



CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

VOL. VI.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, MARCH 14, 1856.

NO. 31.

GLEANINGS FROM MACAULAY.

We purpose, from time to time, to lay before our readers extracts from the last published volumes of Macaulay's History of England; especially from those portions which relate to the unfortunate issue of the gallant struggle made by the Irish in the latter end of the XVII. century, for their national independence. After the conquest of England by the Dutch, under the Prince of Orange, James II. found amongst the Irish Catholics that loyalty and devotion which he had looked for in vain amongst the greater part of his native subjects, and even his own children. There was, however, according to Macaulay, a difference betwixt the loyalty of the Irish, and of the English Jacobites. The Jacobitism of the former being essentially patriotic and national:—

"Between English Jacobitism and Irish Jacobitism there was nothing in common. The English Jacobite was animated by a strong enthusiasm for the family of Stuart; and in his zeal for the interests of that family he too often forgot the interests of the State. Victory, peace, prosperity, seemed evils to the staunch nonjuror of our island if they tended to make usurpation popular and permanent. Defeat, bankruptcy, famine, invasion, were in his view, public blessings, if they increased the chance of a restoration. He would rather have seen his country the last of the nations under James the Second or James the Third, than the mistress of the sea, the umpire between contending potentates, the seat of arts, the hive of industry, under a prince of the house of Nassau or of Brunswick.

"The sentiments of the Irish Jacobite were very different, and, it must in candor be acknowledged, were of a nobler character. The fallen dynasty was nothing to him. He had not, like a Cheshire or Shropshire cavalier, been taught from his cradle to consider loyalty to that dynasty as the first duty of a Christian and a gentleman. All his family traditions, all the lessons taught him by his foster mother and by his priests, had been of a very different tendency.—He had been brought up to regard the foreign sovereigns of his native land with the feeling which the Jew regarded Caesar, with which the Scot regarded Edward the First, with which the Castilian regarded Joseph Bonaparte, with which the Pole regards the Autocrat of the Russians. It was the boast of the highest Milesian that, from the 12th century to the 17th, every generation of his family had been in arms against the English crown. His remote ancestors had contended with Fitzstephen and DeBurgh. His great grandfather had cloven down the soldiers of Elizabeth in the battle of the Blackwater. His grandfather had conspired with O'Donnell against James the First. His father had fought under Sir Phelim O'Neill against Charles the First. The confiscation of the family estate had been ratified by an act of Charles the Second. No Puritan, who had been cited before the High Commission by Laud, who had charged under Cromwell at Naseby, who had been prosecuted under the conventicle act, and who had been in hiding on account of the Rye House Plot, bore less affection to the house of Stuart than the O'Haras and MacMahons, on whose support the fortunes of that house now seemed to depend.

"The fixed purpose of these men was to break the foreign yoke, to exterminate the Saxon colony, to sweep away the Protestant church, and to restore the soil to its ancient protectors. To obtain these ends they would without the smallest scruple have risen up against James; and to obtain these ends they rose up for him. The Irish Jacobites, therefore, were not at all desirous that he should again reign at Whitehall; for they could not but be aware that a sovereign of Ireland, who was also sovereign of England, would not, and even if he would, could not, long administer the government of the smaller and poorer kingdom in direct opposition to the feeling of the larger and richer. Their real wish was that the crowns might be completely separated, and that their island might, whether under James or whether without James they cared little, form a distinct State under the powerful protection of France."

