

KILLARNEY:

ITS ATTRACTIONS FOR AUTUMN TOURISTS.

THERE are, at this moment, thousands in England who desire to know where a month of autumn may be most pleasantly and most profitably spent—desiring to spend it “at home.” Various circumstances have recently combined to give force to the conviction that it is a shame and a reproach to be better acquainted (as many are) with Italy, Switzerland, Germany, and France, than with England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. The ordinary impediments to comfort and progress abroad have been of late very largely augmented; and there is a gradually growing belief that the British Islands contain a wonderful amount of landscape beauty unexplored, or but little known: facilities for travelling have so much increased, that a *wish* to go “anywhere” is only a little more easy than to go; hotels are acquiring the wisdom of reasonable charges; in short, within the memory of persons by no means old, there have been so many new inducements to travel at home that, ere long, there will be few among us who are entirely ignorant of the charms or wonders of their native land.

Not many years ago, Ireland was a *terra incognita* to England: a sea-voyage of uncertain duration, in a small and ill-ventilated cabin, was an evil not to be encountered by those who sought enjoyment only; while so many subsequent inconveniences awaited the voyager, that to undertake it required an amount of courage and endurance hardly to be expected from “sight-seers,” whose holiday was limited to a month. Now-a-days, in summer or autumn, the trip across is a pleasure trip: in a few hours the tourist is landed either at Dublin or Waterford—these hours being passed in one of the largest size steam-packets, with comfortable berths, and luxuries in the way of board as well as lodging. The journey to Ireland is, in fact, as easy, as free from annoyances, nay, as little inconvenient as it would be to any distant part of England, Scotland, or Wales; it is but adding a few hours to a long summer day. And how abundant will be the added recompense!

Is the tourist in search of the grand and beautiful in nature? It is here in profuse luxuriance; there are no “bits” in the British Islands so lovely as those he may encounter in Wicklow, upon the Shannon, and especially at Killarney. The wild sea-coasts of the north, the west, and the south are unequalled for magnificence, even in the Scottish sea-highlands; while the sublime and beautiful are so often and so happily combined in every part of the country, by rivers, lakes, and ocean, that, beyond all question, if the desires of the tourist tend this way, his reward will be large and ample; he can scarcely expect too much, and have any dread of disappointment. Is he seeking health? These hill breezes, passing over beds of heather, are full of it,—and freely give; these sea-winds from the broad Atlantic, robust as the huge cliffs on which they break, dashing white foam over rocks that elsewhere would be mountains—these sea-winds make us strong enough to breast them, even in their fury. Is he a sportsman—a gentle or a bold brother of the angle? The lakes and rivers have stores for him; the regal salmon or the spotted trout will be heavier than he will like to carry, save that his “aid” is at hand to bear the burthen his flies, his guidance, and his counsel have helped to take; for, go where he will, there will be always waiting “his honour” a “boy” who knows every hole and corner of the neighbouring water, and precisely what fly will “suit” that place on that day in that season. Does he aim to study character—that “proper study” an hour of which is worth a week of books? There is no country of the world that will give opportunities so rare or so recompensing; as we have heard Maria Edgeworth say, “There is no country in which happiness is so cheap.” The peasantry have indeed lost much of their love of fun—their wit is not so ready as it used to be; faction fights are matters of history, no less than duelling, and drunkenness, as a habit, is almost as much so. You will seldom hear the “keen,” and not often see a wake; of fairies you will learn nothing, except as whispered mysteries in out-of-the-way places; the “blarney” has grown weaker with time; poverty—never “the clamorous voice of woe”—less continuously shocks the sight; and although the nauseous “heap before the door,”

and the “pig in the parlour,” are encountered far too frequently, and the hovel is still wretched as a dwelling for man, the peasant *has* employment—and you know it. But a large portion of their originality remains; their kindness and courtesy, and ever prompt zeal to render service; their cordial welcome of the stranger; their unyielding honesty; their shrewd, yet simple humour; their deep devotion to natural and adopted ties; their familiarity, which is never vulgarity;—in short, if the Irish peasant has many peculiarities, they are only such as will interest and amuse the visitor, and seldom, or never, such as will annoy or offend him.

