

For the Pearl.

TOUCH, MINSTREL! TOUCH THY LUTE FOR ME.

Touch, Minstrel! touch thy lute for me
And wake the voice of song
That used to float at silent eve
My native vales along;
For here a sad and wearied thing
In foreign lands I roam,
Debarred from all the dear delights
And tender cares of home.

Bring back the thousand memories
Of other skies and bowers—
The calm pure thoughts and fairy dreams
Of childhood's sunny hours.
Bring back the sounds I loved of old
Heard in my native glen—
The music of the mountain streams
That used to glad me then.

Yet most from out the vanished years
To this lone heart restore,
The treasured smiles, the tones and tears
Of those beheld no more.
Recall young feeling's blissful dream—
The joys of moments fled,—
And give me back the loved and lost,
The beautiful and dead.

JOHN McPHERSON.

Halifax, January 19, 1840.

SCENES IN OTHER LANDS.

JOURNEY FROM BALLYCASTLE TO BELFAST.

Ballycastle is beautifully situated close to an inlet of the sea, and in the centre of an amphitheatre of hills. Much intercourse is kept up with the neighbouring islanders of Rathlin—a people of great simplicity, and still living under a species of patriarchal government. They seem to be neither Irish nor Scotch, but a distinct race partaking of the characteristics of both the neighbouring countries; and so strong is the partiality for their own little island, that, as we were told, nothing so readily quiet the insubordinate amongst them as to threaten them with banishment to the neighbouring coast of Ireland. The passage between Ballycastle and Rathlin is generally a stormy and dangerous one,—subject to sudden gusts of wind, which frequently overturn the light craft that ply between them, and the influence of wind and tide in so narrow a strait will very suddenly raise up a heavy and dangerous sea.

After dining at Ballycastle, we proceeded in a car to Cushendall, about 12 miles distant. On the way, about four miles from the former place, is the majestic promontory of Fair Head, or Benmore, rising up close to the margin of the raging sea to the height of 535 feet. Its base is composed of huge masses of rock strewn about in the wildest confusion, upon which there rises a succession of perpendicular columns to the height of 250 feet; but the awful grandeur of the spot is much increased by the precipices and caves which the traveller may there contemplate. One wild chasm of 200 feet in depth, seems to divide the promontory in two; and there are places where you may gaze down giddy precipices of more than that height, and look into gloomy caverns which the fabled architects of the Causeway might have chosen for their retreat.

The drive to Cushendall was generally over a mountainous and barren country; and as the evening became cloudy and chill, and occasionally dispersing a shower, we were glad to reach that town about eleven o'clock at night. The romantic associations of this charming spot are much heightened by the traditions of the neighbourhood,—it is said to be the scene of many of the wild songs of the Scottish Ossian; and when we gazed upon the magnificent scenery around, and threw back our thoughts to the time when their wildness was complete from the utter absence of cultivation,—when we viewed the mountains with their misty summits almost entirely encircling us, and the angry sea before us, on the opposite side of which were dimly discernible the wildest regions of Scotland,—it was easy to fancy ourselves amongst the very scenes where the poet sung his rhapsodies.

A little beyond Cushendall, the road ran at the foot of a perpendicular cliff, in which are several inhabited caves; one of which has, for several years, been occupied by a fish woman, and another is used as a blacksmith's forge. The road proceeded along beautiful, winding bays, and sometimes across lofty promontories; the whole scene diversified by hill and valley, wood and water, in most agreeable interchange. We passed through the pretty village of Cairnough; above which a mountain frowns with a dark, dismal summit, contrasting strongly with the neat and quiet villas which lie at its base, sloping gently towards the sea. We next drove to Glenarm, a little village delightfully situated on a mountain stream, and nearly encircled by high ridges,—the sea in front, nigh to which are the remains of a Franciscan Friary founded in 1463.

Soon after leaving this village, we ascend an eminence, the summit of which is nearly 1500 feet above the level of the sea, and the view afforded from so great an elevation was grand and beautiful. Just at the moment, too, the sun burst through the mists with which it had been shrouded all the morning, and lit up the varied

and extensive prospect with a glorious splendour. Mountains, woods, valleys, villages, and the sea,—the sea, sparkling and dancing in the sunbeams,—were before us; and the spirits experienced from the freshness and beauty of the scene a sudden renovation. About 5 o'clock in the afternoon we came to Larne, a considerable town situated on a narrow inlet of the sea, and containing one of the best harbours on the north eastern coast of Ireland. Like the others towns on this route, already described, it is surrounded by the most romantic scenery. At the extremity of the peninsula which forms the north side of the harbour, are the ruins of Olderfleet Castle, built in the reign of Henry III.; and here it was that Edward Bruce landed in 1315 with the design of conquering Ireland.