Little was known by the Englishman of those days of that beautiful island on which nature has lavished her richest stores, but which Protestantism has done its best to convert into a hell upon earth:—

"The south-western part of Kerry is now well known as the most beautiful tract in the British isles. The mountains, the glens, the capes stretching far into the Atlantic, the crags on which the eagles build, the rivulets, brawling down rocky passes, the lakes overhung by groves in which the wild deer find covert, attract every summer crowds of wanderers sated with the business and the pleasures of great cities. The beauties of that country are indeed too

often hidden in the mist and rain which the west wind brings up from a boundless ocean. But, on the rare days when the sun shines out in all his glory, the landscape has a freshness and a warmth of coloring seldom found in our latitude. The myrtle loves the soil. The arbutus thrives better than even on the sunny shore of Calabria. The turf is of livelier hue than elsewhere: the hills glow with a richer purple: the varnish of the holly and ivy is more glossy; and berries of a brighter red peep through foliage of a brighter green. But during the greater part of the seventeenth century, this paradise was as little known to the civilised world as Spitzbergen or Greenland. If ever it was mentioned, it was mentioned as a horrible desert, a chaos of bogs, thickets, and precipices, where the she wolf still littered, and where some half naked savages, who could not speak a word of English, made themselves burrows in the mud, and lived on roots and sour milk."

Such a country was worth fighting for; and, encouraged by promises of assistance from France, the people of Ireland in the spring of 1689 rose as one man, with the firm resolve to throw off the accursed yoke of the foreigner, and to assert their inalienable right to freedom and national independence:—

"The Irish nation was called to arms; and the call was obeyed with strange promptitude and enthusiasm. The flag on the Castle of Dublin was embroidered with the words, 'Now or never; now and for ever;' and those words resounded through the whole island. Never in modern Europe has there been such a rising up of a whole people. The habits of the Celtic peasant were such that he made no sacrifice in quitting his potatoe ground for the camp.—He loved excitement and adventure. He feared work far more than danger. His national and religious feelings had, during three years, been exasperated by the constant application of stimulants. At every fair and market he had heard that a good time was at hand, that the tyrants who spoke Saxon and lived in slated houses were about to be swept away, and that the land would again belong to its own children. By the peat fires of a hundred thousand cabins had nightly been sung rude ballads which predicted the deliverance of the oppressed race. The priests, most of whom belonged to those old families which the Act of Settlement had ruined, but which were still revered by the native population, had, from a thousand altars, charged every Catholic to show his zeal for the true Church by providing weapons against the day when it might be necessary to try the chances of battle in her cause. The army, which, under Ormond, had consisted of only eight regiments, was now increased to forty eight; and the ranks were soon full to overflowing. It was impossible to find at short notice one tenth of the number of good officers which was required. Commissions were scattered profusely among idle cosherers who claimed to be descended from good Irish families. Yet even thus the supply of captains and lieutenants fell short of the demand; and many companies were commanded by cobblers, tailors and footmen.

"Though four-fifths of the population of Ireland were Celtic and Roman Catholic, more than four-fifths of the property of Ireland belonged to the Protestant English. The garners, the cellars, above all the flocks and herds of the minority, were abandoned to the majority. Whatever the regular troops spared was devoured by bands of marauders who overran almost every barony in the island. For the arming was now universal. No man dared to present himself at mass without some weapon, a pike, a long knife called a skean, or, at the very least, a strong ash stake, pointed and hardened in the fire. The very women were exhorted by their spiritual directors to carry skeans. Every smith, every carpenter, every cutler, was at constant work on guns and blades. It was scarcely possible to get a horse shod. If any Protestant artisan refused to assist in the manufacture of implements which were to be used against his nation and his religion, he was flung into prison."

On the 12th of March, the King landed at Kinsale, and was received with shouts of joy from the ranks of the Irish patriots and loyalists:—

CORK IN THE XVII. CENTURY.

"James learned that his cause was prospering. In the three southern provinces of Ireland the Protestants were disarmed, and were so effectually bowed down by terror that he had nothing to apprehend from them. In the North there was some show of resistance: but Hamilton was marching against the malcontents; and there was little doubt that they would easily be crushed. A day was spent at Kinsale in putting the arms and ammunition out of reach of danger. Horses sufficient to carry a few travellers were with some difficulty procured; and, on the 14th of March, James proceeded to Cork.