We promise, therefore, to all who visit Ireland a rich fund of enjoyment—no matter in what part of the island he travel or is located; and believe that nowhere in the world can a month be so pleasantly or so profitably spent, as it may be in that country—a country so closely connected with England, so directly and essentially a part of it, that upon the welfare and prosperity of the one mainly depends the welfare and prosperity of the other; and which we trust to see, as we believe we shall see, as thoroughly ONE as the two Kingdoms north and south of the Tweed.

But at present our sole business is with “the Lakes,” from which we have just returned; our object having been to prepare a revised edition of a book we produced some years ago, entitled—“A WEEK AT KILLARNEY.”* Our readers will, we trust, permit us to report to them concerning this famous and very lovely district; and to hope we are not trespassing on their favour if we ask them to read that book, in the event of our answering our present purpose,—TO INDUCE THEM TO CONSIDER THE CLAIMS OF IRELAND, WHEN THEY ARE PONDERING THE VARIOUS REASONS THAT SHALL DETERMINE THE DIRECTION OF THEIR AUTUMN TRIP.

There is now a railway all the way from London to Killarney—excepting a comparatively brief and pleasant voyage “across.” This time, we selected the route via Milford Haven and Waterford—the SOUTH WALES Line—a line in all respects desirable, admirably managed so as to facilitate the progress of tourists, and one to which we can give a strong recommendation as the result of experience. It passes through beautiful scenery, between Gloucester and Milford, including part of the Wye, old Severn, and the Vale of Neath; taking passengers on board packets of large size, and capital construction for comfort, within a few yards of the terminus, and landing them eight hours afterwards on the quay at Waterford; two hours of the eight being passed in the lovely haven of Milford, and the grand and charming harbour of Waterford.

There is—or there need be—no delay at Waterford; it is distant about one hundred and twenty miles from Killarney, which is reached in six hours—making fifteen or sixteen hours from London, including all delays. At the Limerick junction, the railroads from Dublin, Limerick, and Waterford meet; but the tourist will seldom have traversed any road more beautiful than that which intervenes between the junction and Waterford, beside the Suir, and into the golden vale of Tipperary.

The tourist then has arrived at Killarney, where an omnibus from each of the five hotels which are somewhat distant (bordering the lake) will await his pleasure; but he may be sure to receive persuasive suggestions from each of the attendant “waiters.” The Railway Hotel is, however, close at hand—a comfortable, although somewhat too “stately,” house it is; its disadvantage being that it has no view—except, indeed, of the mountain tops. There is the “Royal Victoria Lake Hotel,” commodious, comfortable, and admirably managed; there is the “Lake Hotel,” standing at the water’s edge, with fine, though not extensive, views; there is the hotel at Clogheen—the “Herbert Arms”—close by the gate to venerable Mucross; and beside it the neat hostelry of O’Sullivan; there is the “Lake View Hotel,” high up on the hill; and the “Torc View Hotel,” up still higher—with views inconceivably grand and varied at morning, noon, and evening; or, if his taste so direct the tourist, he may be comfortably cared for at the “Kenmare Arms,” in the town. There will be no danger of defective accommodation—somewhere, inasmuch as

* A WEEK AT KILLARNEY. By Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall. Illustrated by twelve engravings on steel, and two hundred engravings on wood. Price 8s. James Virtue, publisher.

“beds,” for perhaps five hundred, can be “made up” at the various hotels and lodgings in and about Killarney. We have “gone into this matter” at some length in our book.

And now the tourist is at THE LAKES, and designs, we hope, to spend a week in this delicious locality; a week may suffice; for Ireland has many other places in which profitably to pass the other three weeks of his “month;” and, as we shall show presently, we are planning for him a journey to the wild sea-coast.

