

the back of which are the following lines, descriptive of the various views which meet the eye, are rudely engraved:

"Here, in full light, the russet plains extend,  
There, wrapped in clouds, the blueish hills ascend,  
Even the wild heath displays her purple dyes,  
And, midst the desert, fruitful fields arise."

The castle of Dundrum, which is situated on a rising rock, and commands a fine view of the whole bay, is itself a very imposing object in the scene which presents itself from Tullamore-park.

#### A WEEK IN LONDON.

I proceeded to the business for which, in addition to the pleasure of seeing one connected with me, I had sent for my nephew, and begged to learn from him where it would be well for me to fix my residence while engaged in my present object, which was that of seeing London and Westminster. This being settled, we set forth together for my domicile that was to be, and now having a guide, and being relieved from all unpleasant anxiety as to going astray and losing myself, I was free to indulge in unrestrained contemplation of all around me. Certainly it is a fine sight, these interminable rows of houses, uniting elegance and comfort in their appearance. Every thing looked so neat, and in perfect repair, to the very scouring and squaring of the stone steps before the doors, as if people did nothing else but watch that no touch of decay or neglect should be visible about their dwellings; and to say the truth, the more I saw of the internal economy of the households of the middle class in London during my residence there, the more I was confirmed in the opinion that the chief attention of the mistress of the family at all events, was directed to the maintaining of a neat and "respectable" appearance on the outside, and within the house. The cleanness of walls, and especially corners—the brightness of the furniture, and the looking glasses, and the windows, the neat and expensive clothing of themselves and their children, and the abundant feeding and physicking of the latter, form the business of their lives and occupy all their thoughts. As for the things of imagination, or of feeling other than household feeling, they know them not. They have an interest in bonnets, but not in books—their taste is generally restricted to dress and cookery, but nevertheless they are respectable people, well fitted for the business of living, and the formation, in the mass, of what is called the English character.

Bye and bye we entered a neat looking street containing on either side about fifty houses, all of them so exactly alike, to the very colour of the doors, and the fancy of the knockers, that I wondered how the inhabitants were able to find their own particular homes amid the multitude, the rather as it is not the custom to have any name affixed upon the hall doors. A stranger must depend entirely upon the numbers, which if he happen to forget, the Lord help him. It will be no use to knock at a door by chance, and ask, for ten to one the people living next door to each other for five years last past, have no notion of each others' names, unless they happen to have had some business together about a party wall, or a spout or gutter common to both houses, or something of that sort.

"This is the street where Hopkins lives," said my nephew—"very neat and comfortable houses, an't they?"

"Yes," said I, "and the builder seems to have been so much in love with the first, that he has made all the others with more than a 'family likeness'—and saying this, I thought of poor Martha at home, and sighed.

"Ah, that puts me in mind of a story Hopkins told me only yesterday," said my nephew.

"Pray indulge me with it," said I, "if it be diverting, for either the fatigue of walking in these streets, or the thought of the distance I am from home, has depressed my spirits."

"Well," said he, "you must know that Hopkins took the house here a short time before he was married, and as he was going out one evening, expecting to return late, he took the key of the hall-door with him, desiring the servant to go to bed at her usual time, and leave a light

burning in the passage. This is a common practice, and it so happened that his next door neighbour that evening did the very same thing. When Hopkins returned at twelve o'clock at night, he went to the wrong door, and the lock being of precisely the same pattern, his key opened it, and in he went. Hopkins's neighbour was, like himself, a new comer, and as yet there was not much furniture in the house. It was in every respect so like Hopkins's own, that he perceived no difference. The truth is, I suppose, he had taken a glass of brandy and water more than usual, but he said nothing of that to me. He took the candle and went up stairs—the bed-room was the same—the two-pair front room. Hopkins observed no difference, but pulled off his clothes, and might have even gone into his neighbour's bed, but that an article of night gear in the room now exposed the mistake. It was of a flaming red pattern, and Hopkins knew that his was blue and white—he looked about, and the moment his suspicion was roused, it was confirmed, for several points of discrepancy, which, while his attention was not turned to any such thing, were wholly unobserved, now flashed upon his observation. His surprise and consternation were such, at finding himself thus an intruder, in another man's house and chamber at midnight, that he upset a rickety basin stand, the crash whereof was very great, and added to his terror. He expected that he would be siezed as a robber, perhaps shot without time or opportunity for explanation being afforded. An awful silence succeeded to the crash—no one was awakened by it, and Hopkins recovering himself a little, donned his clothes again in all haste, got down stairs, replaced the light in the hall, got out again as stealthily as a rat, and had just found his way into his own house and shut the door, when he heard his neighbour arrive. Hopkins says his nerves got such a shock that he could not sleep all night."

