

IRELAND'S MISERIES : Duke
THEIR CAUSE.

FROM THE PLOUGH, THE LOOM, AND THE ANVIL, FOR SEPTEMBER, 1852.

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"I REMEMBER, when I saw the poor Lettes in Livonia, I used to pity them for having to live in huts built of the unhewn logs of trees, the crevices being stopped up with moss. I pitied them on account of their low doors, and their diminutive windows; and gladly would I have arranged their chimneys for them in a more suitable manner. Well, Heaven pardon my ignorance. I knew not that I should ever see a people on whom Almighty God had imposed yet heavier privations. Now that I have seen Ireland, it seems to me that the Lettes, the Esthonians, and the Finlanders, lead a life of comparative comfort, and poor Paddy would feel like a king with their houses, their habiliments, and their daily fare.

"A wooden house, with moss to stop up its crevices, would be a palace in the wild regions of Ireland. Paddy's cabin is built of earth, one shovelful over the other, with a few stones mingled here and there, till the wall is high enough. But perhaps you will say, the roof is thatched or covered with bark. Ay, indeed! A few sods of grass, cut from a neighboring bog, are his only thatch. Well, but a window or two at least, if it be only a pane of glass fixed in the wall, or the bladder of some animal, or a piece of talc, as may often be seen in a Wallachian hut? What idle luxury were this! There are thousands of cabins in which not a trace of a window is to be seen; nothing but a little square hole in front, which doubles the duty of door, window, and chimney; light, smoke, pigs, and children, all must pass in and out of the same aperture!

"A French author, Beaumont, who had seen the Irish peasant in his cabin, and the North American Indian in his wigwam, has assured us that the savage is better provided for than the poor man in Ireland. Indeed, the question may be raised, whether in the whole world a nation is to be found that is subjected to such physical privations as the peasantry in some parts of Ireland. This fact cannot be placed in too strong a light; for if it can once be shown that the wretchedness of the Irish population is without a parallel example on the globe, surely every friend of humanity will feel himself called on to reflect whether means may not be found for remedying an evil of so astounding a magnitude!

"A Russian peasant, no doubt, is the slave of a harder master, but still he is fed and housed to his content, and no trace of mendicancy is to be seen in him. The Hungarians are certainly not among the best used people in the world; still, what fine wheaten bread, and what wine, has even the humblest among them for his daily fare! The Hungarian would scarcely believe it, if he were to be told there was a country in which the inhabitants must content themselves with potatoes every alternate day in the year.

"Servia and Bosnia are reckoned among the most wretched countries of Europe, and certainly the appearance of one of their villages has little that is attractive about it: but at least the people, if badly housed, are well clad. We look not for much luxury or comfort among the Tartars of the Crimea; we call them poor and barbarous, but, good heavens! they look at least like human creatures. They have a national costume, their houses are habitable, their orchards are carefully tended, and their gaily-harnessed ponies are mostly in good condition. An Irishman has nothing national about him but his rags,—his habitation is without a plan, his domestic economy without rule or law. We have beggars and paupers among us, but they form at least an exception: whereas, in Ireland, beggary or abject poverty is the prevailing rule. The nation is one of beggars, and they who are above beggary seem to form the exception.

"The African negroes go naked, but then they have a tropical sun to warm them. The Irish are little removed from a state of nakedness; and their climate, though not cold, is cool, and extremely humid.

"The Indians in America live wretchedly enough at times, but they have no know-

ledge of a better condition, and, as they are hunters, they have every now and then, a productive chase, and are able to make a number of feast-days in the year. Many Irishmen have but one day on which they eat flesh, namely, on Christmas-day. Every other day they feed on potatoes, and nothing but potatoes. Now this is inhuman; for the appetite and stomach of man claim variety in food, and nowhere else do we find human beings gnawing from year's end to year's end, at the same root, berry, or weed. There are animals that do so, but human beings nowhere except in Ireland.

"There are nations of slaves, but they have, by long custom, been made unconscious of the yoke of slavery. This is not the case with the Irish, who have a strong feeling of liberty within them, and are fully sensible of the weight of the yoke they have to bear. They are intelligent enough to know the injustice done them by the distorted laws of their country; and while they are themselves enduring the extreme of poverty, they have frequently before them, in the manner of life of their English landlords, a spectacle of the most refined luxury that human ingenuity ever invented.

"What awakens the most painful feelings in travelling through one of these rocky, boggy districts, rich in nothing but ruins, is this:—Whether you look back into the past, or forward to the future, no prospect more cheering presents itself. There is not the least trace left to show that the country has ever been better cultivated, or that a happier race ever dwelt in it. It seems as if wretchedness had prevailed there from time immemorial—as if rags had succeeded rags, bog had formed over bog, ruins had given birth to ruins, and beggars had begotten beggars, for a long series of centuries. Nor does the future present a more cheering view. Even for the poor Greeks under Turkish domination, there was more hope than for the Irish under the English."—*Kohl's Travels in Ireland.*

The picture here given is from the pen of an accomplished German traveller, who had visited and described most of the countries of Europe; but who had nowhere found the squalor and wretchedness that prevailed among the people of that important portion of the British Empire, called Ireland. And yet he travelled eight or ten years since, before the ravages of famine and pestilence had been so fully experienced as not only to have arrested the progress of population, but actually to have diminished it to a point lower than that at which it stood thirty years since. The numbers of the last four censuses have been as follows:—

1821.....	6,801,827
1831.....	7,767,401
1841.....	8,175,124
1851.....	6,515,794

To what causes may this extraordinary course of events be attributed? Certainly not to any deficiency of land, for nearly one-third of the whole surface, including millions of acres of the richest soils of the kingdom, remains in a state of nature. Not to original inferiority of the soil in cultivation, for it has been confessedly among the richest in the empire. Not to a deficiency of mineral ores or fuel, for coal abounds, and iron ores of the richest kind, as well as those of other metals, exist in vast profusion. Not to any deficiency in the physical qualities of the Irishman, for it is an established fact that he is capable of performing far more labour than the Englishman, the Frenchman, or the Belgian. Not to a deficiency of intellectual ability, for Ireland has given to England her most distinguished soldiers and statesmen; and we have in this country everywhere evidence that the Irishman is capable of the highest degree of intellectual improvement. Nevertheless, while possessed of every advantage that nature could give him, we find the Irishman at home a slave to the severest taskmasters, and reduced to a condition of poverty and distress such as is exhibited in no other portion of the civilized world. No choice is now left him but between expatriation and

starvation, and therefore it is that we see him now everywhere abandoning the home of his fathers, to seek elsewhere that subsistence which Ireland, rich as she is in soil and in her minerals, in her navigable rivers, and in her facilities of communication with the world, can no longer afford him.

