

THE
PICTURE OF DUBLIN

OR

STRANGER'S GUIDE

TO THE

IRISH METROPOLIS.

CONTAINING

AN ACCOUNT OF EVERY OBJECT AND INSTITUTION WORTHY OF
NOTICE, TOGETHER WITH A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE
SURROUNDING COUNTRY AND OF ITS GEOLOGY.

NEW EDITION

WITH A PLAN OF THE CITY AND THIRTEEN VIEWS.

DUBLIN
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POLICE ESTABLISHMENT.

The first institution of Police in Dublin, is supposed to have taken place in the reign of Elizabeth, but upon a very different system from the present ; to this succeeded a class of peace-preservers, and night-guards, called *watchmen*, who were introduced in the reign of George I. The watchmen did not preserve the nightly quiet of the city so effectually as they might have done, for many of them were convicted of aiding in robberies, and even murders, committed within the city : this led Mr. Orde to introduce the Police act, in 1785.

Though this body was exceedingly efficient, yet being entirely appointed by the government, the citizens became jealous of their interference, and appeared to feel themselves rather under the control of a military force, than as having their properties and peace preserved by an useful establishment.

Many attempts were made in parliament to abolish the Police, and substitute city guardians less offensive to the inhabitants ; and a resistance on the part of the government, for ten successive years, gave rise to many serious results to the nation in general.—At length, in the year 1795, the Police act was repealed, and the former miserable system of watch restored.

This wretched mode of preserving the peace, was continued for ten or twelve years, when the Duke of Wellington, then Secretary of State in Ireland, introduced the present police act, from which the metropolis has derived great advantage ; it is now matured to a degree of perfection, which the noble framer of the act could hardly have contemplated.

At present the entire police establishment consists of four

aldermen, four sheriffs' peers, four barristers, one secretary, twelve clerks, four chief constables, fifty-two peace-officers, twenty-six constables of the watch, thirty horse-police, one hundred and seventy foot patrol, for city and country, and five hundred and forty-four watchmen. They are mostly discharged militia-men, whose spirit and good conduct have been certified.

The jurisdiction of the Police extends to all places within eight miles of the Castle of Dublin. This district is formed into four divisions, with their respective offices, namely—

- 1st Division, Office, Exchange Court.
- 2d Division, Office, Arran-quay.
- 3d Division, Office, Henry-street.
- 4th Division, Office, College-street.

To each of these divisions are attached three Justices ; the first an Alderman of the city, the second a Barrister of the Court, of six years' standing, and the third a Sheriffs' peer. The Alderman attached to the Castle Division is Chief Magistrate of the Police. He receives a salary of £600* a-year, with an allowance for a house. The other Justices have £500* a-year each. One or more of the Divisional Justices attends every day at each of the public offices, from ten in the morning until three in the afternoon, and from seven until eight in the evening. They are empowered to examine all persons accused of murder, treason, felony, conspiracies, frauds, riots, assaults, and misdemeanors of every kind ; to hear and determine some particular cases in a summary way, and administer affidavits to all who may apply to them. The horse patrol are quartered in Kevin-street barrack ; and there are thirteen houses in

* Irish currency.

various parts of the city, over each of which two or three constables preside. Patrols are continually in motion during the night to prevent depredations, and see that the watchmen are on their posts; and the peace-officers are constantly in attendance awaiting the commands of the magistrates. There are twenty police stations in the adjacent villages. At these places about seventy policemen are stationed, who send out patrols at night on the different avenues leading to the town. The public office belonging to the Castle Division is called the Head Police Office, to which the other Offices make daily returns.

The power formerly vested in the superintendent magistrate has been transferred to those of the head office of police, which has the control of all carriages plying for hire, and retains thirty-one peace officers in its employment; while the divisional offices are allowed but seven each.

PRISONS.

NEWGATE—the principal gaol for malefactors of all descriptions, is in Green-street. Formerly the gaol was an old castle on the town wall, over the gate leading from Cut-purse-row to Thomas street; and from its situation, derived the name of *Newgate*, which appellation was transferred to the present prison. This building, which stands on a rectangular piece of ground, 170 feet by 130, is after a design of Mr. Thomas Cooley, the Architect of the Exchange, and is faced with granite, from the Dublin Mountains. The front consists of three stories, the lower rusticated, and the two upper perforated by windows divested of ornament: the

centre is surmounted by a pediment, and in front of the upper story of this part of the building, are the platform and apparatus for execution. At each angle is a round tower with loop-holes; and one side of the prison has no other windows than these apertures. In this wing, prisoners of the lowest class were generally confined, and from the exorbitant fees or "garnish money," demanded for any accommodation however wretched, these unfortunate miscreants were compelled to suspend a small bag from the loop-holes by a cord, and beg alms from the passenger; but this extremity of human misery, together with many shameful improprieties practised and countenanced within the prison walls, called forth the interference of Mr. W. Pole, Secretary of State for Ireland, who made a serious reformation in the discipline of Newgate.

