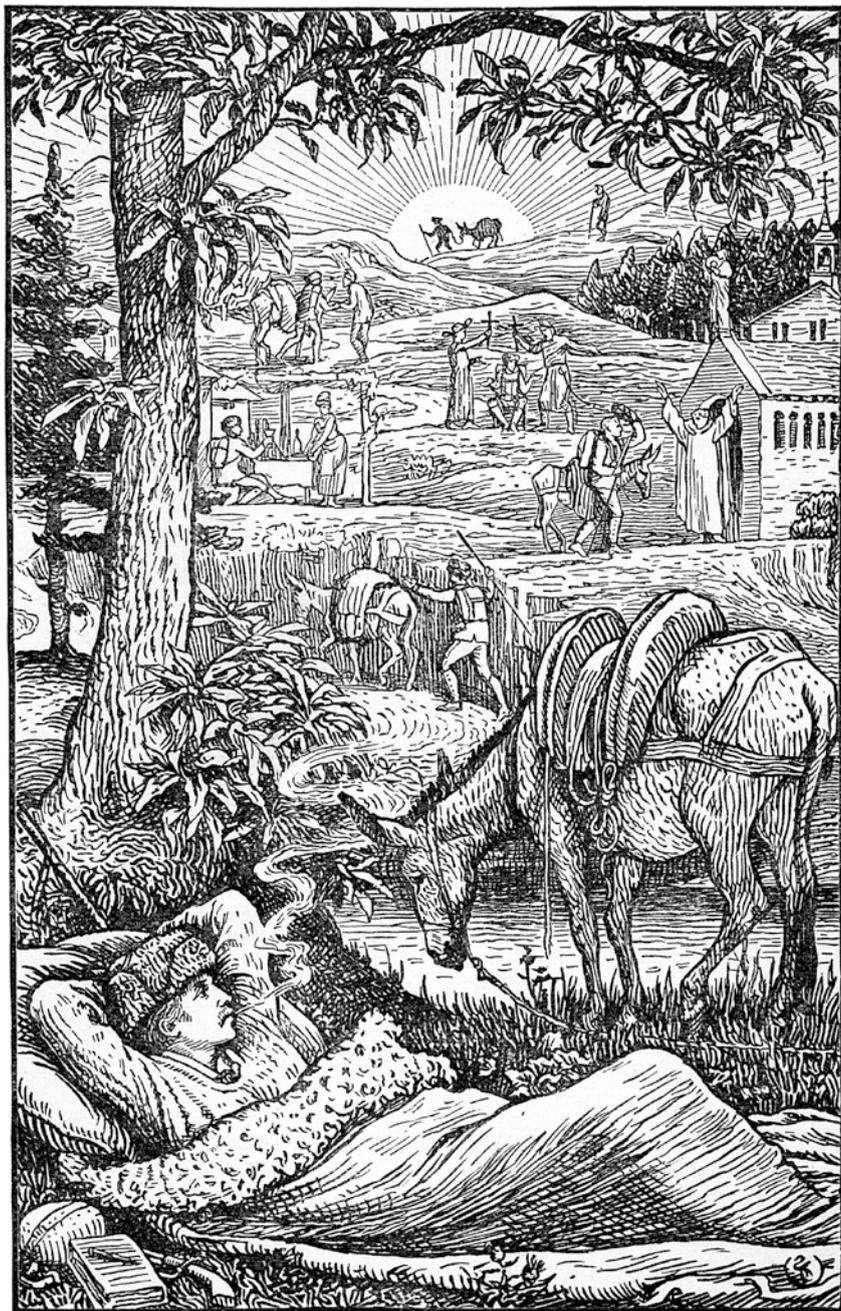


**Great Cities
Through
Travellers'
Eyes**



EDITED BY
PETER FURTADO

Great Cities Through Travellers' Eyes

WITH 39 ILLUSTRATIONS

 Thames & Hudson

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on the atmosphere. I asked if they would mind moving away from me for the picture, which they did in silence. When I had taken it I thanked the man who seemed master of the bath and turned to my old man to have the door unfastened: this was also done in complete silence but just as I was stepping out two or three asked me to turn back and look over the baths. This you may imagine I did not do. I was very glad to have that door open, though I suppose it was really quite all right. I wish now I had taken the picture with more care, for I don't imagine any European had been in that particular place before. I am not mentioning this episode here, for as it is I am being almost shadowed by the family who are evidently fearfully anxious. Think of it! My landlady has never in all her life been even to the Great Mosque.

