

THE COLUMBIA DEMOCRAT.

I have sworn upon the Altar of God, eternal hostility to every form of Tyranny over the Mind of Man.—Thomas Jefferson

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MISCELLANEOUS.

From the Lady's Book for July, 1842.

THE EJECTMENT. AN IRISH SKETCH FROM LIFE.

BY MRS. S. C. HALL LONDON.]

PERHAPS it proceeds from our having 'inhabiteness' largely developed that we are led so completely to sympathize with those who are compelled under any circumstances to quit their homes. Even if a 'flitting' be premeditated under the most pleasant prospects, there is always some things to regret—the discomfort, the bustle the leave taking—are all sad enough, no matter how brilliant the anticipated future may be—there is something really melancholy in parting either from what has been the abode of joy, or sorrow, for both equally, in our opinion, endear a locality. A change of residence is always an inconvenience to the rich, but to the Irish poor it is frequently only a change from the misery of a wretched hovel to the exposure and starvation of the high roads. We witnessed a harrowing scene of this description which we cannot easily forget, and it is one which my American readers will imagine over-drawn, no matter how we tell the story.

We had sent the carriage on and were proceeding on foot, a practice which enables us to converse with the peasantry, and increases our enjoyment and information. It was a fine clear evening; the sun was sinking behind the richly wooded slopes of this most beautiful country; the air was full and balmy; the rail was croaking along the hedges and the thrush singing those rich and varied melodies which art can neither imitate nor teach. A lane, or as the Irish so prettily call in, a boheen' branched off from the high road, and some noble old trees had interlaced their arms above it, so as to form a succession of living Gothic arches, the most perfect and picturesque we had ever observed. The elevated inclosures of flowers—and purple fox glove with fairy like cups, and the sparkling leaves and knotty twistings of sly Robin run the hedge, mingled with the tasseled meadow sweet and broad leaved dock—all beautiful according to their kind: then there were occasional breaks amid the sunlight, so bright before its close, darted the most vivid light, showing the sylvan tracery to the best advantage. It was altogether so exquisite a bit of light and shade that it was not until we had looked at it for some time that we perceived three little children huddled up together at the stump of an old thorn tree, a few yards down the lane; the eldest a grown up girl supported a sleeping infant on her knees; the third whose costume was slight as it is possible to fancy, crying bitterly, and in his fruitless attempts to dry his tears, had smeared his face over so to give it the appearance of a mask. His trouble was of that nature which in England would be alleviated by bread and butter, and cured by bread and sugar; but the grief that caused emotion in the eldest girl was altogether different, it was such as strong women hardly bear. Her features were hardened into the expression of despair, and what is more at variance with the first hours of youth, sullen despair. An old blind dog sat at her feet with his head on her knee, his thick sightless eyes up-

turned to her, while she stroked his head mechanically and with out uttering a word.

'Let me go back Essey! let me go back, just for a minute, and I won't cry out; do let me, and I'll be as good good, I will said the boy.

The girl made no reply, but clatched his shoulder in her hand, and held him fast.

There was a strong resistance on the boy's part, but it did not continue long for he agreed to keep still if she'd 'loose her hold, which she did though her hand still remained on his shoulder.

We were so interested in the girl's sorrow that we endeavored to alleviate it by kind words, and inquired if 'any of her people were ill.' Then she burst into tears and the hardness which rendered her expression so painful to look at, relaxed.

'Thank you kindly for asking only the trouble, ma'am, is laid on us this evenin', we're turned out, we, that never let the winter gale run till summer, that for all we took out of the bit of land put double in it, and did with half feedin sooner than wrong the earth that gave us that came. We're turned out this blessed evenin' to wander the world, or to starve in Navin—to die away from the light of the heavens, and the fresh air, and the fields—oh, there's no use in talking but my heart, will burst, it will burst open in me if I think of the cruelty of the world. How can my father live in town where there are hundreds of men strong an' able to work as he? What can he get to do there? If they'd let us build a sod house by the side of the road itself, in the place where he's known, he could get work among the neighbors—but that spoils the look of the country they say I. Och hone! sure the starving look of the poor spoils it worse.'

'Ye'r crying worse than me, Essey now,' said the urchin, 'and you promised mother you'd keep in the tears: let me go see if she's crying still.'

'Stay where you are, Jimmy my boy there's a good child; mother can bear it better when she does not see us. Oh, I could beg the world's bread for her, from door to door, though until this blessed hour let us suffer as we would, we never asked charity from man or mortal; but I could beg, starve (that's easy enough) or die for my own darlin' mother, if God leaves her with us—but he won't; death was printed in her face this morning; she'll die from me: oh, Holy Vargin, hear my prayer this evenin', and if one must go, take me, Holy Queen of Heaven, and leave her with her husband and her helpless children.'