To enable us to understand the causes of this extraordinary state of things, we must study the colonial system of England ; that system which has for its object the conversion of all the people of the rest of the world into farmers and planters, dependant upon Manchester and Birmingham, Leeds and Sheffield, for a market for their products, and for a market in which to purchase the machinery of cultivation, and the clothing of the cultivator, his wife and his children.

The government which followed the completion of the Revolution of 1688, pledged itself to discountenance the woollen manufacture of Ireland, with a view to compel the export of raw wool to England, whence its exportation to foreign countries was prohibited ; the effect of which was, of course, to enable the English manufacturer to purchase it at his own price. From that period forward we find numerous regulations as to the ports from which alone woollen yarn or cloth might go to England, and the ports of the latter through which it might come ; while no effort was spared to induce the people of Ireland to abandon woollens and take to flax. Laws were passed prohibiting the export of Irish cloth and glass to the colonies. By other laws Irish ships were deprived of the benefit of the navigation laws. The fisheries were closed against them. No sugar could be imported from any place but Great Britain, and no drawback was allowed on its exportation to Ireland ; and thus was the latter compelled to pay a tax for the support of the British government, while maintaining its own. All other colonial produce was required to be carried first to England, after which it might be shipped to Ireland ; and as Irish shipping was excluded from the advantages of the navigation laws, it followed that the voyage of importation was to be made in British ships, manned by British seamen, and owned by British merchants, who were thus authorized to tax the people of Ireland for doing their work, while a large portion of the Irish people were themselves unemployed.

While thus prohibiting the growth of manufactures or of trade, every inducement was held out to them to confine themselves to the production of commodities required by the English manufacturers, and wool, hemp, and flax were admitted into England free of duty ; and thus we see that the system of that day in reference to Ireland was almost precisely what it is now in reference to the world at large.

During our War of the Revolution, freedom of trade was claimed for Ireland ; and as the demand was made at a time when a large portion of her people were under arms as volunteers, the merchants and manufacturers of England, who had so long forced themselves into the situation of middlemen for the people of the sister kingdom, found themselves compelled to remove some of the restrictions under which the latter had so long remained. Step by step changes were made, until at length, in 1783, Ireland was declared independent. Thenceforward we find manufactures and trade making progress ; and such continued to be the case, until, by the Act of Union, the country was reduced to the condition of a mere colony, without the enjoyment of any single right for which these colonies had contended. The Copyright Laws of England were extended to Ireland, and at once the large and growing manufacture of books was prostrated.* The Patent Laws were

* Perhaps the most striking illustration of the changed circumstances of Ireland

extended to Ireland; and as England had so long monopolized to herself the manufacturing machinery then in use, it was clear that it was there the improvements would be made, and that thenceforth the manufactures of Ireland must retrograde. Manchester had the home market, the foreign market, and, to no small extent, that of Ireland open to her; while the manufacturers of the latter were forced to contend for existence, and under the most disadvantageous circumstances, on their own soil, as is now the case with the manufacturers of cloth and iron in this country. The one could afford to purchase expensive machinery, and to adopt whatever improvements might be made, while the other could not. The natural consequence was, that Irish manufactures gradually disappeared as the Act of Union came into effect. By virtue of its provisions, the duties established by the Irish Parliament for the purpose of protecting the farmers of Ireland in their efforts to bring the loom and the anvil into close proximity with the plough and the harrow, were gradually to diminish, and British free-trade was to be fully established; or, in other words, Manchester and Birmingham were to have a monopoly of supplying Ireland with cloth and iron. The duty on English woollens was to continue twenty years. The almost prohibitory duties on English calicoes and muslins were to continue until 1808; after which they were to be gradually diminished, until in 1821 they were to cease. Those on cotton yarn were to cease in 1810. The effect of this in diminishing the demand for Irish labour, is seen in the following comparative view of manufactures at the date of the Union, and at different periods in the ensuing forty years, here given:

Dublin, 1800,	Master woollen manufacturers,....	91	...	1840,	12
"	Hands employed,.....	4918	...	"	602
"	Master wool-combers,.....	30	...	1834,	5
"	Hands employed,.....	230	...	"	66
"	Carpet manufacturers,.....	13	...	1841,	1
"	Hands employed,.....	720	...	"	none.
Kilkenny, 1800,	Blanket manufacturers,.....	56	...	1822,	42
"	Hands employed,.....	3000	...	"	925
Dublin, 1800,	Silk-loom weavers at work,.....	2500	...	1840,	250
Balbriggan, 1799,	Calico looms at work,.....	2000	...	1841,	226
Wicklow, 1800,	Hand-loom at work,.....	1000	...	1841,	none.
Cork, 1800,	Braid weavers,.....	1000	...	1834,	40
"	Worsted weavers,.....	2000	...	"	90
"	Hosiers,.....	300	...	"	28
"	Wool-combers,.....	700	...	"	110
"	Cotton weavers,.....	2000	...	"	200
"	Linen check weavers,.....	600	...	"	none.
"	Cotton spinners, bleachers, } calico printers,..... }	thousands	...	"	none.