At six o'clock I presented myself at my new dwelling, where I was received with much attention by Mrs. Hopkins, now arrayed in her evening costume, which was much more showy than that of the morning, and so neatly put on, that she really looked a very pretty woman—but what was that to me? Her husband, too, was now at home, a fat-headed, short-legged man, concerning whom it might have been prophesied, without much skill in physiognomy, that he loved pudding. He discoursed to me of the weather until his wife sent him to cut the bread and butter, which he seemed to do *con amore*.

He appeared to be indeed a very useful person about the house in a subordinate capacity—his wife saving him all trouble in the direction of affairs. She put me constantly in mind of the Madame B. mentioned by the French essayist, Jouy, "dont l'activité l'intelligence, et l'humeur un peu despotique, s'il faut tout dire, laissent peu de chose à faire à son mari." I found they had three children, who ate their meals with them—a circumstance which I might literally say I had not bargained for; but I was unwilling to give myself or the fond parents the pain of making any objection. Miss Sarah was six years old, a white greasy-looking child, with large dead eyes, and a stoppage in her nose which did not pleasingly affect her voice. Master Jackey was five, and not an ill-looking boy, but as bold an imp as ever worked mischief, and challenging every one that came into the house, stranger or no stranger, to box; then it would close its little fists and batter away at one's knees, to the infinite delight of its parents, until at last it hurt itself, and ran away yowling, to be coaxed and petted by one of them, or both. The youngest darling was Miss Emma, a sharp-eyed little wretch, very like her mother, and passionate as a little fiend:—when thwarted, she would dance with rage, or throw herself down on the floor, and kicking as if in convulsions, scream as if some one had been cutting her head off. I sometimes thought it a pity that they didn't.

Their amiable mother talked to me about them all the time of tea, except while employed in the most affectionate exhortations to them to eat plenty of bread and butter. "Do, darling, take another piece—that's a dear—do make a hearty tea." Such were her frequent exclamations, and assuredly her children showed no undutiful disobedience of her commands. At last the mountain of slices entirely disappeared, and father and mother gazed

alternately at the empty plate and at their children, with an air of paternal satisfaction which none but a stoic could have beheld unmoved. How curious and delightful, thought I, are the tender sympathies which dwell within the parental breast. Alas! why am I forty-three, and a bachelor.

And so saying, or rather so thinking, for I did not say it, I took a candle to go to my room, when in came a very pretty nursery maid, with a soft pleasant voice, and after a special inquiry, with apparent solicitude, if the children had made a hearty tea, and an answer in the affirmative, she said they were dear good children, and carried them off, carefully eyeing me, I could perceive, every now and then, as much as to say, what sort of a person is this new lodger?

These pretty nursery maids in the London lodging houses play the very deuce, but I don't see what help there is for it. The name of the young person in question was Maria, and they called her Mariar. I walked up stairs behind her, while she beguiled the way with vivacious prattle to the children. As I turned into my room, the slightest imaginable turn of her eye showed that she noticed my retreat. This, said I, is her gentle way of wishing me good night—when we get better acquainted, she will venture to say "good night" to me. I never proceeded more accurately in my life.

When I went down some time afterwards to fetch a book which I brought in my hand, and forgotten in the parlour, I heard in the passage the sounds of expostulation, mixed with those of lamentation and woe. One of the voices was that of my landlady, the other was very pathetic, but strange and uncouth. When I arrived at the *locus in quo*, I thought it a point of politeness to express my hope that nothing was the matter.

"O nothing," said Mrs. Hopkins, "it's only Irish Biddy, a char-woman I employ, and I find she won't eat her victuals, so it stands to reason she can't do her work, and I'm telling her we can't have her any more."

"God bless you, Sir, do spake a word for me," said Biddy, with tears in her eyes; "I'm sure I'd ate and drink too, for it's not too much av it I'm often troubled wit, but it's agin my religion, Sir, an' I'm sure I'll work as hard every bit as if I ate the housefull; but only don't turn me off, or I'll be ruint intirely."

Here the poor woman wrung her hands and began to cry.

"I say it's quite impossible," cried Mrs. Hopkins, "that any woman that doesn't take her pint or pint an' half of beer, and some nourishment of meat in the day, can scour my floor properly, and no body will persuade me to the contrary."

"O mistress, dear jewell, sure if you'd only set your two good lookin' beautiful eyes on what I'm afther doin' to-day, you wouldn't find fault with it at all at all," said Biddy.

