THE BARDS OF IRELAND.

IRELAND is doubtless preparing to rouse herself from the lethargy of ages, and to snap asunder the bonds which have hitherto bound her. A voice is issuing from within the neglected halls of her literature, which seems to say to her intellect and her genius, "Sleep no more!" Ere long, we trust, she will hold up her head among the nations, and bear away the prize in the strife of generous emulation. May the blessed GOD grant that these hopes will be realized!

The ancient Irish possessed ample stores in their native language, capable of captivating the fancy, enlarging the understanding, and improving the heart. Our country, from an early period, was famous for the cultivation of the kindred arts of poetry and music. Lugad, the son of Ith, is called in old writings, "the first poet of Ireland," and there still remains, after a lapse of three thousand years, fragments of his poetry. After him, but before the Christian era, flourished Royne File, or the poetic, and Ferceirte, a bard and herald. Lugar and Congal lived about the time of our REDEEMER, and many of their works are extant. The *Dinn Seanchas*, or history of noted places in Ireland, compiled by Amergin Mac Amalgaid, in the year 544, relates that in the time of Geide, monarch of Ireland, "the people deemed each other's voices sweeter than the warblings of a melodious harp, such peace and concord reigned among them, that no music could delight them more than the sound of each other's voice: *Temur (Tarah)* was so called from its celebrity for melody, above the palaces of the world. *Tea*, or *Te*, signifying melody, or sweet music, and *mur* a wall. *Te-mur*, the wall of music." This extract contains the earliest allusion to *the harp*, which Mr. Hardiman has met with. There is an ancient Gaelic poem which used to be sung in the Highlands of Scotland, in which the poet addresses a very old harp, and asks what has become of its former lustre. The harp replies, that it had belonged to a *king of Ireland*, and had been present at many a royal banquet; and had afterwards been in the possession of Dargo, son of the Druid of Baal—of Gaul—of Filan, &c. &c. Such are a few facts regarding the Bards of Ireland before the inhabitants were converted to the profession of the Christian faith.

The introduction of Christianity gave a new and more exalted direction to the powers of poetry. Among the numerous bards who dedicated their talents to the praises of the DEITY, the most distinguished are Feich, the bishop: Amergin, Cinfaela, the learned, who revised the *Uraicepht*, or "Primer of the bards," preserved in the book of Balimote, and in the library of Trinity College, Dublin; and many others, the mention of whose names might be tedious. Passing by many illustrious bards, whose poetic fragments are still preserved, we may mention Mac Liag, secretary and biographer of the famous monarch, Brian Boro, and whose poems on the death of his royal master are given in Mr. Hardiman's "Irish Minstrelsy."

For two centuries after the invasion of Henry II. the voice of the muse was but feebly heard in Ireland. The bards fell with their country, and like the captive Israelites hung their untuned harps on the willows. They might exclaim with the royal psalmist,

> "Now while our harps were hanged soe,
> The men, whose captives then we lay,
> Did on our griefs insulting goe,
> And more to grieve us thus did say,
> You that of musique make such show,
> Come sing us now a Sion lay;
> Oh no, we have nor voice nor hand,
> For such a song, in such a land!"

But the spirit of patriotism at length aroused the bards from their slumbers, and many men of genius started up throughout Ireland. A splendid list of names could be given, but mere names would not interest the reader. In fact, the language itself is so adapted for poetry, that it may almost be said to *make* poets. Its pathetic powers have been long celebrated. "*If you plead for your life plead in Irish*," is a well known adage. But we proceed to give a more detailed account of CAROLAN, a bard whose name is familiar to every Irishman, and the elegy upon whose death, by Mac Cabe, we gave in our last number.

Turlogh O'Carolan was born about the year 1670, at a place called Newton, near Nobber, in the county of Meath. Though gifted with a natural genius for music and poetry, he evinced no precocious disposition for either. He became a minstrel by accident, and continued it more through choice than necessity. Respectably descended, possessing no small share of Milesian pride, and entertaining a due sense of his additional claims as a man of genius, he was above *playing for hire*, and always expected, and invariably received, that attention which he deserved. His visits were regarded as favours conferred, and his departure never failed to occasion regret. In his eighteenth year he was deprived of sight by the small-pox; and this apparently severe calamity was the beginning of his career as one of the principal bards of Ireland.

Near his father's house was a mote or rath, in the interior of which one of the fairy queens, or "good people," was believed by the country folks to hold her court. This mote was the scene of many a boyish pastime with his youthful companions; and after he became blind, he used to prevail on some of his family or neighbours to lead him to it, where he would remain for hours together stretched listlessly before the sun.* He was often observed to start up suddenly, as if in a fit of ecstacy, occasioned, as it was firmly believed, by the preternatural sights which he witnessed. In one of these raptures, he called hastily on his companions to lead him home, and when he reached it, he sat down immediately to his harp, and in a little time played and sung the air and words of a sweet song addressed to Bridget Cruise, the object of his earliest and tenderest attachment. So sudden and so captivating was it, that it was confidently attributed to fairy inspiration, and to this day the place is pointed out from which he desired to be led home. From that hour he became a poet and a musician.