The town of Carrickfergus lies about midway between Larne and Belfast,—a place beautifully situated, and possessing many historical associations. It was taken by Robert Bruce in 1316; in 1568 it was surrendered under O'Neil, the Irish chief, to Sir H. Sydney; in 1689 it yielded to the Duke of Schomberg; in 1770 the French under Thurot made a descent here and surprised the castle; and in 1778, Carrickfergus Bay was visited by the celebrated Paul Jones. The castle situated on a rocky point of the Bay, is a commanding object as well as a venerable structure.

Having arrived in Belfast and intending to spend a portion of two days in that city, I visited many of the public edifices which a traveller ought to inspect, the Linen Hall, with its area and garden, the Academical Institution, the Custom House, &c. The Churches and Hospitals are numerous; and the House of Correction, is a conspicuous object with its front of 236 feet. The quays are well worthy of inspection; and the Bridge over the Lough at its connection with the river, is 2560 feet in length, and supported by twenty one arches.

About noon on the following day we embarked in the Steam Packet Chieftian for Liverpool, and were favoured with fine weather and a tranquil sea. In passing through the Lough, the channel is rather intricate, and in one place there is merely room for two vessels to pass. In proceeding downwards we had an excellent view of the country on either side, embellished with all its variety of mountain and valley, fields, trees, villages and country seats. Soon after our egress from the Lough, we passed the town of Donaghadee, from whence a steam packet plies regularly with the mail to Port Patrick, the nearest point of Scotland, and only 16 miles distant. For some times in the progress of our voyage, we had a clear view both of the Scottish and Irish coast; and towards sunset we made the Calf of Man, along the shore of which were fishing boats in countless multitudes. It was the herring season, and a favourable day,—so that the opportunity was seized by hundreds of the Manxmen. I would fain have landed on this interesting spot; but the Steamer rapidly pursued her way over the tranquil sea, and the Isle of Man was soon lost to sight in the gathering shadows of night. On the following morning we were safely landed at one of the stupendous quays for which Liverpool is so famous.

ROME.

The exact distance from Naples to Rome, by land, is about 132 miles. On the Neapolitan side the road is excellent. Five of us went off *retturino*, and were nearly three days on the road. The manner of travelling is thus: you start at 4 or 5 in the morning, halt from 10 to 12 to rest and feed the horses (the same set carrying you on to Rome,) and here you take a meal. At noon you start again, resume your journey, drive on till eight or nine, when you halt, sup and sleep. The next morning you start again, at the same early hour as before. Thus, with four horses, we were 64 hours on the journey, one half of which time was spent on the road, and the balance in eating, resting, or repose. The *vicinior* charged each of us nine piasters (or about 8 dollars,) and for this he gave beds and suppers, but no dinners. The road is not quite safe, robberies being sometimes committed.

The western shores of Italy consist of a series of plains like the Campiano of Naples, and divided by mountain ridges. The Neapolitan plain extends near to Mola; a ridge of mountains many miles broad, separates that from Terracina, a pretty town (the *Auxur* of the ancients) with castellated rocks of limestone towering above *pugna di Roma*, of which the first portion is the Pontine marshes, which are 26 miles long and about 12 wide. The Republic commenced the draining of them, the Emperor and Pope continued it, but it is not yet finished, though more is done than I had been led to expect. A very monotonous journey is that through the Pontine marshes. In a mathematically straight line, a canal 50 feet wide (the grand trunk of the drainage) extends along the whole length of the marshes. The soil thrown out of this canal has made a raised bank, about 6 feet above the water, and above 100 feet wide. Along this bank a very good road passes, with a double row of trees on each side. And you travel on the straight line, wishing, mile after mile, for something to break the flat monotony. Here and there are a few trusses scantily scattered through the Pontine marshes. What has been drained is chiefly in pasture—a small part has vines, and isolated bits are ploughed. Until you come to the north or higher end, you scarcely meet with any wet marsh. There a great portion remains as yet undrained.

The northern part of this plain embraces and surrounds the Alban mountains, with Rome and its seven hills, and the lakes nearly to Civita Vecchia. It may be 100 miles long by 30 broad.