The interior is divided into two nearly equal parts by a broad passage, having on either side lofty walls with iron gates, through which visitors may speak with the prisoners. At the end of this passage is the gaoler's house, the front of which is in Halston-street; but the turnkeys have apartments in the prison. There is a chapel attached to the prison, and three chaplains, one of the Established Church one of the Roman Catholic persuasion, and a Dissenting clergyman.

The cells are not sufficiently numerous for the number of criminals that must necessarily be at all times confined in the gaol of a large city, nor are they of sufficient magnitude to accommodate more than one, each being only twelve feet long by eight in breadth; they all open into corridors, which look into the court-yard, and are locked at night.

The foundation of this building was laid in 1773, and it was opened for the reception of criminals in 1781. It is not considered either well situated or strongly built, the blocks of stone not being cramped as they are in the county gaol.

Few prisoners, however, have ever been able to effect their escape, without the connivance of the turnkeys. A few years since, when the gaol was crowded with convicts destined for transportation to Botany Bay, a conspiracy was formed to break through the walls ; but the plot was fortunately detected in time.

From that period, no irregularity or spirit of insubordination has appeared, owing partly to better internal arrangement, and partly to a diminution of crime in the city, by which the number of prisoners is much reduced.

The County Gaol is situated near the Royal Hospital, and is called Kilmainham-gaol. A court-house has been lately erected close to it ; but as neither of these are within the city any detail of them would be unnecessary here.

The internal regulation of both these gaols, has been of late greatly benefitted, and the last improvement which has received the sanction of the High Court of Parliament, viz. the abolition of fees, has scarcely left any thing more to do in the government of prisons, but have the present systems strictly observed. Besides the gaoler and his deputy, there are five turnkeys, a surgeon, physician, inspector, and three chaplains : all the guards having been removed from prisons in Ireland by order of government, the Newgate guard is now raised and maintained by the governor, who is captain commandant. It consists of eighteen men. There is one improvement yet wanting in *Irish* prisons in general, viz. the employment of the prisoners ; and whoever has visited Lancaster Castle will feel strongly the force of this observation.

SHERIFF'S PRISON.—Previously to 1794, persons arrested for debts exceeding £10 were generally lodged in “Sponging Houses,” where the most infamous practices were permitted, as the unhappy debtor would make any sacrifice of his property to be allowed to escape before some new claimant seized upon him.—In 1794, the Sheriff's prison in Green-

street was erected ; which is a large building, forming three sides of a square, and having a court-yard in the centre. At the first institution of this prison, the gaoler, turnkeys, and other officers were supported by the rent of the chambers, which was very exorbitant, and a considerable rent, about £100 per annum, was paid by a vintner, who had a shop in the under-ground-story. From such an arrangement, it is obvious abuses must have arisen, and vice and infamy of every description been encouraged in its growth. But happily all this scene of debauchery, profligacy, gambling, and extortion, has vanished with the abolition of gaol fees ; and the removal of those allurements has diminished the charms of confinement, which a profligate mind never failed to discover within the precincts of the Sheriff's prison.—The court-yard in the centre is used as a ball-court, but is much too confined for the number of debtors, of whom there are usually about 100. The Marshalsea and Kilmainham gaol, however, afford accommodation to so many of those whose health is impaired by confinement in Green-street, and the Insolvent act removes the Irish debtors so quickly, that the number at present in this prison is comparatively small.—The same chaplains who visit Newgate attend here ; it is also constantly visited by a medical inspector. The means of support for the poor debtors, are the contributions of their friends and Powell's gratuity. This last resource is derived from £700 bequeathed by Mr. Powell (formerly confined in this gaol,) and vested in the hands of the Lord Mayor and board of Aldermen, who distributes the interest of it amongst the poor debtors at Christmas.

CITY MARSHALSEA.—This wretched mansion is a mean-looking brick building, intended solely for the confinement of persons arrested for debts under £10 ;—in general they do not exceed forty shillings. The debtors are committed by the decrees of the Lord Mayor's Court and the Court of

Conscience. The interior exhibits a picture of the deepest distress and misery. Very frequently, benevolent persons send sums of money to this prison to procure the discharge of a number of those poor creatures, and there cannot be a more truly charitable mode of giving relief, as a large family of infant children, is frequently dependent on the poor prisoner for existence.

Before the erection of this building, which is between the Sheriff's prison and the Sessions-house in Green-street, the poor debtors were confined in a wretched hovel on the Merchant's quay, having a window without glazing, secured by iron bars; here one or two of them stood, holding a box with a small hole in the top, and earnestly supplicated charity from every passer-by.

FOUR COURTS MARSHALSEA.—This place of confinement situated in Marshalsea-lane, in Thomas-street, is also intended for debtors. Here are placed not only the debtors whose health has been injured by confinement in the unwholesome air of the Sheriff's prison, but others from various parts of Ireland who are anxious to take the benefit of the Insolvent Act.—The building consists entirely of lime-stone, and may be said to have no principal front: it is separated from Marshalsea-lane by a high wall, unbroken by an aperture.