The poor girl sank upon her knees, still pressing the infant to her heart, and we walked on, deeply anxious to ascertain the truth of so sad a statement. A turn in the lane brought us opposite to what had been a nesting of three or four cottages; the greater number had been dispossessed of their inmates a few months before, as was evident from the length of time the walls had been uncovered. The one farthest off was the present scene of distress. Two men were busied in unroofing the small dwelling, while two others were evidently prepared to meet any outbreak on the part of the late tenant, or his friends. Several of the latter were assembled but for the most part seemed rather bent on consoling than defending. There was the usual scene of confusion, but it was evident that the ejectment had been served upon a cottage possessed of many comforts. A very pale fragile woman was seated upon a substantial clump bedstead with her hand closely pressed against her side, as if in pain while tears flowed down her cheeks. Chickens of various sizes were crowded in an ancient coop, and a stout little pig had a sougan fixed to his leg, to prepare him for the road. Stools and iron pots, a dresser, delf and wooden ware, were scattered about, and a serious looking cat was seated on the top of a potato basket, as if uncertain whether the esteem she was held in would compel her friends to forego the superstition and carry her with them—little thinking that

they had no alternative but exchange the free air for a wretched room in wretched Navin which it was not likely they could long keep.

'It's Larkins' own fault, I must vay that when the lease of his little place dropt he would'nt take. No' for an answer but would keep possession, and wonder at his doing so, and he so well learned, and bright at every thing,' said one of the men.

'My own fault!' repeated a strong, haggard looking person advancing, while the group of countrymen to whom he had been speaking made way for him. 'Who says it's my own fault—you!—sir, I was born under that thatch, that now you stand on; my father and grandfather held the bit of land and we paid for it at the highest, and to the last farthing.'

'That ye did, poor man—God help you!' said many a voice in tones of the deepest sympathy.

'I, with every hard working soul on the estate, got notice to quit; because the agent wants it to be cleared of men that may feed beasts, I had acted all my life like a man; I had the feelings of one; I loved every stick of them blackened rafters. My father's own hands made the bed that poor broken-hearted woman is sitting on; on it I was born and on it she brought me five children. The bees that are now singing in the bushes came from the ould stock; and father's mother, that they are bringing out now has sat upon that stone bench for sixty four years.'

A very venerable woman had just been carried through the flakes of falling thatch into the open air; she seemed hardly conscious of what was going forward and yet she gazed around her and from one to another, with an anxious look.

'Well; we know all that,' said the first speaker; and you ought to know that I'm only doing my duty and you ought to have sense; the gentleman's land is his own, and if he'd rather feed cattle for the market than have the place broke up in little farms, sure it's his own land, not yours; he lets you take every stick that you like away.'

'The law, only a bastard law after all for the poor,' said Larkins, 'give me them.'

'And he pays you for your crop.'

'And that he cant help either.'

'And yet granny there would not leave till the roof was off. Sure any how the gentleman had a right to do what he liked with his own.'

'He had not!' exclaimed the peasant, firmly planting his foot on the ground; and unconsciously assuming an attitude that would have added dignity to a Roman senator. 'In the sight and light of Almighty God, no man having plenty has a right to say to another, 'Go out and starve'—starve as I shall, and all belonging to me; starve and beg and beg and starve till my bones whiten through my skin and I die as others' in this country have done before me; on the road—Oh my God! if he had given me a piece of mountain or a piece of bog, and time to bring it round, I'd have worked, as I have done all my life—and that's saying enough—for it. Does he call to mind, that the tenant's duty is to pay, and the landlord's to protect? Does he say as a Christian that any man has a right to turn over scores of his fellow creatures to starvation when they are willing to be his slaves for food and raiment? for what more have any of us? We lay by nothing and have nothing to lay by yet we pay our rent! Will any of you say that God intended that?'

'Then why the devil' Johnny Larkins, my jewel!' said a tight concentrated fellow walking up to the excited speaker; why don't you let us starve them all out at once? Sorra a better sport we'll desire, and its under her roof ye'd be now if ye had let us take just one good heavy fling at them.'

'I never broke the law in my life, James replied Larkins.

'Sorra a better ve're off than them that did,' answered James, stepping back in a most discontented manner. Two women were comforting the poor man's wife in the best

way they should and another was busied in adjusting a bed on a small car upon which they intended to place the old woman so as to remove her comfortably. The landlord's agents, in this apparently most unfeeling proceedings seemed resolved not to desist until the roof was entirely removed.

'I wish, a lannan, ye'd be said and led by us,' urged one to Mrs. Larkins who was rocking herself, as the wind rocks a tree that has been more than half uprooted. 'What good can staying here do you, dear? Sure ye'll stop with us as long as ye like before ye go into the close town and yer breathing so bad and ye so weak.'

'If they had only let me die in it,' answered the young mother, whose weak trembling voice recalled her child's opinion so feelingly expressed a few minutes before—that death was printed in her face.—'It wouldn't have been long. Where's the children!'

'Sure ye sent them away, they were crying so.'

'And where's John!'

'Is the sight leaving your eyes that you can't see him forenit you, dear?' answered the woman, at the same time looking anxiously in her face.

'John, darling!' she exclaimed fervently. In a moment her husband was by her side.

'There's a change over her!' whispered the woman to the young man who had proffered to take the law id his own hands. 'There's a change over her—run for the priest if ye love your own soul.'

