserved in the cleanliness and order in which I found them. I have no reason to suppose but that the Board of Guardians are most efficient, still I could see in the attention to minor details of management, that a very great deal must be owing to vigilant inspection and supervision, by the resident inspector and medical officer.

From Kilrush we took a car for Kilkee, a small sea-bathing place about eight miles off. No traveller through this part of Ireland, should omit a visit to this little town; there is a very comfortable hotel, and within a walk of it, some scenery, which in its own way, can hardly be surpassed. I do not know that I ever saw a sea-view, that struck me more for its wild beauty, than that which is to be seen from the cliffs, which command the entrance to the bay, on which Kilkee is situated. The rocks are of a very dark stone; in places, quite perpendicular, and of great depth; the waves of the Atlantic rolling in huge breakers upon them, throwing up vast clouds of white spray against and over them, had a most magnificent effect.

Retracing our steps to Kilrush, we obtained the assistance of an individual, highly recommended to me, as a good guide through the scenes of eviction, to which I now bent my course.

In this day's journey we went by Clonderlaw, Kildysart, Kilchrist, Clondegad to Ennis. The public have heard a good deal of the evictions, *i. e.* the house levelling, in the Union of Kilrush; the reports made by Captain Kennedy and others, have been often declared to be exaggerations. I had now ocular demonstration, that no report can exaggerate the amount of wholesale house levelling which has taken place in this Union.

The rateable tenements in the Kilrush Union in the years were as follows,

1846	1847	1848	1849	1850
9050	8981	8546	7952	7299

The decrease of tenements at the commencement of the ensuing year, will I think shew, that the system of compulsory ejectment is still in full vigour. One place was pointed out to me, where out of 64 houses 54 had been levelled within this last month, there are now 10 caretakers left in possession of the remaining houses. It would only tire the reader to no purpose, were I to particularize the different properties, on which this system has been carried on; the practice seemed almost universal; on both sides of the road, and as far every way as I could command with a telescope, there was evidence of this forcible removal of the population.

Just as the eye and heart of every Englishman is shocked with the first view he has of his fellow-creatures, at death's door, for want of food; beholding in them the mere "wrecks" of life; so are the eye and heart painfully offended, when mile after mile, "wrecks" of homes stand forth on every side. I know not how a country looks, after the passage of an enemy through it, bent on desolating its people's homes; but I am quite certain, the work of destruction could not be done more effectually, though perhaps it would be done less methodically, by such an army, than it is done in these western counties of Ireland, by the proprietors of the land. Roofless gables meet your eye on every side; one ceases to wonder that the Union Houses are so full, when there is this evidence of the fact that no other home is left to so many thousands.

The law now provides, that before forcible possession is taken of the houses of the peasantry, notice should be given to the relieving officer of the district, in order that he may be prepared to offer "the ejected," orders for the Workhouse. I had, however, one case put before me on good authority, which occurred in 1849, in which 70 houses were pulled down, under the orders of the agent of the property, at once; the relieving officer had never got the notice, through it was said some mistake; the people had for some days to crowd on the neighbouring chapel floor, and by the sides of the ditches;

for the neighbours had had orders not to take them in: it is fair to state the whole of this mass of tenantry had been created by a middleman, whose lease was now out.

I was shewn one estate on which, in 1847, there had been 482 families, now there are two. A priest to whom I was recommended, and on whom I called on my way from Kilrush to Ennis, told me, in the two parishes in which his cure lay, viz. Clondegad and Kilchrist, the population of the last census being 9,456; in June last he himself took a census, and that he only found 6,360 remaining; a very large number had emigrated, very many died, and the workhouses had received also their full proportion. This gentleman told me, that the present state of distress seriously affected the moral character of the people; many had no clothes in which they could come with decency to the "stations" to meet their priest; many of a family would often be found in their cabins naked, the clothes being given to those who had to go to the depôt for relief. I had also an interview with one of the Coroners of a district in the Kilrush Union; he admitted to me he had had a great many inquests within these last eighteen months on persons "starved to death." The accounts he gave of some of the scenes he had witnessed were most painful.

It would only be natural to expect, that the state of things I am describing should render those subject

to them, callous to the common feelings of humanity. At a place called Carandotta, not many miles from Kilrush, I was taken into a cabin, and confronted with a man, one Molony, from whose lips I took down the following narrative. He had a father and a brother living near to him; they were taken up for stealing a sheep; he said, and I heard it corroborated from a better source, that his brother had had an excellent character till he committed this crime, which he only did at all when driven to it by hunger. The culprits were tried at the Sessions, but acquitted. The man my informant rented under, a middleman, came to him before his father and brother were out of jail, and forgave him the rent he owed, and said he would allow him to remain as "caretaker," on condition that he would prevent his brother and father returning, *i.e.* pull their cabin down; for as Molony said, "sure it was the only way I could do it." He accordingly *with his own hand tumbled their house*. When they returned another married brother kindly took them in; here the brother continued to live, till he arrived at the last stage of want; at last, and before very long, he one morning started for Kilrush, with a bundle of grass to sell, he dropped down on the side of the road, a very short distance off; he, the informant, brought him into his house; he lived just two hours. There was an inquest and verdict, to the effect that the man was starved. I took

man who saw him die, on the very spot I then stood, and who was himself at the inquest.

A few miles from this spot, I copied from the KNOCKPETTY Petty Session book, the following charge: "May 21, 1850, The Queen at the Prosecution of Constable Coolican, for manslaughter against Pat Halpin, viz. turning out of his house Pat Cahill, who was his lodger, in consequence of which exposure he died on the 11th inst. Dismissed with advice to not act in a like manner again." The Sub-Inspector of Police had caused this man to be summoned, he said he did this, "not with a view to have him punished, as he was a very distressed man, but with a view to deter others from acting in a like manner; he had attended the inquest, and thought the inhumanity of the case was beyond description, and required an example, to deter others of his class, from similar acts of brutality, *as they thought no more of the life of a fellow creature than they would of that of a dog.*" It appeared that Pat Halpin seeing his lodger in the very act of dying, in fact, having but a few minutes to live, put him out of his house, he said, "because his children got alarmed," "he had intended to take him to another house." The poor creature died in the open air, I believe by the roadside. The Magistrates gave the man a most severe reprimand, and told him it was only on account of his large and distressed family that they did not send him for trial

been given me of what passed, that the Magistrates and Sub-Inspector alike stated, the people were dying fast; this, reader, was in May last.

It may be as well, perhaps, here, to give a description of the actual carrying out of the process of "forcible eviction." The legal forms necessary to obtain the Sheriff's authority to take possession, having been gone through, and the proper notices served on the parties concerned; a notice is also served on the Relieving Officer, informing him on what day the people will be ejected. At the appointed hour, we will suppose ourselves to be on the spot; there are, say, some six dwellings in a group, nearly adjoining each other, and all situated close to a public road side. Some of these dwellings may be larger than others, but in outward form and actual structure, they are all much alike, simply, two stone gables, built of the stone of the country, a thatched roof connecting them, and descending to some five or six feet from the ground. A gig or outside car arrives with the Sheriff's deputy; the Agent for the property is in attendance on horseback, with some ten or twelve rough looking peasants, one or two of whom have iron crowbars, and other necessaries for their business of destruction. A certain form is quickly gone through by the Law's Officer, the effect of which is, to put the Agent of the property in possession, in other words, giving him full power to turn

his pleasure to do so. In very many districts, a small body of armed police attend, in case of any forcible resistance. The Relieving Officer calls out the names from the list sent to him, and as he may think proper, offers to the parties now to be ejected orders for admission to the Union House. These orders are very generally refused, or if accepted, are not acted on.

The word is now given by the Agent, to his "destructives." If the people will not come out of the dwellings, they are dragged out; with them, the bed, kettle, old wheel, tub, and one or two stools, with perhaps an old chest; few cabins have anything to add to this list of furniture at the time the tenants are ejected; the living and dead stock being alike out in the road; now begins a loud and long sustained chorus of intermingled prayers, blessings, reproaches, revilings, weeping, &c., generally ending in low monotonous imprecations on the heads of those, who thus are crowning the ruin of the ejected.

The women will "skene," beat their breasts, throw themselves on the ground, embrace the knees of the Agent's horse, hang on to the steps of the Sheriff's car; they will do and say all an excited Irish woman can say and do, to either obtain mercy, or invoke vengeance; and truly poor creatures, they are gifted with powers of eloquence, aided by a power of action and gesticulation, which, as it may be employed, to bless or curse, is in either way most impressive.

Agents and sheriff's officers, however, from the nature of their avocation, have become case hardened against these attacks upon the softer feelings of our nature; the groans and prayers of the ejected, like the dust of the falling thatch of their roofs, are unavoidable evils, the regular result of the routine of "house tumbling." "Don't be all day, boys," is command enough; a man jumps up on the roof, and soon uncovers a part of the beam, which goes from the point of one gable to the other; he fastens a rope round it, it may require, perhaps, a little action from a saw, to weaken it; the rope is passed through the door of the house; it is manned at once by some others of the band; an iron bar is now placed under the wall plate, at one of the angles; a pull at the rope, breaking the back of the roof, and the lifting of the bar, hoisting it from its bearing on the wall, down it goes in a cloud of dust, sometimes falling wholly within the walls, sometimes a part will remain resting one end on the ground, the other against the gable.

So clever are a good practised band of destructives, that thirty houses in the morning, would not be at all beyond their powers. Our group of six houses are in about two hours and a half, rendered ruins, there was a little delay from Honor ——— going into a fit as they removed her; the tenants are now houseless. They have been told that they may have the thatch and blackened wood of the fallen roofs; but they are

significantly warned, not to linger about the spot too long. The Relieving Officer will now try and persuade them to be wise and go at once to the workhouse.

Last year I passed the scene of a small eviction operation, (there were only three houses "tumbled,") about half an hour after the operators had left; the wretched creatures were most of them sitting in two or three groups by the side of their furniture, such as it was; the only voice of lamentation I heard was that of a little child about six years old, who was crying most lustily, as it kept running round the flattened, fallen roof of one of the cabins; I made my driver ask, what made the little thing so miserable? the answer was, "that the cat was supposed to be under the thatch." I tried to console her with a fourpenny piece, but in vain; however, whilst I was talking to one of the women, a scream of delight, announced the rise of pussy from one corner of the ruins, very dusty, but from the quiet way in which she proceeded to her toilet, less discomposed by the events of the day, than any of the ejected. It was curious to witness how quickly, the sense of being houseless, was soon swallowed up, in the breasts of the juveniles, by the delight they felt, in the cat's escape; and yet I have no doubt, they had, within an hour, lent their tears and screams to the older chorus.

As there is a certain expense attendant on the Sheriff's presence, the people now, seeing that their houses must fall, for a small gratuity, will pull them

down themselves. I took a statement from a clergyman, of one case, in which, an old woman, actually worked her own house down, *with her own hands*, on the belief, she was to have 5*l*. for doing so, she had not however then got it.

One of these lately "tumbled out" colonies, though a very wretched spectacle, is sometimes a very picturesque one; the women in the red petticoat of the country, the said garment ever in tatters, with the dark bodice only just sufficiently patched to make a bare covering to the bosom; their long dark parted hair; bare legs and feet; the attitudes of the old, crouching under the bank or wall; of the less aged, in active work, drawing the smoke-blackened wood from beneath the thatch; the baby, half out of the queer-looking, half-box half-boat, called a cradle; the younger children, half naked, romping about the ruins, or climbing about the furniture on the roadside; the gables, their heads pointing upwards, as though they would tell the tale to the powers above; the different positions of the fallen roofs, some shewing the blackened rafters where the thatch has separated from them in the fall; others, the work not quite finished, still hanging, hesitating as it were, in their fall: a painter could find no little beauty in a scene, which to one, who looks not at the picture, but at its cost, is only a very ugly page in the history of the exercise of man's power, over those who are themselves powerless.

On our journey we had ample opportunity of seeing to what shifts the peasantry will resort before they will face the Union House, after they have been evicted, and seen their homes "tumbled." Their usual practice is, with the thatch and some of the roof-sticks, to build up a dwelling called a "scalpeen," the most common form of this species of dwelling is, what I suppose an Englishman would call, "the lean to." The construction is simple; some of the roof-sticks, or beams, are placed, so that one end of them shall rest on the ground, while the other end rests against the side of a wall of one of the ruins, or failing this, against a bank on the road-side: on these beams, with the help of a few short sticks, the old thatch is heaped up; stones and more wood are laid on it, to keep it together; one end is closed up with a heap of thatch and stones, the other end left just open enough for the inmates to have egress; into this stye a whole family will crowd, and even take a lodger; and in a few hundreds of such, would often be found a population of many thousands. Sometimes they will make a sort of stye within the walls and between the gables, keeping it so low as to avoid observation, and into this stye they will creep, and dwell till utter want forces them out, or they die, are found by the police, and carried out.

It is a rare thing to find any males at these scenes of desolation; in the majority of cases, I fear, they desert their families, go to seek work at a distance,

perhaps in England; very often they start for America as soon as they find they are to be ejected. A very large proportion of the families in the workhouses are deserted families. In travelling in the west of Ireland, it is a curious fact, that you scarce ever meet an able-bodied labourer on the road; the only males you see, are the old and infirm, and the very few small farmers who have as yet survived the storm.

At Kildysart, we found a crowd of wretched objects, waiting the coming of the meal for out relief; my companion, who had an amiable propensity for buying up bakers' shops, to distribute the bread, thereby getting again and again into some trouble, proceeded at once to indulge this charitable feeling, the consequence was, that the shop was very soon in a state of siege; the assaulting party, being, I should think, little less in number than 100, as starved, ill-clad, and desperate-looking creatures as it is possible to conceive; by the aid of one of the police, the door of the shop was closed, so as to shut some in, many out; such, however, was the pressure, that it was thought advisable that my friend should surrender his position, and make a retreat by a back-door, then over a wall, and thus escape to the inn. I was already seated on the car, and just as he was about to join me, a detachment from the scene of his late difficulty arrived; in vain did he loudly declare, he had nothing more to give; *would give nothing more*, his head became as

the centre of countless *radii*, in the shape of bony fleshless arms; before and behind, with outstretched hands, this famished crew pressed upon him; as the chorus of entreaty rose with every fresh denial, its rising seemed to call frēsh fleshless actors upon the stage; nothing but the exercise of positive force, and no little of that, by two strong men, enabled him to mount the car, and escape the blessings, embraces and entreaties of those, who starving, wooed for bread; they followed us in a crowd, till stopped by the police.

This is to be a wholly separate Union from Kilrush. At present, it is a tributary to it, contributing its full share of pauperage; a few miles further on, after passing many most wretched objects, the least miserable of whom would have caused a crowd in any street in London; we overtook two children, boys, I should suppose, from 10 to 12 years of age; one, himself very far from strong, was supporting the staggering steps of the other, evidently sinking in the last stage of famine. I know not how far he had to go, before he found a shelter on earth, I feel a comfort in my assurance that his hours were numbered there.

Passing a group of modern house-ruins, I thought I saw some smoke curling up from a corner, between two roofless gables; we left the car and made our way between the walls; there were a few pieces of turf smouldering on the ground, a board fixed into

the walls, immediately over this mockery of a fire, to I suppose conceal all evidence of its existence from any passer by; by it as we came in view, was a woman in mere rags; her child, a girl of about 12, quite naked, and another little thing partially so. She at once hung some rags upon the girl to make her about as decent as herself. Her story was the old one—"her house had been tumbled, she lived as we saw her in the day, at night she was covertly sheltered in a neighbouring cabin." A little further on, we came to one of the "lean to's" I have described above, when we looked into it, we found a woman, perhaps some thirty years of age, the place was a mere stye, a lad of four feet heighth could hardly have stood in the highest part of it; the roof descended abruptly to the ground; here this poor creature had dwelt for weeks, with her three children; how she lived was evident; her stock of food was at her feet: *a large bundle of corn-weed and nettles*; she was positively naked to the waist, but with the instinctive modest quickness of her race, as she talked to us, by crossing her arms and hitching up some of the rags which hung about her, she extemporised a bodice.

We were glad enough to arrive at Ennis, for our journey from Kilrush had been one continued scene of devastation and destitution. As to the crops, it is true we saw here and there a good deal of potato coming up well; there were places too, but few and far between, where the land seemed tolerably well

cropped with cereals; but the great proportion of the land, if cropped at all, had as much foul weed as corn growing on it; a great deal was utterly waste, but with evidence on the surface, that it had once been otherwise.

There had been, on this our route, a good deal of what is called consolidation of holdings, *i. e.* the laying into one farm the lands of several on which the dwellings had been destroyed, and the people driven out; however, it was clear that the land had not gained by the process; the rents exacted, the want of skill and capital on the part of the tenantry —the want of market for the produce, are working their way; the men who now occupy in the place of the evicted will soon themselves share the same fate, unless, according to the custom of the country, they avoid that fate, by a sudden retreat across the Atlantic.

CHAPTER III.

ENNIS—PRIVATE SITTING ROOM—THE UNION HOUSE—CREDITABLE MANAGEMENT — GORT UNION HOUSE—WRETCHED CONDITION OF CHILDREN—SCRAMBLE FOR DINNER—HORRORS OF ONE YARD OF WOMEN, ETC.—BLACK WOMEN—SHAMEFUL CROWDING—LOUGHREA—APPEARANCE OF STREET — WHOLESALE EVICTION — BALINASLOE—STATE OF ABLE-BODIED MEN—AN ENCUMBERED ESTATE—ORANMORE—WAR ON DWELLINGS—A FEVER CASE.

HAVING a long journey before me the next day, I determined to pay a visit to the Ennis Union workhouse, early in the morning; leaving my bedroom at the hotel, soon after five o'clock; I was met at the foot of the stairs, by a sort of porter or boots, in that state of somnambulism, in which such officials are usually found, at that hour. As he went to let me out, I saw he was anxious I should not enter the *private* sitting room, I had engaged the night before; but as my hat was there, I was compelled to force a passage. On opening part of a shutter, that I might see my way; to my amusement, I found our *private* sofa was occupied, by a fellow mortal, in bed undress, with a nightcap of some magnitude, the tassel of which hung gracefully down over his nose, as he lay on his back, in the happiness of deep sleep: hotels in Ireland,—at least in the far west,—have many

little customs and omissions in their economy, which at first take an Englishman by surprise; however, as I was once asked to admit a gentleman to sleep on a shakedown, on the floor of my bedroom, and actually found all prepared, in anticipation of my cheerful acquiescence; I did not now feel disposed to quarrel with a night's rest, stolen from the sofa of my sitting room.

Having reached the gates of the Union House before 6 o'clock, I employed a quarter of an hour, in looking at the new court house, now nearly completed, which is a short distance from it. It was another of the many instances I have seen, of the strange love for building at any cost, to the public cost, common to the Irish. It is really a very fine building, the front elevation, as handsome, classical, and substantial, as if it had been built by a people who could well afford it. It must have cost many thousands of pounds; it made me think the statement, in an official document I had with me, must be a libel—viz. "That the net liabilities of the Ennis Union at the end of the March quarter, 1850, *over the balance in Bank*, were £21,627," if this is not a libel, it can scarcely be one, to say that such unnecessary expense, for such a building, under such circumstances, is very foolish, if not very wrong.

Having obtained the assistance of the clerk of the Union, to whose kindness I must acknowledge myself much indebted, for it was scarcely reasonable to

rouse him so early, I went over every department of the House, and then visited a detached mansion, with large gardens, and some 25 acres of land—an auxiliary inhabited by the boys. There were in the Parent House and auxiliaries 3,528 paupers, 6,533 persons on the out-relief list, of whom only 4 were able-bodied. This Union is very heavy in debt, and has, I believe, received as much as £7000 in grants in aid of relief, from Government.

The Parent House and the auxiliary I visited, were both very clean, and the inmates were in evident good order; they were only just out of bed, and I was much pleased with the celerity with which the dormitories were cleaned, and the beds arranged, so that they should get thoroughly aired, before they were again used. In no house I visited, was there more industrial employment, and employment turned to better account. Every article of clothing is made from the raw material, in the house; except of course, fine linen. They manufacture all the shoes, and even the boys scotch bonnets. The large kitchen garden of the adjoining auxiliary was well stocked, and most cleanly cultivated. I walked over the farm, which was well cropped with root crops, &c.—the labour being superintended by an agricultural instructor; the paupers were generally well enough clothed; the women looked healthy; the boys, equal to the average of workhouse boys, some however bore the familiar "want" stamp in their countenances.

The infirmary was clean—and I was much pleased to see the tenderness, with which two nurses were dressing one of the most distressing cases I ever saw; a child of some 6 or 7 years of age, whose eye from disease had swelled to a size, that had I not seen it, I could not have believed possible; I was thankful to feel it had not long to live.

For a Union under great financial difficulty, the Ennis does great credit, to all who take the executive part in its economy; it is satisfactory to see those who must be kept, not kept in idleness; I am satisfied that the health, happiness, and morality of the paupers, are alike advanced, by steady industrial occupation. The average cost of each pauper is at present $10\frac{3}{4}d$ per week—the bread is half rye, half barley for the adult classes.

From Ennis to Gort the country offers nothing worthy of particular observation, there are the same traces of the hand of the home destroyer as in other places; the peasantry, what few are met on the road, though perhaps not so distressed in appearance as those I have already described, are still in very evident great distress. There was some fair cropping of the ground, but a great deal of it lies comparatively waste.

I found the Gort Parent workhouse as neat in its outward elevation, as the Union houses generally are. In proceeding to go over it, the first thing which struck me was, the very wretched state of some

children, in a yard on the right as you enter the main building; there were about 200 of them, of the class under fifteen years of age. They were in a shameful state of neglect as to cleanliness and clothing: they were sitting, or squatting, here and there, though not a cold day, still shivering; many were only clothed in such rags as I could conceive a beggar would consider as the cast clothing of his order; some actually, for want of anything better, were in *petticoats.* The state of one poor little fellow, who I should think can hardly now be alive, was most pitiable; he squatted by himself under the wall, and looked in the last stage of existence, from the want of every thing which could sustain and cherish it; we were told he had been in the yard (which I suppose means in the house) for eight weeks; his name, as given me, was Larkin. It struck me as wanton cruelty, to leave a poor creature in such weakness, so clad, and so evidently neglected, in this yard; the infirmary was his proper place. About 450 women were being fed in the hall; from so many more being crammed into the house than it ever was meant to contain, they are obliged to be fed in relays; the inspector afterwards told me, that it has happened, that some have had to wait *until twelve o'clock at night,* before they could get their dinner; it was a complete scramble; the parties bringing in the food —men—had short thick sticks, which they used very freely, and I thought brutally, to protect the tins of

stirabout from the rush made for them by these hungry women.

In a yard at the back of the workhouse, and in a day room opening into it, there were, as the numbers were given to me, 529 women and children, 129 of whom were between five and nine years of age; in addition they had with them twenty-four babies in arms. This crowd of human beings was lying and crouching about the surface of the yard, in masses, and in groups, whose disgusting appearance it is difficult to describe. They were in the rags in which they had entered the house; many had been in from one month to three, many, I believe, longer; what dress they had seemed to be rags of the red petticoat of the country, from below the waist, rags of some black stuff above it. Some of the infants were nearly naked, and very evidently in the most filthy state. In spite of all that was said to me to the contrary, my own senses satisfied me that soap and water were as equally foreign articles in this yard as decent clothing: it is not to be wondered at, that the gestures of the women, their language, and very evident habits, were as unlike civilized beings as possible. I found the name for this tribe amongst the officials was "the black women," to distinguish them, I presume, by their rags and dirt, from the cleaner clothed women of other wards. They sleep close packed in long sheds, have no sheets, and must either sleep *naked* or in their rags; as it was admitted,

indeed it was evident, they had in very rare cases, any body linen. The one day room for this mass of living filth, was crowded, as much as the yard; I leave the reader to conceive, what the state of things would be, did rain drive them all into it. It is my firm belief, that were the cubic feet taken of the space, these women are forced to live in, and could the details of their last few weeks existence be published, a more dreadful exposè could hardly be imagined. The condition of the children, 129 between five and nine, stirred in with this mass of festering humanity may be imagined. I left this yard utterly disgusted; I can scarcely believe that any nobleman, priest, clergyman, or gentleman, can know the state of things we saw; if they do, it is a shame on them to suffer it. I did not visit the Auxiliaries; this sample was enough to satisfy me, what the bulk of wretchedness and mismanagement must be. In passing, however, down the town, I saw some hundreds of girls on the green, outside an auxiliary, looking clean and well-clad; but this was in a place so situated that the eye of the public was for ever on it.

In the Gort Union there were on the 14th of June, 3,392 inmates, the number for which the houses are estimated is 2,850! The parent house is estimated for 1,200, there were 1,895!! in it. A sort of apology was made for the state of things, "that

"the clothing was ordered," &c. The evident want of discipline, the neglect of the children, the dirt, and raggedness, and crowding of that horrid yard, were of no modern date; and could not have proceeded from the mere neglect of the working, paid staff.

In travelling from Gort to Loughrea, there are, here and there, symptoms of a better state of things, so far as farming is concerned, there is more and better cropping, and in places, a good deal of stock: it seems to be very thinly populated: there are not quite so many roofless gables by the roadside; but quite enough marks of eviction left, to shew that the spirit still exists. As you enter Loughrea, such has been the destruction of dwellings on both sides of the road, right into the town, that a regular siege could hardly have done more; some were evidently recent, as the children were yet busy in carrying off the roof sticks from the ruins. Many hundreds of people must have been here rendered houseless, and there stand the gables with their blackened chimney corners to tell the tale. Out of common decency, when such work is done, one would expect, the marks of it, in the very streets of a town, would be obliterated; however, here, the proprietors think no shame of it, and therefore do not see that moral defacement, that strikes a stranger's eye. I could not visit the Loughrea Union House, as I had engaged to be at a friend's near Balinasloe that evening. The country, now much improved, both in the appearance of the

fields, the numbers of stock, and the dress and flesh of the peasantry.

When I visited the Balinasloe Union last year, the embers of the awful inroad of cholera within its houses were yet smouldering: it is now in a healthy condition. In the "Brewery" auxiliary, which was then used as the cholera hospital, in one building of which some hundreds died, I found a large number, about 400 girls; they were arranged in schools and seemed in very good order, looking clean and healthy. There were between 200 and 300 more, between nine and fifteen, and from two to nine, in another auxiliary, called "Waterloo;" they had been lately moved into it, out of the Parent House; for many reasons it would have been as well, if their removal had been postponed, until it was ready for them; some had to sleep on a damp earth floor, and there were other evident symptoms of the removal being too hurried. In the Parent House, which with its adjoining building is estimated to hold 1,390, there were 1,540 returned as inmates; as the children of "Waterloo" had only just been removed, it must, I conclude, have been still more unreasonably crowded. The dormitories were very clean, some of the day rooms very crowded. In the fever sheds, and the permanent fever hospital [an excellent building, in excellent order] there were about 120 patients.

From information I had received, I went into a

breaking; the state of all their clothing was bad enough to be quite disgraceful, one in particular, was in a condition of the grossest indecency. I ascertained from one of these men, *that for nine days past, not one of them had had one drop of water either to wash with, or to drink, day or night.* The Master admitted it was so; the excuse was original; he shewed me a stone trough in the yard quite empty, just above it, a stone, lately mortared into the wall; here there used, he told me, to be a tap, but because it was often damaged (not unlikely where it was the only supply for 140 men), the Board, he said, had ordered him to do away with it, he had therefore removed it, and had the hole built up. It had never struck him, that the Board might have intended water to be supplied some other way: "They had given him no orders." Had the Visiting Committee done their duty, this state of things must have been discovered, and, I presume, would have been remedied. The thing was notorious outside the house, for a gentleman had called my notice to it. The total numbers in the Houses were 2,775.

The railroad to connect Dublin and Galway goes through Balinasloe, and the contractors are hard at work at it. I had an opportunity on my return through this place, of paying a visit, with a friend who had bought it, to an "encumbered estate" lately sold under the powers of the much talked of "Act." It was a beautiful specimen of the effect of negligence

and extravagance; the house—"*mansion*" I suppose an auctioneer would call it, was at least as much "out at elbows" as its last proprietor ever could have been. It was an epitome in itself, of all one ever read, of the "Rack Rent" school of property. It proved that the caricaturist, must, let his talent be what it may, find himself at fault, when he endeavours to portray, the condition of an Irish mansion sinking under such extravagance. On asking at the lodge where the iron gates were? we were told that Mr. O. B——, the late proprietor had sold them. The tenantry were quite in keeping in personal appearance and in the repair and nature of their dwellings with the—mansion. I confess I could not but think, that my friend must have had a very strong possessorial fit upon him, when he consented to encumber himself, at his own cost, with such a possession.

We went hence to Galway, through a very uninteresting country; there were here and there, symptoms of improving cultivation, but much of the soil, which could have been turned to account, was either barren, or growing as much weed as corn: the population very thin; still as elsewhere, a sufficient sprinkling of cabin ruins, to shew the desire of the proprietors, to still further reduce the number of the people. I do not know who the proprietor or proprietors of Oranmore may be, but its condition even beat Loughrea—for there, what houses were not

tumbled had an average amount of respectability; here, it would appear as if in the work of destroying a great many, the destructives had wounded all. The whole town seemed like a hospital for dwellings, in which they had been kindly received from some field of deadly war, there was no state of domestic decomposition, no class of architectural injury, which had not its many representatives, in the dreary street of that scene of decay and destruction; the people looked just the sort of creatures such a place would foster and produce. Not very far from this "late" town, as we were passing a group of some three or four eviction ruins, I thought I saw within the walls of one of them, a something in the shape of a shelter, in which, I could conceive in this country, some human beings might be found. We proceeded to explore; and there found—what I shall here find it very difficult to describe; by the ingenious use of some old rafters of one of the fallen roofs, and some thatch from the same quarter; a "lean to" had been built, in its highest part, some four or five feet from the ground, it descended to the ground at an angle which left the area within, perhaps as much as eight feet by four, more or less. On stooping down, to look into it, I found at the farther end a middle-aged woman, lying on some old sacking; herself, that bit of sacking, and an old square box, was all the place contained. She was just getting out of the fever, having been three weeks in the said fever, in this stye, on

that sacking. I asked her—what she had got in the box? She crawled towards it, and unlocking it with a key on a string, round her neck, she produced, its sole contents, a jar of cooked "corn weed." Here, and thus, she had been living with three children: it was the old story, husband gone—house tumbled—horror of the workhouse. There was a house near, at which we inquired, and her story was corroborated. Now I can assure the reader, that such cases are very far from rare; the number of persons who thus live on nettles and green food, with a chance now and then, of a little meal, the produce of their children's begging, is very large. There is scarce a group of ruins of any size, in which, were search made, some such would not be found.

CHAPTER IV.

GALWAY—USE OF BIG TOE—IRISH GIBBETS—WORKHOUSES —DYING CHILDREN—ABLE-BODIED (?)—PAUPER WOMEN —NUMBERS—EMPLOYMENT — AGRICULTURAL SCHOOL— GODLESS COLLEGE—CANAL TO LOUGH CORRIB.

HAVING installed ourselves at the very—for this part of the world—comfortable lodging-house of one Madame De Ruyter at Galway, we devoted two days to looking at things about us. There is now a very large amount of public works going on here. In addition to the railroad works, there are some heavy dock works in progress; and a very important Government work, in the cutting the canal to connect the port of Galway with Lough Corrib.

There are a few fine buildings in the town, and there seems to be a certain amount of commercial activity; the shops generally, in appearance and in their "wares," are of a superior character to those of most provincial towns. The streets of Galway are, however, more crowded with wretched ragged objects, in the shape of human kind, than any place I ever saw. I can only suppose that the opportunity of begging of the many men earning good wages, and the cheapness of food in the shape of coarse fish, has drawn hither the masses of nearly naked women

and children who by day choke up every thoroughfare: where they sleep at night no one could tell me. I saw them again and again seeking food, even in the offal of the fish-market: one has often heard of the manner in which the anatomy of the human frame will admit of the training of particular members to extraordinary uses; twice we saw, in one day's walk, a curious instance of the use to which the *big toe* can be turned in the foot of an Irish food-hunter; I saw a woman, and my companion saw a boy, stop, and turn over a lump of fish or meat offal, in which they expected to find something edible, with the right foot, and then, by crooking the big toe, *lift up* a piece of the said stuff, and *pinch it*, to try its substance; in both instances it was dropped again; the toe evidently telegraphed, from one end of the human frame to the other, a disappointment—it might have announced a prize.

The fish-market at Galway is a very picturesque and busy scene; it seems abundantly supplied with many different kinds of fish; some, of the best species ever brought to table; and a good deal of a coarser sort, but doubtless, at the price at which it is sold, most acceptable food to such a population as we saw here.