"We should greatly err if we imagined that the

road by which he entered that city bore any resemblance to the stately approach which strikes the traveller of the nineteenth century with admiration. At present Cork, though deformed by many miserable relics of a former age, holds no mean place among the ports of the empire. The shipping is more than half what the shipping of London was at the time of the Revolution. The customs exceed the whole revenue which the whole kingdom of Ireland, in the most peaceful and prosperous times, yielded to the Stuarts. The town is adorned by broad and well built streets, by fair gardens, by a Corinthian portico which would do honor to Palladio, and by a Gothic college worthy to stand in the High Street of Oxford. In 1689, the city extended over about one tenth part of the space which it now covers, and was intersected by muddy streams, which have long been concealed by arches and buildings. A desolate marsh, in which the sportsman who pursued the waterfowl sank deep in water and mire at every step, covered the area now occupied by stately buildings, the palaces of great commercial societies. There was only a single street in which two wheeled carriages could pass each other. From this street diverged to right and left, alleys squalid and noisome beyond the belief of those who have formed their notions of misery from the most miserable parts of Saint Giles's and Whitechapel. One of these alleys, called, and, by comparison, justly called, Broad Lane, is about ten feet wide. From such places, now seats of hunger and pestilence, abandoned to the most wretched of mankind, the citizens poured forth to welcome James. He was received with military honors by MacCarthy, who held the chief command in Munster."

From Cork the King proceeded to Dublin. His progress is thus described by the historian, whose hatred to the cause of Irish freedom makes him represent everything in the light most unfavorable to James and his loyal Irish subjects:—

"At length James was able to leave Cork for the capital. On the road, the shrewd and observant Avaux made many remarks. The first part of the journey was through wild highlands, where it was not strange that there should be few traces of art and industry. But, from Kilkenny to the gates of Dublin, the path of the travellers lay over gently undulating ground rich with natural verdure. The fertile district should have been covered with flocks and herds, orchards and cornfields: but it was an untilled and unpeopled desert. Even in the towns the artisans were very few. Manufactured articles were hardly to be found, and if found could be procured only at immense prices. The truth was that most of the English inhabitants had fled, and that art, industry, and capital had fled with them.

"James received on his progress numerous marks of the goodwill of the peasantry; but marks such as, to men bred in the courts of France and England, had an uncouth and ominous appearance. Though very few laborers were seen at work in the fields, the road was lined by Rapparees armed with skeans, stakes, and half pikes, who crowded to look upon the deliverer of their race. The highway along which he travelled presented the aspect of a street in which a fair is held. Pipers came forth to play before him in a style which was not exactly that of the French opera; and the villagers danced wildly to the music. Long freize mantles, resembling those which Spenser had, a century before, described as meet beds for rebels and apt cloaks for thieves, were spread along the path which the cavalcade was to tread; and garlands, in which cabbage stalks supplied the place of laurels, were offered to the royal band. The women insisted on kissing his Majesty; but it should seem that they bore little resemblance to their posterity; for this compliment was so distasteful to him that he ordered his retinue to keep them at a distance.

DUBLIN IN THE XVII. CENTURY.

"On the 24th of March he entered Dublin. That city was then, in extent and population, the second in the British isles. It contained between six and seven thousand houses, and probably above thirty thousand inhabitants. In wealth and beauty, however, Dublin was inferior to many English towns.—Of the graceful and stately public buildings which now adorn both sides of the Liffey scarcely one had been even projected. The College, a very different edifice from that which now stands on the same site, lay quite out of the city. The ground which is at present occupied by Leinster House and Charlemont House, by Sackville Street and Merrion Square, was open meadow. Most of the dwellings were built of timber, and have long given place to more substantial edifices. The Castle had in 1686 been almost uninhabitable. Clarendon had complained that he knew of no gentleman in Pall Mall who was not more conveniently and handsomely lodged than the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. No public cere-