Even the man who had been so busy with the roof paused, and the silence was only disturbed by the prolonged whistle of a distant blackbird.

'John my blessing—my pride—the only lover I ever had—you'll forgive any hasty word I spoke, woun't ye, my jewel!'

'Ye never did, darlin,' answered the poor fellow; but what's over dear? what ails you? What ails her, neighbors? Great Queen of Heaven, what ails my wife?'

'Whisht dear!' she said and raising her hand to his face she pressed his cheek still closer to her own. 'I've been sickly a long time John, and was going fast, better I should die before we got into the town—I must have died you know. Your face is very thin darlin' already. Oh may the holy saints lave ye as ye are that I may know ye in heaven! But I would any way—spake to me my bird of blessings!—kiss me dear and let me lay my head on yer bare breast. Neighbors, ye'll look to him and the poor motherless children. Oh then has any Christian sent for a priest, that I may not die in my sins!'

'It's only a faintness my jewel,' said the husband; 'it's nothing else—fetch her a drop of water.'

She drank eagerly, and then nestled her head as a child would in its mother's arms.

'Oh I was sinful,' murmured the man 'to rebel while my angel was left me—I'll never say a word again if the Lord spares her—pray for her, good friends.'

There was not to use a honestly phrase 'a dry eye' in the circle that formed round them; even the minister of a law as cruel as its enforcers sympathized with the poor man's agony. Suddenly the old woman, who had been forgotten in the fresh excitement pushed the little crowd to the right and left with her long lean arms, stood like a spectre in the midst her white hair streaming from beneath her black hood and the wrinkles in her sharp face thickened by a mariac smile—'I ask her pardon,' she said courtesying as deeply as the infirmities of extreme age would permit—'I ask yer pardon but I don't rightly understand this—is it a wedding—or a berr'ing.'

'Look! look!' exclaimed Larkins. 'Some one look in Mary's face—I feel as if her breath passed right into my heart.'

She was dead upon his bosom.

Growth of Cities.—Rochester, N. Y., now numbers 20,000 inhabitants. In 1817 its entire voting inhabitants consisted of 32 all told.

STARTING CHILDREN IN THE WORLD.

The following extract from the works of a living writer, is replete with sound philosophy and common sense. It is well worth the attention of parents:

'Many and unwise parent labors hard and lives sparingly enough to give his children a start in the world as it is called. Setting a young man afloat with money left him by his relatives, is like tying bladders under the arms of one who cannot swim; ten chances to one he will lose his bladders and go to the bottom. Teach him to swim, and he will never need the bladders. Give your child a sound education, and you have done enough for him. See to it that his morals are pure, his mind enlivened and his whole nature made subservient to the laws which govern man and you have given what will be of more value than the wealth of the Indies. You have given him a start which no misfortune can deprive him of. The earlier you teach him to depend upon his own resources the better.'

REMARKABLE MAGNETIC ROCKS.

The following interesting facts are detailed by the Vickburg Whig:—

Near the iron mountains in Missouri, there is a ledge of some extending for a half a mile in length, and several hundred yards in width. This stone is very strongly impregnated with magnetic properties, so strongly so indeed, that it is impossible to ride a well shod horse over it. A gentleman having his horse newly shod once attempted it but before he had made two 'revolutions' his horse 'was brought up standing—perfectly still. In vain our traveller urged his gallant steek forward persuasion and force proved equally futile. until his patience became exhausted and he sent for a blacksmith. The son of Vulcan soon arrived and found the horse standing still, and to all appearance as immovable as the rock of Gibraltar. Various expedients were resorted to to relieve the horse but all failed. There he stood, and to all appearances, was likely to stand, with his feet literally glued to the solid and impervious rock. At last the blacksmith's eyes glistened, he laid it sure smithy for his shoeing tools, which were soon forthboming. when the proceeded, with all possible despatch to unclinch the nails which bound the horse's shoe to his hoofs!—One by one the nails were unclunched, the whip was applied to the horse, and as the last nail gave way he escaped with a bound but left his shoes welded to the rock.

'I never did see such a wind and such a storm' said a man in a coffee room. 'And pray, sir' inquired a would-be-wit, 'since you saw the wind and the storm, what might their color be?' 'The wind blue and the storm rose,' was the ready rejoinder.

Horrid Depravity.—A Western paper tells of a gun which upon being discharged not only kicked its owner over, but kept kicking him after he was down—and, adds the paper, would probably have kicked him to death, had it not been for the timely arrival of assistance.

Apprentices.—Oh, you're a 'prentice!' said a little boy tauntingly to his companion the other day. The other looked proudly round, and while fire of injured pride and the look of pity were strangely blended in his countenance, coolly answered. 'So was Franklin!'

'Boy, what is your name?, Robert, sir? 'Yes that is your Christian name, but what is your other name?' 'Bob, sir.'

Do make yourself at home, ladies, said a lady to her visitors one day, 'I am at home myself, and I wish you all were,

'I have a great ear, a wonderful ear,' said a musician, in the course of conversation. 'So has a jackass!' was the abrupt ejaculation in reply.