"For nearly half a century Ireland has had perfectly free trade with the richest country in the world; and what" says the author of a recent work of great ability, "has that free trade done for her? She has even now," he continues, "no employment for her teeming population except upon the land. She ought to have had, and might easily have had, other and various

since the Union, is to be found in the diminished consumption of books. Prior to 1800, a large portion of the valuable books published in England, were reprinted across the channel; and evidence of this may especially be found on an examination of any of our old law libraries, where almost all the reporters of that period, as well as many of the most valuable treatises, will be found to be of Irish editions. It may be doubted if the whole quantity of books sold in Ireland at this time is equal to that which before the Union was published by a single house.

employments, and plenty of it. Are we to believe," says he, "the calumny that the Irish are lazy and won't work? Is Irish human nature different from other human nature? Are not the most laborious of all labourers in London and New York, Irishmen? Are Irishmen inferior in understanding? We Englishmen who have personally known Irishmen in the army, at the bar, and in the church, know that there is no better head than a disciplined Irish one. But in all these cases, that master of industry, the stomach, has been well satisfied. Let an Englishman exchange his bread and beer, and beef and mutton, for no breakfast, for a lukewarm lumper at dinner, and no supper. With such a diet, how much better is he than an Irishman—a Celt, as he calls him? No, the truth is, that the misery of Ireland is not from the human nature that grows there—it is from England's perverse legislation, past and present."*

Deprived of all employment, except in the labour of agriculture, land became, of course, the great object of pursuit. "Land is life," said, most emphatically, Chief Justice Blackburn; and the people had before them the choice between the occupation of land, *at any rent*, or *starvation*. The lord of the land was thus enabled to dictate his own terms, and therefore it has been that we have heard of the payment of five, six, eight, and even as much as ten pounds per acre. "Enormous rents, low wages, farms of an enormous extent, let by rapacious and indolent proprietors to monopolizing land-jobbers, to be relet by intermediate oppressors, for five times their value, among the wretched starvers on potatoes and water," led to a constant succession of outrages, followed by Insurrection Acts, Arms Acts, and Coercion Acts, when the real remedy was to be found in the adoption of a system that would emancipate the country from the tyranny of the spindle and the loom, and permit the labour of Ireland to find employment at home.

That employment could not be had. With the suppression of Irish manufactures the demand for labour had disappeared. We have now before us the work of a highly intelligent traveller, describing the state of Ireland in 1834, thirteen years after the free-trade provisions of the Act of Union had come fully into operation, from which we shall now give some extracts, showing that they were compelled to remain idle, although willing to work at the lowest wages—such wages as could not by any possibility enable them to do more than merely sustain life, and perhaps not even that.

Cashel.—"Wages here only *eightpence a day*, and numbers altogether without employment."

Cahir.—"I noticed, on Sunday, on coming from church, the streets crowded with labourers, with spades and other implements in their hands, standing to be hired; and I ascertained that any number of these men might have been engaged, on constant employment, at *sixpence per day* without diet."

Wicklow.—"The husband of this woman was a labourer, at *sixpence a day*, *eighty* of which *sixpences*—that is, *eighty days' labour*—were absorbed in the rent of the cabin." "In another cabin was a decently dressed woman with five children, and her husband was also a labourer at *sixpence a day*. The pig had been taken for rent a few days before." "I found some labourers receiving only *fourpence per day*."

Kilkenny.—"Upwards of 2000 persons totally without employment." "I visited the factories that used to support 200 men with their families, and how many men did I find at work? ONE MAN! In place of finding men occupied, I saw them in scores, like spectres, walking about, and lying about the mill. I saw immense piles of goods completed, but for which there was no sale. I saw heaps of blankets, and I saw every loom idle. As for the carpets which had excited the jealousy and the fears of Kidderminster, not one had been made for seven months. To convey an idea of the destitution of these people, I mention, that when an order recently arrived for

* Sophisms of Free Trade, by J. Barnard Byles, Esq.

the manufacture of as many blankets for the police as would have kept the men at work for a few days, bonfires were lighted about the country—not bonfires to communicate insurrection, but to evince joy that a few starving men were about to earn bread to support their families. Nevertheless, we are told that Irishmen will not work at home.”

Callen.—“In this town, containing between four and five thousand inhabitants, at least 1000 are without regular employment, six or seven hundred entirely destitute, and there are upwards of 200 mendicants in the town—persons incapable of work.”—*Englis's Ireland in 1834.*

Such was the picture everywhere presented to the eye of this intelligent traveller. Go where he might, he found hundreds anxious for employment, yet no employment could be had, unless they could travel to England, there to spend *weeks* in travelling round the country in quest of *days* of employment, the wages for which might enable them to pay their rent at home. “The Celt,” says the *Times*, “is the hewer of wood and the drawer of water to the Saxon. The great works of this country,” it continues, “depend on *cheap labour*.” Such being the case, the lower the price at which the Celt could be made to work, the better for the Saxon; and no better mode could be found of cheapening labour than the sacrifice of Irish manufactures, brought about by the adoption of British free trade, the inevitable effect of which must be that of placing the whole population at home in the power of the few owners of land, and abroad in that of the projectors of the great works of England, requiring for their accomplishment a large supply of those “hewers of wood and drawers of water.”

It might be thought, however, that Ireland was deficient in the capital required for obtaining machinery of manufacture to enable her people to maintain competition with her powerful neighbour. In reply to this we have to say that before the Union she had that machinery; and from the date of that arrangement, so fraudulently brought about, by which was settled conclusively the destruction of Irish manufactures, the annual waste of labour was greater than the whole amount of capital then employed in the cotton and woollen manufactures of England. From that date the people of Ireland were thrown, from year to year, more in the hands of middlemen, who accumulated fortunes that they *would* not invest in the improvement of land, and *could* not, under the system which prostrated manufactures, invest in machinery of any kind calculated to render labour productive; and *all their accumulations were sent therefore to England for investment*. We have now before us an official statement shewing that the transfers of British securities from England to Ireland, that is to say, the investment of Irish capital in England, in the thirteen years following the final adoption of British free trade in 1821, amounted to as many millions of pounds sterling; and thus was Ireland forced to contribute cheap labour and cheap capital to building up “the great works of Britain.” Further, it was provided by law that whenever the poor people of a neighbourhood contributed to a saving fund the amount should not be applied in any manner calculated to furnish local employment, but should be transferred for investment in the British funds. The landlords fled to England, and their rent followed them. The middlemen sent their capital to England. The trader or the labourer that could accumulate a little capital saw it sent to England; and he was then compelled to follow it. Such is the history of the origin of the present abandonment of Ireland by its inhabitants.

The form in which rents, profits, and savings, as well as taxes, went to England, was that of raw products of the soil, to be consumed abroad,

yielding nothing to be returned to the land, which was, of course, impoverished.