There is at this moment great local excitement on the subject of Galway becoming a packet station for America, when the railroad is finished. The Americans will form a curious idea of Great Britain's

prosperity, when their first welcome to our shores is heard in such a scene of squalid wretchedness as that which is now painted, in living colours, at every turn of this town. The British lion has indeed here so mangy an appearance, that every Briton of common decency would be inclined to disclaim all connection with the unhappy animal.

One is for ever seeing strange things in this very odd land. The workhouses are as handsome in their outward elevation, as their contents are the contrary. The Irish study effect very often in things the English hide altogether; whilst, alas! every traveller will find, there are some things they do not care to have, which we feel wretched without. When we hang our criminals, we only bring out the gallows at the last moment, and put away the horrid thing as soon as its tragic office is over. The drop in Ireland is commonly an iron balcony in front of the jail; there it always is, *on view*, with its fallen floor hanging down; probably just as it fell from beneath the heels of its last victim. Thus is it at Galway jail; the door from the inside of the prison was, the day I was there, open on to it; above the said drop was a cast-iron imitation of the Roman fasces, but the bundle of rods had a graceful curve given to them, so as to bring the two axes in the proper position to receive, at an execution, the ropes into two rings attached to them; from which ropes the Galway hanged, hang. At Mullingar, we saw a less classically adorned

instrument of the law's last sentence, but one, perhaps, whose adornment was more easily appreciated by the vulgar eye—the same balcony made to hang *two*, but over each trap-floor a projecting iron beam, terminating in a large iron cast of a *skull*, from which, by a ring receiving the rope, the culprit swings. These drops are thus ever exposed, not much, if any, higher from the ground of the street than an ordinary second-floor. This strange attention given to the detail of legal killing, compared with the little attention given to all that should be in character with life, sustained by law, is curious, to say the least of it.

In the Galway workhouse and its auxiliaries, I found 4,882 inmates. The houses are estimated to hold 4,225; but I am told that a new estimate is in the course of being made, which will diminish the ugly appearance of these figures placed in comparison. The parent house, though very crowded—far too much so—was still in very fair order, the dormitories clean, the people clothed. There was in several departments a decided want of ventilation, but plans are now before the architect, to remedy this failing. The infirmary and the dysentery wards were here sad spectacles; they were not only too crowded, but the cases were of a very bad type. There was one dysentery shed, for children, in which were 81 patients; I was told they had had 107 patients in it. The appearance of these poor things was sad in the extreme;

tients with a complaint which almost forbids cleanliness. There was one bed with four children in it; one of them, quite naked, lay on his back, a mere skeleton; the skin, which was painfully stretched over the bones, was of a pallor I never saw in life before; they cannot, they say, wash the linen fast enough to keep them clad, even when they only require a shirt to die in: I can easily believe it. This little blanched piece of skeletoned humanity seemed pushed up in the bed above his three companions, as if their strength, such as it was, was forcing him out of their way before his time; this made his nakedness, and the horrors of his frame, the more apparent; one felt very thankful that he must soon die; he neither spoke nor moved—such children never do: I have sometimes liked to think, that at a certain stage of workhouse misery, the child's spirit has so far escaped from the decaying frame, that nothing remains, which can appreciate neglect, or be sensible of real pain; there is just life to swell the total of the dying, but not enough of it to add to the great total of workhouse suffering.

The yard in which what was called the able-bodied class of males was assembled, gave immediate, unmistakeable evidence of the state of the Union. Such is the horror of the workhouse, especially with men, that nothing short of the most pressing want will ever drive them into it; these, the so-called "able-bodied," were most wretched samples of "starved

in" humanity. It was clear they had fought the battle of life without the hated wall, until all power to contend had left them. This is the class which at this season of the year ever appears the very worst; they are nearly all of them more or less so constitutionally weakened, that food can do little to restore them; the chronic diarrhœa, to which they have been subject, is soon followed by dysentery; they go from the ward of their class to the infirmary, and seldom quit that building but for the grave. If the history of these poor creatures was accurately traced, I am informed, many of them would prove to have been small farmers; youths, *i. e.* those from sixteen to twenty, will often rally on food and shelter; the full grown man, once brought below a certain point, very seldom rallies; the repairing power of nature in his case seems altogether gone.

I went with the Inspector of the Union (who was most kind in every way in meeting my wishes), on the following day, to visit the Auxiliaries. They were of the usual character, large old buildings, stores and others, occupied very closely by many hundred women and children; there was a certain amount of schoolroom for the latter, of working rooms for the former; there was also one house, far too small for the purpose, full of women with their babies. There was one large old store-house or collection of houses, with a very extensive open yard, near the quay, which had I should suppose between 7 and 800 able-bodied

women in it; they looked well fed, healthy, and well enough clothed: a certain number of them were at work with spinning wheels, but the great mass were squatting and lying about the yard, with the exception of the tongue, in perfect idleness.

Next to squatting in a sort of heap, which sadly taxes one's knowledge of anatomy, to discover on what they sit, or how they dispose of their limbs; and in this position, remaining for hours—indeed from one meal to another, and then till they go to bed; the most favourite indulgence is—combing their own or each other's hair, and performing certain friendly offices to each other, as a part of the task. They have reason, many of them, to be proud of their locks; you will from time to time see a profusion of coal-black tresses, industriously, but I should think rather painfully pulled through, by the great coarse combs they use; which many a lady of fashion would envy.

It is painful to see this large mass of healthy, young, well-limbed womanhood, vegetating in idleness, or at best, only playing at work; when in other parts of our Sovereign's dominions, the only supply which falls far short of a most pressing demand, is, in the article of wives and female servants, and it is the more painful to see this, and know, that the rearing of these thousands of workhouse mermaids, who live this mere hair-combing life, is just the thing which makes them most unfit for service or matrimony in the colonies. I am now, less surprised than

ever, that the Australian colonial press, is so violent as it is, against the importation of Irish workhouse orphans; for of all parents who train for the matrimonial or the domestic service market, Madam Workhouse is the very worst of all. She has no power to enforce on her numerous and everchanging progeny, the observance, of those, the commonest rules of industry and decency, which are the very elements of good education. There is, and there must be, a constant wholesale process of female degradation going on, where married women and single women—girls of 16—women of 40, are associated in hundreds in idleness by day; lay down to rest—but too often in nakedness, by hundreds together in a room at night.

It was with very great satisfaction, that I accompanied the Inspector of the Union, to see a most praiseworthy attempt, as regards the boys of this Union, to give them useful knowledge and habits of useful industry.

At some little distance from the town, the Guardians of the Union have taken on lease a capacious house and premises, formerly a nunnery, with 25 statute acres of ground, at a rent of £204. 9*s* 8*d* per annum, on a lease for 999 years; at this time it has about 1000 inmates, boys from five years of age; of these, there is one class called "the Agricultural," consisting of about 200; 150 of them work on the farm, under the superintendence and tutelage of an Agricultural instructor, who has a salary of £35 per

annum and rations; the other 50 are employed in cooking, mending the roads, and in other miscellaneous labour. A great many more of the mass of boys are, from time to time, employed on the farm, in weeding and picking stones, &c. There is a paid master tailor, who has a staff of lads to instruct in his trade, and to whom is entrusted the repair of the clothing of the establishment. There are also, a schoolmaster and assistant schoolmaster, and a matron.

We found the farm very highly worked, and the crops coming up remarkably well; there were several large gangs of lads, working under the direction of the Instructor, hoeing the turnips and mangold wurtzel; they seemed to take interest in their work. The crops now in the ground are:—

Swedish Turnips .	4 acres
Potatoes . . .	3 ,,
Cabbages . . .	1½ ,,
Parsnips . . .	2 ,,
Carrots . . .	1½ ,,
Mangold wurtzel .	0¾ ,,
Onions . . .	0¾ ,,
Cabbage plants . .	0¼ ,,
being	13¾ acres.

The whole is cultivated by the hand, a horse is only used to draw manure from the parent and auxiliary houses. Last year only five acres were cultivated; the value of the produce was calculated at £98. 9*s* 9*d*.

These boys looked far healthier and happier in

every way than any I saw in any other Union. There is plenty of space for exercise by day, and being away from the town, the air is purer, and I have no doubt the fresh vegetables, added to the usual diet, tends also to health. The importance of a knowledge of agriculture, as practised on sound principles, valuable everywhere, is no where more so than in this part of Ireland. I cannot, therefore, rate too high the experiment here making, of turning the youthful pauperage of the Union, into future instruments for advancing that particular species of knowledge, the advance of which, and its practical result, can in the end prove the only effectual means of contending against pauperism. These lads are not only taught the manipulation of the soil—the actual working of it by hand labour, but they are taught the principles by which what they do is regulated; their practice, and its result—the success or failure of the crops, is to them, proof of the soundness or unsoundness of what they are taught. The Agricultural instructor has himself had a careful education, the aim of which has been, to enable him to teach as well as practise the best system of agriculture.

A separate set of buildings are in the course of erection, for the separate use of the agricultural class of lads; it is intended to have them furnished with yards, &c. for stall-feeding a small amount of stock, that the youths may thus acquire practical knowledge, not only of dairy work, and the best process of fat-

tening cattle, but also in the economy and preparation of manures. Whilst they are thus advanced in a species of knowledge which must be mainly acquired in the open fields, they have also a certain amount each day of in-door schooling.

If the Guardians steadily pursue what they have so well begun, I have no doubt in my own mind, they will reap a large harvest of future good; for these youths will—a new feature in pauperism—become qualified to earn independence for themselves; and by diffusing the knowledge they here obtain, will do much to better every neighbourhood in which they may settle; as colonists, also, they will have no ordinary chance of success. I do not believe in the end this establishment will cost more to the rate-payers than a Mount Kennet, or any other auxiliary house, in which the boys are maintained, little taught in anything, and not at all practiscd in any employment by which they may in the end obtain their own bread.

I visited the schools of the master and assistant-master, and was much pleased with both of them; I heard a class read, and myself questioned them, and they both read and replied well. I could have wished there were more masters to so many children, but, as it is, after what I had seen, it was most satisfactory to see the order and the general appearance of the children. There is a large kitchen-garden attached to the premises, which was in good cultivation.

Galway may justly boast of one very handsome public building, one of the new Queen's Colleges; I unfortunately had not time to go over it, but its outward elevation and the general appearance of the grounds around it, were all in good keeping with its object and importance. This College, with that of Belfast and Cork, form, what is designated, "The Queen's University in Ireland." The students, after they have passed through their undergraduate course, at any of these Colleges, will pass an examination at Dublin for their degrees, which will be of the same value to them as those of any of the other Universities in the empire.

The great end and object of these Colleges is to offer, at an expense within the means of the middle classes, a sound classical and scientific education, to their sons, if they are disposed to avail themselves of it.

There is this difference in this College as to the course of study from that of the older Universities, the student has it in his power to select that particular faculty or school which he may think the best calculated to assist him in his future career. There are scholarships in the Faculties of Arts, of Medicine, of Law; a school of Civil Engineering, and of Agriculture; and the fortunate holders of these scholarships can obtain their education at a very small expense.

The Session consists of three terms, and for two

out of the three, the students must attend the lectures of the Professors. There is a library; a well-found laboratory; a well-appointed dissecting room; a museum is in the course of formation; there are also a sufficient number of convenient lecture rooms. There are no less than twenty professors; and I have reason to believe, that in the choice of these gentlemen, no common care has been taken; for the difficulties of their position were seriously taken into consideration.

This College opened at the end of last October, under the Presidency of Mr. E. Beswick, a gentleman, who, as I heard in many quarters, had given the highest satisfaction in the arduous post he holds: before it had been open two months, it had 68 students on its books; viz.—38 Roman Catholics, 23 Protestants, and 7 Presbyterians. From what I heard from impartial sources, the conduct of the young men had been every thing which could be wished. Differing in religious persuasion, their religious teaching is superintended by chaplains of their own separate persuasion, who have also the control over the residences, each of his own religious pupils. That there may be no suspicion of any tampering with the religious views of any of the pupils by the Professors, the lecture rooms are always open to all the chaplains.

This is one of the so-called "Godless Colleges;" if violent attacks upon the system from its very infancy,

could have destroyed its chance of success, it should now be numbered amongst the departed failures of well-intentioned men, who had no power to carry out what they sincerely purposed. It is my own belief, however, that a time will come, when the common voice of men of all parties will give to these Institutions the credit they deserve. No one can dispute but that the means of a good professional education *in Ireland* should be placed within the reach of the Irish; so far as it can be done, at an expense, within the means of those classes of that country, from whose ranks "the Professions" are recruited.

To go on withholding education, until all men in Ireland are of one religious persuasion, or to give to any particular persuasion a monopoly of it; would be in the one instance as foolish, as in the other it would be unjust.

I have now had some knowledge of Ireland for many years; I have been intimate with its people of all ranks, and I have long since come to the conclusion, that religious and political bigotry are its two greatest curses. I would hail anything, from any source, which might exemplify in that unhappy country, the fact—that men may choose different paths to Heaven without necessarily being in hate, on their path in this life. Who does not know, how men, whose practice proves they have no real religion, are for ever educated with those who have deep views of religion; and yet they do not necessarily quarrel, or

act injuriously to each other. I have seen at an English University, the drunkard, the gambler, and the profligate, drinking together at the streams of general literature, of classical, and scientific knowledge, in the same lecture rooms, with men of high religious principle; I have known, perhaps, some evil, from this contact of the real believer with the worldly despiser of the truth; but I never knew the man, who would say, the chances of religious contamination were so great, as to forbid any but those who would act up to a real and true profession of Christianity, being received at the University. I should be the first to say, exclude the man who avows he has no faith, from contact with the believer; but where the religion differs, but still is a real religion; where all profess religion, though some act unworthy of their profession, I should be the last to say, that there must be unanimity in all the details of faith; in the carrying principle into action; before I would admit equal participation, in the teaching of secular knowledge.

I am most happy to see that that most kind and excellent man, Dr. Murray, gives these colleges his support; when men of his position, with his experience, are not afraid to sanction them, it may be well argued, that the evils of which they are accused, are either mere inventions, exaggerations, or the result of that honest—it may be—but blind bigotry, which in this country, alas! is for ever looking for some polemical feature, in every act, which men of one

faith may do towards men of another, bringing in any way, men of differing faith into social contact.

If Ireland is to rise to her just position in the scale of nations, the first step of her elevation will be—education—especially the liberal education of the sons of her middle classes. The Irish have a peculiar aptitude for education; I believe it has been again and again said by competent authorities, that the people of no nation on earth are easier taught.

These Colleges, will gain this much from the violent opposition made to them: their Professors cannot sleep on their oars; they will be closely, severely watched; but let them steadily pursue a diligent and upright path, let them, knowing the rocks on which they may split, and the under current which is ever seeking to impel them on these rocks; steer in the clear path of duty; neither turning to the right or left; neither lured by political feeling, or tempted by religious feeling; let them give, each in his school, all of the best of teaching he has to give; leaving the religious professor—the chaplain—to do his part, and I have no doubt, but that Galway College, and the other Colleges, will outlive their present difficulties; and that Connaught will, in future years, find the full value of this endeavour, to open within her boundaries, a ready access to those branches of knowledge, which shall qualify her sons to obtain any position they may covet and deserve, in any of those liberal professions, to whose members, the men of all nations owe so much.

I have no doubt but that the completion of the railway between Dublin and Galway will be of the greatest possible service to the port itself and the whole surrounding country; independent of the question, whether or no it may be made a packet station, there can be no doubt but that it will give a great impulse to the markets over a large tract of country. The opening of the canal now in course of formation, which is to form part of the water communication between Galway and the eastern point of Lough Corrib, thence to and through Lough Mask, will also have a most beneficial effect in aid of the markets of this part of Ireland. If efforts are made to give travellers good accommodation, the beautiful scenery of this district, will, I am satisfied, be yearly resorted to by large numbers of tourists; at present, although there is such accommodation as may suffice for not over fastidious travellers, it is scarcely, in amount, or in quality, equal to the ordinary expectations of those who travel to spend their money for their own amusement. If the willingness of Irish hosts and waiters, could make up for the want of power in many ways to meet the English traveller's ideas of comfort, none could complain, for they are one and all most willing, as far as they can, to answer the demands made upon them.

It is my firm belief that this part of Ireland has seen its worst; the dawn of better and happier times, I trust, is now breaking upon it; times, in which

those who for pleasure, or business, shall come amongst its people, will find far less of misery, and social degradation, than unhappily is now so evident, in every direction.

CHAPTER V.

A GOOD LANDLORD—THE FISHERIES—"MARTIN PROPERTY"—ADVENTURES OF SALMON—CLIFDEN—REFORMATIONISTS—THE WORKHOUSES—SHAMEFUL CONDITION OF THE INMATES—ANOTHER EXPERIENCE OF THE PENALTY OF CHARITY—A TRAVELLER HUNT.

From Galway we started to Oughterard, en route to Clifden: the scenery is more or less pleasing, very soon after you quit Galway; but still as ever disfigured by the evidence of eviction, and the wretched appearance of very many of the people. We came however to one estate, which really did form an exception to almost any I had as yet seen; that of Mr. Flaherty, the Member for Galway; not only did all the lands round about it, appear well and cleanly cultivated; not only was there unmistakeable evidence of a pains-taking management; but the cabins were all "in roof"—in repair; the little holdings well stocked; and the people uniting in the same grateful story, that this kind owner, did and had done, through the worst of times, all man could do for his poor dependents. Such examples are indeed bright exceptions to the common run of proprietary; it did one good, to see that such goodness was appreciated here, hereafter none can doubt but that it will have its reward.

Soon after passing Oughterard, the traveller

finds himself entering upon the far-famed mountain scenery of Connemara : to any one, fond of lake and mountain scenery, the road from Oughterard to Clifden, will afford a great treat. I confess, I enjoyed it the more, from the absence of population, and therefore of misery. Here and there you pass small holdings, or see them nestled under the mountains in the distance; but the nature of the country is such, as to have little to attract settlers. There is a continued succession of lakes, backed with mountains, some of them, of great elevation; all, more or less of a wild and highly picturesque character. Our destination was—"the Fisheries," on the Ballinahinch,—the great Martin property; there is here a small and clean hotel; built, I should suppose, chiefly for the convenience of salmon fishers, as except for fishing, there is little to tempt the traveller, out of the direct road to Clifden; from which place this hotel is about eight miles distant.

We passed Ballinahinch, at about a mile or so from the hotel; it is a place of no great external pretension, but I should suppose commands from its windows extensive views of the beautiful country around.

For all I know to the contrary, there may be portions of the "great Martin estates," well fitted for colonization, or for investment, for agricultural purposes; but from all I saw of the property, and I suppose we travelled some miles through it: I should

cultivation. It is wild, mountainous, and much of it heath, almost covered with masses of strewn rock: there is a great deal of coarse, wet grass ground, but of a nature little adapted for any grazing purposes.

That very hardy stock, might live and breed here and there in large numbers, I can easily conceive. That here and there patches of land could be cultivated in small holdings, so as to pay some rent, is very likely the case. But my own impression is, that if those who have talked so much, of what could be done here, as from a sort of nucleus, for the redemption of this part of Ireland; by settling English capitalists and founding English colonies, had seen, only what we saw, they would have admitted that a worse site for the purpose could not have been thought of.

There may be valuable land on the estate, but certainly it is not in any extent, near the chief seat of the property: and this, I found to be the opinion of men, far better able to judge, than a passing traveller. That the estate must return a large revenue from some sources, is to be inferred, from the immense mortgages known to encumber it. I can only hope it may find a wealthy and liberal purchaser: it is a fine possession, if only for its magnitude, and its scenery; and I have no doubt, is a field, in which wealth and liberality might work much good to this part of Ireland.

The "Fisheries" are worth a little notice. A Scotch gentleman, I believe, the agent of the estate,

has here established a sort of "fresh fish factory;" *i. e.* he prepares, after a fashion of his own, fresh fish, for any the most distant market. A river runs hence into the sea; passing the fishery, on its way to the sea, a mile or two distant. There are some buildings erected, close to a bend, in this river; in one building, there were all the various descriptions of ingenious machinery, necessary, in the manufacture of tin cases; one boy cuts out the body of the case; another, with another machine, punches out the top and bottom; another forms the rims; another solders the sides and the bottom together, so as to make a case, only wanting the top. It was curious to see, how a Scotch foreman had got his staff of young tinkers busily employed, and how expeditiously they did their work. In another building, are a certain number of boilers, superintended by a woman. Presently, a signal is given "that there are fish," a boat is manned, and a long net quickly run out, so as to sweep a pool made by the bend of the river; we saw at one haul some twenty salmon, or salmon trout, brought in. They are at once washed, and with very little mutilation, put into tin cases, in certain weights or sizes, as it may be: so quickly are they out of the river, into the "tin," that as a workman described it, "you may see them a panting, as we puts the tops on." The top once on the case, it is instantly soldered on; in short, portions of a fish, or a whole fish, as it may be, are hermeti-

can scarcely believe he is out of the water; and now into the water, he goes again, but this time "he is in hot water." He is tenderly boiled, under the mild superintendence of the boiler woman. After having undergone this ordeal, he is ready for exportation; he may be eat at Liverpool, or on board a transatlantic steamer; he may be eat off Cape Horn, or at the London Tavern: he is simply for sale, in a travelling costume, warranted to produce him *fresh*, whenever and wherever he is undressed from his armour, to be dressed for dinner. Lobsters, oysters, and milk are all here prepared in the same way; and if one can judge from the mass of oyster-shells which are heaped up on the spot, the demand for stewed oysters, must be very large.

The proprietor of the factory assured us, the demand was greater than he could supply, for the fishing was very uncertain, some seasons being far more favourable than others; there are large salmon weirs in connection with the establishment; in one way or another, a great number of hands are employed at these fisheries; it is a wild place, but worth a visit; especially I should suppose in the season, to those fond of fishing, as there is excellent river fishing for some miles.

We passed from the Fisheries to Clifden, through some eight miles of very wretched, wild, barren country, very thinly populated; there were, however, some cabins or small farms, giving evident proof

of the perseverance with which this class of farmers will try and get a living; their little patches of crops shewed the struggle of industry under no common difficulties.

We found at Clifden the hotel in a bustle; Mr. Dallas, and his corps of "reformation" friends and assistants, were just starting to visit some of their out-posts; inasmuch as they had hired all the cars, and I had yet a long day's journey before me, I did not I fear feel very charitably disposed towards them. I was informed, on good authority, that in Connemara "the Reformationists" have upwards of 1200 children of Roman Catholics, under education as Protestants; they are taught the Scriptures in the Irish language. I believe a considerable staff of missionaries or instructors are employed amongst the peasantry as Scripture readers. The children have one meal of stirabout given them each day. On asking an individual, whose position qualifies him to give good information, whether he thought the conversions were real; whilst he declined to give an opinion as to the adult conversions, for he did not seem to have a high idea of the adult's perception of "truth," he assured me, that the meal did the children a great deal of good; and the education had tended to make them less uncivilized; he said he had heard them read well, sing hymns, &c., and all this, he added, can't do them harm; whether they will grow up Catholics or Protestants, he seemed to think as problematical, as,

whether they would continue to attend school if the potato crop was not blighted.

That the gentlemen and ladies embarked in this crusade are most earnest and sincere, none dispute; whether they could, or could not, carry on their operations less open to the accusation of bribing converts, by feeding them, I cannot say: that they have raised the utmost enmity of the priests, is only natural; that they must cause much domestic division, is inevitable. That they feel themselves justified in this, I do not dispute; but for my own part, I can only lament, that, in the working of God's providence in this unhappy land, it would seem, that nothing can occur upon which a *casus belli* for polemical warfare cannot be founded. But I will say nothing further here on the subject; to touch any of these matters in Ireland, is to handle a sort of controversial "pitch"—you are sure to be blackened.

I went over the parent, and some of the auxiliary houses at Clifden with the Inspector, who most kindly gave me every facility of inspection. Here, again, I have the painful task of recording a state of things most disgraceful to a Christian, civilized land. The parent house was built for 300; by however taking possession of parts of it not meant to be so used, it got to be estimated as capable of containing 600. There were now 759 in it!! The infirmary, estimated to hold 40, had 79 in it!! The total number of inmates in all the houses was 2439. I be-

lieve about 5000 were receiving out relief. The want of clothing here was quite distressing; it pervaded all classes alike. There was a man just out of jail, whose condition of rags, or rather want of enough of them, made him a most disgusting object: it had this effect, however; by shewing his frame, it proved in how superior a condition the criminal is kept, to that of the pauper.

There was a yard, with a day ward in it, of about 30 ft. by 15 ft., with open roof, in which were about 160 small children; in one corner there was a child with the small-pox out upon it; at least 30 of the others had not been vaccinated; there were 24 with caps on, with *bad heads*. The state of these children's clothing was quite shameful; if possible, they were in this respect worse than the same class at Limerick. Many of them were mere skeletons. They were walked out into the yard for me to see them better; as they passed us, one child actually, whether of herself, or by order, put her hand across to hold the rags together in front of the poor thing who walked with her, that we might not be more shocked than she could by such ingenuity prevent; they looked in the yard so cold, so comfortless, so naked, and such a libel on humanity, that I was glad to have them called in again to the close and infected atmosphere of the crowded day room; they were, I believe, all girls, though such is the nature of pure rag attire, that the dress often

ceases to be any guide, as to the sex, amongst the young.

There were two underground places, which the architect meant for lumber rooms, which we, however, found inhabited; they were damp and chilly, unventilated, and utterly unfitted for the purpose to which they were applied. There were some adult women in one of them, crouched upon the cold floor, looking just as such beings, so starved, so clad, would look in such a place; they were new admissions. There was little about the whole house out of keeping with what I have described; want of space, want of clothing, in a refuge crowded by those who come in starving and naked, must defy anything like the order and decency which should characterize every public establishment professing to be under the guardianship of the laws.

We now went to an Auxiliary, just occupied by a class of able-bodied women, called the "Police Barrack." The day rooms of this wretched building had no sashes in the ground-floor windows; they were, however, covered with iron lattice; immediately under them was a mass of stinking filth of the most miscellaneous character. Passing through a narrow dirty passage, we turned out of a confined yard, in which some masons were at work building up a wall, into two day rooms, *i. e.* what had been two rooms; the partition door, however, had been removed, though the division walls, or some of them remained.

The rooms were measured in my presence, and the result, on a drawing in my notes, records, that the area of both inclusive was 21 ft. by 12 ft.; in this space, we found 32 women in the inner room, 35 in the outer, being 67 adult women in a space of 21 ft. by 12 ft.! the ceiling was not, I believe, nine feet from the ground. In another small room, 9 ft. by 11 ft., twelve grown-up women lived, *i. e.* existed. In a loft, of dimensions not larger than the first-mentioned rooms, the roof coming down at an acute angle to the floor, twenty-six adult women were said to sleep; I believe more did sleep.

No power of pen can describe the state of the clothing of this seething mass of female pauperage; there were some, that the others, for shame's sake, would not let stand up before us; some I felt ashamed to ask to do so, though with more rags on. The smell of the rooms was intolerable; that of the yard, from an unmistakeable source, no improvement on it. I can hardly conceive anything more thoroughly brutalizing, than the herding of this mass together at night; for if they do not sleep in their dirty rags, they must at all events, I presume, be disentangled from them when they lie down, in the place where they lie down; this rag heap, then, redolent of many days or weeks' wear in this confined space, must add its share to that offence to every sense, which, without it, the masses so herded on the floors would produce.

There were altogether 150 inmates in this house. The day rooms look through the lattice into the public street; how such a place, for such a number of persons, could ever have been sanctioned, I cannot understand; if they escape a pestilence, which shall destroy life, they cannot escape an amount of moral disease, which must so brutalize, as to painfully affect it.

We now went to another Auxiliary, in which were between 40 and 50 infants, with their mothers, many of these small morsels of misery were absolutely naked; their mothers, generally speaking, clothed only so far as a small allowance of filthy rags, can be called clothing. Of course they were crowded far more than was in any way justifiable. In another auxiliary, there were 2 or 300 able-bodied females; still the same want of dress, or rather the same insufficiency of rags; packed closely at night in two or three dormitories; by day, their only shelter was one room, of the same area as any one of the said dormitories; but its size reduced by the tables for dining; they were sitting in heaps, in idleness, about the yard. The auxiliary for the boys was some miles off, so that I did not see it; I can only hope it is no worse than those I did see, though that were scarcely possible.

This Clifden Union had poor rates in course of collection at the end of the quarter, terminating 30th of last March, to the amount of £2,287, it had received relief from the rate-in-aid in that quarter,

to the amount of £2,115, its net liabilities at the same period, over balance at the Bank, were £6,292. *The weekly average mortality per* 1000 *inmates, for the four weeks ending March* 30, 1850, *was* 8·2 !

It is awful to contemplate, as in the case of this Union, to what one's fellow creatures can be exposed, when the scene of infliction is in one of these out of the way corners of her Majesty's dominions. There is a chance, in a place like Limerick, of some stray traveller, or some local party of sufficient courage and humanity, rising up, to publicly protest against such treatment of our fellow subjects, in establishments, supported under legal enactment, and supposed to be under official supervision; but here, I believe, anything might be done, and the chances of exposure be small. The people of all ranks are so now accustomed to scenes of misery and tyranny, that they have ceased to be shocked or roused by them; they say, "the potato rot" brought it about, "potato plenty" will heal it. The intermediate misery is counted as a small thing for humanity to notice; humanity, I fear, has been so taxed, that it has become blind to anything, which might increase its burden.

I know no justifiable excuse, however, for such wanton contempt of life and decency; I do not know why the "rate-in-aid" Bill was passed, but to obtain the efficient working of the Poor-law, in bankrupt

shame system, Poor-law administration. In England one-fiftieth part of such conduct, would so rouse the indignation of the public, that a speedy end would be put to the abuse, and I have no doubt, prĕtty severe rebuke dealt on all who connived at, or promoted it. I have yet to learn, that Ireland is not an integral part of Great Britain; I have yet to learn, that doings so disgraceful can exist in Ireland, and not be a shame and disgrace to England.

My friend here again indulged himself in large investments in bread, to feed the poor wretches he found in the street, and with the customary result; he soon being forced from the pressure, to make a retreat at the rear of the shop. I cannot wonder at the perseverance he displayed, he was new to Ireland; less hardened than myself. From a window we got an opportunity of seeing, ourselves unseen, some of the bread he had given consumed; there was no deceit in the way it was devoured; more voracious reality, it would be hardly possible to conceive; to see the fleshless arms grasping one part of a loaf; whilst the fingers—bone handled forks—dug into the other, to supply the mouth—such mouths too! with an eagerness, as if the bread were stolen, the thief starving, and the steps of the owner heard; was a picture, I think neither of us will easily forget.

Benevolence has its drawbacks; if Mazeppa had been bound to an Irish car in Connemara, in a year of famine, with a few loaves of bread tied to him, he

would have had a scarcely less lively experience of one wolf hunted, than he had on his wild horse, after the fashion in which his perilous ride is handed down to us. No sooner was our car under weigh, than a pack of famished creatures of all descriptions and sexes, set off in full chase after us; the taste of fresh bread, still inflamed the spirit of some; the report of it put others in hot hungry pursuit; the *crescit eundo* is ever realized in the motion of an Irish mob. Our driver did his best, but our pursuers had us at advantage; for our road was up a very steep long hill; they gained on us, and we were soon surrounded by the hungry pack; the cry of the regular professional mendicant, the passionate entreaty of the really destitute—the ragged, the really starving; the whining entreaties of the still more naked children, still more starved,—in a famine the weakest ever suffer soonest. The quickness and volubility of Irish national mendicity, sharpened by hunger, and excited by the rare chance of appeasing it, all combined to give voice to the pack. No two luckless human beings were ever so hunted; no ravening wolves ever gave more open expression of their object—food. A little coaxing—my friend's; a little violence—my own; a little distribution of copper coin from both of us, at last rid us of the inconvenient, but natural result of an Englishman, with money in his pocket, and a baker's shop near, wishing in Ireland to feed some

CHAPTER VI.

OUT-RELIEF—MR. ELLIS AND HIS CONNEMARA HOME—ENGLISH SETTLERS, THE "EASTWOODS"—DISADVANTAGES TO THE ORDINARY TRAVELLER OF THE FISHING SEASON—THOUGHTS ON FISHING TACKLE—A DIALOGUE—FISHING ACCIDENTS—HOW TO GET A FISH-HOOK OUT OF YOUR OWN HAND OR LIP—AUTHOR INCLINED TO GRUMBLE—A CLEVER BEGGAR—WESTPORT—ITS WORKHOUSES—EMIGRATION—INDUSTRIAL SOCIETIES, AT WESTPORT AND CASTLEBAR.