No matter where he is located at Killarney, the moment he begins his walk or drive the full beauty of the scene will burst upon him. It is impossible for either pen or pencil to do justice to the magic beauty of these lakes, deep in the midst of mountains—some of them the loftiest of Ireland; thickly studded with islands richly wooded; rapid rivers rushing over huge rocks; cataracts falling from hill-heights; passages occasionally so close that you have almost to push aside the branches for the boat to row between masses of arbutus, ferns, and wild flowers; broad sheets of water in which the “Leviathan” might float and sport; ruins of castles and abbeys; old churches and round towers; long and narrow bridges with half a score of arches; rocks of fantastic forms; precipices clothed in verdure from base to summit; others so bare that a blade of grass can scarce find sustenance; dells in which nature revels; hollows gloomy and barren; crags that, jutting over pathways, seem to forbid outlet; others, high up, in which the eagle builds and has had his nest for centuries; foliage of a hundred hues everywhere; echoes on land and on water, that give to the bugle note the solemn and prolonged cadence of the organ; clouds that pass rapidly, and sunshine that fades as fast—making, by their quick changes in a moment, a new scene even while the “eye is on it;” sun that lights up a gloom into instant brilliancy; shadows that make awful the gayest “bit” as rapidly as thought! We have mingled without order the several peculiarities of this marvellously grand and beautiful locality, because it is without order they occur, for at any hour, under any form of weather, they have their special charms, inasmuch that by their “infinite variety” they create perpetual delight.

Perhaps the first day the tourist will row on the lake, visiting “fair huißfallen”—singing Moore’s sweet song of farewell to this sweet isle, inspecting the remains of the small oratory, and recalling some of its legends and traditions; for of these he may hear some, and read many, of which the heroes are the old monks, whose learning gave the place a name in history, or the O’Donoghue and his fairy followers, who, on May morning, will rise from their palace underneath the waters, bringing “good luck” to all who see the chieftain mounted on his milk-white and silver-shod steed. His castle is near at hand, occupying that fair promontory opposite—a ruin, but a picturesque one, standing in grounds for which Nature has done much and Art more. But of islands there are so many, and so lovely, that a row among them is all the tourist can accomplish in a day.

It may be, however, he will seek communion with the wild and rugged before he make acquaintance with the graceful and the beautiful: the Gap of Dunloe awaits him; it is a mountain-pass among “the Reeks,” awful in its grandeur—barren, stern, sublime; a wild river rushes through it from lakes that send their waters thus, by various channels, into the lake, themselves supplied by streams or rivulets rushing or trickling from hill-tops, now and then making on their way the sweet music that fairies so much love. The gap ends in “the Black Valley,” a broad dell beyond conception gloomy, even when the mid-day sun seeks to light it up.

Is the tourist a bold cragsman? There is work for him among those crags and hills; let him climb to that cromlech that overhangs the dell, and muse over old Druidic glories of two thousand years ago; for this is their monument: let him drink of that pure spring which, two hundred feet above him, drips from the rock into a basin, crystal clear; let him follow the footmarks of yon hardy goat—nay, it may do as well if he tread where yonder Kerry cow has trodden—he will reach the hill-top then. But, if he be bolder than the bold, let him ascend Carran Tuel, of which, being in the Gap, he sees the back only—a rough, yet comparatively easy descent, after he has been on the very summit of this, the highest mountain of Ireland, 8414 feet above the sea.

Tourist, "screw your courage" before you begin this task; if you be weak of limb, do not attempt it; the chances are you will give in when half way up; young and active, or even old but hardy, go on! It will be a feat, when finished, to remember a life long; not alone because to conquer a difficulty is in itself a reward,—you will have views, north, south, east, and west, such as may recompense even a longer and heavier labour—and it will be no light one; of that be sure. Yet such as it is, three months ago, this labour was undertaken and carried through by a lad aged but sixteen: step by step, he made the ascent boldly, breasting the fierce breezes that are never absent from the half-way up steep—mounting from crag to crag, leaping across brawling currents, and stepping carefully, yet bravely, among the big stones that make footways over bogs: it is hard work, as we know, for strong men; this youth did it all, and stood upon the topmost height of Carran Tuel, hat in hand, doing homage to great Nature—for by her only, and two others in these dominions, is homage asked for from him. It was the young Prince of Wales. God continue to him the physical strength that must be his to do what many men in vigorous manhood would decline as an over-task! God be thanked for such evidence of health of lung and of limb!