The exports of animal produce in the year 1835, had attained to the following figures :

Cows and oxen,.....	98,150
Horses,	4,655
Sheep,.....	125,452
Swine,.....	376,191
Bacon and hams, lbs.,.....	379,111
Beef and pork, lbs.,.....	370,172
Butter, lbs.,	827,009
Lard, lbs.,.....	70,267

In these cases some return was made to the land in the manure yielded by the cows and oxen, the hogs and the sheep; but from the grain exported, averaging for several years preceding this date, about twenty-five millions bushels, of 60 pounds each, no return whatever was made. The poor people were, in fact, selling their soil to pay for cotton and woollen goods that they should have manufactured themselves, for coal which abounded among themselves, for iron, all the materials of which existed at home in great profusion, and for a small quantity of tea, sugar, and other foreign commodities, while the amount required to pay rent to absentees, and interest to mortgagees, was estimated at more than seven millions of pounds sterling, or almost thirty-five millions of dollars. Here was a drain that no nation could bear, however great its productive power; and the whole of it was due to the colonial system. British free trade forbade the application of labour, talent, or capital, to any thing but agriculture, and thus forbade advance in civilization. The inducements to remain at home steadily diminished. Those who could live without labour found that society had changed; and they fled to England, France, or Italy. Those who desired to work, and felt that they were qualified for something beyond mere manual labour, fled to England or America; and thus by degrees was the unfortunate country depleted of every thing that could render it a home in which to remain, while those who could not fly remained to be, as the *Times* so well describes it, mere "hewers of wood and drawers of water to the Saxon," happy when a full grown man could find employment at *sixpence a day*, and that, too, without food.

"Throughout the south and west of Ireland," said an English traveller in 1842, four years before the exhaustion of the soil had produced disease among the potatoes—

"The traveller is haunted by the face of the *popular starvation*. It is not the exception—it is the *condition* of the people. In this fairest and richest of countries, men are suffering and *starving by millions*. There are thousands of them, at this minute, stretched in the sunshine at their cabin doors with *no work*, scarcely any food, no hope seemingly. Strong countrymen are lying in bed, '*for the hunger*'—because a man lying on his back does not need so much food as a person a-foot. Many of them have torn up the unripe potatoes from their little gardens, and to exist now must look to winter, when they shall have to suffer starvation and cold too."

"Everywhere," said the *Quarterly Review*, "throughout all parts, even in the best towns, and in Dublin itself, you will meet men and boys—not dressed, not covered—but hung round with a collection of rags of unrivalled variety, squalidity, and filth—walking dunghills. * * * * No one ever saw an English scarecrow with such rags."

The existence of such a state of things was, said the advocate of British free trade, to be accounted for by the fact that the population was too nume-

rous for the land, and yet a third of the surface, including the richest lands in the kingdom, was lying unoccupied and waste.

“Of single counties,” said an English writer, “Mayo, with a population of 389,000, and a rental of only 300,000*l.*, has an area of 1,364,000 acres, of which 800,000 are waste! No less than 470,000 acres, being very nearly equal to the whole extent of surface now under cultivation, are declared to be reclaimable. Galway, with a population of 423,000, and a valued rental of 433,000*l.*, has upward of 700,000 acres of waste, 410,000 of which are reclaimable! Kerry, with a population of 293,000, has an area of 1,186,000 acres—727,000 being waste, and 400,000 of them reclaimable! Even the union of Glenties, Lord Monteagle’s *ne plus ultra* of redundant population, has an area of 245,000 acres, of which 200,000 are waste, and for the most part reclaimable, to its population of 43,000. While the barony of Ennis, that abomination of desolation, has 230,000 acres of land to its 5,000 paupers—a proportion which, as Mr. Carter, one of the principal proprietors, remarks in his circular advertisement for tenants, ‘is at the rate of only one family to 230 acres; so that if but one head of a family were employed to every 230 acres, there need not be a single pauper in the entire district; a proof,’ he adds, ‘THAT NOTHING BUT EMPLOYMENT IS WANTING TO SET THIS COUNTRY TO RIGHTS!’ In which opinion we fully coincide.”

That such was the true cause of Ireland’s difficulties none could doubt. British free trade had drained the country of capital, and the labour even of men found no demand, while women and children starved, that the women and children of England might spin cotton and weave cloth that Ireland was too poor to purchase. Bad, however, as was all this, a worse state of things was at hand. Poverty and wretchedness compelled the wretched people to fly in thousands and tens of thousands, across the Channel, thus following the capital and the soil that had been transferred to Birmingham and Manchester; and the streets and cellars of those towns, and of those of London, Liverpool, and Glasgow, were filled with men, women, and children in a state almost of starvation; while throughout the country, men were offering to perform the farm labor for food alone, and a cry had arisen among the people of England that the labourers were likely to be swamped by these starving Irishmen: to provide against which it was needed that the landlords of Ireland should be compelled to support their own poor, and forthwith an Act of Parliament was passed for that purpose. As a necessary consequence of this there was an increased desire to rid the country of the men, women, and children whose labour could not be sold, and who could therefore pay no rent. The “Crow-bar Brigade” was therefore called into more active service, as will be seen by the following account of their labours in a single one of the “Unions” established under the new poor-law system, which in many cases took the whole rent of the land for the maintenance of those who had been reduced to pauperism by the determination of the people of Manchester and Birmingham to continue the colonial system under which Ireland had been ruined.

“In Galway Union, recent accounts declared the number of poor evicted, and their homes levelled within the last two years, to equal the numbers in Kilrush—4,000 families and 20,000 human beings are said to have been here also thrown upon the road, houseless and homeless. I can readily believe the statement, for to me some parts of the country appeared like an enormous graveyard—the numerous gables of the unroofed dwellings seemed to be gigantic tombstones. They were, indeed, records of decay and death far more melancholy than the grave can show. Looking on them, the doubt rose in my mind, am I in a civilized country? Have we really a free constitution? Can such scenes be paralleled in Siberia or Caffraria?”