We now proceeded on our journey, through "Joyce's Country," on our way to Westport; the scenery throughout this part of Ireland is very beautiful, and would well repay any tourist in the search of the picturesque; the population is thinly scattered, the nature of the soil does not seem to offer much inducement to them to settle; from time to time, however, we passed some fair grazing ground, and some few districts were apparently farmed by parties, having capital as well as enterprize. We passed on our way, one of the out-relief stations, and left our car that we might witness the distribution of the "meal:" by the side of the high road, and along the banks of a short road, leading up to a cabin, were collected a large number of poor creatures, chiefly women and children, but there were a few old or infirm males amongst them. They were squatting,

and lying in all the varieties of posture, common to this class: it appears to me, that their great object is, to gather their limbs together, in any and every way, which will best enable their rags to exclude the air from their persons.

The allowance for an adult is 1 lb. of Indian meal per day, in value about one penny: for those of a family below a certain age ½ lb. each. We made our way to the cab in through the lane of unhappy beings waiting for this dole; many had come miles for it.

A relieving officer from his book gave out a name; a man at the door repeated it, and took the bag of the respondent; a boy then weighed from a sack, the quantity named by the relieving officer, and emptied the meal from the scales into the bag; I was glad to see that fair weight was given.

There can be no doubt but that out-relief is the cause itself of much mortality. The allowance, except where the small children are numerous enough to add from their quota some surplus, to the swelling of that of the adults, falls short of what can really support life;* it is eked out by the free use of corn-weed, nettles and other weeds, and whatever else the parties can beg or take. Indian meal, however good a food when properly cooked, is far from wholesome when

* It is a well known fact, that children dying, are sometimes buried privately by the parents, that the family may continue to draw their share of meal.

eat as these poor creatures eat it; few of whom have any means of properly cooking it; with but too many, from the almost raw state in which they eat it, it is little digested; however, they will hold out on it as long as nature will endure, for with it they have liberty.

We had not left this wretched group many miles behind us, when we suddenly came on a very different scene. In a situation of great beauty, we came to a very large enclosure by the side of the road, in a very high state of cultivation; there were root crops, flax, &c. growing; a large number of women and others, decently clad, working merrily with hoes, &c.; on the higher part of this enclosure, on an elevation, with neat well kept, prettily laid out lawns descending from it, there was a modern comfortable looking, evidently English house. This was, we found, the abode of Mr. Ellis, a member of the Society of Friends, and brother of the member for Coventry. This gentleman and his family, at least his wife, I am not sure that he has children, are here settled; he having purchased a considerable estate. His attention, a year or two since, was turned to the condition of this unhappy district; he at once determined to pitch his tent amongst the people, and do all God would enable him, to better their condition. I called upon him, and was most kindly welcomed by himself and Mrs. Ellis. He does not profess to any scientific knowledge of agriculture, but he seeks to apply practically, whatever he can gain of useful knowledge on the subject; besides employing a great

many persons on his farms, paying them punctually *money wages;* he has established schools, and with Mrs. Ellis's assistance, is doing all he can, to raise their intellectual as well as physical condition.

He does not state that his farming has as yet answered as a speculation; but he is sanguine that it may do so. With regard to the character of the peasantry as labourers, he states, that they are in the first instance quite unskilled; but he found them quick to learn; they are willing, and he considers them faithful and honest; he spoke with some earnestness upon this point—he had no bolts or bars to his house; his object seems to be, to raise their character, by making their gains dependent upon their industry; and to obtain their respect and confidence, by the strictest right dealing with them; paying them punctually all they earn, and only exacting from them what he pays for.

I believe this excellent man's intentions towards these people are simply those of a most liberal philanthropy, guided by a wise judgment as to how their interests can be best and permanently served. I can only hope, as I believe, God will bless so single-minded an effort to do good. It was refreshing to see this *oasis* in the desert, which the scene of cheerful industry around the house presented. It was still more so, to hear the kind and sympathizing but well-judging way in which Mr. Ellis spoke of the condition of the people. The neatness of all the

set off by that peculiar neatness of attire common to "The Society of Friends," all combine to make the contrast of the scene and the man the greater; in opposition to scenes and men, with whom we had been brought in contact.

At a mile or two distant from the property of Mr. Ellis, we came to another English settlement. Two gentlemen, brothers, from the North of England, of the name of Eastwood, have purchased a large tract of land, and are cultivating it in a most spirited manner; they are young, and evidently have no small share of youth's energy. The chief scene of their farming operations lies in a sort of "flat," surrounded by mountains; through the farm a salmon river passes; which they have bridged over, and the road across it led us up to a comfortable house of considerable size; this, with the adjoining large farm buildings, they have built, apparently with little regard to expense.

We found Mr. A. Eastwood at home; as our time was limited we could only go with him over the farm buildings, just so far as to get some idea of their size, and of the nature of the experiment, in which he and his brother have embarked. The barn and yards and other buildings are on a scale, which in England would be sufficient for a very large arable farm; but the weather is such here, he informed us, that it is necessary to have buildings of a size which will admit of a great deal of in-door work in the winter. Every thing was substantially built; there

was a carpenter's shop and all the accessories to a large farming concern. They use artificial manures, grow root crops, have done a great deal in draining and reclaiming the land; but he seemed of opinion, that when they had once got the land thus treated, into good heart, the wise policy would be, to lay most of it down to the best possible pasture it would admit of, and to look to stock more than to corn, for their return. Having, I believe, a large amount of mountain grazing ground, this view seems to be the wisest. He spoke of the difficulty of finding a market for corn, but seemed to think, and in my opinion, rightly, that the demand for stock must increase.

He says of the men as labourers, that under a good foreman they work well, and are honest, unskilled at first, but quick to learn. They pay them money wages, and pay according to the value of the work. There were drills, and carts, and other farm upholstery of the orthodox red colour about the premises, and every thing looked very unlike Connemara. He spoke in no despondng terms of their prospects, seemed to think the worst was passed. To hear him tell of the trials and adventures he and his brother personally went through in the famine year, made me almost believe I was talking to some Bush settler in Australia. I sincerely hope that these gentlemen may succeed in their plans; at all events, they will have done much good; no effort to introduce good farming, to promote real industry in the men, and to shew integrity in the employer, will

here be thrown away; it may be a case of "*Sic vos non vobis,*" but benefit, and permanent benefit to many will flow from it.

We now pursued our way to Kylemore, an hotel by the side of a beautiful lake, at which we had hoped to get accommodation for the night; alas, when we got there, every inch of it was occupied by a party of fishermen; and we had no other choice but to push the tired horse which had brought us from the "Fisheries" in the morning, some six Irish miles further to Leenane.

I do not know how far this fishing party were successful, who had thus monopolized this hotel; but if tackle in abundance, and variety, could ensure sport, they must be very "otters;" never did I see such a collection of murderous implements as were strewed about in all directions. Fond of the sport myself, I have however long learned to distrust the effects of too much machinery; I have seen natives with very rough rods, rougher tackle, and flies of very homely manufacture, kill fish after fish, when gentlemen with cars full of rods and gaffs; deed boxes of every kind of artificial bait; big blotting books, with blankets for leaves, stocked with every possible combination of feather and hook, have spun and whipped in vain. I once saw a party arrive at the door of an hotel at B—— in the West of Ireland, after a day's whipping of the waters; they had two fine fish in charge of a "gossoon." A native fisherman, a professional, was loaded with about seven per cent of the

amount of the stock of a crack tackle shop; the hats of the two sportsmen were encircled gracefully with tackle, the hand of one was tied up in a handkerchief, the lip of his friend bore marks of recent incision; they were moody, and only just in spirits enough to order lobster sauce for the fish which was to be cooked. In the course of the evening, I got into conversation with the "professional," who had been their guide. I said, "Well, S—, you shewed them a good fish or two to-day." "Bless your honour, the salmon were all a just jumping out of the water, to *pape* at the queeriosities, they had brought from London; and little blame to them for that same." "They hooked a couple tho' I see." "Well, then, it was one of them fish you see the gossoon carry, as did sure enough hook himself, on to one of them queer flies; and it was the bad luck to him, I was handy with the gaff, before the silly thing could get out of the shiver it put him into; but t'other fish, was just a clean caught purse one; and it was not much they give for it." "You have had a long day, however; how was it you did not do better for them? you will lose your character, S—." "Why, I tell you what it is, your honour; what with the turning over of them kettles full of queer contrivances, and the getting of one thing out of the way of t'other; each a shewing the other, what he called the most killingest thing as ever cost money; what with talking about this and that, they lost half their time a putting together the sticks and the lines. Then,

the one of them run a hook into his thumb, and we lost another bit of an hour, hunting for a smart lot of tools made a purpose he said, for cutting of hooks out of the fingers; there was a pair of small shears like, for cutting the hook shank off, and a pretty thing it was to look at, but sure, it was a time we was, a trying to make it do the job; the gemman got so faint, we had to put him on his back, and wait a while, before we could make a job of it; then there was what he called 'force ups,' to pull out the point of the hook with, so as to get him out backwards; at last however we done it; but by the time we had cleaned the tools, and tied up his hand, and put fresh heart with whiskey into him, there was another hour gone. The t'other one, got a hook in his lip, as he was a 'rubbering' the gut to make it straight; says he to me, 'S—, just get it out your own way for me, will you.' I just made him sit down, curled his lip round my fingers, and with a clean cut of my knife it was out in a jiffy; howsoever tho', neither he nor t'other one, took much to the sport afterwards for a bit." "It was a good day was it not?" "Your honour may say that, and what kept a stinging of 'em was, they see Phil's boy with his long stick, and line hitched round a bit of an old shoe, a lying on the ground at his foot, catch two good fish, in less than an hour; they sent me to ask a look at his fly, they searched their flannel books, but they could find nothing in all the heap

gossoon at the river foot, who dont know more about the nature of our fish, than all the Londoners; it aint for me to say so, but if they hired our tackle to catch 'em, just as they pays us to shew where they are to be catched, they'd bring home more fish, and carry a deal less useless stuff about with them."

An Irish car well hung, with a steady going horse, the luggage well adjusted, a pleasant companion on the other side, a fine day, and scenery, and a not too long journey all at once, is very pleasant: leaving good quarters, in heavy rain; horse knocked up, luggage irritable—chafing your back; companion closed up in his umbrella—silent; your last cigar—drawing badly; questionable quarters, at an unquestionable distance; is a trial of one's philosophy; arriving at last, at the Leenane Hotel a climax. It is a bettermost sort of cabin; I daresay has been better than it is; however, civility and attention goes a great way, even with tired travellers, to make up for other deficiencies. There were beds—there were porter and eggs, hopes of bacon; a few dogs of sorts, children ditto, a fox, &c. made company; we eat, drank; one of us smoked a cigar, which has always, on these occasions, the great value, that its distinct smell, brings all other smells to a recognizable focus; we retired to seek rest, under, in my case, some rather unpropitious circumstances.

The Leenane "Hotel"? is very prettily situated, at the head of a long arm of the sea; except its

it has nothing to detain him, we therefore started at 6 A.M. on our way to Westport. The scenery was still very beautiful, very wild; the district through which we passed but little cultivated; though the back ground was still mountain, the plain had changed its character, and seemed of a better nature for grazing purposes, but there were very few farms, and very little stock. We had an instance, in this stage of our journey, of the wonderful way in which the Irish can, in hopes of ever so small a gift, sustain exertion in the practice of 'running.' A girl of about twelve years of age, of course bare-footed; dressed in a man's old coat, closely buttoned; ran beside our car, going at times very fast; for a distance, quite surprizing: she did not ask for anything, but with hands crossed, kept an even pace, only adapting it, to our accidental change of speed; we, as a rule, refused all professional mendicants; we told her again and again, we would give her nothing; she never asked for anything: I saw my friend melting, I from time to time tried to congeal him, by using arguments against encouraging such bad habits, &c. He was firm, astonished at her powers, not so irritated, as I was, by her silent, wearying importunity; on she went, as we went; he shook his head at her; every quarter of a mile I thought the said shake softened in its negative character; I read fresh lectures on the evil of being led from right principles, by appeals to our pity,

through the exhibition of what excited our wonder; the naked spokes of those naked legs, still seemed to turn in some mysterious harmony, with our wheels; on, on she went ever by our side, using her eyes only to pick her way, never speaking, not even looking at us; she won the day—she got very hot, coughed—but still ran with undiminished speed; my companion gave way—that cough did it, he gave her a fourpenny; I confess I forgave him—it was hard earned, though by a bad sort of industry.

At Westport the Master of the parent workhouse and the Medical Officer, gave me their escort, over the extensive house and auxiliaries of the Union. The numbers in the houses were 3977; about 1000 had been sent out on out-relief (Sec. 1.) within a few days of my visit; the deaths in the preceding week had been 25. The pressure on the Union may be judged from the fact that the admissions of the last week had been 542. The numbers in the houses were still far greater than there was proper accommodation for; but from the very great efforts made, to preserve order and to keep the dormitories, &c. clean, the crowding was not offensive, to the degree, I had seen it elsewhere. A large number of women were employed in carding and spinning; the flax is weighed out to them, and each has a certain task to perform. The dining hall will hold about 550; they are fed in relays: those who got breakfast at eight, I was assured got their dinner at four. The

bread given to them, was made of equal parts—"wheat flour," "Indian meal," and rye meal. There were fifty-six cases in the fever hospital and sheds; some of these cases, were of a very bad type. The details of the parent house, were similar to those in the other houses I have described; the dormitories were very clean. I was much struck with the cleanliness of the sick wards, and especially with the attention evidently paid, to many small details of management, which are not expensive, but tend much to the comfort and decency of the patients. From the parent house, I went to see an auxiliary at the Quay, in which were some 250 females, the majority girls, from nine to fifteen. The dormitory of this place was 130 feet long by about 20 feet broad, and in this 218 girls and 32 women slept. It was however well ventilated; the clothing of some of these girls was very bad indeed, but they were not unhealthy in appearance.

We met about 400 boys coming up from the sea, where they had been to bathe; of course they looked clean, but their physical condition generally was far below that of the girls. They were for the most part dressed in a sort of coarse canvass; some of them in loose frocks of that material, tied at the waist. I then visited several very large auxiliaries, old stores; they were all more or less crowded; but kept as far as possible, very clean; in one I should suppose there were not less than 700 or 800 boys; the larger lads

were put through a sort of military drill by the schoolmaster; they performed the exercise very well, and certainly *could stand at ease*; in some of the houses I had seen, it would have been out of the question; however, I must add, that in the large number of children I saw at Westport, I did not see any symptoms of vermin, nor did I see any cases of ophthalmia. There were two or three of these monster auxiliaries, so adjoining the one to the other, that it was impossible to take any very accurate notes, of their separate details.

In one yard of adult women, the want of clothing was very bad; but after Clifden, nothing could shock me much. There was a great deal of active industrial employment going on; ten looms were at work, turning out a coarse linen, linsey woolsey, and flannel; a shoemaker had a large class of young Crispins, whose work would have done no discredit to older hands; there was a master tailor, also, with his corps of lads, busy with needle and shears; in one room I saw seventy-five spinning wheels in full work. There was evidence, everywhere, of active superintendence, and evidently no lack of personal washing: clothes must be made before they can be washed. I was, however, assured, that such was the pains now being taken to clothe these masses, that in three weeks, all will be clothed. I hope it may be so. There were 1556 *able-bodied women*, inmates in the houses! In one block of stores, auxiliary to the parent house,

the number of women given me were 1160! They were very orderly, and, with the exception of the want of clothes, their appearance was good.

I afterwards went some little distance to see an auxiliary of girls under nine years of age, under the care of a Miss Kelly as mistress. They were at their dinner; as usual, far too crowded; but they looked healthy, and were fairly clothed. I drank some of their soup, and found it good; they sang some hymns very well, and then some of those old infant school songs, to which there is a stamping, and clapping of hands accompaniment: they seemed happy enough. I was shewn their writing, which was good; it was evident much pains was taken with them, and they did their mistress credit.

However much there was to deplore, in the existence of such a state of things as caused the massing of these thousands of paupers together, so far as the Guardians, the Medical officers, and staff generally are concerned, I could not but admit, that they were doing their best to meet the evil in the best way they could.

Let me say here, what I might equally well have said elsewhere, that I heartily wish the authorities would forbid the use of hunting whips by the officers; I have seen it in more houses than one, and seen the abuse of it. If the porters or wardsmen must carry a weapon of offence, a cane would be a better thing; the people in these masses are already too much

kenneled; one needs not the whip to make the comparison stronger.

Lord Sligo is Chairman of the Board, he resides here a good deal, and takes a very active part in the management; he seems also, by all report, to labour hard in the encouragement of every sort of industrial employment, for which any wages can be obtained by the poor, who are as yet not actual paupers.

One of the most difficult, to solve, of all the problems connected with the present condition of the distressed districts in Ireland, is, what can be done to relieve the rates from the burden of the masses of able-bodied women now in the houses? There they are, immense consumers, but as producers in any shape—in one sense to their honour be it said—they make no return whatever. Very many thousands of them are "orphans" or "deserted." Emigration has been tried to some extent: I have reason to know, as far as the Australian colonies are concerned, only with evil to the parties emigrating, and to the settlement to which they were sent.

A workhouse life in Ireland is just that particular life which, of all others, unfits women for colonial existence in any but its most deformed and degraded state. A female colonist should have been brought up hardily, in great bodily activity, in habits of continued and varied industry. She should either be

kind of mixed labour which in households is called *all work*, or for out-door service, *i. e.* for marriage and life in the bush; she should, in addition to some knowledge of the above domestic duties, have been trained to turn her hand to coarser labour; she should know something of cattle, of dairy work; she should have been hardened to exposure in the open air; in a few words, she should know how "*usefully to rough it.*"

What can be more opposed to either of these conditions, than women brought up to be fed in masses, twice a day, on food prepared with about the same amount of skill as is required to prepare that of dogs, and very generally served and consumed with about as much decorum as exists in a well appointed kennel: passing the hours at which they are not feeding either in sitting in idleness, close packed, in crowded day rooms, or squatting in idleness, in groups, on the ground of the large yard; retiring to rest at night under a condition of circumstance that makes the decorum of the bedroom or dormitory about equal to that of the dining hall, at best; but often, I fear, making it one of the most disgusting scenes of personal degradation the mind can well conceive.

The last dormitory of a workhouse I visited, in Ireland, was one at Tuam—at an auxiliary. The length of it was 330 feet; 365 women, able-bodied, adult women, slept in it! It had a triple row of beds, *i. e.* of mattrasses, spread upon the floor, leaving

just room for two narrow pathways, between the heads and feet of the centre row and the ends of the side rows. I have seen a male ward, though not on this scale, when occupied at night; from what I saw I can conceive nothing more indecently offensive, than such a space of ground, so closely covered with women, nearly nude—for I am told night dress, in these houses, too often may be taken to be just the covering of the bed clothes.

That anything like personal modesty can long survive the schooling of such scenes, I cannot believe. Were it necessary or fitting, I could prove, from good evidence, taken in three different houses, that the cramming of these large dormitories with women, of every adult age, has proved itself to be, in itself, a monster evil. I admit that, in some of the workhouses, the women are made to do some work: there are a certain number of spinning wheels kept going; there are a good many employed in carding wool and flax; a certain number in making clothing; but this is a very small per centage upon the whole number. The fact is, *there is not day room accommodation to afford the space for any real amount of industrial occupation; there is not one-tenth of the staff required to secure it.* I have never seen anything the least like an attempt to teach any of the common requisites for domestic service.

Of the mere animal, woman, the Union Houses and their auxiliaries are a market, from which a supply

might be found for a very extensive demand; and, as mere animals, they would rank high, for they are, in many districts, a powerfully framed, well formed race; but woe to the colony that seeks for mothers for its future generations, wives for the present, in mere women:—untaught, therefore ignorant; undisciplined, and therefore adding rudeness to ignorance.

I never saw collected together a more strong, hearty, healthy, set of women than I saw within this two years in an emigrant ship, on its way to Australia; with a number of young Irish girls from workhouses. I have heard of them since their arrival; what I heard fully confirms what I have stated above. I believe women to be the very last of God's creatures, capable of being brought up in masses without losing their *caste*. Female virtue, all that tends to form the wife, mother—the servant, is opposed at its every step by too great association.

I was glad to learn at Westport, Castlebar, and at Ballina, that very great efforts are making to foster every species of industry amongst women, the profits of which may enable them, by gaining the bread of independence, to avoid the evils of workhouse association. Lord and Lady Sligo have, by great pains and perseverance, succeeded in establishing a new branch of industry at Westport; it has been followed out by others at Castlebar. Some merchants at Glasgow were led to offer a species of

work, in the way of preparing for them the material for window curtains, screens, &c. They send down large quantities of muslin, with patterns drawn upon it; it is, I believe, unbleached; a particular thread, and frames of different sorts, are used. The women work with the needle the different patterns, on frames varying in size; some are large and square, some small and circular. The agent of the firm pays the wages weekly; the earnings vary, according as the women and girls acquire skill; some at first can only earn from 4*d* to 6*d* per week; when skilled they can make as much as 2*s*. Lord Sligo has appropriated a large building at Westport to the purpose; there are certain teachers who are paid from 5*s* to 7*s* a-week. Some of the best workers are sent to different places to themselves act as teachers. I have before me a list of fifteen different localities connected with Westport and Castlebar, in which the manufacture is carried on under the patronage of different individuals.

I find that more than eleven hundred women and children are thus employed; the demand for this work is said to be likely to increase. The work seemed to me to be of a nature, in which skill would easily be acquired; the smaller frames can be worked at the houses of the peasantry; it has one great advantage, *it requires cleanliness.*

At Castlebar I visited the Industrial Society's establishment; it was founded early in 1848; it is

supported by donations, and 1*s* entrance paid by members, with 1*d* weekly subscription. A committee gives out work for the poor to do at their own houses; they, under certain rules, giving security for its proper return, &c. In its first ten months 10,490 individuals received wages for work done for the Society; the weekly average of persons receiving wages was 219; their average wages 8*d* per day. They worked the following number of yards of goods, manufactured and sold by the Society, 3,947 yards, viz.:

1,500	yards	freize
450	„	fancy blue tweed
250	„	shepherd's plaid
175	„	dark woollen tweed
480	„	flannel
1,092	„	bleached linen
3,947		

In the second year, the total number of yards of woollen fabrics manufactured by the Society, amounted to 12,928 yards; linen, including sheeting and ticking, 4,880 yards. 160 persons are daily employed by the Society; £1,890 was paid within the year for wages and materials. This Society took and fulfilled a large contract for clothing from Count Strzelecki, to the amount of £500; they have supplied one of the Unions with £700 worth of blanketing, ticking, and sheeting; independent of the work

they give out, they employ 70 persons on their premises.

The subscriptions are certainly great aids to the Society; but their amount is such, that nothing but the realising a fair manufacturer's profit could keep it so prosperous; and this is the great feature to be regarded. They are now doing the tambour work, having a teacher from Westport. At Ballina a great and comprehensive effort is making to promote the linen manufacture, and with every prospect of success.

It is only to those who have studied the nature of that social crisis, in which the west of Ireland is involved, that the great value of this impetus to native industry will come home. No step, however small, which can turn the hand-power of the women to account—to real fair profit, can be overvalued. To give a habit of industry, you must secure a return for it. Once get the peasantry into working habits—lead them to learn the value of the independence they can thus obtain, and I have no fear but some way will be found to turn that industry to account. "Tambouring" may only have its day; but the spirit of patient industry will survive any one class of work; there can be no reason why the same hope of gain, which leads one firm to give one species of employment, should not incite others to find their gain by seeking it, in the same market, from some other work.

I believe the day will come, when the water power of these districts will be turned to account, to manufacture the flax, no land could grow better. I know that already methods have been discovered of so working Irish flax, that it can be turned to uses, which will bring it into competition with manufactures, which as yet little know the enemy they may have to contend against.

Let Ireland have a continuance of peace within her borders, and I do not despair, but that her hitherto neglected industrial resources—the wealth that her people, her waters, and her lands could produce, will be known, and be appreciated. These Societies, now in their infancy, are, whilst they support thousands in a crisis, laying a foundation for that energy, which will be required from the people when the crisis is past.

CHAPTER VII.

CASTLEBAR—WORKHOUSES—EXECUTION IN THE HOUSES—EARL OF LUCAN'S FARMING OPERATIONS—BALLINA—SEIZURE AND SALE OF WORKHOUSE PROPERTY—RESCUE BY MR. GURNEY—FUNERAL OF PAUPER CHILDREN—A VERY CAUTIOUS BANKER.

BETWEEN Westport and Castlebar there are but too many proofs of the old evil—eviction; but there is also some evidence that it has not been so wantonly done as elsewhere; not only have farms been consolidated, but as yet they seem to have been treated so with this effect—the land is improved—there are large fields under heavy cropping; these must have given employment, and so far I hope the last state of many of the evicted has been better than their former. It was market-day at Castlebar, and seemed to be a very busy market; the appearance of the town and people was much improved from what it was last year. Very heavy drainage works are being here carried out; these, and the large amount of money paid by Lord Lucan in the carrying out of his farming operations, I have no doubt powerfully affect the prosperity of the town. I found the workhouses certainly improved in their details from what they were last year; the inmates looked healthy, with the exception of some of the boys and men; they were on the whole fairly clad. The total num-

bers in all the houses were 2,512, of whom 190 were on the sick lists. Able-bodied working males, 201; ditto, females, 693; boys and girls above nine and under fifteen years of age, 1010! The average mortality per week of the month ending 30th of March last, was 4·9; a low mortality compared with very many Unions. The only building which has more inmates in it than it was estimated to accommodate, is the parent house. I was much struck with the clean appearance of the girls at the parent house. There were some objectionable points with regard to the state of the inmates of the probationary wards, who had been in some days; but on the whole, it would be captious to find fault in small details, where generally there was so much to praise. The fever hospital, and the sick wards generally, were very clean. I must say here, what I might have said with more reason elsewhere, that I do think nothing should ever justify the putting four or even three children in one bed, when, to do so, it is necessary to make them sleep, some with their heads at one end, some at the other; in cases of dysentery I think it most cruel to do so. I believe it to be against the rules of the Medical Inspector; unless my notes deceive me, I saw one case of it in this house; I know I saw it again and again in other houses.

There are two "monster" permanent single story wards or sheds being built in connection with the parent house, one more than 200 feet long, the other

nearly 200. The object of the Board, a very wise one, viz. to try and do without auxiliary houses as soon as they can. The number of persons dependent on out-relief is 2,443. I think it was in this house that I saw the bread for the dinner put into the other food, in order to *sop* it, to make it an unsaleable article outside the walls.

The parent house stands within walls enclosing a large space of ground; this is very nicely laid out in a sort of pleasure ground fashion, with a great extent of flower border, and broad gravelled walks; not only has it been so laid out with no little taste, but it is very neatly kept, and was well cropped with annuals and other plants; there were also in connection with the hospital, gardens similarly laid out and cropped. Not only am I convinced that there is sound policy in thus surrounding the Workhouse with ground so laid out as to secure a certain amount of neatness and cleanliness, but that it is politic as well as humane, to have the means of thus giving the children occasional exercise, under circumstances which tend to give them tastes of higher nature, than can be given in the crowded, walled, barren yards. Again, it did one's heart good to see some of the convalescent patients, walking about in a scene which must have been most refreshing to their every sense, after the confinement of the sick wards.

It may easily be conceived that the office of a Guardian is not a bed of roses in these Unions. A

small body of police, I was told, are here regularly in attendance on the Board on admission days; applicants are very apt to be violent when refused altogether, or relieved in a way not according to their own views. It has happened that a Guardian has been severely wounded as he sat, by a stone thrown by one of these unruly spirits.

At this moment, though all is apparently in fair order, there is an execution in every Poor House of this Union; the cost to the Union of the bailiffs in possession being not less than 17*s* 6*d* per week. On the doors of some of the wards are pasted printed notices, to the effect, that the contents of such ward belongs to one "Charles Malley" a contractor, who has made what is called a friendly seizure, *i.e.* I presume, having secured the property, he is content to wait till he can be paid his debt.

In the immediate neighbourhood of Castlebar is the mansion of the Earl of Lucan; it is in itself a place not pretending to be any thing more than a country gentleman's country house. Within half a mile of it are the farm buildings to which public attention has more than once been called. They are on an extensive scale, substantially built. They contain all the necessary conveniences for working a large amount of ground. The resident manager, who went with me over them, was an intelligent Scotchman, who evidently understood his business. Lord Lucan's aim has been to do away with the old

system of very small holdings, with their attendant low farming, and to introduce the very best English or Scotch plans of large farming operations, carried on upon the best known system. He has accordingly, here and on parts of his estate, made most wholesale "clearance," and has now embarked a very large amount of capital in the cultivation, on the new system, of the land thus cleared.

In connection with these particular buildings, he has 1,000 acres under high tillage, carrying between 700 and 800 head of cattle, including 110 cows giving milk; his flock of sheep exceeds 700, 220 are Leicester ewes; he has forty-six cart horses in work, fourteen young horses coming on, has now about 100 men employed—has had 500; he pays each fortnight, about £41. wages, for farm work; about the same sum for draining operations; he has, I believe, taken up large sums under the Act for this object; he seems to spare no pains or expense in improving his stock; he has some very fine Leicester rams, some high bred short horned bulls; I was told he was importing more.

There is a well appointed dairy, in which we saw cheese-making going on; the cleanliness and apparent activity of the dairy staff, and its appointments, would have done credit to Cheshire. There is a large bone-crushing mill, and all the other usual accompaniments to a first-rate modern bread and beef factory. On other parts of his property he has about

4,000 acres of land, which he has laid out in three or four farms; having worked it into good heart, he has put up suitable buildings on two of these farms, and would find buildings for every good tenant he could command; at present they are unlet. He has established a "tilery," making his own draining tiles. The average wages of the farm labourers are from 9*d* to 1*s* a day. I was told, that like all other labouring men on farms, they required looking after; but that they were quick at acquiring skill, and by practice made good servants. The lands were laid out in large fields, but not hedged the one from the other. The crops looked very heavy and very clean; but I did not go over them. The soil appeared to be very good.

The reader must bear in mind, in order to estimate the spirit of this undertaking, that it was begun under every possible discouragement, and has been continued in the face of ruinous poor rates, falling—or rather no markets. There was not only the unpopularity of the process by which he took possession of the land, but he had to work out his schemes, in the teeth of every conceivable local prejudice. He had to revolutionize a wide-extended system, to which long use, idle habits, and ignorance had wedded the whole country round him—he himself, the sole conspirator. Failure must be a dear-bought ruin; success could only be purchased by first treading the very confines of ruin. He had to prove that

certain things could be done even by instruments opposed to their doing. Amateur farming in England has all the excitement of racing; the aristocracy of the stall and the arable have excitement, fully equal to that purchased by the frequenters of the ring and the stable. I was born and bred very near Newmarket; I have now lived for some years near my friend Huxtable, and others of known arable and stall craft. I have seen him, and them, fully as much engrossed in a rivalry of beasts, pigs, and swedes, as I ever saw the leviathans of the course in the comparative merits of their studs.

Lord Lucan is farming where the burden of the Poor-rate falls on the proprietary; the town divides him from the Union House, from the records of which I took it, that *it is now insolvent*, there are now within and without the houses, actually relieved 5,400 paupers! This in the teeth of all the work, he, the drainage works, and all other sources of employment, are affording. This is no mere library and anti-luncheon amusement, to be followed out each day by lively post-prandial discussion with brother white-waistcoated agriculturists; discussing theories over claret, and matching pigs and swedes, in all the comfort of a well-appointed social neighbourhood. He had to build his success, in its very foundation, on ground, unavoidably poisoned in the process. The courage he has shewn, makes me desire to feel, that when he evicted, he saw so great an amount of even-

tual good to a future race, that for this he was content to bear the burden of odium, his conduct to the present race of peasantry would produce. If he did the deeds I have abhorred in many, I must admit that he proved in earnest in pursuing the end for which he avowed he did them. There was no cowardly wantonness in his work; he chose his line; at every cost of fortune and of comfort, to much present cost of character; he boldly pursued it. I for one, try and forget the cost of the experiment, in admiration of the courage of the man; in the belief that he has achieved a great movement in a most valuable direction.

From Castlebar I went to Ballina; the scenery, for a considerable part of the way, is very beautiful. The pass at Pontoon, between the two lakes Cullin and Conn, and the road for some miles on the banks of Lake Conn, carries the traveller through some lovely scenery. It is throughout very thinly populated. Ballina was the extreme point of my journey: my readers will not be sorry to hear that its workhouses are the last I shall have to describe.