The tourist, moving homeward from this mountain work, gladly finds rest in the row-boat that will convey him through the three lakes, for the Lakes are three in number—divided, yet joined, and joined by water passages of surpassing beauty. When midway in that which connects the Upper with the Lower, rowing through the Long Range, he will be asked to pause awhile, for, underneath a charmingly wooded height—the Eagle's Nest—the guide will awaken up the grandest of all the echoes. How truly grand! It is utterly impossible to convey an idea of the marvellous effect: you may fancy a score of organs sounding at once, each more or less distant, but all in harmony; no false note is there, if the instrument that gives them life be true: but if the player sound a discord, how terrific the result! as if a score of fiends were screaming in sudden agony. Unexpectedly, perhaps, one of the small cannon will be fired, followed by thunder from a hundred hills—near, far off, farther still—before, behind, around! Then will come a strain of gentle beauty, then again a discord, then once more a shot; and so an hour, it may be, will be expended here, silent, wondering, delighted; sometimes seated or reclining on the beach, you will listen, in a sort of dreamy unconsciousness, the outer world will be far away, and you will commune only with beings of higher and holier spheres, as you give up soul and sense to those marvellously sweet sounds—

"Resounding grace to all Heaven's harmonies,"

awakened again and yet again by Spillane's bugle—Spillane, best of guides, who knows and loves the lakes so well!

But the charm of the Long Range is by no means limited to this, its chiefest attraction: you will land at that pretty island—it is Dinas Island; the arbutus, the yew, the elm, the oak, the holly, and the ivy grow in rich luxuriance above masses of underwood, thickly strewn with wild flowers. Yet you will not long remain here: go on to Glenna—

"Beautiful Glenna!"

It is not an island, but a small promontory jutting out into the lake. From its base almost to the topmost height of an overhanging hill, it is clothed in beauty; nature is here lavish of her loveliness—as indeed she is everywhere about you: but at Glenna she is profuse. There is a pretty cottage here, at which you dine: probably you will be supplied with slices of salmon just caught, and they will be toasted for you on skewers of arbutus wood; you will judge if the fine flavour be derived from the process, or from the fact that ten minutes ago the fish was swimming freely in his own domain. Be sure, there will be a piper here also; and you may determine whether the "Irish pipes" be musical or otherwise: perhaps a single tune will content you; but the chances are that one of the boatmen will find "the colleen of the place," and you will see an Irish jig, as well as hear an Irish song—a song in genuine Irish, a language very sweet, full of expression, and harmonious in sound, when you hear it as you may hear it, and not as it meets your ears, in coarse

guttural, at Covent Garden, or by the sides of new buildings about London. In short, Glenna—"beautiful Glenna"—has many attractions for you; and you will be in no hurry to leave it.

But between this graceful bit and Dinas you will have encountered a scene of another character. Having shot the Weir-bridge, through which there rushes a current so rapid that timid voyagers are usually put ashore before the passage is attempted, you pass through a corner of Torc Lake; the hoary mountain, Torc, looking down upon you, but hiding from your sight, by a thick veil of trees, the waterfall, which you will not fail to see some other day, when your excursion is to the beauties of the mainland. You are again among the rocks and islands of the Lower Lake: they are of all forms and sizes, some thirty of them; you will see them all, but probably land at none, for the sun has set, the clouds have gathered on the mountains, and the shadows on the lake; and to take "your ease at your inn," is now the remaining duty of a day as full of pleasure, of novel and true and healthy enjoyment, as you have ever passed, or ever will pass, in this fair "world of ours."

We have touched upon the waterfalls: there are, at least, three that you must visit—O'Sullivan's, Derry-cunnihy, and especially Torc. There may be grander cataracts elsewhere; no doubt there are; but there are none within a day's reach of London—none so surrounded with other beauties that they form only parts of a great whole. When the midday sun is up, sit under either of the rock-breaks, just where the spray refreshes without wetting, and breathe the moisture after the ascent, and before you move again into the valley.