Up to this time there had been repeated cases of partial famine, but now the nation was startled by the news of the almost total failure of the crop of

potatoes, the single description of food upon which the people of Ireland had been reduced to depend. Constant cropping of the soil, returning to it none of the manure because of the necessity for exporting almost the whole of its products, has produced disease in the vegetable world, precisely as the want of proper nourishment produces it in the animal world, and now a cry of famine rang throughout the land. The poor-houses were everywhere filled, while the roads, and the streets, and the graveyards were occupied by the starving and the naked, the dying and the dead; and the presses of England were filled with denunciations of English and Irish landholders, who desired to make food dear, while men, women, and children were perishing by hundreds of thousands for want of food. Until now, Ireland had been protected in the market of England, as some small compensation for the sacrifice she had made of her manufacturing interests; but now, small as has been the boon, it was to be withdrawn. The famine came most opportunely for Manchester and Birmingham. They had exhausted all the foreign countries with which they had been permitted to maintain what they denominated free trade—India, Portugal, Turkey, the West Indies and Ireland herself—and it had become necessary to make an effort to obtain a control over the trade of the only prosperous countries of the world, those which had established protection of the people against the British monopoly, to wit—this country, France, Belgium, Germany, and Russia—and the mode of accomplishing this was that of offering them *the same freedom of trade in food by which Ireland had been ruined*. The farmers were everywhere invited to exhaust their soil by sending its products to England to be consumed; and the corn laws were repealed for the purpose of enabling them to impoverish themselves by entering into competition with the starving Irishman, who was thus at once deprived of the market of England, as by the Act of Union he had been deprived of his own. The cup of wretchedness was before well nigh full, but it was now filled. The price of food fell, and the labourer was ruined, for the whole product of his land would scarcely pay his rent. The landlord was ruined, for he could collect no rents, and he was at the same time liable for the payment of enormous taxes for the maintenance of his poor neighbours. His land was encumbered with mortgages and settlements, created when food was high, and he could pay no interest; and now the middlemen of England stepped in to claim their “pound of flesh,” and a law was passed, by aid of which property could be summarily disposed of at public sale, and the proceeds distributed among those who had legal claims upon it. The last blow was thus given to Ireland, and from that day to this, famine and pestilence, levellings and evictions, have been the order of the day. Their effect has everywhere been to drive the poor people from the land, and its consequences are seen in the fact that the population numbered, in 1850, *one million six hundred and fifty-nine thousand less than it did in 1840*; while the starving population of the towns had largely increased. The county of Cork had diminished 222,000, while Dublin had grown in numbers 22,000. Galway had lost 125,000, while the city had gained 7,422. Connaught had lost 414,000, while Limerick and Belfast had gained 30,000. Announcing these startling facts, the *London Times*, the great organ of British free-traders, stated that “*for a whole generation man had been a drug in Ireland, and population a nuisance*.” The “inexhaustible Irish supply had,” as it continued, “kept down the price of English labour,” but this cheapness of labour had “contributed vastly to the improvement and power” of England, and largely to “*the enjoyment of those who had money to spend*.” Now, however, a change appeared to be at hand, and it was to be feared that the

prosperity of England, *based as it had been on cheap Irish labour*, might be interfered with, as famine and pestilence, evictions and emigration, were thinning out the Celts who had so long, as it said, been "hewers of wood and drawers of water for the Saxon." The *Daily News*, another of the advocate of the system which has exhausted and ruined Ireland, and is now transferring its land to the men who have enriched themselves by acting as middlemen between the producers and consumers of the world, rejoiced in the great number of those who had fled from their native soil to escape the horrors of starvation and pestilence. This it regarded as the joyful side of the case. We give its words :

"What will follow? This great good, among others—that *the stagnant weight of unemployed population* in these insulated realms is never likely again to accumulate to the dangerous amount which there was sometimes cause to apprehend that, from unforeseen revulsions in industry or foreign trade, it might have done. A natural vent is now so thoroughly opened, and so certain to grow wider and clearer every day, that the overflow will pass off whenever a moderate degree of pressure recurs. Population, skill, and capital, also, will no longer wait in consternation till they are half spent with watching and fear. The way is ready. They will silently shift their quarters when the competition or depression here becomes uncomfortable. Every family has already friends or acquaintances who have gone before them over sea. Socially, our insulation as a people is proved, by the census of 1851, to be at an end."

The *Times*, too, rejoices in the prospect that the resources of Ireland will now probably be developed, as the Saxon takes the place of the Celt, who has so long hewn the wood and drawn the water for his Saxon masters. "Prosperity and happiness may," as it thinks, "some day reign over that beautiful island. Its fertile soil, its rivers and lakes, its water-power, its minerals, and other materials for the wants and luxuries of man, may one day be developed; but *all appearances are against the belief that this will ever happen in the days of the Celt*. That tribe will soon fulfil the great law of Providence which seems to enjoin and reward the union of races. *It will mix with the Anglo-American, and be known no more as a jealous and separate people*. Its present place will be occupied by the more mixed, more docile, and more serviceable race, which has long borne the yoke of sturdy industry in this island, which can submit to a master and obey the law. This is no longer a dream, for it is a fact now in progress, and every day more apparent."

Commenting upon the view thus presented, one of our American contemporaries most truly says, "There is a cold-blooded atrocity in the spirit of these remarks for which examples will be sought in vain, except among the doctors of the free-trade school. Naturalists have learned to look with philosophical indifference upon the agonies of a rabbit or a mouse expiring in an exhausted receiver, but it requires long teaching from the economists before men's hearts can be so steeled, that after pumping out all the sustenance of vitality from one of the fairest islands under the sun, they can discourse calmly upon its depopulation as proof of the success of the experiment, can talk with bitter irony of 'that *strange* region of the earth where such a people, affectionate and hopeful, genial and witty, industrious and independent, was produced and *could not stay*,' and can gloat in the anticipation that prosperity and happiness may some day reign over that beautiful island, and its boundless resources for the wants and luxuries of man be developed, not for the Celt but 'for a more mixed, more docile, and more serviceable race, which can submit to a master and obey the law.'"

The *Times* rejoices that the place of the Celt is in future to be occupied by cattle, as sheep already occupy the place of the Highlander expelled from the land in which, before Britain undertook to underwork the world and

thus secure a monopoly for the men of Manchester and Birmingham, his fathers were as secure in their rights as was the landowner himself.* Irish journals take a different view of the prospect. They deprecate the idea of the total expulsion of the native race, as may be seen in the following extract from *The Western Star*. Speaking of the exodus of the people from the province of Connaught, it says :

“There is no doubt that in a few years more, if some stop is not put to the present outpouring of the people to America, and latterly to Australia, there will not be a million of the present race of inhabitants to be found within the compass of the four provinces. From the west,” it is added, “they are flying in hundreds.”