Perhaps few, if any, Unions have had heavier trials than that of Ballina; I wish I could say it was altogether out of them: The paupers now in the houses amount in numbers to 3,788. The parent house was very clean, and the inmates in good order. The women, young and old, seemed healthy. The clothing of the women and the children was pretty

good. In the sick wards there were a good many very distressing cases; the old story, dysentery—the result of want. The Medical officer reported as remaining under his care—sick—the previous week 479; he had had, in that week, 13 deaths. In the fever hospital 60 cases remained under treatment: two deaths in the week. Outside the house there were some 150 so-called able men and lads, breaking stones, *i. e.* hitting at stones with hammers; they were a wretched spectacle; a good many were late admissions, and had come in, in the last state of weakness. I was told that the stone breaking, in their case, was made more a plea to get them out into the air, than to exact work from them; in fact, anything like real work they could not do. There is a certain amount of ground under tillage; the crops were heavy; from the manure we saw in use it does not surprise me that they were so. Every endeavour is made to promote industrial employment, and a good deal of the clothing is manufactured in the houses.

My attention was called to the fact of so many of the articles of furniture — beds, tables, &c. being marked with the initials S. G.; on inquiry, I found that last year some of the creditors, or some one of them, made a seizure of the whole property in the houses, and forced a sale; I believe nothing was left unsold but the beds under fever patients, and that on condition they were not to be used for fresh patients.

It so happened that Mr. S. Gurney, Sir E. Buxton, and others, were travelling in Ireland at the time; with the help of a sum subscribed by one of the Guardians, a sum of money was raised by them, and a great deal of the property bought; the things have been marked with Mr. Gurney's initials, and are by him *lent* to the Union, to preserve them from a second seizure. There are some auxiliary workhouses here, built on a different plan from any I have seen elsewhere; they are merely thatched long sheds, the walls tolerably substantial, running round the four sides of square yards. They are inhabited by many hundreds of boys and girls; the boys, many of them, looked wretched objects. There were a great many distinct famine cases amongst them; some were wretchedly clothed—they all looked cold and miserable. From the absolute want of tins at this house, one portion of these wretched creatures we saw waiting, shivering round the hall door, whilst another class was fed: this, to me, is most cruel. Children with such frames, such debilitated constitutions, are the very last between whose meals there should be any unnecessary delay. At an auxiliary we visited afterwards, in which there were some 600 able-bodied women, they had not more than 30 tins for the whole number to eat out of; we were there when one relay was being fed, and a more savage, noisy, turbulent scene I have seldom ever witnessed.

The girls and the little children at the "shed

auxiliary," were, as they ever are, better clad, and looking in far better health, than the boys. The women also looked strong and healthy; there was a certain sort of industrial employment going on amongst them, but to a very limited amount. The "bridge auxiliary" was to all appearance very crowded; and though the dormitories were clean, the crowding of the day rooms, and the evident disorder at the meals, gave one a sad insight into the evils of this massing of women in a confined space, without even the staff that could control them, or a sufficiency of the common necessaries of civilized life.

Two children, one six months, the other ten months old, died here two days before our visit; the previous day to the said visit I happened to be in the Abbey burying-ground, very near this house; I saw there two women squatting on the ground, beside two coffins; four workhouse boys, with long spades, were scratching out a sort of grave; I returned a few hours afterwards, and found they had put the coffins about seven inches underground, some loose stones and soil above them; this was the funeral of the above two children. There was no ceremony whatever; it was in the afternoon, in a very public part of the town; two dogs could not have been buried with less respect. I found, on inquiry, neither of these children had been dead twenty-four hours, one not eighteen. It was, I was informed, against rules to bury paupers in the Abbey ground; however, the

pauper boys must have had leave from one of the houses to play at sexton. The women were the mothers of the childrer. I will say no more here, as I must presently enter at length into the subject of the treatment of the dead.

It is satisfactory to know, that in a country which has acquired very great notoriety for the reckless disrespect generally shewn to the question of money, there are yet in existence some men of money, whose prudence and caution shine forth brightly, in an atmosphere of extravagance and wanton credit giving. I went with my friend into a certain Bank at Ballina, and asked a clerk, whether they would kindly cash a small cheque for me on a London bank; I told him who I was. A partner, a man of years, came forward from some counting-house back settlement, and asked me, "if I was known to any one in the town?" I said, "I feared I was known by name but too well; I was known personally to Captain Hamilton, the Poor-law Inspector, living in the town." "Had I any introduction from him?" "Certainly not, but I could get one in the evening; he was now out of town, having just called on me; but then the Bank would be closed, and I wanted to leave for Balinasloe early in the morning." The provincial Rothschild heard with all due courtesy the proof I tendered of my own identity; he said, "how glad he was to make the acquaintance of one whose writings he so admired," &c. &c. &c.; drawing large bills

on my self-love—very large ones—so large as to seem to require no slight demand on my gratitude, to honour them on the spot: still, no admission of my identity; he evidently did not care, if he threw his praise in the way of an impostor; it cost the firm nothing; but as to money, it was another thing. However, he did so paint my excellency, that in common decency he could not refuse gently to fathom my need: "How much did I want? who was my London banker?" "£15; Glyn and Co." "A small sum—excellent house; it was quite painful to him, that he only knew me on my own introduction." No offer of the accommodation; had I shewn him the mark on my handkerchief, he might have justly argued, it was possible I might have become *accidentally* possessed of S. G. O.'s China silk. I do not think he would have believed me, had I shewn him the said too well known initials on the corner of my shirt; he was so civil, however, he would, perhaps, have only suggested, "Laundresses sometimes make mistakes." I left him well paid for my visit, in admiration of "real prudence" in such high preservation in Connaught. O Ireland, "*si sic omnes!*" there would then have been no "Encumbered Estates Bill." Long may he live, a very prince of banking diplomacy. One who, I believe, would not stretch a rule of the firm to serve the Lord-Lieutenant; but who would as soon be gazetted a bankrupt in gold, as in the means of paving over the

counter in civil terms—*very civil terms*—any and every applicant for any the smallest, *out of the question*, pecuniary accommodation.

Colonel Knox Gore lives closely adjoining the town; he is a large proprietor, and an honour to his property. Foreseeing the probable force of the coming storm, he determined to prepare to meet it, at any sacrifice. He reduced his establishment to the lowest possible point; gave up every luxury, scarcely allowed himself the commonest comforts of life; making himself his own superintendent of labour; he has given an enormous amount of employment, paying the men with his own hand, according to the value of their work; he has thus laid out very large sums of money; has improved a large portion of his estate, and been the means of doing a great deal of substantial enduring good: he speaks hopefully of the future; but evidently does not think the crisis over. It is for the sake of such men one would indeed hail better times. Sincerely do I hope he may live to see the fruit of the self-sacrifice he has shewn. From Ballina I returned to Dublin, by Hollymount, Tuam, Balinasloe, Athlone, Mullingar, and the Midland Railway: every step eastward shewed improvement: the land more cropped; the people better clad; fewer evictions—still a good many; much less mendicancy.

CHAPTER VIII.

HOW DOES THE POOR-LAW TREAT PAUPERS WITH REFERENCE TO THEIR MORAL AND SOCIAL CHARACTER—POPULATION EQUAL TO ENGLISH TOWNS IN IRISH WORKHOUSES—THEIR TREATMENT—NEGLECT OF THE RULES AND ORDERS OF COMMISSIONERS—WANT OF SYMPATHY TO DYING—TIGHT OFFICERS!—WANT OF REVERENCE IN BURIALS—JOBBING IN THE CONTRACTS.

I WOULD now entreat the attention of my readers, to some remarks upon the condition of the pauper population of Ireland, with reference to the effect upon their social and moral character, which I affirm their present treatment must have, as regards those who may survive it, and those who are dying under it. To beg, is now a punishable offence in Ireland, on the grounds, that the destitute are provided for by the Poor-law; the peasant may be without shelter and without food; but if he is destitute of the means of obtaining either of these for himself, he is, by law, entitled to obtain both within the workhouse. The law then, which makes it penal to beg, takes upon itself the responsibility of feeding, clothing and sheltering, the starving, naked and houseless: how does the law as now carried out do this?

I have shewn in the former chapters, the chief features of the practical working of that law; I must now again allude to those features, that I may prove, how far in the operation of this law of relief, to mere temporal necessity, mischief is done to the entire social and moral character; admitting, that my fellow creatures are fed and sheltered and clothed in some degree as *animals*, needing those processes for the sustainment of life; I have to regard how far they are treated as animals, having *the responsibilities of human beings, in a civilized, Christian country.*

In eleven Unions I visited—one had 8000 paupers on indoor relief. Four, had more than 4000. Three, more than 3000. Three, more than 2000. It is difficult to bring home to the minds of readers, not accustomed to think on these subjects, the real import of these numbers, in reference to the subject they concern. 8000 persons are more than double the population of many large county towns in England. 4000 persons are at least, the full amount of population, in very many such county towns. I will take the county in which I am now writing—Dorsetshire. Weymouth with Melcombe Regis, a sea-port, and fashionable watering place, does not in its population, by the last census, return a number equal to that in the workhouses at Limerick. Blandford—Sherborne—Shaftesbury and Dorchester, are not one of them equal in population, to the numbers in

any one of four Unions I visited. Poole, a large and important sea-port, returning a Member to Parliament, has not the population of the Limerick workhouses. Dorchester, returns two Members, Shaftesbury one, neither of these have a population equal to that either in the Galway or Kilrush Unionhouses.

I ask my readers then to suppose the population of a large English county town, to be shut up within walls; to be daily allowed air only in yards; and fed and found in the bare necessaries of life; even the hospitals and the places of worship for this population being within the enclosures. Again, be it remembered, that the whole population of the workhouse, is one, of a grade, generally, far lower as to ignorance and want, than any to be found in the worst streets and lanes of any of the said towns. Still further, it is to be borne in mind, that a very large proportion of the said workhouse population, consists of children and young women, either orphans or absolutely deserted. Again, a very large part of the population so walled in, have come within the walls, as well in a state of almost nudity as in a state of debility, which they can scarcely hope ever to recover.

Food, clothing, shelter, education, medicine, religious teaching, industrial teaching, are to be found for this mass; grave-ground for a very large portion of it: the law has undertaken this monster-task: what

the law deliberately undertakes, every subject of the realm has a right to demand, that the law shall do its best to fulfil: a "Poor-law" is the pauper's "charter," it gives him certain rights, when he obtains them not he is wronged.

To feed a man, means to give him what will support him in health—to shelter a man, means to guard him from exposure to weather, without exposing him to disease in the manner of doing so—to clothe, means to cover, all of the human body that health, and decency, require to be covered—education, means the process which shall cultivate man's reasoning power, to fit him for his station—medical aid, means to give him, when in a state of disease, or debility, or when injured physically, the benefit of the curative art of the physician, the surgical skill of the surgeon—religious education, regards, the submission of the reasoning powers, to the guidance of those whose holy province it is to teach the responsibility of the soul—industrial education, aims at the early inculcation of habits, the early teaching in ways, by which the man, or woman, or child, may by industry, or the use of their physical powers, acquire the means of earning their own support.

I have before me a certain small Green Book—"The General Order of the Commissioners for Administering the Laws for the Relief of the Poor in Ireland, for Regulating the Management of the Workhouses, and the duties of the Workhouse Officers, 5th of Feb.

1849," (set forth within these eighteen months). This General Order is sent out with all the weight of the highest authority. The names of every Union to which it applies are given; it is "*sealed with our seal,*" *i. e.* the seals of E. T. B. TWISTLETON, *Chief Commissioner*, and T. N. REDINGTON, *Under-Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant.* There is the Proclamation of the Lord Lieutenant at the foot of it, approving the Order. It has, in fact, all the force and authority of an Act of Parliament.

Were the Rules and Orders of this document carried out, I have no hesitation in saying, I should, on the whole, think the indoor paupers of Ireland fairly dealt with. I have, however, no hesitation in asserting, that they are very generally in the West of Ireland grossly neglected, cunningly evaded, or openly defied. By these rules all I have said above as to things fitting to be found for the paupers in the houses, are clearly laid down as *to be found for them by the Guardians.* The former chapters of this little work will prove, how these orders are carried out, or rather with what open contempt they are treated.

Suppose, reader, that you had a population, equal to that of an English county town of some magnitude, shut up within walls; you would, I presume, at once admit, that to preserve order amongst them, especially when they were of the class I have described, you would have a sufficient staff of trustworthy, well

paid officers. You would not place 700 or 800 women under the care of one woman, at a low salary, with an unpaid assistant or two of the same sex, with the further aid of a low paid man, or a pauper unpaid, called a porter or wardsman, armed with a stick or whip to force, *by force*, order at meals, &c. You would not place 500 or 1000 boys or girls under some two or three, at the most, *very young*, very low paid, young women or men, and call this education, when you have not even given these instructors the commonest necessaries of a school; leaving to these young men or women, with the aid perhaps of an adult pauper or two, the whole management and supervision, by day and by night, of these numbers of children, sick or well.

You would not so regulate departments of your walled up community, that women with the most loathsome diseases, should be herded with the rest, or at best, only imperfectly separated; you would not allow children, eat up with vermin, evidently affected with contagious disease, to mingle in the massed hundreds of your schools. You would not stow away by night your men, your women, and your children, each in three separate departments, so crammed on the mattrasses, on the dormitory floors, that when all are on the ground, those floors present thick masses of hot, steaming life—all decency defied, the weak at the mercy of the tyranny of the strong—in the scramble for room to rest. Know-

ing the common necessities of our nature, you would not adopt insufficient disgusting expedients to meet them at night, or, as sometimes is the case, have no provision whatever for these necessities; you would not, by day, leave the same necessities to seek relief under circumstances of publicity and scanty provision, which outrage every sense of decorum or cleanliness.

If you had many hundreds of children suffering from chronic diarrhœa or dysentery, I presume you would not place them by 30, 40, 50, or 60 in a ward, two, three, sometimes four in the same bed: sometimes four so placed, in a narrow bed, that two of them have their heads on the pillow, two their heads on the foot of the bed; this, even when the disease is dysentery!

Water is not an expensive article. Cleanliness, when the people are in masses, becomes a necessary element to the common safety. You would not, then, leave many, very many hundred children utterly unwashed for weeks and weeks together; you would not leave them in filthy rags, as well as unwashed. You would not herd hundreds, more or less, of women, infants at the breast, children, with here and there an idiot, in wards, with no choice but to crouch down on the bare floor of the one small day room, or on the bare ground of the one confined yard; keeping them for weeks in the dirt and filth in which they sought shelter from you, causing them to sleep

at night naked, or in their rags—their beds foul mattrasses thrown on a shed floor, with a foul blanket their only covering: the hours of each night to be thus spent—these people, of various ages, left each night to seek rest in this filth, this promiscuous, almost naked contact.

When the meals were to be served, say to a class of some hundreds of women, you would not have them served by men with sticks in their hands, to keep them, as men do pigs, from the trough, till each is served in turn; you would not suffer the periods of serving the meals to be such times of disorder, that when I told one official I had just seen the women being fed in one of his workhouses struck with sticks by men, his reply was,—"I am glad of it, it is time something was done to keep order." I say, reader, no one possessed of common sense, common humanity, would permit such ways to exist in the walled communities of which we are speaking; and yet, I assert, many of such ways are common to very many Unions. I must, however, add, that all of this is directly in opposition to the clearly laid down rules of the Green Book, sealed by Messrs. Twisleton and Redington, approved by the Earl of Clarendon. They are, then, abuses of the law, and as such, on the part of these wretched paupers, I protest against them.

If every class of these thousands, above nine years of age, are only to be fed twice in the four and twenty

hours, is it justifiable that there should be such gross inequality, between the means of so feeding them, and their numbers, that, again and again, many hundreds have to wait twelve, fourteen, sixteen hours between their meals, and when fed, have but too often to be hurried, that they may make way for the hungry crowd waiting to rush into their places? In many of these Unions the halls are scarce ever unoccupied, the coppers are ever going; classes have to wait until ten, eleven, even twelve at night before they get their dinner; those fed at four in the afternoon see no more food until perhaps ten or twelve the next day. Never shall I forget the looks of those famished boys at Ballina, herding round the door of a half empty hall, waiting till the few *tins* of the establishment were at liberty from the class being fed, that they might feed.

As for industrial occupation, with some few exceptions, it is very little regarded; and yet the Green Book lays down excellent orders regarding it. To be fed as they can, to sleep as they may, to squat in groups, close packed, for hours together, seeking a little sun in the yards, or warmth from closing on each other; when driven in by weather, to crowd the one day room, still in idleness; this is the lot and life of many thousands of adult women in the workhouses I visited. It is mere animal vegetation, it is not human life, in any common accepted sense of the term.

As to religious instruction and public worship, the Green Book orders provision to be made for it: a Chaplain is to be appointed, service is to be performed, the children are to be catechised, the sick ministered to. I have no doubt that mass is regularly performed in the parent houses, and in some auxiliaries; but I know very well only a very limited number of the inmates can attend it. I had it from the best authority that, in some auxiliaries, there is no religious service. As to the regular catechising of the children, why the numbers utterly forbid it, even if there were teachers enough, and books, &c. by which the children could be prepared for the priests. There is, I admit, in many Unions, very praiseworthy attempts made by the priests to carry out a good deal of what their church considers it right to enforce in and from the people; but the testimony of every priest I spoke to on the subject, was, that the numbers, the want of discipline, the whole economy of the Unions, utterly forbids anything like a real carrying out of religious instruction, religious visitation, the public, proper administration of religious rites.

And here I must speak with pain, what I with pain observed. I have been in the houses at all hours; last year, when the cholera, and fever, and dysentery, were all at work amongst the people; and in my late tour, when many hundreds were still ever crowding the infirmary and sick wards; I have passed through, I should suppose, some miles of

wards, to every two feet of which there was a sick or dying human being. I saw the extreme rite of the Church administered in a few instances last year; but neither then, or now, have I ever seen one single human being giving any other consolation to a sick or dying person. I believe, in the West, very few Protestants are ever found in the workhouses; I am told, and I believe it, that when once an adult member of the Catholic Church has received her last rites, he has no further desire for any more spiritual help; he is as one waiting for death, in the full persuasion that he is fit to die. I have no reason to doubt but that, in the case of the adult, except when death is very sudden, he has generally been thus prepared; for I know the intense desire of the people for this rite, and the readiness of the priests to administer it. I therefore try to believe, that, according to their faith, they have in this matter what they desire, though I so seldom saw proof of it; but I wish for them something more; I should wish to see these afflicted creatures made objects of commiseration to individuals, whose higher condition in life and education would give their sympathy weight, their words, authority. There is something to me very fearful, in having one fellow-creature after another, shewn to me as dying, *shrived*, but then left to die, with no further regard to the feelings of the

I can, however, endeavour to believe, that what I have been told on this subject, corroborated to some degree, as it has been, by what I have seen, is still, less lamentable than I think it is; I will allow it to be assumed, that I speak in some ignorance about adults; that they may all have power to attend mass, the confessional, &c. &c.; but there is one class of inmates, whose condition I know to be, as I shall now, with no little indignation, paint it from the life—or, rather, the death.

Of the very many hundred young children I have seen lying in the sickness which writes on them, that "it is unto death;" passing, as I have done, through those long lanes, hedged by beds, crowded with children in the worst stages of dysentery, fever, small-pox, famine; I have never yet chanced to find one single instance of any one person doing any one office to them, but those mere offices which hired or appointed nurses are compelled to do. I have seen these, the young blighted of our kind, under every varying shade of physical comfort, or discomfort. In some instances, in beds clean and not very crowded, in wards well ventilated, and with evident attention to the details of personal cleanliness. In others, I have seen them in long wooden sheds, on mattrasses of unquestionable dirty hue, spread thick on the floor, on each side; two, three, and even four children on each; many of the children either shirtless, or in very dirty, scanty linen; the bed-covering filthy.

In one respect I found all alike; I never saw one solitary instance of any one attempt to cheer these little ones, in any one of the very many ways in which we know children, sick and dying, can be cheered.

I am not speaking in the religious view of the subject, but only as regards the utter absence of practical acts of sympathy; it is rare to see death in any shape left to do its work on its victim, with none near to try and cheer and comfort that victim; it is still more rare to see the young, the very young, left to die, without many a kind attempt to throw some light, from human lips, on the darkened page of that lesson they are then prematurely reading.

The cold-blooded sneerer at the sympathies of our kind may scoff at the mother, who hides her tears, forces down the emotion of her heart, as she holds some gilded, painted toy, before the eyes of the child, whose little foot is on the edge of its little grave: she, however, knows the value of the faint smile she may thus provoke; if she can banish an instant's fear, a moment's pain, from its breast, she is well repaid; she is dealing with a child; she knows toys to be no small elements in childhood's philosophy.

I admit these children lie tearless, as they are smileless; but, because I see neither pain nor pleasure speaking in their little disease-sunken faces, am I to believe, that the former does not exist, that something of the latter might not be produced?

Twice only have I seen emotion of any sort, in any of these cases; once, when I removed for a moment a kitten from a little shrunken arm; again, when I took a kitten from the floor, and placed it on a sick child's pillow.

I am told that there are "Sisters of Charity" in some of the towns, who pay regular visits to the schools, and to the women's wards. What I would pray to see, would be, *mothers*—women who have learned at their own breasts, on their own knees, the language, the character of childhood; making these poor suffering things, objects for practical works of love. I want to see the pillow smoothed, the medicine sometimes given by other than mere hurried hired hands. This famine-cropped garden, in which the fading flowers, the broken flowers, are for ever for a time, however brief, in contact with the dead flowers, needs kind hands and hearts to support and cheer the living, even as hired hands weed out the dead.

I could have forgiven the crowding, for I could try and believe in the necessity which crowds these wards of sick children; I cannot forgive my fellow-creatures, that so few, if any, are found to face these scenes of pain, where they might, at the little cost of a few very brief little offices, do so much to cheer those who are dying unheeded, amidst every surrounding circumstance repulsive to every feeling of their age.

From the very limited number of officers in these

houses, and, therefore, the little real inspection which they can give over the doings of the inmates; from the necessity which thus exists of employing paupers in very many offices; I *know* that very great tyranny, dishonesty, and cruelty result. *I know no such tyrant as a pauper dressed in authority.* I have heard it from sources on which I can rely, that not only are the weak for ever robbed of their food and *rest* by the strong, but that there is a regular market within the houses, and without the houses, for food stolen from the rations. To get "tight" officers is a great object with the Guardians; and certainly, when such numbers, of such a class, are to be ruled by so few officers, despotism must do the work. These "tight" officers choose "tight" paupers to assist in the hall, the kitchen, &c.; they are little likely to listen to any complaint against them; and these official paupers are as little likely to let complainants pass unpunished; the rod they hold has, indeed, many ways of giving its blows.

But I think I hear it said, there are Visitors appointed for the express purpose of seeing that the rules of the Green Book are carried out; it is true this is the case, and they have certain questions each week to answer in a book set apart for the purpose. If they do visit at all, they must either be determined not to see or hear anything which may displease them; or, hearing and seeing, they do not choose to record the truth. It is very rare to find the answers

put to the questions at all; I have reason to know, it is not rare for the page to be signed, when little, if any of the duty has been performed.

The sum of the whole matter is simply this; these houses, as now very generally ordered, are theatres, in which much gross cruelty is for ever enacted; they are rank schools of evil; no human ingenuity could contrive more powerful machinery to degrade human nature than that now contained, and at full work, within the houses for the relief of the poor, in very many of the Unions in the West of Ireland.

As to the diet and cost of the paupers, it may readily be conceived what it is, when the average cost per head per week may be put at 10*d*. The dietary of the Green Book runs things near enough; but I do not believe, in many houses, what are called the healthy adult classes get even the quantity ordered, to say nothing of the questionable quality of much of what they do get. Bread, or rather cakes, of half rye-meal, half barley-meal, is food utterly unfitted for the proper healthy support of human beings, under so many sanitary disadvantages. I have again and again seen the inside of these cakes, nothing better than a sticky black dough. The bread is made in the houses; and when it is admitted, that the coppers must be kept going all day, it is fair to presume that the bakehouse department is equally hurried: I am satisfied, that such bread as I saw in

several of the Unions, would not be allowed in any jail in the United Kingdom.

Let us leave the living, and see how the dead are treated. I know I shall be contradicted on this point, but I challenge inquiry—fair inquiry, as to the facts. The journey from the bed to the grave is one very frequently indeed made under twenty-four hours, very often under twelve. Nay, one who ought to know, assures me, that sometimes the body has been warm in the dead-house, scarcely cold in the coffin; conveyed to the grave in the morning, having died in the night. I am not speaking of persons dying of contagious diseases. When the burial-ground is at any distance, there is a sort of hearse, or black covered cart, which goes, in many Unions, at least once a-day to it; some paupers are told off for the purpose, they just go with it, and see the coffins put in the ground, and covered up or not, as the pit may require more to complete its complement.

No religious service whatever is observed at the burial of the dead. Not only is no reverence shewn in pauper burials, but the grave-ground, in nine cases out of ten, might be used for any other purpose, so far as any outward mark exists to distinguish it from other ground. This to me is a gross outrage on all decency. A dead pauper will rise from the grave on an equality with the risen sovereign. I am no admirer of lead, and velvet, and gilded furniture, binding up the life-read pages of the rich departed, to

make them worthy of those subterraneous well-kept receptacles, in which the rich are pleased to place their dead. Let marble say what it may to the living, the closed vault can make no appeal to us, by the voice of the splendour in which its dead are encased. Still, the corpse was the tenement of a soul—of an immortal existence; and I never can think it right that the ruins of that tenement should be just put away, with no more ceremony in the act, and no more respect to the place, than we should bestow on the putting away of the carcases of mere animals, and on the places in which we put them away. I am told, the pauper burying-grounds are consecrated. I suppose, therefore, they may be; this makes me wonder the more, that the priesthood, especially of the Catholic Church, do not with one voice protest against this leaving of these grounds in the state in which I saw several of them. I only saw one with a wall around it, and at the end of this one, some thrifty agriculturalist had got a crop growing, I think, of flax, on a spot to which the burials, and they had been above a thousand, had not yet reached. I am informed that when a Protestant dies the regular service is read. I know this to be the case in some Unions; but this does not affect the question of the state of the "burial-grounds." They should be walled in, have proper gates; there should be a large stone cross, or some religious emblem or other, indicative of the solemn purpose to which

the ground has been set apart; placed conspicuously in, or about it. It should be kept at least as clean as the other ground around it, instead of being as it sometimes is, full of the coarsest weeds, and the worst filth.

The consequence of the present neglect of these common decencies to the dead is, that the friends will try to get the bodies away from the workhouses how they can—on all manner of excuses; carry them away in the most unheard-of—out of Ireland—methods; one or two coffins tied on a donkey at night, are driven to some of the old church grounds, and so long as they are put beneath that, to the survivors, holy soil, they care not how shallow the grave; hence horrors, quite unfit to relate.

As to the respect shewn to the bodies after they are buried, even in regular burying-grounds, I saw enough last year to cause me to communicate with one of the highest authorities on the subject. In this, my last tour, my friend and myself saw quantities of fresh coffin wood in the abbey ground of Ballina; the explanation given of this by a man who lived close by, was, that the ground was so crowded; that often to get a fresh body in, they had to "knock the wood off" one that had been lately buried, so as the more conveniently to force the new coffin down into the hole.

A gentleman, in whom I can perfectly trust, lately told me that he himself saw, in a churchyard in the

West of Ireland, a coffin of a person of the higher class exposed on the open ground; he saw by the plate it was that of a Miss ——; it was so damaged that he could see the body in it; it had been dug up to make room for another corpse, and left on the ground. If it is true that want of respect for the dead is a sign of barbarism, of a truth, civilization is in rapid decay in the part of the world of which I am now writing.

It seems, after what I have just been relating, a trifling matter to talk of any features of this state of things, of so comparatively trivial importance, as those which concern the finance department of these Unions. With 4000, 6000, or 8000 inmates, the reader may easily believe, that to keep these masses in any decent pretension to existence; to clothe them, however sparingly; is yet to open a very large market. Shut up Weymouth, or Poole, or Dorchester within walls; put the population under lock and key, taking the responsibility of supplying, in any sort of way, the necessaries of existence; do this by contract —and it is not difficult to believe, that to obtain such contracts will become a matter of severe interested competition. The contractor cares little where his money comes from—the Union—the Government—the Rate-in-Aid—all are alike to him; if the Union is bankrupt, and at his mercy, so much the better, they must accede to his terms; if not, he can seize and sell.

However it may have come to pass, that hundreds

may be slain by the abuse of the law's operation, at the hands of hard Shylocks in the shape of agents, (by the by, they would be long on many an estate before they could find *a pound of human flesh*), we have not yet arrived at that point of barbarism, which will suffer those to be deliberately starved *in* the houses, who have been starved *into* them. The contractors know this, and play their cards accordingly. I own I have misgivings about friendly seizures; they seem to me something of the nature of a forestalling of all future contracts: a friendly office in which self is not forgotten. It is rather suspicious, that on contract days, the Board Room is crowded; on admission days, just three Guardians, the legal *quorum* can alone —very often, be found to attend.

That very much of the grossest jobbing has been again and again exposed, is notorious; like the old "presentment to make roads," which found money to build many a well known demesne wall, a good deal of neighbourly feeling is shewn in these matters; indeed, where Government money is concerned, this sort of "help me and I will help you" game, has been so long the practice, that it is a stereotyped virtue. I do not think it at all improbable, that some very considerable amount of property, sold under the Encumbered Estates Act, will be purchased out of fortunes, made by contractors for workhouse supplies. This will be one of the many curious social pheno-

Cheshire farmer would, I think, be puzzled to make out, how a given number of cows, on very ordinary diet, have been known to supply the large quantity of milk, they have professed to do, for successive months, in some Unions. The cows cannot multiply their own quarts of produce; however at the rate, I saw in one place, that it had been multiplied, I am not at all surprised, that so small a dairy, so soon enables its owner, to buy, in fee, pasture ground for double the number of animals.

CHAPTER IX.

CONDITION OF PEASANTRY OUT OF THE WORKHOUSE—POTATO CULTURE—ITS CONSEQUENCE—THE VALUE IT GAVE TO LAND—LANDLORDS—AGENTS—DRIVERS—HOW THEY GET THEIR MEANS OF LIVING—ILLEGAL ACTS OF AGENTS—DEATHS IN KILRUSH UNION HOUSES—THE STATE OF THE PAUPERS ON ADMISSION—A LANDLORD'S PROCLAMATION—RELIEVING OFFICER'S STATEMENT.

If the condition of the peasantry in the workhouses, is one most disgraceful in a Christian country; if it is one, utterly subversive of all that tends to keep up decency and self-respect; if it is one, which confirms the idle in idleness, and rears the young in no one useful habit, in very many pernicious habits; if tyranny, and cruelty, are the lot of the weak, in these great lazar houses; what is to be said of the condition of the peasantry, as yet out of the houses, whether "relieved" or not?

When the "peasantry" are spoken of in the West of Ireland, the reader must understand, the term also means "the tenantry," they are nearly one and the same class. The fortunes which have supported the absentee landlords, their agents, the sub-agents, and

"drivers," have simply been the produce of rents, wrung, in great measure, from the people who now crowd the workhouses, and are crowding the graveyards. They have been in one sense a most extraordinary tenantry; lazy, when cultivating their patch of ground for themselves, they still even in their laziness, paid rents, from which large mansions, with miles of demesne walls, have been built, their owners supported in affluence.

With scarce any sweat from their brow, the peasantry worked out of the bowels of the estates, a rent roll, which placed the owners for a length of years in a state of high ease. Rack-rents, upheld by competition for potato land, gave that fictitious value to land, which begot the extravagance, which again was the father of those encumbrances, now forcing the sale of so much Irish property.

I was shewn a table at one of the great Clubs in Dublin, it is a national curiosity, as doubtless it is a curious witness of the way to wide spread national ruin. It was the table at which many of the last generation dispersed the wealth obtained from their potato mines. It is a large table, round or oval, of hard wood; but the surface of it, so far as an arm could reach, is one mass of circles, deeply imprinted in the wood; cutting each other in every possible form of circular division. These circles, reader, are the marks of the DICE BOXES of the gamblers of that day; the table was a hazard table.

It would be a most curious work of research, to trace out the gradual increase of the importance, and style of living, of many a past, and not a few present owners of Irish property, from the gradual increase of the system, which encouraged a potato eating population. From the many curious statistics in this matter, which I have seen; it is quite clear to me, that a very large amount of Irish property, owes its existence solely to a system, which was perseveringly and wilfully encouraged; that very system of subletting, which now is so cried down: nay, more than this, I know now, that if the potato recovers, not a few agents will at once begin again to revive the old system; within this few months *con acre* has shewn symptoms, in more than one district, of revival.