But, good tourist, are your spirits toned to harmony with solemn thoughts, visit Mucross, the venerable abbey that abuts upon the Middle Lake. Think!—as you pace its cloisters, sit upon its ivied walls, or stand beneath the yew-tree, planted when the monks were in their glory and the abbey in its prime! There may be holier memories of the olden time: yet we may doubt if there be any so exquisitely touching as this lonely relic by the borders of that lovely lake.

Good reader, we have written enough, we hope, to impress you with a belief that a tour to Killarney will be a "rich and rare" treat,—such as cannot fail to yield you a harvest of healthy enjoyment. We have but hinted at the many sources whence that enjoyment will be derived. And—if we may do so without presumption—we ask you to refer to the book we have produced, to know them more thoroughly, and estimate them more justly.

But we may not assume that you will visit Ireland only to see Killarney. The journey we have laid down for you will have been by railway all the way, too rapid for observation—even for thought. We trust, therefore, you will not be homeward bound until you have examined somewhat the wild sea-coast. We could plan for you several excursions, by any one of which you would be largely recompensed; but being at Killarney we will recommend to you one: it is to go by Kenmare, round to Derrynane, then to Valentia, then to Dingle, then to Tralee, then to Tarbert—and so, by the lordly Shannon, to "the city of the violated treaty," Limerick; and thence to Dublin, or again to Waterford. Reader, have you at hand a map of Ireland? look at it; see how many grand bays there are along this grand coast. Begin with Bantry, near the head of which, in a most lovely little harbour of its own, is the fair rival of Killarney—Glengariff. Taken alone, perhaps, there is no single view at the Lakes so inexpressibly charming as this most beautiful glen; but we cannot pause to describe it here: we might give pages to it (as indeed we have elsewhere done), and to that "gloomy lake" which you pass on the way, if you journey from Cork—

"A lone island in lone Gougane Barra."

We may not ask you to accompany us too far: we take you, therefore, "round the coast" to the bays of Kenmare and Dingle, and the stupendous sea-rocks, islands, and harbours that lie between them. Being at Kenmare—and "stopping" at the inn of Mr. Downing, who will enlighten as well as assist you as to your projected tour, and furnish you with "fitting flies," if you be an angler—you will soon enter on a marvellous scene of comparatively desolate grandeur. But on your way to this

town of prodigious capabilities—in which nothing is done, where neglect is a sin against nature—you will traverse a district rich in pictorial beauty, inasmuch as for a long part of the way from Killarney you have continual views of the Lakes, their islands, and the mountains that surround them, from the several heights you will be called upon to ascend. If you traverse the northern side of Kenmare bay, you will visit the three mountain lakes of Clonee and Inchiquin; and one as wild and nearly as beautiful as either—the lake of Glenmore. It is on the southern side of the bay probably you will journey, for that is your road—and a good road it is, although it runs over morasses, cuts through stupendous rocks and by the sides of mountains, over precipices that we cannot look down without being dizzy. In time,—passing by the angler's treasure trove, the Blackwater, four miles only between the sea and its source in Lough Brin, where, if "the trout and salmon" do not actually "play at backgammon," you may be sure to kill more than you can carry,—you reach the pleasant nook of West Cove, and proceed thence to Derrynane. We do not believe you will find in any part of the Queen's dominions a scene so inconceivably magnificent as that on which you will look down from the road above Derrynane. You will not leave your car; but you will see it all: huge precipices, tiny bays, gigantic sea-cliffs—all! And if you please, you may drive among yonder belting of trees, which hides and shelters a house that will for ever have a place in history, for here "the Liberator," or "the Agitator,"—call him which you will,—had his home, when the fierce waves of the broad Atlantic were his only auditors. Pass on—to Ballinskellig Bay: there is an inn here,—nay, there are two inns, although but a dozen houses,—one of them cold and stately, the other humble and comfortable: take your choice, for you are at Waterville, and on the borders of Lough Carrane, a lake which the angler knows and loves. We hurry on—but it must be early next day, for to reach this locality you will have traversed forty miles. Avoid Cahirciveen, a "big town" which you see before you when ten miles more are traversed, and turn off to take the ferry to Valentia. Here is an island full as a full and good book—with its slate quarries, its antique remains, and especially its electric telegraph, by which you may send a message in five minutes to London. The Knight of Kerry has his seat here—"monarch of all he surveys," excepting the mainland, the far-out islands, and the many mountains, including Carran Tuel and Mount Brandon, the highest and the next highest of the Irish mountains, both of which he can see from his garden-seat. From the eastern side of this most interesting island—very rich in fact, and richer still in promise—you may obtain sea-views, rude yet grand beyond conception. But our space is limited; we must hurry, if you, good tourist, do not;—we hope you will not, for here is one of the neatest and pleasantest inns of the district; and the Knight himself—happily a resident—orders all things wisely and well for the stranger. You have yet a rich banquet on which to feast; and that whether you go round by Dingle, Tralee, Tarbert, and the Shannon, or, abridging your route, traverse Dingle Bay, and make your way back to Killarney.