“No thoughts of the land of their birth,” it continues, “seems to enter their minds, although the Irish people have been proverbial for their attachment to their country. The prospect of an abundant harvest has not the slightest effect in giving pause to their outward movement. The predominant, and, in fact, the only feeling that seems to pervade them, is an indescribable anxiety to get out of the country at all hazards. If war, famine, and pestilence were known to be close at hand, there could not be greater avidity shown to fly from their houses than is every day exhibited by the hundreds who crowd our high roads and railways in their journey to the shipping ports.”

What is the prospect of a change may be seen by the following extract from one of the Dublin papers, received by the last steamer, in which are the measures now in course of being carried out, with the view to prepare the land of the Celt for the occupation of the Saxon and his cattle.

“The Galway papers are full of the most deplorable accounts of wholesale evictions, or rather exterminations, in that miserable country. The tenantry are turned out of the cottages by scores at a time. As many as 203 men, women, and children have been driven upon the roads and ditches by way of one day’s work, and have now no resource but to beg their bread in desolate places, or to bury their griefs, in many instances for ever, within the walls of the Union workhouse. Land agents direct the operation. The work is done by a large force of police and soldiery. Under the protection of the latter, ‘the Crowbar Brigade’ advance to the devoted township, takes possession of the houses, such as they are, and, with a few turns of the crowbar and a few pulls at a rope, brings down the roof, and leaves nothing but a tottering

* As our readers may desire to understand the process of eviction in Scotland, we give the following extracts from recent English journals describing it, *as now being carried on*, and as likely to be continued.

“A Colonel Gordon, the owner of estates in South Uist and Barra, in the highlands of Scotland, has sent off over 1100 destitute tenants and cotters under the most cruel and delusive temptations; assuring them that they would be taken care of immediately on their arrival at Quebec by the emigrant agent, receive a free passage to Upper Canada, where they would be provided with work by the government agents, and receive grants of land on certain imaginary conditions. Seventy-one of the last cargo of four hundred and fifty have signed a statement that some of them fled to the mountains when an attempt was made to force them to emigrate. ‘Whereupon,’ they add, ‘Mr. Fleming gave orders to a policeman, who was accompanied by the ground officer of the estate in Barra, and some constables, to pursue the people who had runaway among the mountains, which they did, and succeeded in capturing about twenty from the mountains and from other islands in the neighbourhood; but only came with the officers on an attempt being made to handcuff them, and that some who ran away were not brought back; in consequence of which four families, at least, have been divided, some having come in the ships to Quebec, while other members of the same families are left in the highlands.’”

“On board the *Conrad* and the *Birman* were 518 persons from Mull and Tyree, sent out by his Grace the Duke of Argyll, who provided them with a free passage to Montreal, where on arrival they presented the same appearance of destitution as those from South Uist, sent out by Col. Gordon—that is, ‘entirely destitute of money and provisions.’ They were all sent free to Hamilton.”

It may be proper to add, that starvation made considerable inroads upon the numbers of these poor people during the last winter.

chimney, if even that. The sun that rose on a village sets on a desert; the police return to their barracks, and the people are nowhere to be found, or are vainly watching from some friendly covert for the chance of crouching once more under their ruined homes.

“What to the Irish heart is more painful than even the large amount and stern method of the destruction, is that the authors this time are Saxon strangers. It is a wealthy London company that is invading the quiet retreats of Connemara, and robbing a primitive peasantry of its last hold on the earth. The Law Life Assurance Company having advanced, we believe, £240,000 on the Martin estates, has now become the purchaser under the Encumbered Estates Acts, and is adopting these summary but usual measures to secure the forfeited pledge. That gentlemen, many of whom have never set foot in Ireland, and who are wealthy enough to lend a quarter of a million of money, should exact the last penny from a wretched peasantry who had no hand or voice in the transaction which gave them new masters, seems utterly intolerable to the native Irish reason.”

We have said, that to the separation of the consumer from the producer produced by the adoption of British free trade, having for its object the establishment of a monopoly of the machinery of manufacture for the world, are due the exhaustion of Ireland, the ruin of its landholders, the starvation of its people, and the degradation in the eyes of the world of the country which has furnished to the continent its best soldiers, and to the empire not only its most industrious and intelligent labourers, but also its Burke, its Grattan, its Sheridan, and its Wellington; and in this view we are fully borne out by Mr. THOMAS FRANCIS MEAGHER, a few extracts from whose speeches on various occasions will now be given. In a speech delivered at a meeting of the Irish Confederation, on April 7, 1847, he used these impressive words :

“Tell me, has England not eaten enough of your food, and has she not broken down enough of your manufactories, and has she not buried enough of your people? Recount for a moment a few of your losses. The cotton manufacture of Dublin, which employed 14,000 operatives, has been destroyed; the 3400 silk-looms of the Liberty have been destroyed; the stuff and serge manufacture, which employed 1491 operatives, have been destroyed; the calico-looms of Balbriggan have been destroyed; the flannel manufacture of Rathdrum has been destroyed; the blanket manufacture of Kilkenny has been destroyed; the camlet trade of Bandon, which produced £100,000 a year, has been destroyed; the worsted and stuff manufactures of Waterford have been destroyed; the rateen and frieze manufactures of Carrick-on-Suir have been destroyed. One business alone survives! One business alone thrives and flourishes, and dreads no bankruptcy! That fortunate business—which the Union Act has not struck down, but which the Union Act has stood by—which the absentee drain has not slackened, but has stimulated—which the drainage acts and navigation laws of the Imperial Senate have not deadened but invigorated—that favoured, and privileged, and patronized business is the Irish coffin-maker’s.”

Such is everywhere the result of the British colonial system, which England denominates free trade. The population of her West India islands is not now more than one-half of the number of Africans that have been imported into them. In India, in the twenty years from 1818 to 1838, *there were no less than nine years of famine*. That of 1837–8 was terrific, yet the unfortunate people were surrounded by millions upon millions of acres of the richest lands in the world, which they could not cultivate for want of machinery, although the raw materials of that machinery abounded. Whole families of respectability poisoned themselves, rather than beg a little rice for their support. The rivers were choked with dead bodies in the provinces in which this abundance of waste land existed; and the air putrefied with the stench of dead and dying men, women, and children; while jackals and vultures were seen preying on the still animated bodies of our fellow-creatures.