If Providence had not blighted the potato, I do not believe the West of Ireland would have seen the landlords so bent on the destruction of the small holding class. So long as "Pat's" lazy bed of potatos, enabled him to pay the Rack-rent, which kept up the old style of Irish living, of the agents at home, and of the absent landlord; a style notorious for its extravagance; Pat might have slept and bred as much as he liked; the more mouths, the more potatos would be wanted—the more competition for potato land; such competition was the very soul of rack-rent.

I shall presently have to horrify the reader, with

proved as I will prove them; I must yet, however, say a word or two, as to who are the real actors in this scene of savage exercise of right. Instead of travelling in my record over the whole West, I will take the West of Clare for the ground of my exhibition. The same effects are to be seen elsewhere, and therefore I believe much of the same cause for them exists.

To whom the estates in this part of the world in justice belong, I cannot say; the acting owners are agents, and sub-agents: the professed owner may now and then be found on his estate, but is then but too often a mere cipher there; in general, he is an absentee. An agent for an Irish property seems only to have one duty to fulfil, as between him and the owner, in which the said owner takes any interest, *viz.* to get all the rent he can, paying himself a per centage, and remitting the rest, with as little deduction for expenses of any kind as possible. Occasionally, instead of an agent, there is a "receiver" in Chancery. It is not often that these vicarious owners live on the property; they again have their deputies, who do: these may be what are called drivers—or some man, a class above them, who again employs a driver or two.

The owner expects the rents, minus the agency and unavoidable deductions, to be paid to his banker; the agent through his sub, or the drivers, expects those rents to be collected.

Now even Rack-rents could not sustain this amount of official taxation. Whilst the owner may be any where he may choose, with no further interest in the estate, than receiving what dividend it will pay, after the agency and unavoidable drawbacks, interest on bonds, &c. are paid. The agent has a good deal of trouble, and for that gets very high costs. I only wish I could have obtained a copy for the press, of a not over harsh agent's bill, for even only one year. Ingenious as a lawyer's bill ever is, and must be, the books of an Irish attorney agent are really quite curiosities. I don't wonder that *they* get rich, that they are *first creditors* on so many an estate; that they like processes, decrees, evictions, levellings, consolidation of farms, &c. &c. these are the grist of their mills; the agency per centage—they don't always get it—is a mere bagatelle to the direct, *in-direct* profits of an agency.

The resident land leech, *i. e.* the Driver, has on his part also, no idea of living on his salary alone. Lands are notoriously let by competition, the driver's good word, if he is "a tight hand," will go a great way with the agent; there are ways of purchasing that word. Is a tenant in arrear? the dreaded driver is to be soothed, to obtain a little time; that is an expensive process, for another tenant may be *soothing* in his way, to get in, if the tenant in arrear should be ejected. A tenant, seeing he cannot hold on at the rack-rent, with poor-rate, &c. meditates a

flight to America, after realizing all he has on his holding: there is a species of ophthalmia not cured but produced, by golden ointment, which will often make a driver so blind, that he is ready to swear "that he never dreamed of ever such wickedness, as that Phil Moriarty should be after bolting of that fashion: wasn't he after him, the moment he heard of it; but the cunning rascal, he was gone entirely." Does the Agent order keepers to be put upon some defaulting tenant's stock; the Driver sends a cousin or two at 2*s* 6*d* a day, to be paid by the victim; such cousin's usual earnings being perhaps 6*d* or 8*d* a day; some think my cousin the keeper, has to pay the cousin the driver half of this, for the appointment.

These Drivers are chosen from a reckless class, and have at their command a band of assistants, who from fear, or by bribes, are ready to do anything they put them to; they will level or burn the house of their own brother, if the Driver orders it.

The Drivers and the Relieving-officers are known sometimes to play into each other's hands. Relief is stopped till what is called a "Voluntary Surrender"? of the property is made; the house is then at once levelled. Or the family is forced to the workhouse; whilst absent, some of the Driver's gang pull down or burn the cabin, without any legal authority whatever; how is a pauper to prosecute? I regret

Agents are also Magistrates. The Resident Proprietors and the Agents are to all appearance strongly combined together for one and the same end, to clear their lands of the existing tenantry; to employ every possible means of intimidation, to prevent these poor creatures shewing, even to the starving, the commonest rites of hospitality, the smallest amount of Christian sympathy.

God knows, the tone of the higher orders towards the lower of this unhappy land was always harsh and unfeeling enough. When they were in wealth from the rents of fellow creatures, who, to pay those rents, lived as pigs with their pigs, they still spoke of them, and to them, in a way which grieved as it astonished every English traveller. This I know from experience in years long past; but little did I think, that in any part of Great Britain such things could be, as I have recorded and have yet to record. But here I must say, I cannot believe that many absentee landlords, do really know all that is done in their name; if they do know it, and yet venture to live amongst the civilized and commonly humane of any country, their every sense of good must be blunted, or they must live a life of constant self-reproach; no, they cannot know their money to be the coinage of such misery.

I shall presently give a series of evidence, which has been sworn to, to prove the nature of proprietary dealings with tenantry; I will however first produce evidence to shew, the condition in which the evicted

Some of my readers may be aware that certain papers were printed for the House of Commons, 1849, containing the Reports of Captain Kennedy upon the horrors of the Kilrush Union. I will not quote them, but will quote rather from official records relating to the months of the present year, down to the time of my visit to Kilrush in June last.

It is as well here to state, that the President of the Irish Poor-law Commission, kindly gave me a letter of introduction to the gentlemen in charge of the Unions I should visit, assuring me "that they would have much pleasure in giving me the information I might wish to obtain from them." I am most grateful to all the inspectors and officers I saw, for one and all did for me all I wished. I shall now quote from evidence taken from the Medical Officers' reports of the Union Houses at Kilrush.

In the week ending	There were	Within one month of admission.	Within two months of admission.
5th Jan. 1850	31 deaths	19	4
12th Jan. „	29 deaths	17	2

Eight of these described, as emaciated children—one lived only two days—two little better than *skeletons*.

19th Jan. „	36 deaths	13	7
26th Jan. „	32 deaths	16	5
2nd Feb. „	40 deaths	23	6

One little better than a skeleton on admission.

9th Feb. „	29 deaths	11	1

Three this week described as *skeletons*, one a wretched starveling.

16th Feb. „	36 deaths	19	5

One little better than a skeleton; two sisters in the last stage when admitted; one starveling.

23rd Feb. „	32 deaths	20	6

Four little better than skeletons; *one absolutely starved*; two dying when admitted;

In the week ending	There were	Within one month of admission.	Within two months of admission.
2nd March 1850	33 deaths	23	6
9th March „	29 deaths	16	2
16th March „	41 deaths	25	8
Two almost starved when admitted; five almost dead when admitted.			
23rd March „	40 deaths	27	4
30th March „	56 deaths	15	8
One was brought in for a coffin; another was found dying in a ditch; another died soon after admission.			
6th April, „	45 deaths	19	14
13th April „	52 deaths	19	21
Three of them were admitted actually dying.			
20th April „	49 deaths	22	24
Six are entered as received in a state of starvation; two mere skeletons; several in the act of death.			
27th April „	51 deaths	23	11
Two died in a few hours; several starvelings.			
4th May „	48 deaths	23	25
11th May „	38 deaths	20	4
18th May „	36 deaths	17	8
One in *articulo mortis*; several described as *starved*.			
25th May „	22 deaths	13	2
Two all but dead, several *skeletons*.			
1st June „	41 deaths	15	7
Some little better than starvelings; one found *moribund* by a ditch, where she was thrown by the person she lodged with.			
8th June „	45 deaths	16	27
Three were mere skeletons; two died of starvation; one was found speechless in the road; another found by police in a ditch, in a state of exhaustion.			
Total	891 deaths	431	207

By the above extracts from the Medical Officers' Reports, it will appear that from the week ending January 5th, 1850, to that ending June 8th, there were reported 891 deaths, of which number 431 died

months. I have annexed a few pertinent extracts from the Observation column of these Reports. In "the Cause of Death" column, I find that at times there was a great deal of measles prevailing, and some small-pox, but by far the greater proportion of the deaths have been from dysentery—*i. e.* the breaking up of the constitution by either actual starvation, or the long use of unfitting, insufficient food. This Kilrush Union, having these 638 deaths of persons within two months of their admission; 431 of that number being even within one month of the day when they were admitted; is officially returned as having workhouse accommodation at the end of the quarter for 3,715 inmates! I can truly say that the painful statistics I have had to wade through to get at these horrifying facts, are, after all, only so much recorded proof of what the appearance of the people in the houses, the day I visited them, would have led me to expect. That they should die so soon after they are admitted does not surprise me, now I know all to which an Irish "tenant" or "peasant" is exposed to in this Union whilst out of the Union-house.

I shall now proceed to give some copies of evidence which has been taken on oath at different times; much of it within a year, some of it within six months; either at inquests, or at official inquiries into the cause of death, of persons dying under circumstances calling for inquiry. I must add, however, my firm conviction, that very many equally suspicious deaths have escaped all notice; nay, further, I have it on

good evidence, that deaths are often concealed, the bodies clandestinely put away; that by this concealment, the portion of the family still alive may continue to receive the share of meal, allotted to the member of the family who has died.

I entreat, however painful the task may be, my reader's attention to these several depositions; they are only some from a large mass, and only relate to this one Union. It will be seen, that however the workhouse may degrade, it cannot degrade more, than does the awful system on which the owners of land are acting, to clear it of their pauper tenantry. I heard it from the lips of a large Irish proprietor, and he saw me take it down, that if the potato was not blighted, he looked for a very large amount of relief to the present pressure on the poor rates; from that kind, generous feeling, which made the Irish peasantry ever share what they had with each other; he argued that many thousands of the houseless and destitute, would leave the Union-houses, and be lodged and fed, by those who had so far weathered the storm, that they had cabins, and some potatoes. This gentleman only spoke of the Irish peasant as he was by nature; for let it be granted that he is the cunning, idle, ignorant creature, I have heard him so often said to be, it has, even then, been generally admitted he was to his kindred and his class ever generous. The depositions I shall now place before the reader will speak for themselves; how the hand of the peasant

which money can be paid, against even his own kindred. It will be found that the dying are refused food—shelter—left to die—put out of doors to die, even by those of their own class. Taking no note of the fact, that men can now be hired in gangs to perpetrate, for small sums, any of the severest acts the law will justify on their fellow-creatures; that they will do such acts, even knowing them against the law. It will be found, that every feeling of natural kindness, every tie of nature, all that once made an Irish peasant's charity proverbial, is in deliberate course of extinction.

In the week ending April 20th, 1850, there were 49 deaths in the Kilrush Union-house; out of which, 22 were within one month of admission, 24 within two months; 46 deaths, then, out of 49, *in one week*, in these workhouses, occurred within two months of admission. In the printed form for the week, filled up by the Medical Officer, now before me, there is a column thus headed, "*Observations of Medical Officer on each case, especially as to* CONSTITUTIONAL WEAKNESS, *or any causes than the other* ASSIGNED CAUSE *of death.*" The following observations are copied, from this column, in the return for the above week:

. . . had dysentery.	. . . a starveling.
. . . was starving.	. . . was quite a skeleton.
. . . was a starved man.	. . . had dysentery, and was a skeleton.
. . . She and another were little better than starvelings.	. . . Do.

. . . had dysentery, and was a skeleton.	. . . a mere skēleton.
. . . Do.	. . . was quite hopeless when admitted.
. . . emaciated starveling.	. . . admitted last stage.
. . . was quite exhausted when admitted.	. . . was hopeless when taken in.
. . . Do. do.	. . . She and sisters were all but starved.
. . . admitted all but dead.	. . . had dysentery.
. . . had dysentery, was quite emaciated.	. . . had dysentery and bronchitis.
. . . a mere skeleton.	

The above, then, are the Medical Officer's observations on causes of death, other *than the assigned cause*, in the column headed "Cause of Death."

This, reader, is the week ending April 20th, 1850; turn now to the following handbill, printed from an original, in my possession; the date of this Notice, or handbill, is—April 21st, 1850—*the very next week to that of which such horrors are recorded.* I entreat you also to keep in your mind the evident purport of this hand-bill, as you peruse the depositions I shall presently lay before you; it will, I think, make clear to you, how it is, the wretched dying are driven from door to door. I know nothing of CROFTON M. VANDELEUR, except that he is a resident at Kilrush, a large owner of property there, and figures with others, though with many who did more in that way than himself, as an evictionist, in "the Returns relating to Evic-

1849. I presume, however, he knew well the condition of the Union workhouses, as to clothing, accommodation, &c. when he issued an order, closing up all liberality to the wretched but that of the Union.

NOTICE

TO THE RATEPAYERS

OF THE KILRUSH ELECTORAL DIVISION.

As this Electoral Division is much aggrieved by the large influx of Vagrants and Paupers from other Districts, seeking Lodging and Subsistence in this Town, as stated in the Memorial lately presented to me by the Inhabitants,

I HEREBY CAUTION ALL PERSONS HOLDING SMALL TENEMENTS UNDER ME,

that if they persevere in harbouring Vagrants and pauper families in their houses, not belonging to this Division, I shall be obliged strictly to enforce the penalties TO WHICH THEY ARE SUBJECT BY THEIR AGREEMENTS, and take such other proceedings as may be necessary to prevent the settlement of persons who may become chargeable to this Division, so as to protect both the Rate-payers and the Labourers from undue competition with strangers; and request the active co-operation of all classes to enforce these regulations, and assist me in protecting OUR MUTUAL INTERESTS, by preventing abuses, supporting our own poor, and thereby reducing the taxation.

CROFTON M. VANDELEUR.

Kilrush House, April 21st, 1850.

N.B.—Every pauper allowed to settle, may add £4 per Annum additional to your Rates.

I have also before me the evidence of a Relieving-officer of this Union, taken by myself at Kildysart, on my late visit there. He says, "I took a list of "840 paupers, on four successive Thursdays, to the "Kilrush Board; for three of those days I could not "get the Guardians to take my cases into considera-"tion; they said, that as the Guardians from my "district had not attended, they should take their "own paupers first; many of the paupers went each "of the three Thursdays—it is twenty miles; on the "fourth Thursday, when my list was taken, many of "them did not appear; "no appearance" was put "against their names, and they got no relief; in "some extreme cases I had given provisional relief. "I have known paupers kept so long by the Board, "they have had twenty miles to walk home after "eight o'clock at night; in the winter they will sleep "from 800 to 1,200 in the streets, and in and about "the market-house at Kilrush."

I know not what the terms of the Memorial presented to C. M. Vandeleur were; but I think the Ratepayers might have discovered, that the management of the Union had quite as much to do with the crowding into the town of these poor wretches, as the hospitality of "HOLDERS OF SMALL TENEMENTS" under C. M. Vandeleur.

Let the Board sit oftener, let more Union-houses be obtained, more Relieving-officers; let the Guardians

a handbill would not be quite what I think, and every humane man will think it to be: these poor creatures are vagrants if they beg; they are to be forbidden charity wherever they can find it in the town, or in the Kilrush Electoral Division; and yet, they may be brought ten, fifteen, or twenty miles, kept till night, and not heard, by the Board, even when their cases are on the Relieving-officer's list: because their own Guardians are not in attendance, and the Board chooses to have so few admission days, that it cannot get through the business brought before it.

I think the reader must already have nearly arrived at the same conviction with myself, that Eviction, as carried on in this part of Ireland, is very much the same as Extermination; he will hardly want the following proofs, that it is so; but I think it right to make these terrible truths stand forth, upon the strongest possible evidence.

CHAPTER X.

EVIDENCE TAKEN AT INQUESTS OR OFFICIAL INQUIRIES.

Copy of Evidence taken before the Coroner, relative to the death of William Moore.

February 18, 1849.

KILFIDANE,

BIDDY MOORE sworn.—I am daughter to deceased Wm. Moore. He had a cabin in "Coolan," on Thomas Miskill's land. He lived there four or five months. Thomas Miskill came on Wednesday last, the 14th February, about 9 o'clock, A.M. My father and I were in bed; my father was sick; he was ill since Christmas: he complained of nothing, but was not able to walk from cramps in his knees. He had his appetite, and was able to eat. He was getting a stone of meal a week, out-door relief, for self and three more. No doctor visited him. Miskill came and desired us to get up; I got up, but my father was unable to get up. He begged for God's sake to leave him within for that night, till Mr. ———, the relieving-officer, would send him to the workhouse hospital next day. Thomas Miskill said nothing, but went out and began to strip the roof, over the bed where deceased was lying; some of the sticks and thatch fell down upon deceased on the bed. My father asked Thomas Miskill not to throw any more down until his daughter "Margaret" would come in, and help him out of the bed.

Thomas Miskill then went away to his brother's house, and came back when my sister returned home. Thomas Miskill commenced to throw down the thatch at that side of the house where my father was lying. My sister asked him not to throw any more till she would take her father out, and she would throw the remainder herself. Thomas Miskill then went away; my sister and I then lifted him out of the bed and brought him out on the road. He was unable to stand up; and we, being unable to carry him, took him under the arms and dragged him along the road till we went to Daniel Miskill's house, (brother to Thomas,) we took him in there to rest. My sister went back from there to clear out deceased's cabin; my sister remained absent for some time; deceased and myself left the house and went to the next house, Thady Doody's; I was under one of his arms and helped him; my father stood in the door and asked for lodging for that night, for God's sake. Doody's wife asked him to go in to the fire, and she said she would leave him in for that night, only she was under an oath to have no one in the house. My father desired me to go and help my sister to clear out the cabin. I did not do as he desired. We were in Doody's house about half an hour: I then took my father, as before, to the next house, "Thomas Nikil's." Nikil's wife asked my father what brought him out? He said, "Thomas Miskill threw him out, and knocked his cabin." My father sat at the fire about an hour. I went back to my sister to clear the cabin, and when we returned to "Nikil's," my father desired us to take him out, to the widow "Conners," as Mrs. Nikil could have nobody within her house. My sister took him out on

the road, and I remained at "Nikil's," to wait for M'Phelan the distributor, to get meal, as my father had nothing to eat that day. My father eat his supper the night before, as well as usual; the next time I saw my father, he was lying on Mike Hoolehan's dunghill: that was about half an hour after I had left him at "Nikils." My sister, myself, and Mrs. Connors, took him into the widow Lyon's house, at "Stone Park," in Kilfidane parish, C. Clare. Deceased sat in the chair, my sister and I returned to the cabin for some straw, which we brought to Lyon's. My father was asleep when we came back. My sister prepared some straw in the corner of widow Lyon's house, and then awoke the deceased. He asked me where she was then going with him; she replied, "to bed." We then stripped him and put him to bed; it was then late in the evening. To my knowledge, he had eaten nothing that day; he was very uneasy for fear he would not get shelter anywhere.

I then went away for some meal, and when I came back, my sister put some down in a saucepan, and made some drink for him, but she found "his teeth stuck together." He never spoke after. It was about an hour after he was brought into widow Lyon's house that he died. I think my father was as well that morning as he had been for many mornings before. My father complained of the dirt and sticks that fell on him while the house was thrown down. I think that my father, being turned out and exposed to the cold, without covering, hastened his death. My brother went to Mr. ——, Relieving-officer, for a coffin for him. My father has been getting relief for many months. I don't know his

age; my mother is dead six or seven years. For the last fortnight, we had a stone and a half weekly (of meal). My eldest sister was in the workhouse, and left it of her own accord. It was my father got the relief.

I here omit the evidence of two witnesses, relating very nearly the same facts, and proceed to the evidence of the fourth witness.

KATE LYONS sworn.—I live at Stone Park, Kilfidane parish, Co. Clare. I remember Wednesday last. "Margaret Moore," daughter to William Moore, deceased, came to me, and asked me, for the honour of God, to have her father in for that night, till Mr. Gwinne, the Relieving-officer, would send them to the hospital next day. I told her to bring him in. Margaret Moore told me, that the reason she asked shelter for her father was, that Tom Miskill had thrown down their house. Margaret Moore, Kiddy Moore, and widow Connors, then brought deceased into my house. They told me he was "stretched on the dunghill at the side of the road." He was unable to walk; he looked very ill. His daughter brought some bed clothes, and settled him in the side of my cabin (about 12 feet square); we were obliged to lift him in; he asked for a drink, and never spoke after. Deceased died about an hour after coming into my house. He had hardly any clothes upon him: he had the old shirt in which he is buried, an old flannel waistcoat, and was without any stockings; I am not sure whether he had any coat.

5th witness. Dr. THOMAS O'DONNELL, sworn, states.—I have examined the body of deceased, William Moore.

I found no external marks of violence on him. From the evidence I have heard, and view of the body, I think he was a feeble and debilitated man. I think his death was occasioned by the excitement, exposure to cold, and want of nourishment, to which he was subjected, on the day of his death. I am of opinion, that a weakly man, taken out of his bed, as described in evidence, and exposed to the cold, would have his death accelerated thereby.

MARGARET MOORE, recalled and examined by a juror, states.—My father had as much of the meal as I had. I had no other means of subsistence: if I got a "bit" for an odd job outside, I shared it with him.

Verdict.—"That William Moore came by his death, at Stone Park, on Wednesday the 14th February, from excitement, exposure to cold, and want of nourishment."

I must here give a summary of some facts, of which I am possessed on good authority, relative to the death of four persons, in consequence of their eviction. I have reason to believe these facts were proved on oath, before some of the authorities of the Union, although I cannot find that any inquest was held on the bodies. The occurrences I am about to describe, took place in the electoral division of Kilfofin, Union of Kilrush, in May, 1849.

One Cox, his wife, and four children, lodged with a man of the name of McMahon, on a townland the property of a Mr. Westropp. This McMahon's house was knocked down on a Monday, by one Mo-

number of men, but no police or law officers present. Cox and his wife, thus turned out, built "a hut" on the strand close by; they were all then in good health; on the Wednesday, Cox was taken ill, *died* before Friday morning, having just lived to be "prepared" by the priest, one Father Taleent; Thomas Cox, six years old, was taken ill Saturday, died on the following Monday.

The McMahon's had also set up a sort of hut; this, however, one Jerry Moloney, a son, I suppose, of the agent, desired them to knock down, or he would do it; it was knocked down by one of the family; and that night they slept without any shelter but a few boards. Mrs. McMahon was taken ill on the Tuesday night, the day after the cabin was "tumbled," *died* on Wednesday night. The same priest prepared her. Biddy McMahon, aged thirteen, fell sick the day after her mother died, and *died* on the Sunday morning following. I must here add a cruel fact, for on the authority I have received it, I must take it to be one. These poor creatures, having by Moloney's (the agent) orders stripped their hut of its straw, and put it aside to enable them to thatch another, this straw was deliberately *set on fire* by Jerry Moloney. A visitor to this scene of ——— thus describes it, whilst it was fresh upon his mind: "In a hovel, six feet long and five broad, composed "of a dresser lying against a low wall, and an old "mat, I found the wife of Cox, who had died on

"Thursday, lying in a little straw. A son, Thomas, "six years old, *dead*, behind her; and in her arms, "a child a month old, apparently dying. Some forty "yards off, in a similar shed, I found McMahon "(whose wife had died on Wednesday) just returned "with an ass, with which he had conveyed the body "of his daughter, thirteen years of age, to the burial "ground, who had died Sunday morning." If I mistake not, the police in that neighbourhood can bear witness to the above narrative, and that the bodies of Cox and McMahon's wife lay amongst the living in these sheds for *two days* unburied, and were then only buried by their instrumentality. It was stated, on the best authority, that these parties, thus "*exposed to death*," had, up to the time of the eviction, been in good health, having sufficient food. I ask any English reader to try and conceive, what four deaths so caused would produce in England, in the shape of public execration of the whole transaction.

Minutes of Evidence taken at an Inquest held by Francis O'Donnell, Esq. on the body of Michael Clancey, of Knockbrack, on the 30th January, 1850.

ELLEN CLANCEY, daughter of the deceased, sworn.—Lives at Knockbrack; held land from Gilbert O'Dea; had to give it up to get relief; deceased was about sixty years of age; he had five in family, himself and his wife; they were getting two stone of meal a week; they used not to

get it regularly; they only got one stone for the entire family last Thursday; they had nothing else to subsist on since, except they got something from the neighbours; while the stone of meal held, we eat two meals a day, but had not enough in each meal; all the meal was eaten on Saturday night; they had nothing since but a tea-cup of meal, and a few heads of cabbage, which witness got from the neighbours; my deceased father partook of his portion of the tea-cup of meal and cabbage; he had not enough, he would have eaten more if he got it; he died on Monday about twelve o'clock; *he drank the cabbage water on Sunday evening*, as he had not enough in the cabbage. Deceased had no complaint; he was as well the day before he died as he was for some time; he was weak, she thinks, from hunger; if he had enough to eat, she thinks he would not have died so soon. We have nothing to live on to-day; looking for the meal is what caused my mother's absence here to-day.

BRIDGET EUSTICE, sworn.—Is sister-in-law to the deceased; he lived with me for about two months, until he left me about seven or eight days ago; he was brought back to my house the day he died, as his own hut was too small, and it was impossible for any person to get into it, it was so low; he had to creep in and out of it himself; he was getting two stone of meal for himself and family (weekly); he did not get his meal regularly; since about ten days before Christmas, until the second last supply; and the last supply was only half complement; he and family were for twelve days trusting to four pounds of meal. Deceased was delicate when he used to live with witness; but he told me, it was want of food caused

his ill-health. I am of opinion that they had not enough at any meal; and were days on one meal, and were *frequently for three days without a meal at all*, having only a few turnips, or a little porridge, which merely kept the breath in them.

To Mr. Comyn, a juror.—Deceased had always a delicate appearance; but this time twelve months, having his own food, he was then able to work every day, and from what he told me, could do so this year had he enough to eat.

Doctor B. O'Donnell sworn.—I have examined the body of the deceased; it was reduced to a mere skeleton. From the evidence I have heard, I am of opinion that he died of inanition.

Verdict.—"That deceased came by his death at Knockbrack, on Monday, January the 28th instant, from STARVATION."

Minutes of Evidence taken at an Inquisition held by George Studdart, J.P. Clonderalaw, and Robert H. Burrough, J.P. Esqs. at Bleanmore, on the 19th January instant, on the body of James Breene, late of Kilmichael.

Thomas Calligan, of Bleanmore, sworn, and examined by Mr. Burrough.—On my way to John Mead's house, on the morning of Tuesday, the 16th instant, about eight o'clock, I saw the deceased stretched on the middle of the road; I took him up and walked about a perch with him. I then asked him, was he able to travel by himself; but deceased made no reply; he then staggered a few yards and fell. I returned and took him up a second time, and

assisted in placing him against a ditch, near John Mead's house. I then asked deceased, would he go into the house? and he said, *he would not be admitted.*

THOMAS CARMODY sworn.—I saw the deceased on the morning of the 16th instant; he was stretched on the middle of the road—it was after he was taken up by Thomas Calligan; I met a boy named Connell taking a warm drink of milk to the deceased, who drank it. Connell and I took him to Stretton's house: *he was refused admittance.* We then left him on the road, near the house. From what I saw of the man, I think it was cold and hunger that caused his weakness.

NANCY STRETTON sworn, to Mr. Chaumiers.—I saw two men, named Tim Connell and Tom Carmody, bringing what I supposed to be a dead man to my house; I at first objected to let him in, stating as my reasons for objecting, that I was that morning preparing myself and family to go to the workhouse. I afterwards got alarmed, and called on a man named Thomas Reidy to assist me to bring him in; he did so. My son, Pat Stretton, asked the deceased if he was hungry? he replied, that he was hungry enough. I then gave him some bread; he took one mouthful, which he was unable to swallow; I then attempted to give him some milk with a spoon, which he was also unable to take. When first I took up the deceased all he could tell me was, that his name was James Breene; that, and telling my son that he was hungry, were all the words he was able to speak from the time I took him in until he died, in about four hours after.

Doctor BENJAMIN TIDD sworn, to Mr. Burrough.—I have examined the body of the deceased, and had a *post*

mortem examination. I am of opinion that the deceased died of want and privation; the external marks on the body might have been caused by a fall; the body had a dropsical appearance, indicating great debility.

The jury then retired, and after a few minutes returned the following verdict:—"That the deceased James Breene came by his death *from hunger and cold.*"

Minutes of Evidence taken at an Inquest held by Mr. Francis O'Donnell on the body of Michael Moloney, at Lack, in the Electoral Division of Kilmichael, on the 2nd February, 1850.

MARGARET MOLONEY, wife to the deceased, Michael Moloney, sworn and examined.—The deceased was forty years of age; he was on out-door relief on stone breaking until last harvest, when he was taken off; he then went mowing, by which he supported me, himself, and five children: he continued to work while he could get threepence to earn. He then went for his keeping to Andy Glynn for a fortnight, and left me and family to beg amongst the neighbours for that fortnight. On his return home, when he saw the state to which we were reduced from hunger, he upbraided himself for having left us; he then went to the Relieving-officer, and had his name entered for the workhouse, where we were admitted about eight weeks ago. We remained in the workhouse until yesterday week; *three of the children died in the workhouse,* and he *could not eat the black bread.* He then said to me, he would try to support the remainder of his

was he able to work. At our return from the workhouse I got two bowls of meal from Mrs. Pilkington and a penny-worth of potatoes that I bought, which was all the food we had from Friday until the Tuesday following, which was last Tuesday, when we got two stone of Indian meal, but the deceased was so exhausted that he was not able to eat any of it, nor did he use it, but he said he was now satisfied, as we had it. He eat the last portion of the meal we got from Mrs. Pilkington on Sunday, but did not taste any thing from that *until he died on Thursday last.* He would eat bread and milk if he had it, but I do not think he could eat dry bread. He had a bowel complaint, but I think he would have lived longer if he had had anything he could eat. The entire family of us had nothing but cold water from Sunday until we got meal on Tuesday evening, and I fear I will never be the better of it myself. I locked my house when the family went to the workhouse, but it *was thrown down whilst we were in the workhouse,* and on our return we had to take shelter in the hut where my husband died, and in which we had not the place of our bed dry.

Doctor O'Donnell sworn and examined.—I have viewed the body of the deceased, it presents all the appearances of extreme emaciation and debility. I am of opinion that his death was hastened by exposure to cold and the noxious effluvia of the stagnant sink in the hut —and want of proper and sufficient food.

Verdict.—"Deceased Michael Moloney came by his death at Lack, on Thursday, January 31st, from exposure to cold and want of proper food."

Minutes of Evidence taken at an Inquisition held at Burrane (on the 12th of February instant), by James Little, R.M. and George Studdart, Esqs. on the body of Patt Collins.

JOHANNA BATEMAN of Burrane sworn and examined by Mr. Bryan Purcell, solicitor to the Union.—Deceased came to my house on about nine o'clock on the 10th instant; my husband first refused him admittance; I was at my prayers at the time, when I heard the conversation between them. I got off my knees, and requested my husband to have him within, or that he would be dead at our door in the morning, if we put him out; my husband then let in the deceased, and I made down a large fire for him; he took up a bit of a raw turnip that was on the floor after our supper, and began to eat it; I then asked him what ailed him, or did he eat any supper, or was he sick? he said, he had no sickness since harvest, and that all the supper he eat, was a small bit of bread, he got from Mrs. Daley: I never saw such a sight before, he looked like a starved man; he died at about seven o'clock the morning following.

Mr. SIMON DALEY—a juror sworn and examined by Mr. Little.—I have seen the corpse of the deceased Patt Collins: I recollect the night he came to my house, he presented an emaciated appearance; I am of opinion he died of starvation; he told my mother, when she gave him the bit of bread, that he eat nothing for 24 hours before—he appeared to me like a man rather weak;—at the time my mother gave him the bread, he seemed so exhausted from hunger and cold, that he was scarcely able to eat it.

Mr. PURCELL, solicitor, sworn, and examined by Mr. Little.—I have viewed the body of the deceased, and *in the course of my life I never witnessed so horrifying a spectacle*, the frame so denuded of flesh, that it appears to be a mere anatomy of a human being. Mr. Studdart, J.P. There can be no doubt but the man died of starvation.

Dr. BENJAMIN TIDD, sworn and examined by Mr. Little.—I have examined the body of the deceased—I could discover no external marks or appearance of violence on the body; in the absence of a post mortem examination, I am of opinion, from the emaciated appearance the body presents, that the man died of *starvation*. Mr. Studdart to Dr. Tidd.—I am of opinion that this is much a worse case, than that of Breene, which you attended at Bleanmore some time since.—Dr. Tidd. —The other appeared dropsical; but I never saw so emaciated a corpse as the present; both cases were bad: this is the more frightful case of the two.