"No, I don't say it's badly done," returned the lady, not a little softened, I dare say, by the compliment to her beauty, "but I know that no work can be done as it should be if one don't eat meat, nor drink beer, and I can't have you to-morrow, unless you take your victuals properly."

"Why do you not eat and drink like other people, my good woman?" said I.

"In troth, Sir, I'll tell you how it is," she answered, "this is Friday, and to-morrow is Saturday, plaze God, if we live to see it—it's agin our religion to ate mate of a Friday, any way, and I'm undher a vow besides for Saturday, and not to taste porther."

"And what induced you to make such a vow?"

"My husband fell off a ladder, Sir, upon his breast, and he was very bad entirely, and I made a vow that iv it id plaze God to spare him, I wouldn't ate mate on Saturdays, nor drink anything stronger nor milk for a twelvemonth, and sure enough it was afther that he got better, Sir, and now he's able to go about agin, I thank the Almighty."

The tears came into my eyes at this little recital, in which affection, simplicity, and superstition, were all combined. Mrs. Hopkins exclaimed, "poor ignorant creature," and slightly laughed, but seeing that I looked grave, she changed her countenance to an aspect of compassion.

As for me, I was not surprised by the poor woman's story, for in my part of the country there are several small settlements of Roman Catholics, and I was by no means unaware of the strange manner in which they mix up their superstitions with the ordinary affairs of life.

"Does your priest know of your vow?" said I.

"Yis, your honour," said Biddy, making a curtsy, and now looking rather surprised at me.

"And he can release you from it, I suppose?"

"Yis, your honour," she replied again, with another curtsy.

"And does he live near this?"

"Quite convanient, your honour—he belongs to the chapel there, just hard by Lincoln's-Inn-Fields."

"Well," said I, "I shall write a paper for you, which you must take to him, and see if he won't manage this affair for you, for it's quite too bad that you should lose your health and your livelihood on account of this vow—I dare say he can change it to something else."

"To be sure, it's himself that can do anything of the sort," said Biddy, "an' an' illigant priest he is, an' a good man to us poor crathurs—maybe you know him, Sir?"

"No," said I, "I have not that pleasure, but I shall use the freedom of writing to him notwithstanding; and in the mean time I will ask Mrs. Hopkins to let you off without eating meat, or drinking beer, for to-morrow."

Mrs. Hopkins was prevailed upon to consent, and Biddy prayed that the "heavens might be my bed."

"But your husband," said I, "is he able to work again?"

"No, Sir," she replied, with a sigh, "not to say hard work; but he runs of arrands an' the like, and picks up a penny the best way he can."

"Is he an Irishman?"

"An Irishman!" replied Biddy, with a laugh, "arrah, what else would he be, Sir? In troth, he is, Sir—he comes from a place called Kilecullin in the county Kildare—he lived sarvent wid one Mr. Tracy, that, I dare say, you've heerd of iv you ever wor that way."

"I never was, Biddy—but does your husband know London well?"

"Does a dook swim, your honour?—It's himself that does know Lunnun; sure we've been in the place for seven years, an' a power of hardship we've seen in it too—glory be to God."

It occurred to me that I should very much want an attendant, to act both as a guide and a servant, while I remained in London, and that this poor woman's husband might answer my purpose. As to dress, thought I, this suit that I have travelled in, if it will fit him, may be made over to him as sufficiently worse for the wear to be abandoned. It is not exactly the sort of servant one should choose, if one had to seek him out, but as the occasion offers, and it would be a charity, why—

In short, I had made up my mind to the thing, so without further parley, I told Biddy that I wanted a servant while I was in town, and if her husband would come to me, so that I might satisfy myself of his qualifications, I would perhaps employ him.

The poor woman put up some more fervent prayers on my behalf, and promised to send her husband early the next morning.

He came, I saw, and he conquered. It was very absurd, and I knew it, to take upon trust all that Brian Murphy assured me of, with so much veracity, in his own behalf—but he was irresistible, and besides, he looked as if my old clothes would fit him to a nicety. He protested he knew every place and could do every thing, or if he couldn't do it just this minute, "sure he could larn."

Many a man takes high office, thought I, with precisely the same self-assurance as to capability—the difference is, that he carries off his ignorance with an air, while Brian in some sort admits it.

In the end, I had no reason to repent of having taken Brian into my service, at a venture.\*

\* Extracted from "A Sentimental Journey through London and Westminster," in the Dublin University Magazine, No. XVI, for April, 1834.