Though Carolan passed a wandering and restless life, there is nothing on which we can lay our finger as very extraordinary or singular. He seldom stirred out of the province of Connaught, where he was such a universal favorite, that messengers were continually after him, inviting him to one or other of the houses of the principal inhabitants, his presence being regarded as an honour and a compliment. The number of his musical pieces, to almost all of which he composed verses, is said to have exceeded two hundred. But though he was such a master of his native language, he was but indifferently acquainted with the English, of which we will give the reader a specimen, reminding him, however, that though it may appear ludicrous to him, it is the composition of a man not unworthy of ranking with some of the first poets of the past or present age. A young lady, of the name of Featherstone, who did not understand Irish, being anxious to have some verses to his own fine air, the "Devotion," he gave her the following:—

> "On a fine Sunday morning devoted to be
> Attentive to a sermon that was ordered for me,
> I met a fresh rose on the road by decree,
> And though mass was my notion, my devotion was *she*.
> Welcome, fair lily, white and red,
> Welcome was every word we said;
> Welcome, bright angel of noble degree,
> I wish you would love, and that I were with thee;
> I pray don't frown at me with mouth or with eye,—
> So I told the fair maiden with heart full of glee,
> Tho' the mass was my notion, my devotion was *she*."

Although Carolan delivered himself but indifferently in English, he did not like to be corrected for his solecisms. A self-sufficient gentleman of the name of O'Dowd, or Dudy, as it is sometimes pronounced, once asked him why he attempted a language of which he knew nothing. "I know a little of it," Carolan replied. "If so," says the other, "what is the English for *Bundoon*, (a facetious Irish term for the seat of honour,) "Oh," said the bard, with an arch smile, "I think the *properest* English for *Bundoon* is *Billy Dudy!*" The gentleman was ever after known by the name of *Bundoon Dudy*.

Carolan died in the year 1737, at Alderford, the house of his old and never-failing patroness, Mrs. M'Dermott. Feeling his end approaching, he called for his harp, and played his well known "Farewell to Music," in a strain of tenderness which drew tears from the eyes of his auditory. His last moments were spent in prayer, until he calmly breathed his last, at the age of about sixty seven years. Upwards of sixty clergymen of different denominations, a number of gentlemen from the neighbouring counties, and a vast con-

* Moore in his life of Byron, remarks that the noble poet would lie for hours together on the sea-shore in a kind of ecstacy.

course of country people, assembled to pay the last mark of respect to their favourite bard, one whose death has caused a chasm in the bardic annals of Ireland. But he lives in his own deathless strains; and while the charms of melody hold their sway over the human heart, the name of CAROLAN will be remembered and revered.

In an early number we will give the life of THOMAS FURLONG, the gifted translator of Carolan's remains, and of other ancient relics. We conclude our present article with the following translation of a humorous reply which Carolan made to a gentleman who was pressing him to prolong his stay at his house:

"If to a friend's house thou shouldst repair
Pause and take heed of ling'ring idly there;
Thou may'st be welcome, but, 'tis past a doubt,
Long visits soon will wear the welcome out."

IRISH MANUFACTURES.

The WOOLEN MANUFACTURE of Ireland was very early celebrated. In the time of Edward III. in 1327, Irish frizes were freely imported into England from Dublin, duty free. Even in Italy, in the year 1357, at a time when the woollens of that country had attained an high degree of perfection, and sumptuary laws were enacted to restrain luxury in dress, Irish serges were in demand, and imported. In the year 1482, not only serges, but other kinds of woollens, were so sought after, and the fashion of the country so approved, that the Pope's agent obtained from Richard II. a licence to export, duty free, mantles made of Irish cloth.

In the year 1673, Sir W. Temple, at the request of Lord Essex, then Vicery of Ireland, published a formal overture for relinquishing the woollen trade, except in the lower branches, that it might not interfere with that of England, urging the superior fitness of this country for the linen trade.

Immediately after the cessation of the disturbances in Ireland, in 1688, the woollen manufacture was established to a considerable extent in the Liberties of Dublin. The security of property ensured after the capitulation of Limerick, induced a number of English manufacturers to avail themselves of its local advantages, the cheapness of labour, the excellence of wool, and the abundance of the necessaries of life, and to settle here. The Coombe, Pimlico, Spitalfields, and the Weavers'-square were then built, and soon became the residence of all that was opulent and respectable in the city. What a contrast the Liberty now presents!