NORRY COLLINS, wife to the deceased, sworn and examined by Mr. Little, deposed to the identity of the deceased.—They resided at Kilmurray, at a place called Ballybought; the deceased did not live with them for the last five weeks; he visited them off and on—they had nothing to live on since the meal was stopped; he was stone breaking last year; I got a ticket from Mr. George Studdart, the magistrate, and Mr. John Sennane, the guardian; to Jerry Malony, the Killofin guardian, for meal, but he refused to give it to me. The deceased had no business with them, as he could do nothing for them.

The jury, without retiring, returned the following verdict:—"*That the deceased died of starvation.*"

Minutes of Evidence taken at an Inquest held at "Paradise," Parish of "Kilchreest," on the 11*th of March, on the body of Tim Spellacy.*

MARY SPELLACY, wife to the deceased, sworn.—To the Coroner.—Her deceased husband was about sixty years of age; he was on out-door relief. We were getting two stone of meal, for him, me, and five children, per week; he used to take his own half stone out of the two stone, the day he used to get it, at Clondagad depot; he did not stop with us, but amongst the neighbours. I did not see deceased from Saturday, the 2nd instant, until last Saturday. Thursdays were the days we used to get the meal at Clondagad, but we did not get it on Thursday the 7th of March; the day was changed to Saturday. I saw him eat bread at Kildysart on Saturday morning, before he got the meal; he did not complain to me on Saturday of being ill; he told me he eat something in the morning of that day, before he got his meal on Saturday night; when he got the meal, he gave it to me, all but a little he kept for his supper. When I came home with my meal, I returned back, and met him on the road; he desired me to go home, and that he would go to Tim Meany's house. I did not see him after, until I saw him dead on Sunday, the 10th instant, at Tim Cleary's.

JOSEPH MCENERMY, sworn.—I am relieving-officer for

of Indian meal per week, up to Saturday, the 9th instant; on that day he got two-and-three-quarter stone. I saw him on Saturday; he did not appear to be weaker than usual; he mostly always came for his meal; he did not complain to me at any time of being hungry.

PATT REILLY, sworn.—To the Coroner—I was on my way home from Kildysart, on Saturday night last, between ten and twelve o'clock. I met a man lying on the side of the road; I spoke to him, but got no answer; I viewed him, and then went to James Healy's house, to know if he would allow me to bring him in; James Healy, in reply, said he had no fire, and that he was told who was there. I then asked Healy who he was; he said, a man named Spellacy. I then, with Thomas Healy, returned, and raised deceased off the road; I then knew him to be Tim Spellacy. I then took him on my back, as far as James Healy's house, and laid him there, and kept him sitting on the side of the road, opposite Healy's house, who refused to let him in. Thomas Healy then brought a barrow, and I, with his assistance, put deceased into the barrow; he was then alive; we brought him to Tim Cleary's house; he died before he came to Cleary's; it was on the night of Saturday, the 9th instant.

Dr. O'GRADY, sworn.—I have examined the body of deceased, and from the appearance it presents, I am of opinion he died from exposure to cold and exhaustion.

Verdict.—"That the deceased, Tim Spellacy, died at Paradise, on the night of Saturday, the 9th instant, from exposure to cold and exhaustion."

Minutes of Evidence taken at an Inquest held at Ballyguiry, on the 11th of March instant, on the body of Edmond Kelly, by Francis O'Donnell, Esq.

EDMOND KELLY, son to the deceased, sworn, and examined by the Coroner.—We were in the Kilrush workhouse for five weeks; we left it on Friday last. My deceased father got his discharge from Mr. Foley; he and I were ordered by Mr. McEverney to get a ticket from the doctor, to get meal outside, which we did. My mother, two sisters, and brother are still in the workhouse; deceased was to send for them this day. When we left the poor-house, on Friday, we came as far as "Ballykett" fair place; deceased then got so weak, that he went into a house to rest himself, and get a stick to help him home; he desired me to go on before him, and to have a fire in our cabin for him. I did not see him after until I came home on Saturday night, after supper time; he was then stretched in a field, on a heap of bog-stuff; he was then alive. My brother and I brought him home, and he died before day on Sunday morning, the 10th instant. Deceased told me he eat very little for breakfast on Friday, and eat nothing for dinner on Thursday night, but a *pint of porridge;* he was not able to eat the workhouse bread.

MARTIN COFFEE, sworn, and examined.—On Saturday last, as I was going towards my own house, I heard the deceased calling several times. I came up, and asked who was there; he said it was Edmond Kelly, and that he was coming from the poor house, and that he eat nothing since the Friday morning previous; he was not able to stand or move, he was so weak. I went to his son, and told him

of it, and he went immediately for him. I did not see him since, until this day. He was about fifty years of age.

The jury, without retiring, returned the following verdict:—"*That deceased died of starvation.*"

County of Clare, to wit.—*At an Inquest taken before George Studdart, Daniel O'Grady, and D. B. Franks, Esqs. three of her Majesty's Justices of the Peace at Kildysart, in said County, on the body of Michael Scanlan, of Shanahea, in said County.*

MARY SCANLAN, being sworn, saith, that her husband's name was Michael Scanlan; he is now dead. On Wednesday night, the 15th of May, after her going to the Board of Guardians at Kildysart, he asked her for something to eat, and she had not it to give him, and he died immediately after, sitting on a chair. He was in the workhouse of Kilrush, and left it to-morrow fortnight. She does not know why he left it; she buried two of her children there, and has five more; they left the workhouse of their own free will. She got two stone of meal since then from the Relieving-officer; *she and her family lived on nettles and wild garlic until her husband died.* She swears that he complained of a complaint in his bowels, and that he died of hunger; he complained that he did not get enough to eat in the workhouse. She says that the persons who were over the boilers used to sell the bread and stirabout to any person who had a halfpenny: two tins of stirabout used to be sold for a halfpenny, and a lump of bread and a tin of porridge. She says the persons who distributed the food took some from each

pauper. She says that she heard all the women complain to the Master that the soup was thin, and the stirabout thin.

THOMAS GUMANE.—Is Relieving-officer of the Electoral Division of Kilfidane and Kildysart. Knew Michael Scanlan of Shanahea; on the 6th of March he got a ticket of admission into the Kilrush workhouse, and remained there until the 7th of May. His wife applied to me to have her application placed on the books on last Tuesday. His name was not called, in consequence of the Guardians *not being able to conclude all the business;* but his wife was there on Thursday: she applied for a coffin, which I gave her, and an order for two stone of meal. He says that, from the appearance of the body this day, as he saw it in the coffin, in the churchyard of Kildysart, he thinks he died from want of food and nourishment.

Verdict.—"We find that Michael Scanlan came by his death from want of food and insufficient nourishment; and we consider his death was brought on by his having left the workhouse at Kilrush, where he was for some months previous to his death, when his family were with him. May 22nd, 1850."

Minutes of Evidence taken at an Inquest held at Labasheeda, on the 11th of May, by Mr. Francis O'Donnell, Coroner, on the body of Patt Cahill.

PATT HALPIN sworn.—I knew the deceased well; I am of opinion that he was about thirty years of age; he was in the habit of visiting my house about six weeks ago. He stopped at my house last night; I was not at home

when he came to my place; he asked me for lodgings; I said if he would get a little straw to lie on, that I would allow him in; he was so weak he was not able to go and look for it; he brought down a few turfs and made down a fire. He told me he was very weak, and that he eat nothing from Thursday before but a bit of bread he got from sub-constable Scully, and that he was weak with hunger; that his wife treated him badly; that she took away with her fourteen shillings she got from her mother from America. He told me, the night he stopped with me, that he was hungry and had nothing to eat; he died about half past nine this morning.

To Mr. Whitstone, Poor Law Guardian.—Mary Madigan and I *removed him from my house this morning, in a dying state, and laid him by the ditch side.*

To Mr. Blennerhassett, sub-Inspector, Kildysart.—Mary Halloran then took him into her hut, and laid him by the fire; the reason I put him out was, my children got frightened when they saw him dying.

Mr. Blennerhassett, with feelings of charity so characteristic of him, gave Mary Halloran five shillings as the reward of her humanity, for taking deceased in a dying state into her house, and said that he, (Mr. Blennerhassett,) for the life of him, did not know what was to become of the country; that it appeared to him that humanity had fled the land; that it was hard to say what could be done. But there was one thing certain, the people were starving and in a most deplorable condition.

Mr. Whitstone.—We have made application to the Commissioners for permission to relieve the able-bodied under Section 2: we were refused. There is *neither in-door*

accommodation or out-door relief; and as Mr. Blennerhassett truly states, the people are starving. I brought a few cases of extreme destitution under the notice of Captain Kennedy last week, and as that gentleman could not legally order them relief, he gave me money out of his own private purse to relieve them; so that there is no use any longer cloaking the matter,—*we are in a fix, and the people are dying.*

Mr. Blennerhassett.—It would be well if Captain Kennedy had power, as he has the will; he relieved two or three cases that I recommended to him in a similar manner. I am of opinion a good many drains have been brought on his purse by cases of extrême destitution which he could not otherwise relieve. The jury, all respectable rate-payers, without retiring, returned the following verdict:—"*Died from starvation.*"

Minutes of Evidence taken at a Coroner's Inquest, held on the body of a child named Bryan McMahon, on the 25th of January instant.

Mary McMahon, sworn, and examined by Mr. Little, R.M.—I am mother to the deceased child, Bryan McMahon, aged about seven or eight years. I was one of the under-tenants on Mr. Westby's property, whose houses were levelled about two years ago, at Tullybrack, in the parish of Kilmacamane; I was part of my time since begging about the world. I stopped at John McDonnell's, above at Ballycra, before I went to the workhouse. I left the poorhouse the Friday before Christmas of my own accord; I was three weeks in the poorhouse. I left the

better, when I brought him out of the poorhouse hospital, about three weeks ago; the child was delicate. I got out-door relief last Thursday week; I got relief twice since I left the workhouse; I got last Thursday week two stone three-quarters of meal; my family consisted of myself, my husband, and five children; I had about five pounds of meal for seven in family, daily; it would not answer any more for me. I never made any use of the meal but for the use of food, except a half-stone I sold this day week to pay a week's rent. I got fivepence for the half-stone; I gave threepence to pay the rent, and twopence to buy milk for my sick children. I sold a can I had for twopence-halfpenny, and I pawned my husband's coat for two shillings.

The woman appeared so stupified from actual want, that she could not recollect the day on which the child died, but at length stated, that she believed it died about four days ago.

I had yellow meal in my house the day the child died, but he could not eat it. I did not get meal for the last half year but two weeks; when I asked for relief I was ordered into the workhouse. I sometimes did not get enough to eat in the workhouse; some of the inmates got more than others.

Mr. Patt O'Connor (a juror).—It was the women that were in the cook-house that had more chances than others. The child got bad usage; when I saw the child it was striped and cut; I then took him to myself to make better of him. To Mr. Patt O'Connor.—I lived at Tullybrack fourteen years before I was turned out. To Mr. Little.—I was not able to go out to report my child's

death to the police. My husband, myself, and family was so weak and exhausted, that we could not leave the house; it was the want of food that caused all our sickness; the child was as fine a child when I took him into the workhouse as could be seen. Mr. O'Connor.—When I first visited these creatures a few days ago, *I thought at first sight they were all dead;* but on my examining their state more minutely, I found that they still breathed; I called on a few charitable persons, and we collected some money for them; they were at the time so exhausted, that I thought none of them would linger out half the time.

Mr. N. Lillis, Relieving-officer, sworn and examined by Mr. Little.—I saw the deceased child dead in a house, in Chapel-street, Kilrush. The family were relieved continuously up to the 15th September last; that class, as able-bodied, were then struck off—the out-door relief having ceased under second section. The next time they applied for relief was about the 1st of December; I find by the records of the house, that they were admitted on the 4th of December, and were discharged at their own request on the 21st of December, except the child in hospital. They then applied for relief, on the 7th of January: I took their application, and brought them to the workhouse on the 9th of January to be tested by the Board of Guardians; they were ordered fourteen days relief by the Chairman; they got the first draft of it on week ending the 12th of January, 38½ lbs., and on week ending 19th of January they got the second draft; it was on the 16th they got

woman did send her son, which I met at Tullybrack, on last Wednesday, the 23rd; my place from here is about four miles distance. I had no relief to give them, as out-door relief was stopped last week. To the Jury.—*The state of the country is such, that it is a common practice with those receiving relief to keep those deaths private, and bury them in most cases without coffins, rather than be deprived of their meal.*

Dr. Thomas B. O'Donnell, sworn.—I examined the body of deceased this day. I recollect his being under my care in the workhouse infirmary for small-pox; he was taken out of it on the 2nd of January, without my consent, when nearly convalescent; he presents a more emaciated appearance than when in the infirmary. I attribute his death to disease following the small-pox, and aggravated by cold, want of sufficient and proper food and treatment; if the family had remained in the workhouse, the child could not have died for want of treatment or proper food. To Mr. O'Connor.—The number of deaths (*last week*) in the workhouse, amounted to thirty-five.

Mr. Lillis, Relieving-officer, to Mr. Little.—I have done nothing to relieve the rest of the family.

Dr. O'Donnell.—When I saw the family on yesterday morning, I thought you would have three deaths in place of one; and you would, were it not for the treatment they received from me, the Rev. Mr. Moran, Roman Catholic clergyman, and Mr. Patt O'Connor. The straw they lay on was perfect dung.

The Jury, after a very lengthened discussion, which

"We find that the deceased, Bryan McMahon, came by his death, from want of proper and sufficient food and treatment, four days ago, at Kilrush; the mother of the child having taken it out of the workhouse, being under the impression the child would improve more under her care, than it would in the workhouse."

Minutes of Evidence taken at an Inquest, held at Liscormick, on the 11*th of May, instant, on the body of Martin Clancy.*

Mary Clancy sworn and examined by the Coroner, Mr. Francis O'Donnell.—I am sister to the deceased; he came to my house on Wednesday last, about four o'clock in the evening: he was then returning from jail: I went out and borrowed a small quantity of meal from one of the neighbours, and made a small cake of it for him; he eat it and went to bed, and he had not enough of it; on the next morning (Thursday), he told me he did not know what to do; that he would die with hunger; he eat a little for breakfast on Thursday morning, and a little for supper Friday night; my sister got a pound of meal at Kildysart, and made gruel with it, mixed with nettles; I went to call him to eat a little of the gruel, but he was not able to stir; I put some of the gruel with a spoon in his mouth, it stopped in his throat, he was not able to swallow it; he died in a short time after; before he lost his speech, he told me he was weak: I am sure he died of hunger.

Biddy Clancy sworn.—I recollect when my deceased brother came home on Wednesday evening last, my sister, the last witness, told me she gave him a small bit

of bread. I gave him some gruel, he complained of nothing that night, on Thursday morning I gave him some gruel; he went on that evening to Rosshill, to the house of Michael Donealy to look for employment; when he returned, he told me he was hardly able to come home with weakness; he said he begged a penny of Donealy to buy meal, but he did not get it, he had not enough to eat for an infant, on Thursday. I think if he had enough to eat, he would live for many years after; he was only twenty-five years of age. I am sure he died of hunger.

Verdict.—"Died of starvation."

Minutes of Evidence taken at an Inquest, held by Daniel O'Gready and D. B. Franks, Esqs. Justices of the Peace, at Ballynacally, on the 21*st day of May*, 1850, *on the body of Thomas Cusack of said place.*

Mary Rourke of Dromquim being sworn, saith—I knew Thomas Cusack, of Ballynacally; he came to my house on last Tuesday evening; he eat his dinner, and slept in my house, about breakfast time he began to moan; my husband asked him what ailed him? and he said it would not signify; he then fell asleep, and after waking, he continued to moan; he did not speak to me, when I asked him some questions; he had his hands clenched, and remained in that state, until he died; he told me it was the "hungry grass" he met on the road; he did not complain that he was in want of food.

Nancy Cusack, wife to the deceased, sworn, saith—He was receiving out-door relief for the last two years; his niece came to tell me, that my husband was dead, at the house of Thomas Rourke, of Dromquim; I saw him

here in the village this day week, he told me he would go to Peg Kerin's house at "Dromquim;" he did not say he was in any want, but that he was suffering, and in trouble, from the swelling he had in his thighs, and limbs; but did not say he was hungry, or in want. My husband, myself, and the children lived on a stone and a half of meal a week, we used to get assistance from our neighbours; but we are mostly obliged to use weeds, corn-kale, &c. for our support. I had no meal to give him for breakfast the morning he went to Dromquim, and he was obliged to eat corn-kale boiled.

MICHAEL HEHIR, sworn, saith—I am Relieving-officer for Ballynacally and Kilchreest, electoral divisions. I knew Thomas Cusack, he was on out-door relief; he got one stone and half of meal, per week, for self, wife and one child; he had two children more in the house living with him; I gave the two that was over age, tickets to the Ennis workhouse, but they were not admitted there; I think the whole family lived on what was allowed for three; *the reason they were refused the workhouse was, for want of room.* I think from the insufficiency of food he had, his death was accelerated for want of nourishment.

Verdict.—"We think his death was caused by weakness, brought on by long continued want of sufficient food or sufficient nourishment."

Minutes of Evidence taken at an Inquest at Kildysart, on the 18th of April last, on the body of John Garvey.

KATE SHEEHAN, sworn and examined by the Coroner,

Mr. F. O'Donnell.—Deceased slept at my mother's house on Sunday night: he was so weak, that he could not lie on a bed, but sat up on a chair. He was offered a bed, but he said he could not lie on it; his feet were greatly swollen. He had some bits of turnips: I can't say that he eat any of them, but took some gruel made of Indian meal for supper on Monday night. On Tuesday morning he took very little for breakfast, he was too weak to use it. He was on the out-relief. *He wanted to remain in the house on Tuesday, but we turned him out when we heard he had fever: it was for that we put him out. When we put him out he stretched along the road ditch, not far from the house. About twelve o'clock the same day he came in again, and we turned him out in the evening, a little before dark.* I afterwards saw him *lying* in a *quarry* not far from the house, stretched opposite a fire. I went and brought him some straw, and made it round him. He was then very weak. I did not see him after until yesterday morning (Wednesday, April 17). When I saw him, HE WAS BURNT TO DEATH.

JOHN REIDY, sworn.—On Tuesday, about one o'clock, I saw the deceased stretched by the road-side. I brought him on a barrow to a quarry. *At his own request* I went for some turf, and made down a fire for him. He had a sheet, which he stretched on along the fire. I made down another fire for him at nightfall. I did not see him after, until I saw him dead next morning.

MICHAEL O'BRIEN, of Ross Hill, sworn.—On yesterday morning, after my getting out of bed, I went out and saw smoke in a quarry. I went there, and saw the deceased stretched there, and burned to death. I called on

another man, and we put out the fire by throwing water on it. I am sure, that were it not for as soon as, I came up, the deceased would be consumed to ashes.

Verdict.—"Deceased came by his death in consequence of being burned by his straw bed taking fire while asleep in the bed in a quarry, he being in a delicate state of health, and refused shelter."

The above evidence on "inquests," is copied verbatim from the notes, taken at the time; I fear, however, that in recopying them for the press, there may be some mis-spellings of names of individuals, and localities.

CHAPTER XI.

MORTALITY IN UNION HOUSES—PEASANTRY SAID TO BE PRIEST-RIDDEN—THEIR DEVOTION—THEIR GRATITUDE—NEGLECT OF THEIR EDUCATION—HAVE BEEN MADE LAZY—TAUGHT CUNNING—THEIR TITLE TO SYMPATHY—AGRARIAN MURDERS, NOT UNNATURAL RESULT OF THEIR TREATMENT.

THE contents of the foregoing chapters will, I think, have satisfied every impartial reader, that the statements I have made generally, on the condition of the peasantry, in the districts I have been describing, are fully borne out by evidence, which cannot be refuted. The official returns of the Medical officers, and the verdicts of juries, are, as evidence, given on the very spot where, if untrue, it could be at once contested. The fact is, the horrors of these Unions are not contested on the spot, though there is every endeavour to confine the knowledge of them to the neighbourhood in which they occur; and such is the power, exercised by proprietary machinery, that it is very difficult to lift the veil, and expose to the public eye what there is so powerful a combination to conceal.

It will be said, that the inquests and returns I have quoted are from the Kilrush Union alone; I admit it; but I have described other Unions, as crowded, as ill clad, nay, worse; I have said, that I

did not see eviction to be at all confined to Clare; far from it, it is the "rule" of the West; I shall hereafter produce evidence to prove it to be so. If at Kilrush, the mortality weekly, per *thousand* inmates, was, for the quarter ending March 30th, 1850, 8·7, at Limerick it was 6: at Scariff, when I visited it last year, it was 9·4—this year it is 11·8! at Cliften it was this year 8·1; Galway, 7·6; Gort, 5·7; Ballina, 4·5; Castlebar, 4·9. I have a fair right then to presume, that the same causes which produce death in Kilrush, produce it in those other Unions, where I saw those same causes at work, and could trace in their degree the same effects.

At Ballinrobe, I see, the mortality weekly per thousand, for the quarter mentioned above, was 10·6! This Union has had its full share of eviction horrors, as I saw last year, and I know the practice is not discontinued.

I am satisfied, in all these Unions, the majority of deaths will be found to be amongst the late admissions; and if the whole truth could be got at, a very large proportion of those deaths have been hurried, if not actually brought about, by the grossest abuse of—Law; not a small number, by doings the law does not allow.

Talk of a public prosecutor in England! an able man, with a good clerk, kept in communication with the police, would in these districts have clients suffi-

play, would, I firmly believe, soon be the cause of the involuntary emigration of many rather high-class Emigrants.

It is now for ever objected to me—"You don't know our peasantry; you really don't: you have nothing like them in England; the same rules will not hold good with us which hold good with you: priest-ridden, ignorant, lazy, cunning, and dishonest; they little deserve the sympathy you would excite."

I will now, then, say a little of the peasantry, or tenantry, of the West; and what I say, shall be the honest conviction of an experience, obtained by repeated inquiry, now and for years back. They are said to be priest-ridden. I do not for one moment dispute but that, as in all Catholic lands, so in the West of Ireland, where the majority of the peasantry are Catholics, the priests have great power over them; their office gives it; the entire character of their officiate duty demands it. The more ignorant the peasantry, the more power must the priests have over them; for if they would have any religious teaching—advice—consolation;—any participation in religious ordinances, they must obtain it, for the most part, direct from the priest's lips—or through the ceremonies which the priest conducts.

When the mind is uncultivated, the imagination is chiefly worked on by the outward senses,—what the eye beholds becomes the substitute for much, which a cultivated understanding might have received or

rejected by the exercise of sober judgment. But those who learn by the eye and ear, whose inward impressions have been trained into obedience to outward impressions, are slow reasoners. The Catholic peasant has been reared to reverence his priest, as the organ by whom, what he is to believe, is to be taught him; what he is to do, declared to him; as the one power, on whose office, directing his own efforts, will depend the welfare of his soul. He has been reared to hate and oppose everything which would encroach on that narrow circle, within which he has bounded all he would have of religious faith and teaching. The Saviour—the Virgin—the Saints—are objects of his faith and worship, after the way he has been taught; the priest teaches him how to worship them—disciplines him in the things his Church declares essential to that worship.

I am of Protestants—*protestantissimus*. Still, I cannot deny—I see no reason why I should—that I have been struck most deeply with the repeated proofs I have received, of the devotion—*in their own way*—of the peasantry. I have seen them at all allowable times, in their chapels; I have come upon them in their private devotions—I have seen them watching by the dying—on the ditch-side—careless to answer any question, or receive any gift, in the depth of the anxiety with which they awaited the

stood thus watching, on the road, for the priest, hold a cross, made of two pieces of stick, tied with rush, before the glazed eyes of her dying parent ; nor shall I ever forget the quiet agony of expectation with which she waited, in hopes he would again recognize the emblem of his faith.

In the wards of workhouses, by day and at night, I have seen an attention paid to the forms of devotion which does these poor creatures the greatest credit. They, at least, are not ashamed to be seen at prayer; and never did I see the slightest levity shewn by others, when they were thus praying.

The language of excited lips is, in its way, no bad interpreter of the real language of the heart. I have seen a poor starving creature again and again pass a traveller, without thinking of asking for anything; a few pence, nay, one penny thrown to her, will fling her on her knees, let the road before her be what it may; with tear-startled eyes and uplifted hands, there will she kneel, and bless the giver of those pence with a vehemence and eloquence which could only come from the heart.

No two things can be more different, than the hackneyed blessings of the professional mendicant, and those obtained by an unexpected gift; to some of the thousands, who, starving, have yet ceased to beg of any but their poor neighbours: passing cars are generally to them, only as passing Relieving-officers, or Agents, or any of that large class, on whose lips are

for ever, the words "*Be out of that, now; why don't ye go to the workhouse?*" Go amongst the scalps and scalpeens; the wrecked dwellings you may find on every side: give your alms to the poor creatures you will find there, living as beasts—grazing on green food; the damp ground their bed; rotten wet thatch, on blackened sticks, their roof; relieve them, unexpectedly, and though it were only with the value of one meal, you will hear and see an eloquence of gratitude, speaking in every feature and gesture, invoking from the lips every office of the Saviour —every grace of the Virgin—every pleading of the Saints, to bless you, which is as astonishing as—to me—it is humiliating to the person on whom it is expended. There is something very dreadful in this cheapness of—blessings; I fear they are very little in demand, where they can be so easily purchased.

That the religion of very many of these peasants carries them patiently through the very deepest trials, none who have been amongst them will deny; it seems to be the only thing left them; it don't catch cold, fever, or die from exposure and want; legal process cannot evict it; it survives and is strong, when the body, in which it is the acting spirit, can scarce be said to live.

I cannot, then, wonder at the power of the priest over the minds of those who look for so much, by him and through him. Again, be it remembered,

regards the Catholic peasantry, in these scenes of social war and disruption, he *sympathises* with them, and that, not only in his spiritual character, but in his temporal character. He would be worse than man, and far less than a religious teacher, if he could live untouched by the misery he is forced to see; but he himself is touched by the same misery; when the flock is in process of dispersion, by violence, by fraud, by famine; the priest is himself brought to the very verge of absolute want; no wonder, then, if he is on their side; if he acts and speaks, indignantly, of what he sees. As a Christian minister, he would be bound to do so; he will not—for priests are but men—do so the less, in that the common suffering brings suffering on him.

That the mere political power of the priesthood is in abeyance, I admit; the people and the priests—the latter in ignorance, the former through a blindness I cannot excuse, or a folly I must ever reprobate, lent themselves to the designs of mere demagogues, who affected to seek social benefit, by the wildest theories of mere political agitation. Starving mobs were led to give support to so-called patriots, who were either mere knavish seekers of their own ends, or weak but dangerous actors in a drama, the plot of which was badly defined; the crisis of which could only have purchased a momentary triumph, at the present expense of the lives of thousands of their

followers; the future cost, of years of strife and confusion.

Priests and people have alike seen the folly of such national (?) attempts at freedom; they have learned enough to know that they are yet more likely to get justice from England by a patient, persevering exposure of their wrongs, than to obtain it, in spite of English opinion, at the hands of their own countrymen.

We in England have been taught to think *the Irish hate us*—it is false. Every feeling of an Englishman is known to be so opposed to tyranny, the abuse of power, the perversion of legal right; that, so far from being hated, it is my own belief, that we are, in our individual character, loved; and shall be yet more loved, as we shew more sympathy for those wrongs in Ireland, which we would not suffer to exist a day in England.

I am obliged to admit, with grief, what I fear is somewhat of an object of congratulation to many whom I respect. The religious character of the lower Irish has received of late "heavy blows, much discouragement." That they are becoming irregular in many of their Church's demands upon them; that they do not crowd their stations as they used to do; that they have become in some matters less moral, and therefore that they less readily submit to their Church's discipline—I admit. The naked must fore-

go even the publicity of religious public service; the weak become incapable of leaving their homes; fear of many an evil, keeps many close within their dwellings; starvation drives to dishonesty; the breaking up of every social tie; the indecent confusion of the workhouses, the indecent crowding of the huts; these are all so many powerful sources of moral poison; that they have a far-spreading effect I know; that they may make thousands, bad Catholics, I do not doubt, for they make bad men of them; but whatever my feeling for my own faith may be, my own deep sense of the Catholic's error, I cannot see any thing but a cause of grief, in the undermining of a people's religion, by such a process as this.

As to the ignorance of the peasantry, I at once admit that they have for the most part, in this western part of Ireland, been born and bred, in an ignorance on all subjects which require any amount of mental cultivation, which is most lamentable: But whose fault is this? What effort, until of late years, was made to give them any real education whatever? A very large proportion of them only understand the Irish tongue; it is notorious, that publications of any description, in that tongue, have been, and still are, very rare; those that now exist have been published for the most part avowedly for polemical purposes. There is no subject on which there exists more bitter division of opinion, than that of the education of the peasantry. There are those who argue that this

arises solely from religious jealousy; one party will not hear of any system, which does not teach in the schools from the whole Bible, and the English authorized version of it; the Roman Catholics very naturally object to this; they would only have their own version used, and only such portions of it as their priesthood consider expedient to set before the young; another party, steering between the two, would have selected—so to speak—*neutral* portions of the Holy Word made the text-book of religious teaching, so that the children of all might learn together, whether they were Protestants or Catholics.

Again, it is urged on me, and I am not prepared altogether to dispute it, that the priests are against all education; that they wish to keep the peasantry in ignorance, because the more ignorant they are, the greater their power over them, in opposition to those who would convert them. I must add to these generally allowed obstacles to education, in this part of Ireland, my own conviction, that very many of the very men of influence, who use these various arguments, as their creed may be; have also, one ground of common agreement, as against education; which they hold very strongly, but seldom have the courage to openly profess—they fear, that education may make the people more troublesome; less easily dealt with, after the fashion, in which men of all creeds, are very apt to deal with them. I myself quite believe that a good sound education, that species

of mental training which would be proper for the class of small holders, or peasantry of the west, would not only curb any undue influence of the priesthood, but it would, to a very great degree, check the tyrannical abuse of delegated power, of the agents, sub-agents, and drivers.

I have said, that there is a very large proportion of the lower grades of Irish, who know little of any tongue but *the Irish*; and yet, I have yet to learn, that any one of the legal processes, by which their lives and properties are every day affected, are ever published in that tongue; I have some now before me, that certainly are not. No one would more rejoice than I should, to hear that the Bible in the Irish language, could be generally read by these people; but I, in addition to the value I should set upon the study of that book, as it would affect their religious knowledge; should put this further gain to the account—that once taught to read that Book, there would be an opening, for the spread in the Irish language of literature; directly applicable, to the many phases of the social and political state of this people.

The dreadfully depressed state of the people at the present moment, altogether precludes the present "national system" having a fair chance in the distressed districts; I regret this, for though I think there is much which might be amended in that system, it is at all events one conceived in a liberal, tolerant

spirit, quite refreshing in a land where tolerance is so rare. I give every credit to the sincerity of those who oppose it, on the grounds that it appears to be a virtual surrender of the great principle, that the Bible, the whole of it, and nothing else, should be the ground work of all education; but I myself am borne down by the weight of that simple argument which says, this principle would consign to ignorance—of necessity, a very large proportion of the children of Catholics: these districts are essentially Catholic. I must not, also, conceal my own feeling, that it is wise to take every step which shall tend in any way to qualify that tone of social opposition and hate, which I am satisfied is so much fostered, by the for ever separating the Catholic and the Protestant.

It is said the tenantry, *i.e.* the peasantry are "lazy." Now, how have they been made so; and who have been the gainers by their sloth? Can any thing be more in opposition to every feeling and habit of industry than the rearing a people on a food—the potato — cultivated with the least possible pains, harvested with very little trouble, and cooked by the simplest and cheapest of all processes? A stack of turf, a potato heap, a cabin, and a pig, formed all the small holder required. With very little labour in the season he planted his potatoes, cut and stacked the turf; by a little more labour at another season he dug and pitted the potatoes; selling some, he bought his pig; fattening the pig from the others, he paid his rent

with it; he made a little more by working for larger holders or his landlord at their harvest; he had still time enough left on his hands to confirm him in lazy, idle habits.