DUBLIN



Dublin was founded by Vikings in the 10th century, and the town rose to prominence in the Middle Ages when it became the centre for the precarious English hold over Ireland. In the mid-17th century, it saw a Catholic uprising against Protestant English rule that left much of the city derelict, but following the Restoration of Charles II in 1660 its fortune revived, based in large part on the wool trade.

In the 18th century, Dublin flourished economically, becoming the second largest city in the British Isles: culturally, with many well-known writers and musicians based there; and architecturally, with elegant classical squares and terraces. The late 18th century saw the emergence of a nationalist movement in Ireland, fuelled in large part by grievances at the treatment of the majority Catholic population, which contributed to social and political unrest in 1798 and political union with England in 1800.

In the 19th century, Dublin was marked by the general poverty that caused widespread emigration from Ireland. Independence in 1922 saw Dublin the capital of essentially Catholic and introverted Eire, but in the 21st century the city has become more cosmopolitan in outlook and has attracted large businesses from across the world.

1666 FRANÇOIS DE LA BOULLAYE LE GOUZ

French aristocrat François de La Boullaye Le Gouz (1623–1668) wrote of his travels in India, Persia, Greece, the Middle East, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, England, Ireland and Italy. Published in English in 1837, The Tour of the French traveller M. de La Boullaye Le Gouz in Ireland, A.D. 1644 was one of the first books to give practical information for travellers.

The city of Dublin is the capital of Ireland. It is on the east of the island: its size equal to that of Angers. The quay of the harbour is very fine, but receives only small craft: large vessels remain in the roads, two miles from the city. There is no curiosity except a well which is two or three miles from the city, on the northern coast, which works miracles for the lame and the blind. So say the natives.

There are fine buildings in Dublin: a college and many churches, among which is that of St Patrick, the apostle of the country. In the choir are displayed the arms of the old English knights, with their devices. I went there on Sunday to witness the ceremonial attending on the Viceroy. I saw much that was really magnificent. On leaving the church there marched before him a company of footmen, beating the drum, and with matchlocks ready for action. Then followed a company of halberdiers, his bodyguards

and sixty gentlemen on foot, with four noblemen well mounted, and the Viceroy in the midst upon a white Barbary horse. I followed the train in order to enter more freely into the castle; but at the door they ordered me to lay down my sword, which I would not do, saying, that being born of a condition to carry it before the king, I would rather not see the castle than part with my arms. A gentleman in the suite of the Viceroy seeing from my gallant bearing that I was a Frenchman, took me by the hand, saying, 'Strangers shall on this occasion be more favoured than residents.' And he brought me in. I replied to him that his civility equalled that of the French towards his nation, when they met them in France. Being within, I found this castle indifferently strong, without any outworks, and pretty well furnished with guns of cast metal.

1776 ARTHUR YOUNG

The English economist and agriculturalist Arthur Young (1741–1820) visited Dublin in 1776 as part of an extended journey that he described in Tour in Ireland (1780). He liked what he saw.

19 June Arrived at Holyhead, after an instructive journey through a part of England and Wales I had not seen before. Found the packet, the Claremont, captain Taylor, would sail very soon. After a tedious passage of twenty-two hours, landed on the 20th, in the morning, at Dunlary, four miles from Dublin, a city which much exceeded my expectation; the public buildings are magnificent, very many of the streets regularly laid out, and exceedingly well built. The front of the Parliament House is grand; though not so light as a more open finishing of the roof would have made it. The apartments are spacious, elegant and convenient, much beyond that heap of confusion at Westminster, so inferior to the magnificence to be looked for in the seat of empire. I was so fortunate as to arrive just in time to see Lord Harcourt, with the usual ceremonies, prorogue the Parliament.