Let us tempt the tourist to make this tour; not alone because of the grandeur, the positive magnificence of its sea-coast, but because thus he will make acquaintance with the ways and *wants* of the Irish people; not by rushing among them, railway-led, but by springing perpetually off "the car" to see something that is striking, novel, and interesting. He will undoubtedly note much that he must deplore: into this district improvements have hardly yet travelled. Civilization is creeping but slowly into "the south-west." If, however, the people there are comparatively in a state of nature, they have at all events its virtues; inhabitants never care to lock their doors; theft is a thing unknown there; a stranger may travel or roam about in any part of this wild district; go where he will, he is sure to meet civility, courtesy, and gracefulness, because natural, politeness, with a ready zeal to render service whenever, wherever, and however, it can be required—clumsy it is often, no doubt, but always cordial and hearty. Those who travel here will therefore find ample studies of natural character, the picturesque in scenery, the peculiar in habit, and the original in all things.

But we must return with the tourist to Killarney. He will by this time have grown accustomed to the Irish jaunting-car, and like it for its freedom from restraint—the ease with which he leaps on and off; and he will have made acquaintance with the drivers—pleasant fellows generally, witty, intelligent, and communicative. At Killarney, he will have had “a guide:” he cannot well be wrong in this matter; upon which, however, much of his pleasure must depend. The guide will tell him everything—and more; the histories, the “laegends,” the peculiarities of famous places—carry his coat, and himself, if needful—direct his footsteps, and take the roughness off all that is rugged by attention and good-humour. So it is with the boatmen also; pleasant and attentive fellows all of them are. The scores upon scores of boys and girls who will bore him in “the Gap,” and at the mountain-foot will have worried him, it may be; but there is so much of wit in what they say, and of kindness in what they do, that he has a set-off against their obtrusiveness. The crowd who will follow him—to exchange bits of heather, cups of spring water, goats-milk, or potheen, for anything “his honour plases”—are like no other crowds to be met with in any other part of the islands “pertaining to the British crown.” In Ireland, even that which is disagreeable is not altogether so—the sweet is there always mingled with the bitter.

It may to some seem absurd if we lay any stress upon the *safety* with which visitors to Ireland may travel: but there may be those who even yet feel the old alarms concerning that country, although at no period was “the stranger” ever subject to insults, much less to injuries, there. No matter by what kind of conveyance you journey, good tourist, or if you walk on foot—no matter whether it be noonday or midnight, whether on the Queen’s highway, or on roads through pathless mountains or trackless bogs—be sure you need no protector other than the umbrella you carry in your hand; be sure, too, you will always find a guide wherever you meet a peasant. For ourselves, we have posted on the “common car” somewhere about six thousand miles in Ireland—through its highways and its byeways—in all sorts of out-of-the-way places, and at all hours of the day and night,—not only have we never met with let or hindrance, much less insult or injury, but we have ever regarded ourselves—as all other strangers may regard themselves—in greater safety from evil there than we should do if we traversed the road that leads from London to Brentford, with gas-lights all the way.