And yet, with such a population, from the rent of such holdings, the owners of land reaped enormous incomes, were content to encourage the system, so long as it kept up their incomes; nay, more than this, were for ever causing or conniving at a still further subdivision of their property; thus they became men of importance; lords over an almost countless peasantry. Their jointure deeds, their marriage settlements, their establishments, were on a wild princely scale. Rack-rents were still paid; they went on spending, as if potato ground and peasant breeding could have no limit in its profitable returns; they got in debt—deeply in debt; leased out more land at high sums, to be minutely subdivided into heavy rented small holdings. The people grew too fast even for the potato; they had seasons of almost periodical famine. It was thought to check this by a Poor-law; for a few years that law did act in some degree as a warning, if not a check, to the awful abuse of property. The *potato blight came*, knocked from under their feet the ground which had long trembled beneath them, and left landlord, mortagee, middleman, agent, &c. to face the consequence of their folly and usury how they might. Now came the cry against the ignorant, the lazy peasantry; for they were no longer

in their ignorance and idleness a source of wealth, but a burden. With the potato went the pig—the great security for rent: creditors pressed their claims; the rate collector pressed his; no rack could have wrung the payment of rack rents on potato-valued land, when all confidence in the potato had vanished. If money could not be raised, money must be saved; those who could not pay rents, should, if possible, be prevented themselves from being burdens on the rates; the tenantry were paupers; paupers were a drain on the rent roll; the object was now to get rid of them; hence the wholesale clearances; hence that relentless, reckless work, which has within this few years driven from their homes, in one Union alone, more than 10,000 people; which has caused the death, the most painful death of very many thousands.

The peasantry are cunning and dishonest,—so it is said. I deny that they are generally dishonest; that being driven to steal or die has made them face the jail, rather than the grave, I admit; but when well treated, they were and are an honest race. As for cunning—here, as elsewhere, cunning is the child of circumstance. The instinct of the beast of the forest ever becomes more acute, as he practically learns the cunning by which man attempts to entrap him. The Irish peasant, in his ignorance, is no match for the acuteness of the paid agency, which has so long dealt with him; no people are more fond of law; they seek to hire craft to oppose to craft; at every

Sessions a spectator may see frieze-coated moths in dozens fluttering round legal lights; burnt again and again, they still persevere in the silly, simple flight to the "counsellor;" in vain he tells them that they have no chance: "Sure, then its just your honour's the man to make it clear for me in court."

The whole system of land tenure in a great part of Ireland, has been just that system which would beget low *cunning*—the cunning of ignorant people. The poorer a tenant could look, the less likely he was to be "*put upon*;" to look as if he thrived on his holding, was to hang out an invitation to have his rent raised: yes, let who will deny it, it is too true, that the Irish small holder has had every inducement to conceal every farthing of profit he could make by his tenancy; as sure as he had the character of doing well, he ran the risk of having his rent raised; such was the competition for land, that there were ever ready plenty of persons to step into his place. So exorbitant has been the rent in many districts, that the tenant had to *lie* himself into his holding, with the only hope of keeping it by more lying still. He had to promise a rent he knew he could not pay; to assert a capital he had not; and then to lie how he could, to get an abatement on the day of payment.

Many tenants had to work so many days for their landlords, as a part of their tenancy. I am ashamed to say, that it was the unanimous opinion of every independent employer of the peasantry in the dis-

tricts I visited, that nothing could for a time overcome their unbelief, that when put at task-work they would be paid the stipulated price; they had been so accustomed to deal with employers who had again and again deceived them.

That there are elements in the Irish character capable of being developed, on the side of industry, honesty, and intelligence, is easily proved. No men work better, wherever they are fairly dealt with and fairly paid; this every officer of every great engineering work will say; from the small-holding tenantry, and from the families of a class little, if any, raised above them, have been recruited the majority of one of the finest forces in the world—the Irish police; a force, not less distinguished for their physical, than they are for their moral and intellectual character.

As to the Irish peasantry being deserving of the sympathy I and very many others would seek to excite in their favour, I can only say, that I can conceive no class of human beings on this earth, whose condition, every way, can be worse. I know no one ingredient in the catalogue of those dark ingredients which enter into the composition of human suffering, which is not to be found in the cup from which they have, of late years, been compelled to drink. Much of what Howard found in the jails of Europe; not a little of the wrongs and sufferings the Wilberforces and Buxtons of our day have exposed in the case of the children of Africa; no less of suffering than that which

an Ashley has brought to light from beneath the ground, and above it; very much of the worst which has been said of the wrongs of the Polish patriots, Polish serfs, from Russian tyranny; has, in its degree, been the lot of the suffering people of the West of Ireland.

The worst feature in the whole matter is the fact, that this war of class on class, had its commencement, took its date, from the very hour the weakest class had become still weaker, by a direct dispensation of Providence.

God forbid, that I should say, that all landlords, all agents, have acted the same wantonly cruel part in the life-destruction drama of the West; or that I believe, that all proprietors really sanction all that is done in their name; but I cannot rid myself of the conviction, that the general spirit of landlordism, and the policy of agents generally, connives at, if it does not directly abet, that class war, that class extinction, which has existed, and now exists, to a degree defying all contradiction. I have heard, that it is openly avowed in certain circles, that the wholesale clearances are made on some—on many estates, *in order to enhance their selling value at the Rotunda sales;* I can just believe it, however horrible the idea.

In justice, I must now touch on one characteristic very generally ascribed to the peasantry; it is said that they are very *revengeful,* and the agrarian murders are quoted as proof that they are so. There is

no one public writer, I believe, who has written in stronger language than myself his abhorrence of that trait in the character of the Irish peasantry, which evinces itself, in their callousness, to the deaths by violence of those they hate. There is no one measure which could, in the severest justice, be devised, which I would not gladly see in force, to put down these horrible assassinations. I regard the paid or oath-bound assassins, as not one whit worse than those who witness the murders, but refuse to arrest the murderer, or give evidence against him. I think those really leagued for these impious ends, and those not in league, but who connive at them, are equally guilty. Still, I cannot say these murders surprise me. The men who do them, the class who connive at them, are in intellectual culture little better than brutes; they have all the passions of the most violent of brutes, with none of the restraints, which, giving man the command of his evil passions, raises him above them. For ever made victims of some legal process or other, they hate all law which they cannot turn against others; they make their own will their law; that will, inflamed by the specious arguments and wild theories of ill advisers, assumes the dark hue of the worst human hate; their whole existence, from the earliest moment they could dig a potato for themselves, has been one, binding them by every conceivable tie to the occupation of land, as the very tenure by which the living spirit would find

an occupation in their own persons. Their knowledge of history has simply been the traditions of their own and neighbours' holdings; if they have ever learned anything of politics, or polemics, it has been at the mouths of those, who knew well enough, that to rouse the passions of the ignorant, they must paint their oratory with the brush of untruth's colours; left for years to contend against many a real wrong, with no other weapons than the cunning they could oppose to the craft of those who for ever were trying to overreach them; disciplined in petty falsehood in the schools of usurious middlemen; they were fitting subjects for those schools, which in every age are from time to time so openly established by ambitious demagogues, who need numbers to prop their own insignificance; and know full well, that to get those numbers they must be little particular in the means they use.

I am not going to deny but that Ireland has been, in years past, sorely misgoverned; that wanton insult was often cast upon her, in matters in which insult breeds most discontent; that she had not that share of either religious, or political freedom, which was her due. But I do assert that the means which were taken to enforce attention to her real wrongs, were those which have bred in her people, by exciting them with statements of false and exaggerated wrongs, a spirit every lover of that country will for ever deplore.

Let any one take the files of Irish and English papers for some years back, and study their contents, and he will cease to wonder that the Irish peasant takes the law into his own hands; it would be contrary to all the experience of history, if the poison of sedition, if the preachings of violence, of very many years, imbibed and digested by this class, did not bear their natural fruit—a sullen, revengeful spirit: deceived and betrayed by those who promised what they knew they never could perform; the peasantry now trust none above their own class. It is on that class that every social misery has come with a stunning force; they see their race in progress of extinction; they prefer the jail to the workhouse—the very jails are full. Human beings who have been so bred, so socially depraved, so politically misled, so driven wholesale from everything to which their nature clings—looking at the workhouses, as too many have found them to be, as refuges, in which the evils encountered are worse than the evils fled; seeing house after house cast down—kindred after kindred, doomed to the workhouse, to banishment, or to death—who can wonder that they are ever ripe for every deed of violence; that they have learned to rejoice in the perpetration of acts, the perpetration of which so brands infamy on their nation.

Let no one course be spared which can pursue the assassin, till the earth is rid of him; lay on all who pollute the earth, by the countenance of his crime,

all of painful burden the law can impose; but let us be assured of this, the remedy for this moral disease is—the education of the people, to the raising them from their moral degradation; the treatment of that people with Christian forbearance, rather than with legal stringency, in a crisis, which has so sorely wounded them in its every circumstance, that we cannot wonder if they are impatient under any aggravation of their social wounds.

To the honour of the districts I have now twice visited, the patience and forbearance of the people has had a trial, which has proved it to be beyond all praise; they suffer, die, are silent, and scarce in any instance are they driven to violence; for such a people, so patient, and yet so suffering, who does not feel —who, feeling, would not do his best to aid them. I can only pray that they may resist all temptation to violence, leaving their condition, once exposed to the full force of public opinion, to that redress which the verdict of public justice will reward, and ere long see enforced.

CHAPTER XIX.

TENANT-RIGHT AGITATION—WILL GAIN FORCE IN THE WEST FROM THE OPPRESSION OF THE TENANTS—JUSTICE TO PEASANT AS WELL AS TO PROPRIETOR—TENANTS IN THE WEST COMPARED WITH TENANTS IN THE NORTH—THE PROPRIETORS' TRUE INTEREST, SPEEDY JUSTICE TO TENANTRY.

Can Ireland be, for any length of time, without some popular cause of agitation? to us, in our generation, it would seem to be impossible. In the Western districts, which I visited, I could, however, hear of no movement on any grounds of political grievance; but I could perceive that the present lull was no proof of contentment. Unless I much mistake, the next great movement of the masses will take a form of a very different character from those movements which have kept this unhappy land, of late years, in so unsettled a state.

There are those, amongst men of no mean political ability, who are inclined to treat lightly the "tenant-right agitation;" they argue, that whatever may have been the result of the custom, which has

assumed all the force of law, as determining tenure and its rights in Ulster and elsewhere, it is mere folly to suppose that any such custom shall ever rule the relations of landlord and tenant in the South and West. I admit, that, in the West, the feeling thus far developed on this question is but as a distant echo of the cry from the North; but I have seen enough of the condition of the West to account to me for the apparent weakness of the "tenant-right" agitation there: when a population is bleeding at every pore, the pressure for the life of the moment may well account for the want of all energy, with regard to the prospects of the years which may or may not be granted to it.

If "tenant-right" is "landlord-wrong," as many say, never did men so deliberately set to work to achieve their own ruin as these Western proprietors are doing. Why, the very gables of the land, the roof-robbed stones, would soon find a voice and cry for "tenant-right," if exposure, fever, cold, hunger, and workhouse relief (?) should continue to combine to close the mouths of men. I am, and I have again and again proved it, no advocate for that extreme interference with the owner of property, and his tenants, which is so boldly advocated by the agitators of this question. I have always held that it would scarcely, under any circumstances, be justifiable to force on the owner in fee a permanent partnership with the mere conditional occupier. I am

one of those who believe that law seldom meddles between landlord and tenant without working to the injury of both. If I have held extreme opinions, as to the jealousy with which every right of property should be guarded, I have done so from the feeling that public opinion and self interest would combine to enforce the duties attached to property.

I never read of, never dreamed of such romantic oppression as that which I have lately learned really exists; even now, when I look at the papers before me, attested as they seem to be, by scenes which, unless I dream, I surely saw, I can scarcely accept the reality, of what appears to be a page from some ill-conceived romance.

Then, again, there is a "Bradshaw" on my table; it persists in assuring me, that the scenes I am forced to believe I saw, were only at that distance from the seat of Government, which a traveller may compass, easily, in some "thirty hours." English public opinion may be so diluted in its strength, before it could reach even the Mauritius, that I could suppose small tyrants might there act their little tyrannies, and be heedless of English rebuke; but *Kilrush*, for all I know to the contrary, reads each day its *yesterday's* "Times," and yet its Union records week after week, scores of cases of human beings, late "tenantry," coming to its workhouse, just in time to die under a roof, having been forbidden

I am, nevertheless, very bigoted in my opinion, that the tenant-right of Ulster could be only forced on the proprietors of Ireland generally, by gross injustice; but I am quite satisfied, that the time is come, when some check must be put upon that reckless abuse of the rights of property, which deliberately compasses in a day of trial, the ruin, if not deaths, of tens of thousands of these self-same beings; from whom, by a course of many years hard exaction, immense incomes were drawn in better times. This much I am quite prepared to contend—if all this eviction is legal, and the consequences of it are the mere consequences of *law*, not of abuse of it; if I am to be told, the proprietor has nothing to do with the after effect of these laws, to which he has a clear right to appeal; I must be permitted to ask, Are one set of laws to be rigidly enforced, another set cunningly evaded, or wilfully broke by the same parties; and yet, the enforcement to be justified, whilst the evasion is winked at? Do the Landlords and Agents, who act as Guardians, give to the tenantry when pauperized, the same measure of law they deal out to make them paupers?

If the landlord has a right to eject, the pauper has a right to certain shelter, certain support, &c. &c.—*Vide* "Green Book of Orders of Commissioners of Poor-laws." Compare what the pauper gets, with what he is ordered, and then see how the law differs

in the measure of justice it gives, from the measure of justice by which it takes from him. O, but I hear it said, "the proprietors cannot pay the rates to keep the pauper as the law orders him to be kept." I don't now believe this so easily as I did last year; I was then led to think, that the return from land was so little, and the rates so high, that it was impossible to carry out the Poor-law humanely, even with that niggard amount of humane treatment to which it entitles the destitute. I have now more knowledge of the real expense of the existing pauperism, the real amount of money the land *has returned in rent*, even during the last year or two. I had been led to believe, that the Poor-law valuation was *above* the letting value of the land; I have now reason to know, that in some of the very districts most cruelly defaced by the evictions, the land has been let for a very far higher rent than the Poor-law valuation would set it at; nay, I believe that a very large amount of most exorbitant rents has been netted, though I do not say it has reached the landlord's own pocket.

We English get frightened at the number of paupers on the rates in Ireland; and arguing on our own experience of the expense of pauperism, we set down huge sums as the cost of Irish relief. I have an account of a Union in Clare now before me, that of Ennis; there were actually in the workhouses 3528 persons; the cost for the week was £192. 8*s* 7¾*d*.

4*s* 6*d*—in kind, £149. 9*s* 9*d*. Meal has lately risen, but I see that the cost per head for the last week of last month (July), of the paupers of the Limerick Union, was 12⅛*d*. In several Unions I visited, the cost per head, weekly, was under 11*d*, out-door relief about 8*d*. I am just returned from my own Board of Guardians in England—the cost per week, per head, is 2*s* 7½*d*!

I have some idea, that if in the distressed districts, the money received from Government, directly and indirectly; the money received from English charity; the money lately received per rate-in-aid; *the money acturally collected for rent and rates,* was all put together, and a balance struck between the gross sum and that actually spent in relieving destitution, we should arrive at a most puzzling result, as to where the balance has been expended. I am sure of one thing, our indignation would not be less than it now is, at the cruel course pursued on the grounds of—so called—necessity. I know I shall be told; that the Poor-law is an English measure, worked on English principle, &c. &c. I have nothing to say to this, beyond the assertion, that Irish Guardians do not work it according to law, though the same parties do work their evictions to the extreme letter of the law. If we cannot pay our rates in England, extreme measures are taken, just as the Western landlords take them to get their rents. If I am told, that to find proper workhouses, to feed the paupers,

clothe and educate them according to law, could only be done by selling up a great portion of the estates; what, then? is the selling up of one man worse than the selling up another? Has the peasant no claims for mercy, if mercy is to be shewn the class above him? Because landlords are bankrupt, are tens of thousands of miserable beings, bred upon their estates, to be cast on the mercies of a Poor-law, and then denied that amount of charity, which the law declares to be their due?

No reverence for the rights of property can guard it from attack on those rights, when such property is found to be either itself a mere shadow; or if it be of any substance, acting out its rights in opposition to all that ever claimed respect for such rights. Go where Tenant-right exists—go where the tenant by a sense of some security of tenure, feels that he may hope to reap the fruits of his industry; and you will find, however subdivided the land may be, the tenantry are in comparative comfort: the reason is obvious, industry cannot survive without *hope*; the very soul of a tenant's hope, is—that he may himself gather the result of his own invested capital, his own industry. Land, like life, is a trust—the reckoning for the abuse of the latter is an affair principally of the next world; but who shall dare to argue, that when law, by common consent, was made the guardian of the proprietor's rights, it bound itself to

The tenantry of the West were bred to be tenantry not labourers; their tenancy was for many generations, at the cost of their own character, more profitable to the proprietor, than their labour, as labourers would have been. He never could have farmed to the profit, to which he let and sublet. I have learned to discard the idea that the subletting, was so altogether in opposition to the will of the landlord. The middleman, he must have known, could never have paid the rent he did, had he not looked to redivide his holdings again and again.

Why is the tenant's house in the West, of so homely a structure, that any of the well trained levelling gangs, can make its utter ruin, almost a matter of minutes?—simply because, feeling the uncertainty of his tenure, it was the best he dared to build, or rent. Why did these cottier tenants, live so from hand to mouth, not caring to save, or if they saved, not daring to shew any improvement in their condition?—because, having no leases, or none that could not easily be rendered void, they feared, to have their rent raised, the moment it was known, they had made one farthing beyond the sum on which they could exist. Why is it, that in the counties of Ireland, where there is something like fixity of tenure; the land is worked in a different way; the higher classes of crops grown, stock kept, &c. whilst the Western tenant, leant alone on potatoes, with now and then a patch of oats?—because the

said Western tenant knew, that to bring the face of his land to a higher culture, was to advertise it, as in the market, for all who would fee the driver, or the agent, to get possession of it for them, at the *higher* rent they would boldly promise. Can it be wondered at, when it is proved, to the experience of thousands, that property has been so abused, industry so fettered, idleness so encouraged, lying and cunning so fostered, that there is a feeling gaining ground, that for the good of all—for the common weal; the law should give to the tenant a better, a more hopeful position?

The nature of a tenant-right agitation, will now be very different from that of any agitation we have yet known; it will be one, which for once will throw open its arms to welcome men of all creeds, all politics. The agitators will be of a class of far more esteem, than ever were the leaders of mere political or sectarian movements. They will argue from premises, very difficult to refute, capable of the most popular reception. They will hold up two pictures, and bid us look on this—on that—on the comparative prosperity of subdivided Ulster; on the wretchedness of Connaught. They will say *here* are solvent tenants, solvent landlords, a people well domiciled; cropping their lands with turnips, wheat, flax, &c. living at ease, an ease purchased by industry; they will say—on the other hand, *there*, are large fields planted with workhouse corpses; vast districts of fallen dwellings—thousands of acres of waste land—

land fast receding to its original barrenness; *there*, paupers are counted in tens of thousands; granaries, corn stores, and factories rented for workhouses, and crammed as soon as hired;—*here*, behold water power turned to account, factories raising up markets for agricultural produce, scenes of busy employment, active enterprise;—*there*, water power wasted—manufacture almost unknown, or only kept alive by the force of *alms;* the people naked, and yet, fields barren of the flax the power of the rivers could turn to clothing—*here*, they will say, "is tenant-right," prosperity,—a low degree of pauperism;—*there*, mere property right—adversity—unheard of pauperism and mortality, far spread ruin.

They will add to these more homely illustrations, of the effect of tenants in security, as opposed to tenants wholly unsecured in their tenure; arguments, drawn from a comparison of the intellectual condition of the two classes; pointing to the schools, churches, chapels, &c. on the one side, and their effect upon the social condition of every class; on the other side, holding up the ignorance of the masses, the wretched church and chapel accommodation; the scanty attendance on the schools, and the general neglect of all the known means, of improving the intellectual tone of social life.

Now I am far from myself admitting, that the force of such arguments, if they can be proved to be well founded in their premises, would lead me to

allow, that the tenant-right of Ulster, could be justifiably forced upon the landlords of the West. But knowing, as I do, the disposition of the people in the West, to accept such arguments; not only for what they allow to their weight, but because they tend to a consummation, they have long desired; I shall not be surprised, if the utter disgust, and discontent, the dealings of the landlords have produced, prepare the way in the Western districts, for the most strenuous efforts, on the side of that agitation, on this question, as yet, chiefly confined to the more northern, and eastern parts of Ireland.

The new proprietary, it is to be hoped, will be wise in time; there are many ways of forming agreements with tenantry, giving to them what is just towards them; securing to them, a fair and equitable treatment, as regards the questions of rent, value of improvement, duration, and conditions of tenure; without resorting to the length, which in my opinion seems to make the landlord a mere annuitant on his own estate. If they, with those of the present proprietary, who may yet weather the storm, will seek by timely measures of justice, to disarm the force that threatens them; they may do it, to their own gain, and the social benefit of their several districts; but if on the other hand they are going to stand on the letter of their right—*to do as they like with their own*; I fear they will find, when it is too late, that the days are gone by, in which, such a stretching of

the recognised privileges of property will be endured.*

They had better learn of Lincolnshire, and of the north of England, how to deal with tenantry, before they are forced to learn a less agreeable lesson from the county Down, and the north of Ireland. Of the effect the late policy of the Irish proprietary, especially in the West, has already had on public opinion; there scarce can be a stronger proof, than the rejection of the "Bill," by the House of Commons, for the better protection of the landlord's right to the crops, in the case of insolvent tenants. The Legislature, naturally enough, fears to put even a just power into the hands of those, who themselves, or by their

* Since the above was written, I have seen the accounts of the sayings and doings of the Tenant-Right League; they do not take me at all by surprise; I have long since felt and declared my opinion,—that the land question would ere long enlist into one body, men of every creed. I can only hope, means may now be taken, to do what is fair between both parties, before the pressure from without, may threaten even louder than at present, to bring about a system, I think fair, to neither landlord or tenant; for it destroys their true position towards each other; taking from one, the power he ought to hold over his own property; giving to the other *possession*, under the name of *tenancy*. I cannot but think, that all which justice would demand for either party could be obtained, without this open departure from those principles of justice, as regards the rights of ownership, which are the very basis of civilization.

agents, have so abused the power they at present possess. I regard "corn lifting" as a thing which should be put down by law; I therefore regret that power has not been given to suppress it; but I am not surprised at the jealousy which has denied that power. I regret the more, that some simple Act has not been passed, to check the turning the Sabbath into a day of fraud; because, I fear this fraudulent practice will find favour, in districts, where the tenants have been well treated. I believe, however, the amount of crop-lifting last year was much exaggerated; I fear it will be far exceeded this year. A very great number of tenants, hold on with their land, only to the moment, when they can realize enough to fly to America; to get the means of doing so, they will strain their every cunning.

CHAPTER XIII.

BRIGHTER PROSPECTS—CONSOLIDATION OF HOLDINGS—DECREASE OF SMALL TENANTRY—THE EFFECT ON LABOUR OF PUBLIC WORKS—AGRICULTURAL INSTRUCTION—GLASNEVIN COLLEGE—ABSENTEEISM—THE PRIESTS—THEIR CONDITION—ENCUMBERED ESTATES ACT.

I HAVE now to invite my reader's attention to some of the brighter features in the state of this unhappy country. It used to be said, that there was a population in Ireland so disproportioned to the real power of the soil to afford employment for it, that this alone was cause sufficient to account for the amount of misery which existed. I do not think any one possessed of common sense, and the most limited knowledge of Ireland, can say this at the present time. According to the returns of the Emigration Commissioners, emigration from Ireland to the Colonies and the United States, has averaged for the last three years, 200,000 per annum; there is now no material diminution in the outward-bound movement of this people. It is a well-known fact, that very large sums are for ever arriving, by one channel or another, from those who have gone, to help those who remain to follow them. Unfortunately, there is no way of

ascertaining the amount of the doings of death in the various Unions with anything like accuracy; my own firm belief is, that if a line was drawn from Ballina, Mayo, touching the border of Roscommon, King's County, and Kilkenny, to Waterford, that to the West of that line, the decrease in 1851 will be found to be *not less than* 40 *per cent* on the census of 1841; I believe that death and emigration have yet to decrease very seriously the population for at least another year. There are scarcely any marriages, the males have died, or emigrated, in a far greater proportion than the females; and a very large proportion of the existing pauper population of the West are in a condition of weakness, forbidding hope of eventual recovery; many may live for a few years, surviving their present physical depression; but I believe, the dysentery produced by famine and exposure so injures the organism of life, that all that skill and care can do seldom affects anything beyond an arrest of the acute symptoms; chronic ailment of the worst character remains.

If, then, over-population was a curse, it must be allowed that, however awful, in every sense, has been the process, a decrease has been effected, and is still in progress, likely to remove this avowed bane of Ireland. It has been argued, that the land could never give the employment, which alone could make the capital invested in it reproductive, until the holdings were more consolidated. I here insert a table,

compiled from Captain Larcom's returns for 1848, shewing, in the counties I visited, the progress of consolidation.

	Holdings above 1 and not exceeding 5 acres.			Holdings above 5 and not exceeding 15 acres.			Holdings above 15 and not exceeding 30 acres.		
	Numbers in		Decrease.	Numbers in		Decrease.	Numbers in		Decrease.
	1847	1848		1847	1848		1847	1848	
Clare . .	4,747	2,763	1,984	10,977	8,110	2,867	7,936	7,661	275
Limerick	5,051	3,927	1,124	6,048	5,174	874	4,919	4,736	183
Galway .	12,798	9,419	3,379	21,621	17,805	3,816	10,486	8,911	1575
Mayo . .	10,349	6,775	3,574	23,571	19,230	4,341	9,857	9,403	454
Total. . .	32,945	22,884	10,061	62,217	50,319	11,898	33,198	30,711	2487
	Total Decrease, 10,061			Total Decrease, 11,898			Total Decrease, 2,487		

Total decrease, in one year, in the above four counties, of holdings under 30 acres 24,446

It appears from the above table, that *in one year*, the holdings in those counties, between one and five acres, have *decreased* 10,061 ; between five and fifteen acres, 11,898 ; between fifteen, and not exceeding thirty acres, 2,487.

In *the whole of Ireland*, between 1847 and 1848— I quote again from the same returns—

Holdings under one acre have become 30 per cent less.
Ditto above one, and not exceeding five 20 „
Ditto five „ fifteen 11 „
Ditto fifteen „ thirty 3 „
Above thirty acres, there is an *increase* of 3 per cent.

That the small farms and farmers have thus undergone rapid obliteration, even in one year, is a fact beyond all dispute. The returns for 1849 are not yet published: unless I am mistaken, they will prove the process of exterminating the small holdings has not flagged.

What prospect is there of these consolidated holdings being turned to account? What are the owners doing with them? The tenants—are they tenanted? In a great part of the country through which I travelled, nothing can be worse than the appearance of a great proportion of the land said to be under cultivation; where four or five holdings have been thrown into one, a great deal of what I saw was the tillage of men without knowledge or capital; there was a good deal of potato, some little oats, scarce any turnips, and very little wheat. The crops were foul and poor; a good deal of land was waste; there were all the marks of former tillage of some sort; but the surface of a great deal of the ground was a mass of weeds, thistles, &c. The farmhouses(?) had no conveniences for farming; it is clear to me the majority of these tenants, who have eagerly grasped the land, torn from, or deserted by others, must soon follow them, and will do so, either voluntarily midnight fashion, or by day, under Sheriff pressure. They had no capital or skill; they have been offered no security that, had they both, their application would eventually benefit themselves. They just answer this purpose—they exist—the pro-

prietor's apology for eviction; they adorn "Particulars of Sale" of encumbered estates, as tenantry in occupation of *promising holdings*.

Nevertheless, there is this much of hope, in this state of things; new proprietors, with capital, and without encumbrances, have had their way so far smoothed, that they have, in reality, little surplus labour to provide for; and the estates are just in that condition, which, whilst it calls for energy and industry, has now fewer difficulties, in the way of both, than their former condition. A better system of tenure, some present help, some little sympathy, a little patience, and practical teaching; may yet make of the tenantry who remain, valuable agents for their own eventual good, and the return from the soil of produce, sufficient to pay a fair interest for the capital invested.

A very large number of the peasantry, are being fast led into habits, which will fit them for hard work, in return for money *wages*; a great and satisfactory change from their old potato-bred habits: I allude to the men, employed on the drainage, and other great works, now in progress. These men will be available for very much of that species of work, which a better state of farming will require. The amount of arterial drainage now in progress, will, when completed, confer extended and permanent benefit to the districts through which it will pass; it will give the owners of lands, over a large extent of

country, the power, at a comparatively small expense, to drain their property, and thus permanently raise its value.

The cultivation of the potato, must now, I would hope, at once, and for ever, be given up, as the great absorbing object of the tiller of the soil. In the year 1848, as compared with 1847, that crop occupied an *increase* of area to the amount of 481,750 acres; it will not be denied, that this present year has seen every possible pains taken, to give this favourite root, again, a position as the first object of the small farmers' hope; as I write, I have received intelligence corroborating all my fears—that again the potato would be, what is called blighted. I myself do not believe it is a *blight*. I firmly believe, this vegetable has now—from what first cause I know not—an hereditary taint of constitution; like scrofula in the human race, there is some latent germ of disease, in the genus, potato, which will from time to time develop itself, in more or less severity, in the various species of that root. I believe it will not for many years, if ever, put off this susceptibility to disease; one year may be better than another, but I expect that there will be few years, in which those who look for a harvest of this root, unaffected by disease, will not be disappointed. Deeply as I regret this year's threatened visitation; I cannot but believe, it will work for eventual good.

The intersection of Ireland from East to West by

railway, is in quick progress; when the railway is open to Galway, it will, I am satisfied, prove of very great benefit to the whole of the western coast. Ready access to markets, is a very great incentive to industry; it will require years to resuscitate mere local demand, to that amount, which would be required to develop the resources of the coasts, the lakes, and the soil of the West: ready and quick communication with Dublin and the East and North of Ireland, in connection with such a town as Galway, must tell greatly in favour of the country, for miles around: the opening of the canal to Lough Corrib, and from that Lake again to Lough Mask, making a safe and speedy transit for goods to Galway from so great a distance up the country, will help the extreme North-Western districts. I look at the supposed value to the West of Ireland of the railroad to Galway, on the supposition of that port becoming a packet station, as quite secondary to its value, in the way of creating a market for the produce of those fisheries, farms, and *factories* in the West, which I have myself no doubt, will in the course of time, exist and require, as they will thus obtain, such a means of disposing of the result of their several productive powers.

It is in vain to attempt to spur on the different branches of industry, for which there is such an ample field in Connaught, until there is a prospect of a better market for their produce. What is doing

now by individuals, however praiseworthy, is only the mere keeping just alive what might be nurtured into great results. There is not native capital enough to call out all that could be done by native industry; but I am satisfied there is a good deal of capital in Ireland, as well as in England, only waiting for the ordinary chances of commercial speculation to embark itself in the fisheries and farms of Connaught; and I have no doubt, in my own mind, but that in a country so suited to the growth of flax, with an amount of water power to be had at such little cost, the best of building materials cheap at hand, and thousands of hands to be very reasonably hired, manufactories of linen and of woollen will ere long spring up in these districts.

If we once see a speedy and cheap communication open between a country possessing great advantages for cheap production, with distant localities, in which there is a demand for the matters produced; if we could see some mitigation of those awful scenes of misery, which are now so far spread, and so powerfully prejudice every would be settler; if we should happily arrive at a time when sectarian and political differences could so far restrain their respective evil passions, that men could live at least as neighbours in this life, however they may differ in politics and polemics; if there was once a well established sense of safety to life and property, of the reasonable probability of the results of industry becoming the

secured property of the industrious producing them; then, I have no doubt, but those districts in the West of Ireland, now so morally and socially defaced, in which God's gifts are so wantonly abused, would become fields of successful commercial and agricultural enterprize, to an extent sufficient to restore the people to a state of comparative prosperity.

A great deal of money is now expending under the Land Improvement Act; and I rejoice to see the money so obtained may now be applied in the erection of farm buildings; in no direction could borrowed money be of more service. With regard to agriculture, so far as a more accurate knowledge of its principles is a thing to be desired in these districts, rapid strides are making in the right direction. Not merely is there a disposition on the part of such men as Lord Lucan, Lord Clancarty, Colonel Knox Gore, and many others, to prove, at their own expense on their own estates, the advantages of a sound system of agriculture, but there is a large machinery at work to force, as it were, a knowledge of good husbandry on the attention of the small holders: too old to come to school, the schoolmaster is *sent to them:* on very many large estates individuals called "Practical Instructors" are salaried to go amongst the farmers to offer, gratuitously, advice and general direction, as to all the best means of improving their land, and increasing its returns, which such land will admit of. I had the pleasure, at Lord Clancarty's, of seeing

several of his small farms, on my former tour, and hearing from his lips, on the spot the amount of increased produce these small holders had attained, by having given their minds to learn, and their hands to practise, improved husbandry—he had on his estate one of these "Practical Instructors."