mony could be performed in a becoming manner under the Viceregal roof. Nay, in spite of constant glazing and tiling, the rain perpetually drenched the apartments. Tyrconnel, since he became Lord Deputy, had erected a new building somewhat more commodious. To this building the King was conducted in state through the southern part of the city. Every exertion had been made to give an air of festivity and splendor to the district which he was to traverse. The streets, which were generally deep in mud, were strewn with gravel. Boughs and flowers were scattered over the path. Tapestry and arras hung from the windows of those who could afford to exhibit such finery. The poor supplied the place of rich stuffs with blankets and coverlids. In one place was stationed a troop of friars with a cross; in another a company of forty girls dressed in white and carrying nosebags. Pipers and harpers played 'The King shall enjoy his own again.' The Lord Deputy carried the sword of state before his master. The Judges, the Heralds, the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, appeared in all the pomp of office. Soldiers were drawn up on the right and left to keep the passages clear. A procession of twenty coaches belonging to public functionaries was mustered. Before the Castle gate, the King was met by the host under a canopy borne by four bishops of his church. At the sight he fell on his knees, and passed some time in devotion. He then rose and was conducted to the chapel of his palace, once—such are the vicissitudes of human things—the riding house of Henry Cromwell. A Te Deum was performed in honor of his Majesty's arrival. The next morning he held a Privy Council, discharged Chief Justice Keating from any further attendance at the board, ordered Avaux and Bishop Cartwright to be sworn in, and issued a proclamation convoking a Parliament to meet at Dublin on the seventh of May."

In a few months the foreign oppressors of Ireland were almost entirely driven from the soil which they had so long polluted; and Londonderry alone held out for the Prince of Orange. Of its defenders—to whom it is impossible to deny the praise of great courage, and much skill in their defence—Macaulay thus speaks:—

"Whatever an engineer might think of the strength of the ramparts, all that was most intelligent, most courageous, most highspirited among the Englishry of Leinster and of Northern Ulster was crowded behind them. The number of men capable of bearing arms within the walls was seven thousand; and the whole world could not have furnished seven thousand men better qualified to meet a terrible emergency with clear judgment, dauntless valor, and stubborn patience. They were all zealous Protestants; and the Protestantism of the majority was tinged with Puritanism. They had much in common with that sober, resolute, and Godfearing class out of which Cromwell had formed his unconquerable army.—But the peculiar situation in which they had been placed had developed in them some qualities which, in the mother country, might possibly have remained latent. The English inhabitants of Ireland were an aristocratic caste, which had been enabled, by superior civilisation, by close union, by sleepless vigilance, by cool intrepidity, to keep in subjection a numerous and hostile population. Almost every one of them had been in some measure trained both to military and to political functions. Almost every one was familiar with the use of arms, and was accustomed to bear a part in the administration of justice. It was remarked by contemporary writers that the colonists had something of the Castilian haughtiness of manner, though none of the Castilian indolence, that they spoke English with remarkable purity and correctness, and that they were, both as militiamen and as jurymen, superior to their kindred in the mother country. In all ages, men situated as the Anglosaxons in Ireland were situated have had peculiar virtues and peculiar virtues, the vices and virtues of masters, as opposed to the vices and virtues of slaves. The member of a dominant race is, in his dealings with the subject race, seldom indeed fraudulent—for fraud is the resource of the weak—but imperious, insolent, and cruel. Towards his brethren, on the other hand, his conduct is generally just, kind, and even noble. His selfrespect leads him to respect all who belong to his own order. His interest impels him to cultivate a good understanding with those whose prompt, strenuous, and courageous assistance may at any moment be necessary to preserve his property and life. It is a truth ever present to his mind that his own wellbeing depends on the ascendancy of the class to which he belongs. His very selfishness therefore is sublimed into public spirit; and this public spirit is stimulated to fierce enthusiasm by sympathy, by the desire of applause, and by the dread of infamy. For the only opinion which he values is the opinion of his fellows; and in their opinion devotion