We must bring this article to a close: it is long; but we have said only a small part of what we might say to induce a visit to Ireland, to that portion of it more especially which is unequalled for beauty and grandeur in the British Islands. The LAKES OF KILLARNEY are famous all the world over. We have shown how easily and how pleasantly they may be reached; we may add that “tourists’ tickets” make the voyage and journey “cheap,” that the cost incurred at the Lakes will be much less than they can be at any other “fashionable watering place,” that the sources of enjoyment are very numerous; and we “go bail” that not one out of a hundred travellers thither will return dissatisfied or disappointed. Moreover—and we admit this to be our chief reason for striving to influence all we can influence to determine that their autumn trip in 1858 shall be to Ireland—it is of the highest importance that the people of the two countries shall know one another. He who helps to promote intercourse between them is assuredly doing a good work. That Ireland has been undergoing rapid and large improvement is beyond doubt: if there be much yet to do, assuredly much has been done: it is certain, at all events, that “the stranger” in that country will receive, as he ever has received, a cordial welcome; he will see little to depress, and much to cheer and encourage, and will return from his visit, brief or prolonged, with a kindly feeling towards it and its people, with hope in its future arising from conviction of its capabilities.*

S. C. HALL.

* The London Stereoscopic Company has just issued a series of views in Ireland; we shall direct attention to them elsewhere; but we may here state that they are very beautiful and highly interesting, and cannot fail to act as inducements to visit that country.

THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.

THE trustees of the new “National Portrait Gallery” have made, at length, a first Report to the Lords of the Treasury,—and this Report was published a few days ago by command of Parliament. By its means, we are enabled to arrive at a more definite appreciation of what has been actually done towards carrying out the objects for which they were appointed, than was before possible. Hitherto, our estimate has been in great measure speculative, and was worked principally out of a series of negations. Now, that we have actual figures before us, we can only say, that they give us nothing to correct in our argument. The summing up of these positives yields exactly the same result as was obtained by our previous addition of the negatives that we found lying around the subject. For a convenient summary, that result may be expressed in the following short formula:—The nation is just about as far from having a National Portrait Gallery, in any rational sense of the word, as it was when the trustees took the matter in hand. That is the credit side of the account which the trustees have with the nation; the other side, as our readers know, shows £4000.

The total number of portraits that have been harvested for the nation, out of a field standing thick with the grain—in case the trustees could have hit upon the best method of reaping it,—is, according to this Report, only thirty-five. As the trustees, it thus appears, have determined to reject the principle of quantity, in laying the foundations of the structure committed to their hands, it might be presumed that they did so because they chose to be eclectic; and this reason, though not, in our judgment, the best producible for the beginnings of the young institution,—still, *would* have been a reason. Between one reason and another there is fair ground for argument; and eclecticism is in the present case the natural alternative of numbers. But the trustees have found some other principle of action, which is neither the one nor the other of these,—which they do not state in terms,—and which our own sagacity fails to drag out of its hiding-place among the results. While they simply reject numbers, they *insult* eclecticism; and, merely letting the one of these principles lie idle, they make the other do a duty which is repugnant to its nature and gives its own assumption the lie. Our readers will remember, that in our number for May last we gave a list of twenty-three of the pictures which this institution now contains; but it will be convenient, with a view to what we have at present to say, that we should repeat these, so as to produce here the completed list, and in a different arrangement. The portraits now in possession of the trustees for the use of the nation, are the following:—The Chandos Shakspeare,—William Wilberforce,—Lord Sidmouth,—Spencer Perceval,—the first Earl Stanhope,—Stothard, the Royal Academician,—the poet Thomson,—the first Viscount Torrington,—Fox, the martyrologist,—Wright, of Derby, the painter,—Nollekens, the sculptor,—Sir Francis Burdett, and Lord Chancellor Talbot;—Sir Walter Raleigh,—Handel,—Dr. Parr,—Arthur Murphy,—Speaker Lenthall,—Horne Tooke,—Dr. Mead,—Harley, first Earl of Oxford,—Sir William Wyndham,—the first Earl of Cadogan,—Richard Cumberland,—the Comtesse de Grammont,—Huskisson,—Archbishop Wake,—Bishop Warburton,—Sharp, the engraver,—Captain Cook,—Chambers, the architect,—Elizabeth Carter,—Bishop Hoadley,—Cardinal Wolsey, and Ireton.—To this list of portraits has to be added the portrait of Sir Joshua Reynolds, by himself, since purchased, as we stated last month, by the trustees, for a large sum of money;—and making the number of works now constituting the National Portrait Gallery, in all, thirty-six.