Trinity College is a beautiful building and a numerous society; the library is a very fine room, and well filled. The new Exchange will be another edifice to do honour to Ireland; it is elegant, cost £40,000, but deserves a better situation. From everything I saw, I was struck with all those appearances of wealth which the capital of a thriving community may be supposed to exhibit.

Happy if I find through the country in diffused prosperity the right source of this splendor! The common computation of inhabitants 200,000, but, I should suppose, exaggerated. Others guessed the number 140, or 150,000.

23 June Lord Charlemont's house in Dublin is equally elegant and convenient, the apartments large, handsome and well disposed, containing some good pictures, particularly one by Rembrandt, of Judas throwing the money on the floor, with a strong expression of guilt and remorse; the whole group fine. In the same room is a portrait of Caesar Borgia by Titian. The library is a most elegant apartment, of about 40 by 30, and of such a height as to form a pleasing proportion, the light is well managed, coming in from the cove of the ceiling, and has an exceeding good effect.

Before I quit the city, I observe, on the houses in general, that what they call their two-roomed ones, are good and convenient. Mr Latouche's, in Stephen's Green, I was shown as a model of this sort, and I found it well contrived, and finished elegantly. Drove to Lord Charlemont's villa at Marino, near the city, where his lordship has formed a pleasing lawn, margined in the higher part by a well-planted thriving shrubbery, and on a rising ground a banqueting room, which ranks very high among the most beautiful edifices I have anywhere seen; it has much elegance, lightness and effect, and commands a fine prospect; the rising ground on which it stands slopes off to an agreeable accompaniment of wood, beyond which, on one side, is Dublin harbour, which here has the appearance of a noble river crowded with ships moving to and from the capital. On the other side is a shore spotted with white buildings, and beyond it the hills of Wicklow, presenting an outline extremely various....

Having the year following lived more than two months in Dublin, I am able to speak to a few points, which, as a mere traveller I could not have done.... Fish and poultry are plentiful and very cheap. Good lodgings almost as dear as they are in London; though we were well accommodated (dirt excepted) for two guineas and an half a week. All the lower ranks in this city have no idea of English cleanliness, either in apartments, persons or cookery. There is a very good society in Dublin in a Parliament winter – a great round of dinners, and parties; and balls and suppers every night in the week, some of which are very elegant, but you almost everywhere meet a company much too numerous for the size of the apartments.

They have two assemblies on the plan of those of London, in Fishamble street, and at the Rotunda; and two gentlemen's clubs, Anthry's and Daly's, very well regulated; I heard some anecdotes of deep play at the latter, though never to the excess common at London. An ill-judged and unsuccessful attempt was made to establish the Italian Opera, which existed but with scarcely any life for this one winter; of course they could rise no higher than a comic one.... The house was generally empty and miserably cold.

1796 JACQUES-LOUIS DE BOUGRENET DE LA TOCNAYE

The Chevalier de La Tocnaye (1767–1823) was a French royalist aristocrat exiled to London from 1792, who toured Ireland on foot in 1795–96 (saying he had 'nothing better to do'), enjoying the countryside and its people. He described his adventures in A Frenchman's Walk through Ireland (1797).

Dublin is a very considerable city, about one-fourth the size of London, of which it is the image in little – even the streets bear the same names; the beauty of the buildings may dispute for precedence with those of the capital; one is astonished at their magnificence and number. The Parliament House does honour to the nation's representatives; it is an immense circular building surrounded by a magnificent colonnade....

I occupied my leisure in the early days of my sojourn as I do ordinarily in such times elsewhere, by moving from one place to another, and mixing as much as possible with the crowd. I joined one which seemed, on a certain day, to be expecting something with impatience, and found myself among them in front of a large building which had something of the look of an old castle. There was a little platform at the level of a window in the second storey; two men of somewhat disagreeable look made their appearance on it, and I thought I was about to witness some peculiar ceremony. But I was promptly disabused of this idea, for one of them passed a loop of rope round the neck of the other and fastened the cord to a bar of iron above him. I turned to get away, but the crowd was too dense for movement; the poor wretch stood for a moment, alone, in view of the people, then a bolt slipped, and the little platform on which he stood fell against the wall. The Irish have, perhaps, got the better of their neighbours in the matter of hanging people with grace, but to me

it appears a great cruelty to make a sort of parade of the death of a man, and in diminishing the horror of the punishment crime is increased and executions multiplied.