There is a large Agricultural Society at Balinasloe; I have attended many such meetings in England, to meet English agricultural stars, but I must say, I never heard, at any English meeting, anything so good and practical as the speeches which I have read as delivered at these Irish meetings. It will serve to give the reader some idea of the effort making to spread sound agricultural knowledge, if I now proceed to detail the result of my late visit to the Glasnevin Model Farm Establishment, near Dublin. This school is under her Majesty's Commissioners of National Education in Ireland. I found some neat buildings in connection with about 100 acres, more or less, of land; there were cattle sheds, with a certain amount of stock, piggeries, &c. The land was very heavily cropped, and farmed on the highest known principles, applicable to such an extent of soil. It is worked, I believe, entirely by the labour of the pupils, under the direction of a Mr. John Donaghy, the Agricultural Instructor and Superintendent.

The young men here educated, are received on certain rules of recommendation, from all parts of Ireland,

to be qualified for the situations of Land Bailiffs; Agricultural teachers in schools; Practical Instructors in the provinces; or as Farmers on their own account. The day I visited the establishment, there were forty-seven pupils in course of instruction. Before giving any account of the nature of the education afforded them, I will place before the reader the different parts of Ireland from which these forty-seven pupils came, their parentage, and their intended future occupation, from particulars kindly furnished at my desire.

Sons of Farmers . .	26
„ Tradesmen . .	7
„ Land Stewards .	6
„ Schoolmasters .	6
Son of a House Agent .	1
„ Medical Man .	1
	47

INTENDED OCCUPATION.	
To be Land Stewards .	43
To farm on his own account . . .	1
To teach Agriculture .	3
	47

HAVE COME FROM.

Co. of Cork . . .	2	Co. of Meath . . .	1
„ Donegal . .	1	„ Wicklow . .	2
„ Clare . . .	4	„ Galway . .	3
„ Limerick . .	1	„ Mayo . . .	3
„ Roscommon . .	1	„ Kerry . . .	1
„ Kildare . .	2	„ Dublin . .	1
„ Down . . .	2	„ Louth . . .	1
„ Antrim . .	2	„ Waterford . .	3
„ Cavan . . .	4	„ Tyrone . .	1
„ Kilkenny . .	2	„ Leitrim . .	2
„ King's Co. . .	1	„ Tipperary . .	1
			47

From the above particulars it will be seen, that the advantages of this institution are sought by just that class most to be desired, for the ends for which it was established; it also appears, that this leavening of the agricultural mind, is a process in course of action throughout the length and breadth of the country.

The following is the result of an inquiry as to the destination of those pupils who have been already educated. Of seventy-one pupils who have left this establishment since 1st Nov. 1847 to the 1st of July, 1850,

26 have been appointed to conduct small Agricultural schools.
8 to Literary schools, until Agricultural schools need their services.
4 are Land Stewards.
4 Practical Agriculturists on private estates.
3 „ „ under Lord Clarendon's letter.
4 conduct the business of their fathers' farms.
5 have emigrated.
5 dismissed.
12 occupations unknown.

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After going over the land in cultivation, I saw the young men collected in the Class-room. They were put through a long examination in the practice and theory of agriculture. They were questioned narrowly as to the nature and classification of soils; the theory and practice of draining; the economy, nature, and effect of manures, natural and artificial; the

relative cost of particular courses of cropping; the theory of cropping; succession of crops, &c. The organism of plants; their relative effect upon the soil; the application of chemistry to agriculture; the comparative cost of land worked as arable or pasture, &c. &c. They were, in fact, examined with some strictness as to their knowledge of all those subjects, which form the staple of books on the Science and Practice of High-farming. Many of them answered quickly and *understandingly*; they all gave evidence that fully as much pains was taken in the theoretical teaching, as in the practical. I looked at some of the themes they write on the subject of agriculture; they were all directed to the same end, *viz.* teaching thoroughly all that is known on this interesting branch of knowledge. I at first doubted whether they could understand the scientific terms they so freely used; I therefore laid wait for an opportunity to test one of them, and, to my surprise, had a good plain definition of a term given, which I thought must have been as Hebrew to the youth who used it.

They looked to me to be youths of just the right stamp for the purpose for which they were in training; hardy, healthy and homely. They have lately got an increase of land for the farm, and are about to put up a house and offices on a larger scale. I was much gratified with the time I spent at this establishment; I can see no bound to the good it is calculated to effect. In December, 1848, there were fifty agricultural

schools in connection with the Commissioners of Education in Ireland. I am afraid I forgot to inquire whether the pupils were chiefly Catholics or Protestants, I hope there are many of both religious professions, and have no doubt that the pupils of these establishments are not exclusively of any one religious denomination.

Those only who have had an opportunity of observing the general nature of farming, as practised amongst the small holders in the West, can form any true idea of the value of this system of training young men to become teachers, and exhibitors of a very different practice. The soil of the South and West of Ireland is, very much of it, capable of a very high cultivation, especially as regards root crops and flax; but much of it requires thorough draining, and a very large proportion of the tenantry, until of late years, had nothing beyond the most limited knowledge of those well known principles, which regulate good tillage.

The "Agriculturists" and "Practical Instructors" make it their duty to go from farm to farm, wherever invited, and give on the spot every necessary advice and direction, to assist the tenant in bettering his mode of tillage. They work powerfully in aid of the Agricultural Societies, and very generally act as judges on those estates, where the proprietors try by premiums to improve the farming of their tenantry.

I have now before me a hand-bill relative to prizes,

—1st, A NEW TURN PLOUGH; 2nd, A DOUBLE HARROW; 3rd, THREE TURNIP HOES—offered by the proprietor of Kilbrittain Castle, county of Cork, for competition amongst his tenantry; I have also the award made, with all its details of inspection, and grounds of decision, it is signed, T. F. GERRARD, Practical Instructor; GEO. RONALDSON, Superintendent of Drainage; HUGH IRVINE, Agriculturist. In a short address circulated with the above award, Colonel Alcock reminds his tenantry how much they owe to the "Practical Instructor."

I believe, in nothing will "practical instruction" more avail for good, than in connection with the culture and management of flax. It is now capable of easy proof, that flax grown for the loom, not for seed, is not the land scourging crop generally supposed; it is found that there are ready means of returning to the soil from the refuse of the crop, and by use of the water in which the crop is steeped, all or nearly all, of those properties of the soil the crop has taken from it. Both soil and climate are peculiarly adapted for the growth of flax, and the employment it affords in its preparation for the loom is most valuable. So far then, as the population being now, not more than sufficient (I doubt its sufficiency) to cultivate the land in the West of Ireland; the land being so cleared of small holdings, that there is a great facility for an improved system of cultivation; the peasantry, in large numbers, having, by employment under engi-

neers, at draining and other operations, acquired habits of hard work, for moderate money-wages. A great and systematic effort being in operation to teach practically the best methods of cultivating the soil: it cannot be denied but that there are grounds for hope of a better state of things—grounds not rendered less sound from the warning again given to us, of the uncertain result of potato culture. That there is also very great improvement in the returns of "live stock" upon the face of the land cannot be denied. There is even to the passing traveller, proof that the pig is again making his appearance, and here and there, as you travel eastward, may be seen a considerable quantity of sheep and cattle.

Taking a comparison between the year 1847 and 1848, and classing the holdings of the whole rural districts of Ireland, as—under 1 acre—above 1 under 5—above 5, not exceeding 15—above 15, not exceeding 30—above 30. There was an increase in horses and mules at £8. per head to the value of £8,976—a *decrease* of asses at £1. per head, to the amount of £7,01*z*. Cattle at £6. 10*s* per head, an *increase* to the value of £743,354. Sheep at £1. 2*s* per head, had *decreased* to an amount in value of £189,857. Pigs at £1. 5*s* per head had *increased*, as in value to the amount of £40,134.

The horses had decreased on the holdings under 15 acres to the amount in *numbers* of 10,222; increasing on the larger holdings 11,344. Cattle on

holdings under 15 acres, had decreased in numbers 36,300; on the larger holdings they had increased 149,662; on the holdings under 15 acres, sheep had numerically decreased 56,622; on the larger holdings also decreased 115,906! on the holdings under 15 acres pigs had increased 9,455, on the larger holdings 22,652. The reader must bear in mind these details are taken from Captain Larcom's tables of 1847-1848—they shew a great diminution in the capital of small farmers; a large increase in the stock of the larger holders.

I look with much curiosity to the forthcoming returns, which will shew us the state of things in 1849, my own impression is, pigs will still be looking up. Cattle will have increased, though not in the ratio of 1848 over 1847. Sheep it will not surprise me to find, have, as to all Ireland, increased, but have decreased in the West of it.

One result of the system of clearance has been, in very many districts, to throw a large amount of arable land into pasture; perhaps, in many instances, with a good effect; but this can only go on to a limited extent, there must be winter feed found for the stock; and stock farms must have in connection with them, land tilled to carry roots, and some cereal crops. The system of improved farming now pursued in England, will make a great demand for lean stock, and this a great deal of Irish land will be able to furnish, with fair profit; but the improvement

of tillage, must keep company with the extension of the numbers of stock, yearly bred; the mere grazier, and the cultivator of arable land, can neither do, the one without the other. It is satisfactory to see the increase in the amount of cattle in the aggregate, as also the increase of horses, although it appears, that the increase has been at the cost of the small holders; the decrease in the number of asses, is again proof of the pressure which has existed on these holders; it is satisfactory to see, however, that such small holders as remain are gaining in the matter of pigs, for the pig is of all animals one that they can the least afford to lose.

I am far from denying that the West of Ireland is as yet beset on every side with difficulty—financial, social, and to some degree political; but I am myself well assured, that there yet remains abundant material for a great, though it must be gradual, revival of its depressed resources; of one thing I have no doubt—if it has a fair chance of recovery, its second state will be one far better every way than its first. The proprietors who survive, and the new proprietors, will alike have had a valuable lesson from the past; it is all very well for angry or interested parties to say, that the estates now selling by the Commissioners are *confiscated*, are sold at such unjustifiable sacrifice. I believe, on inquiry, it would be found they sell for their full value, taking into consideration the condition they are in, and the capi-

tal which will be required to restore the waste of their natural resources.

Men talk of "so many years' purchase," as if any man in his senses would measure the future by the past in the matter of an Irish estate, and expect to get potato rack-rent from a dispersed, diminished, enfeebled population; the potato itself having proved in itself its own deterioration. I wish the estates may not go too cheap, for, as in matters of tenancy, the man who holds his land at too low a rent is very apt to be a bad farmer, wanting the spur to industry, which a fair rent ever proves itself; so the higher the terms of purchase the greater must be the effort to get the interest for the money invested, out of the soil. An unencumbered landlord starts free from those clogs upon his will to rightly manage his property after his own way, which tie down the debt-ridden, agent-ridden proprietor of an estate, in which one interest alone is felt by all concerned in its management, *viz.* to screw out any how, all that in any way can be got each year out of it.

It is satisfactory to notice another healthy symptom: those who have the power and the desire to improve their estates, are now more intent upon drawing out all the value of good and ordinary land, in preference to endeavouring to reclaim bog and old barren waste land. I have seen many thousands of acres of reclaimed bog at different times in Ireland; there is no denying but that in some instances such

land does become valuable; but as a rule, I am satisfied it is far better every way to apply the money such reclamation costs, to the bringing land, which is in cultivation, into the highest order it will admit of; there are few estates in the West which would not in this way profitably absorb all the capital at the disposal of their owners.

There is some hope too—I wish there was more—that Absenteeism will now be less the rule than it has been. There is reason to believe that the division of the large estates sold, and in the market, into smaller properties will lead to more proprietary residence. That the purchasers will, many of them, be of a class likely themselves to look after their own properties. For my own part, I believe there could scarce be a greater blessing to the West than the raising up a race of proprietors, who would find occupation, amusement, and a sphere of usefulness, without aspiring to be of great individual provincial importance. A good many moderate sized houses of mere country gentlemen, inhabited by men aiming to be nothing more, would be as gratifying to the eye, as they would prove beneficial to these districts.

Landed grandeeism is all very well in its way; deer parks, demesnes, and miles of well kept walls, telling of exclusiveness, and seeming to claim a sense of inferiority from all landed beings less qualified in these respects, have perhaps some advantages; but to keep up the healthy elements of social life, it is

needed that no one scale of social importance should so far prevail, as to make the lines too broad which necessarily divide class from class. There are very many matters in rural districts requiring the continued consideration of practical men, interested in the prosperity of such districts, and invested with official power to act in aid of those many minor matters, which avail to the advancement and upholding of order, &c. &c. Where the estates are on a very large scale, not only is the number of proprietors who can reside and act for the public benefit necessarily narrowed, but they are then, generally, men in a rank of life which necessarily draws them much from home; when they are at home, has many hinderances in the way of their performance of social duties, men of smaller calibre could do with more ease to themselves and others.

One of the great social evils, which has had no little effect in the production of a great deal one sees to lament in the condition of the peasantry, is, the little direct communication they ever have, with their landlord or chief employers, they have been far too much handed over to agents and land stewards *et id genus omne*. They have but too often been purposely kept from communication with those on whose conduct towards them depends so much of their interest. I have again and again been struck with the great difference between England and Ireland in the matter of communication between landlord and

tenant, labourer and employer. In no one thing do the two countries more differ; in England, the landlord is, with very rare exceptions, ever accessible to the tenant; the tenant is ever treated at least with courtesy, if not with familiarity; who is there, who knows anything of Ireland, who will say the same of that country? I live in hopes that a new race may take a different course; nothing can be more painful to any well thinking man, than to see frieze-coated farmers, who have come from miles off, waiting hour after hour at lodge gates, hall doors, anywhere about the demesne, where they may hope at last to get "a hearing" from the proprietor, and then to hear them laconically dismissed with some such observation as "What do you come to me for? why do I pay an agent, if I am to be ever pestered myself by people coming after me?" That power of the Priesthood, which I hear so often complained of, owes, I am convinced, a good deal to the want of sympathy shewn to the small tenantry, by almost every other class.

There are no men on earth more susceptible of civility from their superiors in rank than the Irish; they of all men look up to, and highly estimate rank. They may cringe to the agent they hate, but still would propitiate; but they would do anything, go anywhere, heart and soul in the act, in return for one word of kindness from a "real gentleman"—"the man who just owns them." They have been made suspicious and cunning by the force of circumstances; the same

force, in a healthier direction, will still find in them elements of honesty and real respect for their superiors, which, once developed, will prove them to be all we could wish them to be.

Ignorance can only be overcome by education; although the pressure of general distress has for a time much interfered with the progress of education, still, it does make some way, and the machinery of it is ready to be applied to happier times. It is true, that the national system of education has to encounter no common opposition, but this very opposition I believe to have been, in a great measure, the result of a state of opinion fast giving way before the experience of the few past years. The religious strifes, which have been aggravated by fierce political contention, are gradually becoming weaker; I believe men of all parties are beginning to see, that weightier matters than mere polemical and political contentions claim their attention. I can easily conceive, that were Lord Roden and Dr. M'Hale in the same ship, in danger of wreck, they would not hesitate, had they opportunity, to ride the same hen-coop ashore. The threatening of a national bankruptcy, the existence of scenes of misery—a national disgrace; the mischievous and absurd results of past contests of creeds and opinions, are fast forcing on the minds of men of every creed and opinion, that it would be as well to bury "the hatchet," and see what "the plough" can do.

I firmly believe, that even the Godless Colleges will yet survive the pains and perils of their birth, and that they will not be found to act in any way subversive of the several creeds of those who study at them. The boon of a sound, first-rate education, so near home, and at so moderate a cost, to the middling classes of Ireland, is one so great, and must in the end so tell on the prosperity of the people, that I cannot conceive that any sound argument can tell against an effort to afford it; in a way so open to observation, and, therefore, so easily checked in any matter in which it may be thought the interest of any particular creed is unduly dealt with.

That a source of bitter feeling does still exist, and may yet be aggravated, from the attempts of well meaning persons to proselyte amongst the Roman Catholic peasantry, I cannot doubt; I believe the parties engaged in this aggression are in earnest, and the leaders of the movement to be honest. However much I may in my heart desire the conversion of those whom I believe to be in error, I cannot however, but lament the strife, ill-feeling, and but too often hypocrisy, which, I fear, is the result of the attempts made in this direction. My own impression is, that the progress of general education will do more to elicit real truth and put down error, than any other means. What we Protestants hold to be the errors of the Catholic's faith, are just those matters which I believe will be the most affected

by the spread of general knowledge. I rejoice to see the spread of the Bible in the Irish tongue; I should rejoice to see that the power to read that book, and many other books in that tongue, was very general; but I cannot, I own, rejoice as others do, in that excess of zeal which is very often little scrupulous in the instruments it uses, so long as it can compass the object, of gaining over converts.

Nothing can be more unsatisfactory than the present *status* of the Catholic priesthood. Spiritual advisers of the great body of the people, they are yet made so dependent on their congregations, for the merest pittance which will support them in their proper character, that, in such days as these, I believe many of them scarcely have the means of life. I do not believe them to be individually disloyal, or opposed in heart to the English; but I can see quite enough, in their anomalous position, to keep up within their breasts a state of feeling the very reverse of that which one would desire to see in the spiritual advisers of so large a proportion of the people. I can pray for, and from my heart desire, that a time may come when they may be, in religious profession, less severed from those with whom I believe and worship; but till that time comes, I cannot in justice cease from wishing, that they may have afforded to them means of subsistence and of education fitting their office, and that esteem in which they are held by so many thousands of my fellow-subjects. I look on it

as another good symptom, that the feeling of the public generally is less opposed, than it has been, to the giving to the Catholic priesthood that consideration which is their just due. It has been too much the fashion to argue about them, as if they were all chargeable with the wickedness which has proved itself in some of their body. Because some have proved themselves reckless in their support of the objects of unprincipled men; because some few have rashly polluted their office by altar denunciations of the most dangerous character; we have no right to argue that the whole body is corrupt. I have this opinion of the majority of them; that, did they see a kinder and more just treatment of those classes, who form the great proportion of their flocks; were they less personally assailed on the score of those matters of faith, in which I am bound to believe they think they are right, by those who I equally think believe them to be wrong; were they treated by the higher ranks of their own faith with more sympathy and indulgence; they would be found to be ready to lend their very powerful aid on the side of all those social improvements now to be so much desired.

I have just seen a statement with regard to the working of the Encumbered Estates Act, from which, as it corroborates the views I have put forth in these pages, I will give some extracts. Up to the 31st of July, 1850, 1,085 petitions had been presented, the

gross *amount of incumbrances* on which were, £12,400,368;— the *annual rental* £655,470;— the total produce of sales, up to the 10th of August inst. is £748,474. 12*s* 10*d*. In many places the property appears to have been saddled with incumbrances to *double its value,* and the reputed owners have long since lost all actual right of property in the soil. Now, I ask, where could be found more telling proof of wanton, reckless extravagance, than is to be found in these figures? Who can wonder, that the tenantry on such estates were ground to the earth by exaction, as long as they could pay, and then "*cleared*" any and every possible way, as soon as they became a burden? Could any greater bar to local improvement have existed, could ingenuity have devised any more perfect plan of social destruction, than the holding this amount of property, in hands bound by the fetters of engagements, which forbade all expenditure in improvements, and required even double the value of the property to cover the annual demands upon it?

CHAPTER XIV.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE EARL OF CLARENDON—ITS DIFFICULTIES—HIS ENCOURAGEMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND ART — IMPARTIALITY — THE QUEEN'S VISIT — THE AUTHOR'S HOPE, THAT JUSTICE WILL YET BE DONE TO THE PEASANTRY.

If the storms which have assailed Ireland's social interests, during the last few years, which now still in some degree prevail, are to be finally weathered; if this, in itself great, but in its circumstances, pitiable land, is to gain at last a haven, in which its people shall find domestic peace and prosperity, it will owe a very heavy debt to the present Lord Lieutenant, as the pilot who has so ably held the helm. Modern history affords no parallel to the difficulties, which have of late years beset and hindered his course; falling into the hands of the direct judgments of God, he has also had to encounter the worst violence of man's worst passions.

Pestilence and famine scarcely needed civil war to complete the picture, which set before him a state of things, calculated to paralyze the senses of one less courageous, less heart inspired in his work. Even these very morbid symptoms in the economy of the country, committed to his charge, were not alone in their distracting, disturbing consequences.

To party rancour was allied, bitter sectarian feeling, productive of outbreaks, seldom ending without shedding of blood: and all this, at a period of history, when, the whole governments of the civilised world, seemed simultaneously to be infected by some far-spread convulsive epidemic,

Lord Clarendon was, however, neither appalled, nor discouraged by the difficulties of his position; he never faltered in his course; his energies, and his resources, grew with the occasion. With the character of an able diplomatist, his was no course of mystery; he boldly faced the evils, he never doubted, that he could crush. He met the violent weapons of the insurgent, with those weapons with which the rebel expects to contend; whatever was work for the Law Courts, he was content in those Courts to attempt. Possessed of powers granted him by the Legislature, which gave him all even a despot could have desired; he never resorted to extraordinary means, until all other means were likely to fail. It has been admitted by some of the most democratic spirits of the age, that so great an amount of power was never, in any ruler's hands, so little abused.

There are those who affect to ridicule the Balingarry insurrection; now my own firm belief is, that had not Lord Clarendon taken the position he did, and at once determined, at every cost, to put down, at the earliest moment, that outbreak, one short fortnight would have seen the whole South and West of Ire-

land in rebellion. A very small amount of success would have fired the hearts of tens of thousands of discontented men, who only waited to see, whether there was anything of *reality* in the intentions of the popular leaders. It is true, Smith O'Brien had no one requisite for the leader of a rebellion, but how often has it happened, that the occasion, in these matters, has begotten the man. A leader who knew the people and the country, although he never could have gained the day, would, before he had been put down, have caused a confusion and destruction of property, and of life, which would have stained the annals of Ireland for centuries.

Lord Clarendon, a civil ruler, wisely determined to employ the civil force, to the last possible moment; he had the army in reserve, but he put down the insurrection, chiefly by the use of that admirable body—the Police. A very large proportion of that body were Catholics, to a man they were staunch to their duty; that duty was often of a most harassing and dangerous character; far more so, I believe, than is generally known; they performed it in a way beyond all praise: Lord Clarendon had won their most complete confidence; they had found in him one, who took a deep and active interest in them as —a force; they knew him to be fully alive to their value to the country. They had again and again had occasion to know, that he was as prompt to estimate special service, as he was to sanction the

severe consequences of disobedience. It was well known throughout the whole force, that when one of their body had been wounded in an attempt to perform a dangerous duty; the marked sympathy of the Lord Lieutenant, had reached him within a few hours from the time he was laid on the bed of the hospital. It is then no matter of surprise, to those who know the real services of this force of late years, that they shewed the zeal, the firm, and temperate courage they did, in that employment, which called for so much from them.

Not the least remarkable feature in Lord Clarendon's administration of his office, for the last few years, has been the fact—that, amidst all the anxiety and toil of days and months of turbulence and dangerous disaffection, he never ceased his efforts to advance every plan, holding out any hope of success, from which he could expect aid in raising the social condition of the people. He found leisure—how I can scarcely conceive—to keep in view Ireland's commercial improvement, even when most harassed by the attempts of those who aimed at a violent revolution. The promotion of sounder views as to agriculture; the endeavour to make agricultural science a part of the general education of the people; the encouragement of every experiment tending to develop any new branches of manufacture, to improve existing manufactures; the extension of the means of educating the peasantry; the establishing

institutions for the giving to the sons of the middling and higher orders, education of the highest class; the promotion of every public work likely to develop fresh sources of private enterprise; these subjects, in the most minute of their minutiæ, obtained, throughout all the busier and more pressing duties cast upon him, no little share of his attention. The artists of Ireland found him ever alive to their efforts, and ready to patronize every branch of art, which, whilst it raised the national taste, tended to reward the industry of those who professed the finer arts. An improvement in the manufacture of lace, or even any new form in which Irish grown flax could be brought into competition with the products of other lands, anything bearing on the subject of profitable employment, however trifling in detail, still was ever to him a subject of deep interest.

Again, he had the courage to support those bold measures, which established a new system of dealing with property, so encumbered as to make the real proprietors mere shadows of their own substance. Where property could not fulfil even its first duty, of paying the just claims of those who held heavy liens on it, as security for money lent; he saw, clearly enough, that it must depreciate in real value, and cease to render to the general good, that social value which is the chief ground for the laws, which so jealously protect it. However deep the wounds the Encumbered Estates Act may inflict on family pride,

no just man can doubt, but that the working of that Act, the carrying into effect its principles, is, after all, the mere encouragement or enforcement, of a plain system of justice.

One of those curses in Ireland's social condition, which of late years has grown with her growth, was the existence of that spirit of religious (?) feud, which was for ever arming man against man on the score of the antagonism of religious creed. In days of old, according as Toryism or Whiggism was in the ascendant, the Orange or the Riband faction became bold for evil. Lord Clarendon, whilst he has shewn every respect for the claims to the law's protection, of men of every creed, has at the same time shewn, that violence shall find no excuse on the grounds of religious hate. He cannot make men of one mind; but, to a great degree, he has enforced the rule that no difference of mind shall justify the breach of the law.

To hate and to murder were, at one time, as cause and effect, in very many Irish districts. Agrarian disputes found their solution in agrarian violence: this was a many-headed monster. Let any man impartially regard the state of society, as it now is in Ireland, with what so many of us remember it; bearing in mind, that at no period for many past years has more provocation been given to the passions of violent and ignorant men; and then let him deny, if he can, that Lord Clarendon has upheld the majesty

of the law, in a degree, under all circumstances, which reflects infinite credit on the days of his rule.

Acting, as if the land he ruled was the land of his birth, he has made of his high office a matter of heart-felt interest, as well as of grave responsibility; the want of opportunity has alone limited his endeavours to advance every true interest of Ireland. With a pardonable pride in his own knowledge of the people, he ventured on one noble and successful experiment, which, to many at the time appeared rash, to say the least of it. Ireland's soil was yet warm from the embers of a lately suppressed insurrection; the ink had scarce got the darkened hue of a few weeks' age on the signatures of sentences, which had banished the popular idols; when he boldly placed the Sovereign before the people—brought her, her consort, her children, into the thickest of their crowds: he had the satisfaction to see that he had construed the public mind aright; strong at heart and true of heart, no Sovereign ever had a more wildly warm welcome from subjects, than did our Queen receive from the Irish. And I believe I only speak the truth when I add, that of all the scenes she has ever yet had to encounter as a Sovereign, none ever touched more closely, every the deepest feeling of her heart, than did her receptions in Ireland.

The comparison may appear a little invidious, but I will not conceal my own belief, that the general transaction of business in the public offices of Ireland

is at least equal to, if not superior, to that of the public offices of England. I believe Lord Clarendon has been able to attain, with regard to Ireland, an amount of statistical information, in connection with every subject, which can aid the course of legislation, or prove the real condition of the governed; in many respects far superior to any we possess, and attained at a far less expense than we have had again and again to pay, for information less in detail and less accurate. Every failure, of any the most trifling work of Irish legislation, is proclaimed far and wide, by some of that band of Irish legislators, who seem to think that the representation of the people consists in the perpetual vituperation of the governing power. It is rare indeed to hear credit given for the success, even of measures yielded to the popular demand.

When the accounts of the Lord Lieutenantcy are brought to a close, I for one have no doubt but that there will be such a balance on the side of all which can confer credit on the last of the race—if Lord Clarendon shall be that last—as will extort, even from his bitterest opponents, the confession—that he governed in most things as wisely, as prudently, as he governed boldly.

How is it, it may now be well asked of me, that with so much credit given to the Earl of Clarendon's government of Ireland, the misery and oppression of the people, described in previous chapters of this volume, has been suffered to exist to the amount it evidently

has? I am willing to admit, that no powers, no wisdom, can grapple with a force of circumstances, such as those the destruction of the potato produced in the western districts of Ireland. The antecedents of the famine, all combined to aggravate it: the virtual bankruptcy of so many of the proprietary; the amount of absenteeism; the long-fostered false habits of the people; all these, in their different degree, were so many elements of evil, calculated to make the pressure of the famine the more heavy. I do not see how any policy of a government could have done more than was done at the earlier stages of this wretched crisis; that many lives were saved, I feel assured, though I am equally convinced that many of the methods by which they were saved, were most injurious to the people themselves. I may see much to lament in the working of the early machinery, employed to stave off the effects of the famine, but I feel no surprise that so great an infliction was productive of fresh evil, in the attempts at its remedy.

I cannot, however, acquit the Government of all blame, in those matters I am now seeking to expose. This is not a year of famine; the people have starved in many hundreds, I believe, within the last twelvemonths, *in the face of an abundance of cheap food.* They have starved under the working of a law especially directed to meet the case of the destitute. I have no hesitation in adding my firm conviction, that very many have been *done to*

death by pure tyranny. I have seen a very large amount of indisputable evidence, to the effect, that very many hundred evictions have been *illegally* carried out; death has again and again been the result. I do, therefore, charge the Government with this much of blame—the Guardians have been allowed to shirk the fair performance of their duties; the destitute have not had what the law professes to secure to them; the workhouses have not had the supervision they ought to have had; they have been suffered to be the places I have proved them to be, in the face of laws, and orders with the force of law, calling for a very different state of things. No executive dare defend the cruel and indecent crowding, the absence of clothing, the want of discipline, but too often the abuse of the diet table, which, alas! it is notorious, exists. It is nothing to tell me that there are Inspectors. I reply, how are these Inspectors supported, when they report as against the Boards of Guardians? My own very strong impression is, that the Inspector who would persevere in reporting and remonstrating against the abuses of the law, perpetrated and sanctioned by the Guardians, would be considered in anything but a favourable light at the head-quarters of the Poor-law Department. The Inspector who goes on *comfortably* with his Board however that Board may act, stands the best, I fear, in the graces of his superiors.

I cannot get rid of a very strong impression I

entertain, that there has been a disposition to look at the difficulties of the crisis in these respects as so great, that there was a sort of tacit determination, to let things take their course, at any cost. If we were dealing with any animals, but those of our own kind, this would not surprise me; but I cannot admit, that any amount of expense, any amount of official interference, should be spared, to simply secure to the destitute, what the destitute have by law a right to demand. I repeat here, what I have said elsewhere, I do not know what the object of the "Rate-in-aid" Act was, except to provide, by extraordinary means, for an extraordinary state of things. As to the last year's, and this year's published figures, so far as they regard the diminution of pauperism, I hold them as of little value. If you take the decrease by death, and by emigration, and the real condition of the Western districts at this moment, I see no ground whatever to believe, that pauperism has decreased in degree. I think it, however, but just to say, that I fully believe the real condition of many of the Union Houses, has not, until now, been known at the seat of —*but it ought to have been.*

Again, I cannot acquit the executive of one very serious omission of duty; I am satisfied, that the illegal processes of eviction, so generally resorted to by agents, drivers, and others, by which so many of my fellow-creatures have been destroyed, were mat-

ters of general knowledge. I have never been in any society in Ireland, where it was not admitted, that a very large proportion of evictions were carried out by fraud, or by violence. I know in some instances the Vice-Guardians were ordered to prosecute the perpetrators of these outrages; but now I know the nature of the process of such prosecution; I feel, as those in authority must feel, that nothing could be less likely to succeed in obtaining convictions, however clear the guilt of the offenders. Rats might as well hope for the conviction of ferrets by a jury of rat-catchers, as the peasantry to obtain redress for manslaughter against drivers, from juries, many of whom daily employ them.

These are not days to justify private Associations taking upon themselves the functions proper to public officers; and yet, it would not surprise me, if things continue as they are, if "an ABORIGINES PROTECTION SOCIETY FOR IRELAND," was to start into existence, with a well paid, able machinery, to watch over the lives and properties of the native population of the Western districts. I can already fancy I see their first annual Report in type, setting forth the details of the prosecution by which verdicts for "manslaughter" was obtained against a long list of proprietors, agents, process-servers, drivers, house-levellers, &c. for acting contrary to law, and thus causing death without the law's sanction. I say, this would not surprise me, for English philanthropy is

impatient in these matters; when we do get into a bustle about them, our Associations are soon formed, and soon at work. I should, however, regret it, and I live yet in hope, that even the efforts of one or more private individuals may not be needed for this work; but that, ere the race of Vice-Royalty is run, Lord Clarendon will grace its departing years with the additional laurel—that the destitute did get, what the Poor-law gave them a right to; that whilst the law shrunk not from supporting the rights of proprietors, it was equally bold to defend the tenantry from the abuse of those rights; in a few words—that the Law dealt the same justice alike to Poverty and to Property.

FINIS.

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ERRATA.

Page 61, line 23, for *religious*, read *religion's*.

— 82, — 9, for *cab in*, read *cabin*.

— 191, — 17, for *people and priests*, read *priests and people*.