The SILK MANUFACTURE is generally supposed to have been introduced by the French refugees, and established in the Liberty of Dublin shortly after their residence in this city. In the year 1764, an act was passed, placing it under the direction of the Dublin Society. To encourage the manufacture, the Society immediately established an Irish Silk warehouse in Parliament street, and the management of it was placed under the superintendence of persons, annually returned by the corporation of weavers, to examine the quality of the goods sent in by Manufacturers, to whom the Dublin Society paid a premium or discount of five per cent on all sales made in the house. While the trade was thus managed, the sales were on an average £70,000 per annum, and the silk manufacture in Dublin arrived at the highest state of prosperity. But this source of encouragement was done away by an act of parliament, by which the Dublin Society was prohibited from disposing of any part of its funds for the support of any house in which Irish silk goods were sold by wholesale or retail. From that time, the Irish Silk warehouse declined.

It does not enter within our scope to point out what might be done for the revival of IRISH MANUFACTURES; we merely mention facts, and indulge in the hope that Ireland will not *always* be miserable. A gleam of hope dawns upon our country—may that good BEING who delights in the happiness of his creatures, unite all hearts, and "knit them to together" in the bonds of a holy brotherhood.

A great many people never *think* when they are reading: they just run over the words and thus go over a volume without any impression being left on the mind. Yet some of these people would laugh at the man who borrowed a dictionary from a neighbour, believing it to be a novel or a romance, and after patiently *reading* it, said, "this is the strangest author I ever met with; he never writes three lines on the same subject!"

EMIGRATION.

We freely confess that we are opposed to *Emigration*. We think that Ireland is perfectly able to support, not only her present population, but a vast deal more, if her capabilities were properly developed. This, however, is not in the power of the individual; and he naturally anxious to better his condition, and looking to the unsettled state of the country, casts his eye across the Atlantic for a settlement in the midst of Canadian forests, far away from the home of his forefathers.

Now in revolving the matter of Emigration, the following circumstances should be considered. 1st. Can you, or can you not, earn a livelihood sufficient to maintain yourself and your family in your native country? If you can, PAUSE before you decide on going. It is a serious thing to leave country, friends, home, every thing near and dear in kith, kin, and recollection, FOR EVER. Do not let flattering accounts deceive you; do not be led away with the flattering idea of possessing a fee simple estate, on which you can grow your own maple sugar, and make your own delicious peach brandy: think upon the forest, and its gigantic trees: think upon the toil, the incessant toil, requisite to clear your acres, and that your own physical strength will be the means alone of doing it; and if your body is weakened by low living, the consequence of scarcity both of money and provisions, think upon the days of fatigue, and nights of exhaustion; think upon the difficulty of supporting a family during the first winter, in the midst of a thick wood, your rude log house, your rude furniture, the intensity of the cold and the snow in winter, and the intensity of the heat and the musquitoes in summer; if you have just as much money as will land you in Montreal or Quebec, think upon wandering through their streets, the victim of want of employment, and exposed to all its horrors in a strange place; or if you reach the woods, think upon ague, marsh fever, and malaria; think upon bad roads, or no roads, bad provisions, or no provisions, the difficulty of disposing of your crop when you raise one, the possible danger (for it *is* possible, and very possible too) of bears destroying your cattle, if you have any, of the racoons and squirrels (of which there are plenty,) destroying your corn crops, and of rats and mice eating the seed of your Indian corn after it is in the ground: think upon these and more than these, before you resolve on going; and if you can earn a livelihood at home, the probability is, that you will stay where you are.

2d. But on the other hand, if you *are* determined on going, and *are* prepared to look danger, and toil, and privation straight in the face, and your wife and children *are* prepared to accompany you, and share your privations, and partake of your fatigues, and if you possess as much money as will not merely pay your passage over, but carry you into the woods, and enable you to bring provisions with you on which you can live for a time, the following are some of the advantages which may be derived from Emigration:—Employment, incessant employment you will be sure to have: but if you are an industrious man, constant employment will bestow vigour on the frame, (if you have something with you to eat, for there are no shops or provision stores in a forest,) and also bring contentment to the mind. If you hire yourself out as a labourer, you will get about 2s. 6d. a day, and as a skilful mechanic, sometimes as high as 5s. *with victuals*; if you work on your own land, the soil being naturally new and fresh, will give a good return for the labour bestowed upon it. Besides the ordinary grain, you can grow maize, garden vegetable produce, and fruit of all kinds luxuriantly. You can make your own malt, brew your own beer, make your own candles and sugar; raise your own tobacco, and tan your own leather, without dread of being exchequered. Your taxes will be light; while the mind is soothed by the reflection, that every day and month and year of toil and privation is but laying the foundation of future ample provision for the family. These considerations must weigh strongly with any sensible, virtuous man; and if any of the readers of our Journal are thinking of emigrating, we would just say to them, "Look upon this picture and look upon that;" revolve both advantages and disadvantages; and once you resolve to GO, let your resolution be put in practice with prudence and manly vigour of mind; but if you shrink from the toils and privations of clearing an estate in the Canadian forest, and can live at home, we beseech you stay at home!

Having taken the liberty of giving these few hints on Emigration, we think we may give an interesting scene