The policy of England in India has been the same that has been pursued

in Ireland. The whole produce of the land not required for the consumption of the agriculturalists themselves, has had to go to distant markets; the consequence of which has been exhaustion of the land wherever cultivated, and an inability to obtain the machinery by aid of which to bring the richer soils into cultivation. "Hitherto," says a recent English traveller, speaking of the country on the Nerbudda—

"Little beyond the rude produce of the soil has been able to find its way into distant markets, from the valley of the Nerbudda; yet this valley abounds in iron mines; and its soil, *where unexhausted by cropping*, is of the richest quality. It is not then too much to hope that in time the iron of the mines will be worked into machinery for manufactures; and that multitudes, aided by this machinery, and subsisted on the rude agricultural produce which now flows out, will invest their labour in manufactured commodities adapted to foreign markets, and better able, from their superior value, compared with their bulk, to pay the cost of transport by land. *Then, and not till then*, can we expect to see these territories pay a considerable net surplus revenue to government, and abound in a middle class of merchants, manufacturers, and agricultural capitalists."—*Col. Sleeman's Rambles in India.*

This is certainly a pleasant anticipation, but the policy of Great Britain looks to compelling the whole people of the world to become agriculturists, that she may be cheaply supplied with the raw products of the earth, while they exhaust the land, as has been done in every country of the world with which she has had what she calls free trade, and which we regard as monopoly of the most oppressive kind.

Again, in a speech at Belfast, on November 15, 1847, Mr. Meagher said:

"How do you explain this fact, that previous to the enactment of the Union, in thousands of factories now closed up, there were so many evidences of an industrious disposition? I cannot run through them all, but take one or two. Dublin, with its ninety-one master-manufacturers in the woollen trade, employing 4938 hands; Cork, with its forty-one employers in the same trade, giving employment to 2500 hands; Bandon, your old southern ally, with its camlet trade, producing upward of £100,000 a year; were these no proofs of an active spirit, seeking in the rugged paths of labour for that gold out of which a nation weaves its purple robe, and moulds its sceptre? I cite these towns: I could cite a hundred other towns—Limerick, Roscrea, Carrick-on-Suir, Kilkenny—I cite them against the Union."

In the same speech, in recounting the wrongs Ireland had endured at the hands of the British Government, he said:

"Thus it is that the grant in aid of your linen manufacture has been withdrawn; thus it is that the grant in aid of the deep sea fisheries has been withdrawn; thus it is that the *protective duties have been repealed*, in spite of the remonstrance of the principal manufacturers of Ireland."

And on the same occasion at Belfast, Mr. Meagher quoted the following facts from a previous writer, in illustration of his own views in reference to the effect which free trade with England had exercised upon the condition of his native country:

"The exports and imports, as far as they are a test of decay of profitable occupation—so far as the exports and imports are supplied from the parliamentary returns—exhibit extraordinary evidence of the condition of the labouring classes. The importation of flax-seed (an evidence of the extent of a most important source of employment) was—in 1790, 339,745 barrels; 1800, 327,721 barrels; 1836, 469,458 barrels. The importation of silk, raw and thrown, was—in 1790, 92,091 lbs.; 1800, 79,060 lbs.; 1830, 3190 lbs. Of unwrought iron—in 1790, 2271 tons; in 1800, 10,241 tons; in 1830, 871 tons. Formerly we spun all our own woollen and worsted yarn. We imported in 1790, only 2294 lbs.; in 1800, 1880 lbs.; in 1826, 662,750 lbs.—an enormous increase. There were, I understand, upwards of thirty persons engaged in the woollen trade in Dublin, who have become bankrupts since 1821.

There has been doubtless an increase in the exports of cottons. The exports were—in 1800, 9147 yards; 1826, 7,793,873. The exports of cotton from Great Britain were...in 1829, 402,517,196 yards, value £12,516,247, which will give the value of our cotton exports at something less than a quarter of a million—poor substitute for our linens, which the province of Ulster alone exceeded in value two millions two hundred thousand pounds. In fact, every other return affords unequivocal proof that the main sources of occupation are decisively cut off from the main body of the population of this country. The export of live cattle and of corn has greatly increased; but these are raw material. There is little more labour in the production of an ox than the occupation of him who herds and houses him; his value is the rent of the land, the price of the grass that feeds him; while an equal value of cotton, or linen, or pottery, will require for its production the labour of many people for money. Thus the exports of the country now are somewhat under the value of the exports thirty years since, but they employ nothing like the number of the people for their production; employment is immensely reduced—population increased three-eighths. Thus, in this transition from *the state of a manufacturing population to an agricultural*, a mass of misery, poverty, and discontent is created.”

Such are the circumstances that have led to the ruin and depopulation of Ireland. England desired to convert Ireland, as she now desires to convert this country, from a manufacturing to an exclusively agricultural population. She desired, as far as possible, to keep the loom and the spade at a distance from the plough and the harrow, and the result has been there, as it must be here, a “mass of poverty, misery, and discontent.” For all this, however, the *Times* finds consolation in the fact that—

“When the Celt has crossed the Atlantic, *he begins for the first time in his life to consume the manufactures of this country, and indirectly to contribute to its customs.* We may possibly live to see the day *when the chief product of Ireland will be cattle, and English and Scotch the majority of her population.* The nine or ten millions of Irish, who by that time will have settled in the United States, cannot be less friendly to England, and *will certainly be much better customers to her than they now are.*”

Extraordinary as is this fact, it is nevertheless true. From the moment the Irishman crosses the Atlantic, he commences his contribution to the maintenance of the system by which Ireland has been ruined. From that moment he begins to lend his aid to the system which looks to the substitution of cattle for the late occupant of the land—the Celt, so long “a hewer of wood and drawer of water” for the Saxon. From the moment an Irishman lands in this country, he is found lending his aid to the election of law-makers, who profess the same principles of legislation as those which have brought misery upon his native land, and driven himself from the hearthstone of his fathers. The free-traders of England determined that Ireland should raise potatoes for its people, and beef and grain to be carried across the channel and eaten in Britain—that Irishmen should be strictly confined to agricultural production, and buy all their manufactures at the workshops of England. Our free-traders seek to enforce the same policy upon us, and Irishmen who have fled to avoid the consequences of being thus tributary to England, aid by their votes in again reducing themselves to the same subjection. The free-traders of England have been for half a century doing all in their power to reduce the wages of labour to the lowest point, to the end that they might manufacture for the whole world, and undersell all mankind in their various domestic markets. The free-traders of the United States insist that we should oppose no resistance to the monopoly of Britain, and they expect Irishmen to help them by their votes. The advocates of the union of the loom and the anvil with the plough and the harrow, on the contrary, look upon high wages to labour as the sure basis of national prosperity. They know that the Irishman who works for 18 cents a day in

his own country, makes no profit for his employer, no savings for himself. The same Irishman, when he goes into the harvest fields of England, earns perhaps 37½ cents a day. His employer derives a profit from his labour, and he is enabled to save enough, with the aid of the friends who have preceded him to America, to make up a little kit and emigrate to our shores. Here he obtains from 75 to 100 cents a day, and soon accumulates a little capital, which enables him to employ his countrymen as they arrive, while those who pay him these wages make profits from his labour twice as great as those who paid him but half as much in England; and in a still higher proportion to those who paid him but one-fourth as much in Ireland.