It stands higher than the valley of Naples, but is less rich. It is a plateau from 1 foot to 200 above the sea, traversed by wide shallow valleys, of from 50 to 200 feet deep. Along the sea shore is a stripe of swamp, a couple of miles broad, but with this exception the Campagna di Roma appears generally dry, and I entertain no doubt that, in the hands of an industrious, well governed people, a very little expense and trouble would make it become as healthy, populous, and fertile as the far-famed plains of Lombardy or Tuscany. At present the Campagna has a bleak and deserted aspect. Here and there are clumps of brushwood, but a single tree is a rarity, and within its whole extent there is nothing like woodland or forest. Fences are scarce, villas there are none, and farm-houses very few. Even of cottages there are few; from the hills near Civita Vecchia to Rome, (40 miles) I did not count 80 cottages. The soil is cultivated—to some extent. The plough is seldom used—and I heard that the Roman custom is to take a crop one year, and leave the land in fallow for the next three or four. The hoe is used oftener than the plough, and about one acre in eight is sowed with corn. An under peopled as well as an over peopled country will have misery and mendicancy. The working classes of Rome are well clad, and the rural population look like paupers, exactly the reverse of Naples; but then the fruitful plain of Naples is well populated and well cultivated, while the Campagna di Roma is nearly a desert. Tivoli is within 15 miles of Rome, and I was so strongly recommended to carry a couple brace of pistols when I went to it, that I did take them—for a party went thither the week before, in a coach and four, were beset, robbed and stripped of nearly all their clothes!

At Albano you begin the descent of the northern declivity of the mountains, and immediately you get a dim view of Rome 14 miles off. It seems, at the first and distant glance, a long extended mass, where you vainly look for any thing like the seven hills. You press forward and get a glimpse of St. Peter's; you see the cupola. As you advance other domes and objects grow apparent. You turn from the distance to the road, and see the distance marked off by handsome round mile stones on the road side. Your cheek tingles as you read the inscription *VEN ARREA*, M. XII., and then M. XI., and so on, diminishing as you go citywards. You are indeed passing over the famous Appian way, through the drear solitudes of the Campagna. On each side you see the ruins of Empire. Here are a few shapeless brick ruins—there the magnificent ruin of some mighty aqueduct, with perhaps 60 or 80 arches left. The line of road is through a level country, and you see these objects against the sky. Very few, very mean, and very wretched, are the habitation of men which you pass. To describe one is to describe all: a miserable, half-ruined, square erection, with two stories. On the ground floor the cattle are lodged, and the family live on the floor above them. The house has no glass windows, but it has wooden shutters.

You come yet nearer to the Eternal City—the Niobe of Nations—and find the vineyards more frequent. They are fenced or walled off, to protect them. You find no gentlemen's villa, no citizen's box, no cottage ornee. At last you reach the famous walls built by Aurelian, A. D. 271. They have a decayed appearance, but they have been and yet are great. They are chiefly built of brick, have a great many square towers, and are about 50 feet high. You come to the gate, and pass the sentinels who guard it. What meets the eye? what splendid edifice? How elegant its proportions! It is the Church of St. John Lateran. The promise it gives, is soon broken, for you pass through dreary districts. But this is soon got over, and you reach the well-inhabited parts of Rome. Should you enter in any other gate, on the south or east side, you must drive through a mile of vineyards before reaching the actual city.

The country around Rome looks a desert. But it need not be so. I can conceive no place more capable of being made "a land flowing with milk and honey." The natural advantages of soil and climate are very considerable here, and a little wisdom would effect a vast change for the better.—*Correspondence of N. Y. Evening Star.*

From the Falmouth Packet.

HINTS ON HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA.

IN PROSE AND VERSE.

"Heavens! Sutherland," I exclaimed, when his wife and five young children left the room, and we had quaffed a bumper of his curious old port to their healths, "what in the name of ill-fortune can induce you, with a young and increasing family, and an income which in the greater part ceases with your life, to continue vegetating in this confounded garden of England, Devonshire; the very hot-bed of small annuitants and genteel inactivity, where nature has placed her barrier against commercial enterprise, and nothing of greater weight ever occupies the financial enquiries of its inhabitants than the price current of lodgings and cabbages; how so many men like yourself in other respects of mind and energy, should be so far biassed by early prejudices as to sacrifice the interests of their families, by remaining in a neighbourhood where nought but poverty awaits them, is to me an enigma!"

"Why, my dear Darlton, you know Lucy has always set her heart on the boys entering the public service. From the time of her great grandfather, (old Admiral Spunyard,) there have always been three or four in the navy, and therefore if we are to keep up the charter, I don't see how we can do better than stick to this neighbourhood. To be sure, it is not quite so easy in these reforming