I think I am not far wrong in assigning this as the reason why there are more people hung in Great Britain and Ireland than in all the rest of Europe.

The crowd seemed to move steadily in one direction, and I followed again – this time to be led to Phoenix Park, where there was a horse race. I really could not say which of the two – execution or race – gave the greater pleasure to the hundred-headed monster.

Although the part of the city where the well-to-do people live is perhaps as beautiful as anything similar in Europe, nothing anywhere can compare with the dirt and misery of the quarters where the lower classes vegetate. They call these quarters ‘The Liberties’ of Dublin, and this made me think often of ‘liberties’ of France under Robespierre, than which there was nothing more disgusting in the universe....

From seeing Irishmen abroad one would imagine them to be most gallant and incapable of living without society. The very same men who appear to find so much pleasure in dancing attendance on our ladies allow cavaliers to flirt with their own. When an Irishman presents himself at the door of a Jacques Roastbeef in England, the latter fears immediately an attack on his purse, his wife, his daughter, or his wine. In revenge Dublin is shy in receiving the foreigner. One would say that the Dubliners remember their own faults of youth.

There are few social functions except those that are called routs. Where a house might comfortably entertain twenty persons, sixty are invited, and so in proportion. I have seen routs where, from vestibule to garret, the rooms were filled with fine ladies beautifully dressed, but so crushed against each other that it was hardly possible to move. A foreigner has cause for embarrassment in these too brilliant assemblies, for he may here see really charming women in greater number than in most cities, and he thinks it a pity to see them lose on a stairway the time which might be passed much more agreeably with a small number of appreciative friends.

1828 HERMANN VON PÜCKLER-MUSKAU

Hermann von Pückler-Muskau (1785–1871) was a German prince who fought against Napoleon and studied landscape gardening, a subject on which he wrote

to much acclaim. He visited Britain several times in the 1820s, and later travelled in North Africa and the eastern Mediterranean. Von Pückler-Muskau drew on these tropes for his description of the capital in 1828. His Tour in England, Ireland, and France, based on his letters, was published in 1833.

11 August This country has more resemblance to Germany than to England. That universal and almost over-refined industry and culture disappears here, and with it, alas!, English neatness. The houses and streets have a dirty air, although Dublin is adorned with many magnificent palaces and broad straight streets.... The environs of the city have no longer the accustomed freshness; its soil is more neglected, the grass and trees scantier. The grand features of the landscape, however, the bay, the distant mountains of Wicklow, the Hill of Howth, the amphitheatrical mass of houses, the quays, the harbour, are beautiful. Such, at least, is the first impression....

As soon as I had a little refreshed myself I took a walk through the city; in the course of which I passed two rather tasteless monuments. The one represents William of Orange on horseback, in Roman costume. Both man and horse are deformed: the horse has a bit in his mouth, and head-gear on, but no appearance of reins, though the king’s hand is stretched out exactly as if he were holding them. Does this mean that William wanted no rein to rid John Bull?

The other monument is a colossal statue of Nelson, standing on a high pillar, and dressed in modern attire. Behind him hangs a cable, and the figure is too high to be distinctly seen.

I afterwards came to a large round building, towards which the people crowded, keeping watch on the outside. On inquiry I learned that the yearly exhibition of fruits and flowers was held there. They were just taking away the former as I entered; notwithstanding which, I saw many fine specimens. In the midst of the flowers, which formed a sort of temple, there was an enclosed space railed round for the fruits which the judges ate with great gravity and apparent satisfaction. They must have been a long time in coming to a decision; for rinds of melons, pears and apples, fragments of pines, stones of plums, apricots and peaches, lay in mountains on the table beneath; and although the flowers were all gradually removed by the proprietors, I did not see that any of the fruits found their way out of this temple of Pomona.