The personal observation of every emigrant verifies these facts. They cannot help seeing that the road to equalization and Democracy is through the Whig policy of elevating the reward of domestic labour; and yet the party which believes in low wages, and in buying from England because her people are forced to work at low wages—which thus does all in its power to keep down wages here and there—expects to get Irish votes in the perverted name of Democracy; and therefore, unhappily, it has been proved among ourselves, that the most efficient supporters of the British system have been found among those whom that system has deprived of the power of supporting themselves, their parents, their wives and their children, at home.

Such being the case, we need not wonder when we find the *Times* rejoicing at the gradual disappearance of the native population, nor that it should find in

“The abstraction of the Celtic race at the rate of a quarter of a million a year, a surer remedy for *the inveterate Irish disease*, than any human wit could have imagined.”

The “*inveterate Irish disease*” here spoken of is a total absence of demand for labour, resulting from the determination of Manchester and Birmingham to maintain the monopoly of the power to manufacture for the world. The sure remedy for this is found in famines, pestilences, and expatriation, the necessary results of British free trade.

In a recent and eloquent speech from Mr. Meagher, that gentleman spoke of his country as one

“Whose name sounded like a funeral-hymn. It told of a land, the joy of whose heart had ceased—whose inheritance was turned to strangers, and whose house to aliens—whose young men were gone into captivity—whose cities were solitary that were full of people, and whose gates were desolate. Of that land they had heard him speak when the light of a new destiny—beautiful as the light which shone over the face of the prophet—revealed her in a defiant attitude to the world. He did not then pause for words. He should not pause now, were he to behold the same transfiguration. It was painful for them to be there, and have to own that they belonged to a country which, along the great highway of nations, moved on unchartered and unrecognised. It was a galling thought. It flooded the heart with bitterness, and flushed the honest cheek with shame. The glory of a free country descended upon each one of her children—the poorest even—and they walked the world respected. They bore credentials which entitled them to the hospitality, and it might be, to the homage of the stranger. It was painful for them, as he said, to be there, and feel they had no such country.”

He regarded her as one whose present condition afforded little reason for hope. Nevertheless “he would keep alive the feelings, keep alive the hopes which, down even to our own day, have borne her with unconquered endurance through the agony of ages.” Hope in the future emancipation of his country had alone, as he told his hearers, consoled him in all his vicissitudes of fortune, and he concluded with the fervent prayer—

“That it might be vouchsafed to them to see that hope fulfilled! That it might be vouchsafed to them to dwell upon the earth until the promised day had dawned upon the land of their fathers, and their eyes had beheld her salvation! That it might be vouchsafed to them to return to that land—to behold her in her gladness and her glory, as they had looked upon her in her sorrow and captivity—to lead their children to her altar, and dedicate them to her service—for their old age to claim an honourable seat within her gates, as they had been faithful to her youth—and in her holy soil, a resting place forever.”

To this we cry, Amen! We desire to see Ireland restored, and made a place fitting for the residence of its sons. We desire to see Irishmen occupy that high place in the estimation of the world to which they have, on so many occasions, proved themselves so well entitled. We desire to see the day when it shall no longer be needed that the daughters of Ireland should be compelled to separate themselves from parents, and brothers, and sisters, to seek service in foreign lands, and therefore do we desire to see Irishmen aiding, not in the maintenance of the British monopoly, but in resistance to that monopoly, by recognising the existence of the fact, that in protecting the farmers and planters of this country in their efforts to bring the spindle and the loom to the side of the plough and the harrow, they are protecting themselves. “It is time they should see,” says one of our contemporaries, “that so long as they ‘contribute to the customs’ of England, as the *Times* very truly says they do—so long as by buying English manufactures, they pay English wages, and in paying English wages, pay the taxes that are extracted by the government from those wages—it is *they* who pay the police—there are twelve thousand of them in Ireland, kept up at a cost of two and a half millions a year—and the soldiery and the crow-bar brigade to pull down the roof-trees of their brethren! Can they not see that when the Irishmen in America refuse to be customers to England, the temptation for driving them from their native soil will be greatly diminished, and that if England is forced to raise breadstuffs at home, or in Ireland, her fields will not be depopulated to make cattle pastures and sheep walks?”

“The Irish voters can control the election of more than enough members of Congress, in the Middle and Western States, to establish the protective policy permanently in this country, and thereby to build up American manufactures, so that all the raw materials which our own soil and mines supply, shall be wrought up at home by the labour of our citizens, native and adopted—to secure an ample domestic market among those labourers for all their agricultural products, instead of being forced to send them abroad for a market, while swelling the number of producers; because every new citizen who is deprived of mechanical employment is compelled to become a farmer—to dry up the greatest tributary to the commerce and power of England, by depriving her of what are now her largest markets and her most profitable customers in the United States. To do this would be to secure Ireland for the future and avenge her for the past, as far as can be, until Ireland shall again have a Parliament, when she would re-establish an Irish protective tariff at the first session.”

The Irishmen of Albany saw the evil and the remedy, when, at their last St. Patrick's festival, they received with rapturous applause the following toast offered by Mr. John Costigan, of that city:

“Protection to American Industry—The most legitimate and effectual punishment we can inflict on John Bull for his tyranny and oppression to Ireland. Let us have a tariff high enough to exclude the importation of *all* British manufactures.”

Written by H. C. Carey at my
Suggestion in Aug. 1831. A. G.