Now, on the mere fact taken by itself, of the striking inequalities in the values represented by the names above given, we do not insist in the absolute and unqualified sense; because differences of value, even when the values are high, there will inevitably be. We contend, nevertheless, that something like proportion there should be, at any rate; and that in a *commencing* list of thirty-five, culled from the entire unbroken field of

British greatness, any considerable differences would have been an unnecessary fact,—and such differences as we have here are a monstrous one. A National Portrait Gallery of British worthies, when it shall be complete down to a given date, will, of course, represent *all* degrees of value, on a scale going as high in one direction as we can,—and in the other, down to a line below which, of course, we will *not* go; but that is no reason why we should *begin* by representing anything like the two extremes. The names before us, in considering their fitness as the nucleus of a National Portrait Gallery, have to be regarded not only in their relations to one another, but in relation, also, to all the greatness that is yet wanting to the gallery list.

Of the thirty-five names which that list does contain, the first thirteen portraits, our readers should be told, are gifts;—the remaining twenty-two are the purchases of the trustees. First, let us register, that this gives an average of more than £180 for each purchase,—supposing the trustees to have exhausted their fund, as at this early stage of their proceedings they certainly should:—and next, let us remark, that the differences in the values of the names added to the gallery by purchase, are greater than the differences in those contributed by gift! So much for eclecticism, as against accident! Our readers will remember, that in our search for the principle which could have brought together the three and twenty names which we laid before them in May last, we took upon ourselves to relieve the trustees speculatively from the more striking anomalies of its action. We said, then, that if this collection could be supposed to be the spontaneous work of the trustees, it would have to be declared that, in their sweep over the field of British historic constellation, they had been in deliberate search of the minor stars. Of this order of moral astronomy we rashly undertook to acquit them,—and gave it as our belief, that the list as it stood plainly bespoke its own origin in casual contribution. There are names therein which we took for granted could have found their way there—just now, at least—only because the portraits had been gifts. We should have considered that we wronged any body of trustees, in conjecturing that, with all the wide and starry heaven of British greatness before them, they had spent the money entrusted to them for a purpose like this, in making purchases like some of these. Now, here, for instance, is, as we have said, Arthur Murphy. We do not deny, that in a Gallery of British Worthies a time for Arthur Murphy may come,—but his time is not yet. Nay, it is even a long way off. The trustees have a great deal to do among the eagles, before they could properly come down to a bird of Arthur Murphy’s quality,—though a most respectable bird in his place. We deny, that Arthur Murphy is one out of the four and twenty foremost names of historic England. We should certainly have given precedence to Sir Isaac Newton. Then, before we spent much money, or any at all, on a portrait of William, the first Earl of Cadogan, we think we should have liked to secure Lord Bacon for a constituent of England’s greatness. Here, too, is the Comtesse de Grammont:—what possible title hurries the lady into this national collection as one of its most pressing features? What is her title, at all? Will the trustees tell us, in what conceivable sense it is, that La Belle Hamilton is one of England’s great historic names? Has she, by any accident, been mistaken for Lady William Russell?—One half of the list might be commented on in much the same sense. Where we find Richard Cumberland, is it unreasonable that we should look back, and see if Ben Jonson is provided for,—and when we come on the name of Dr. Mead, are we not entitled to inquire after Harvey and Jenner? Sharp, the engraver, and Stothard, the Academician, and Chambers, the architect, should all have had places in a National Portrait Gallery of *our* collecting,—but not till Rubens and Vandyke were placed;—and even Sir William Wyndham should have waited at the door, till we had led in the old blind Milton, and handed him to his seat high up among the immortals.

With twenty-two, then, as representing the whole number of the purchases made up to the date of the Report,—and with names such as that number includes, negating the idea of selection,—there is no other solution that suggests itself for such an action as this on the part of the trustees, save that one to which we have referred again and