13 August Having seen enough of the city, I have begun my rides in the neighbourhood, which is much more beautiful than its appearance at my first approach, on the least favourable side, led me to expect. A road commanding charming views...brought me to Phoenix Park, the Prater of Dublin, which in no respect yields to that of Vienna, whether we regard its expanse of beautiful turf for riding, long avenues for driving or shady walks. A large but ill-proportioned obelisk is erected here to the Duke of Wellington. I found the park rather empty, but the streets through which I returned full of movement and bustle. The dirt, the poverty and the ragged clothing of the common people often exceed all belief. Nevertheless they seemed always good-natured and sometimes have fits of merriment in the open streets which border on madness; whiskey is generally at the bottom of this. I saw a half-naked lad dance the national dance in the marketplace so long, and with such violent exertion, that at last he fell down senseless amid the cheers of the spectators, totally exhausted like a Mohammedan *dervise*.

The streets are crowded with beggar-boys, who buzz around one like flies, incessantly offering their services. Notwithstanding their extreme poverty, you may trust implicitly to their honesty, and wretched, lean and famished as they appear, you see no traces of melancholy on their open, good-natured countenances. They are the best-bred and most contented beggar-boys in the world. Such a little fellow will run by your horse's side for hours, hold it when you alight, go on any errand you like. And is not only contented with the few pence you give him, but full of gratitude which he expresses with Irish hyperbole. The Irishman appears generally more patient than his neighbours, but somewhat degraded by long slavery.

14 August Another friend...paid me a visit this morning. Scarcely had he quitted me, when I was told that Lady B--, an Irish peeress and one of the most beautiful women in the country, whose acquaintance I had cultivated during the last season in the metropolis, was in her carriage below and wished to speak to me. As I was still in the most absolute '*negligé*', I told the waiter...that I was not dressed, as he saw, but that I would be ready immediately. He announced the state of my toilet, but added, '*de son chef*', that 'my Lady had better come up'. Imagine my astonishment when he came back and told me that Lady B-- had laughed very much, and had bid him

say that she would willingly wait but that to pay gentlemen morning visits in their chambers was not the custom of Ireland.

In this answer appeared the cordial, frank and good-natured character of the true Irish woman, which I had already learned to love and admire. A prudish Englishwoman would have driven away in high displeasure, and perhaps have ruined the reputation of a young man for such a 'quid pro quo' as this.

1889 MARIE ANNE DE BOVET

The most famous export of Dublin since the 18th century has been the stout, or dark beer, Guinness. The French traveller de Bovet (fl. 1893–1930) wrote several books about Ireland in the 1880s and 1890s, and was particularly struck by the grand scale of operations surrounding the brewery.

One should not leave the Liberties without visiting the immense industrial establishment which, on the confines of this miserable quarter, represents the fortune of Dublin. I mean the Guinness Brewery, where is manufactured the black beer called stout, or porter, which looks like bottled blacking, and in every part of the world where the English language is spoken is the rival of Bass and Co.'s pale ale. Founded in 1750, the Guinness Brewery has grown to such proportions that in 1885 its business transactions were five times greater than in 1837. Three years ago the business was sold for six millions sterling to a company, Sir Edward Cecil Guinness, Bart., remaining Chairman of the Board.

By way of a joke, people say that Dublin beer is black because it is made with the water of the Liffey. The truth is, that its colour as well as its peculiar taste is due to the malt having been first roasted.... To reduce it to malt it is soaked for two or three days in vats, then it is left in the air to sprout, after which it is dried and baked in an oven. The malt is then warehoused in airtight rooms till the moment it is wanted. The brick building used for this purpose is the largest in Dublin, and can hold a million bushels. After being carefully winnowed, the malt is crushed by metal rollers, and then macerated with warm water. From this process comes an insipid and colourless mush, removed by suction pumps into copper boilers that hold nearly twenty-two thousand gallons, where it is boiled with hops which give