The situation is extremely healthy, being on the very summit of a rising ground, and on the southern bank of the Liffey. In the prison are two court-yards, one of which, surrounded by the chambers of the debtors, has pumps in its centre, which yield a constant supply of water. In the other court is a cold bath. Here are likewise a chapel, several common-halls, a ball-court, and tolerably good accommodation for the debtors: indeed, from the great fluctuation in the number of prisoners committed to this Marshalsea, it would be a matter of great difficulty to decide, whether or not it ought to be enlarged.—There is one desideratum yet,

in the construction of this place of confinement, viz. a perfect ventilation, which might be accomplished by perforating the wall in Marshalsea-lane, as was suggested by Francis Johnston, Esq. some time back, who also showed that it would not be attended with any diminution of security to the prison, but it has not yet been adopted.

SESSIONS HOUSE.—In 1792, the first stone of the Sessions House in Green-street was laid, and trials were held there in five years after. The front consists of six three-quarter columns supporting a pediment; between the columns in the second story are circular-headed windows, and in the lower story blank windows; the doors on either side are approached by a flight of steps, extending along the front and terminated by a broad platform, from which the columns rise.—There is another front corresponding to this, in Halston-street, leading to the apartments in which the agents sit during contested elections.

In the interior of the court-house, which is lofty and spacious, the centre in front of the bench is occupied by the table for the examination of witnesses, the dock, &c.; and on each side is a gallery, part of which is appropriated to the jury, and the remainder to the accommodation of the public. The ceiling, which is flat, is supported by four large Ionic columns; and, upon crowded occasions, the court is capable of being extremely well ventilated.

There are four distinct courts held here. The Quarter Sessions, when the Recorder and two Aldermen at least preside and try petty offences.

The court of Oyer and Terminer sits about six times each year in this court-house, and tries for crimes of a blacker nature than are brought before the Court of Quarter Sessions. On this occasion two of the Puisne Judges preside.

The Lord Mayor's court sits every Thursday, and regulates all disputes relative to journeymen, apprentices, servants, &c. At this court his Lordship and the two Sheriffs preside.

The Recorder's court is held monthly. At this court various offences and misdemeanors are tried, and actions are brought for debt by civil-bill process. In this court were held all the State Trials in 1798 and 1803, of those who were tried by the Civil Law.

MANORS.

There are four manor courts attached to the city—Grange Gorman or Glasnevin, Thomas Court and Donore, St. Sepulchre's and the Deanery of St. Patrick's.—The manors were town lands united to the city, but still preserving their own jurisdiction.

THE MANOR OF GRANGE GORMAN includes that part of Dublin on the north which lies in the neighbourhoods of Glasnevin and Mountjoy-square. The Seneschal holds his court in a private house in Dorset-street, at the corner of the circular road. He has in his employment a Marshal and Registrar. The lord of this manor is the Dean of Christ church.

MANOR OF THOMAS COURT AND DONORE.—In 1545, Henry VII. granted the monastery of Thomas-court, to William Brabazon, ancestor of the Earl of Meath, since which period the appointment of the Seneschal, Registrar, &c. are vested in the Meath family. The court-house is a wretched brick building in Thomas-court, Thomas-street, where small debts are sued for, before the Seneschal, whose powers were formerly very considerable within his own boundaries; but the improvements in the government of the city in general, have rendered the exertion of those powers unnecessary. The court was first established in the reign of King John, and its Jurisdiction extended over the principal part of the liberties and part of the environs at the south side of the city.

MANOR OF ST. SEPULCHRE.—The court-house and prison of St. Sepulchre are situated at the end of the Long-lane in Kevin-street, near the New Meath Hospital.

The Court-house is a modern building fronted with moun-

tain-granite. The jurisdiction of this court, as far as relates to the city of Dublin, is confined to part of St. Peter's, in which are St. Kevin's-parish, and the parish of St. Nicholas without. The Seneschal of these Liberties is appointed by the Archbishop of Dublin, who is the Lord of the Manor of St. Sepulchre. Before the erection of the present court-house, the Seneschal sat in the Archiepiscopal-palace in Kevin-street, now occupied by the horse-police. The prison for debtors, in this manor, is at the rear of the New Court-house.

MANOR OF THE DEANERY OF ST. PATRICK'S.—The Dean of St. Patrick's is Lord of this Manor, which extends only a few hundred yards on each side of the cathedral: it is inhabited by some of the very poorest people in the city, and the court of the manor has been discontinued. The only advantage its poor inhabitants possess is, that they are exempt from the jurisdiction of other courts, as the recovery of trifling debts, and sometimes elude the clutches of the bailiffs by flying for refuge to the confines of their own manor.

CATHEDRAL OF CHRIST CHURCH.

IN the year 1214 the see of Dublin was united to that of Glendalough, a village in the county of Wicklow, twenty-three miles from Dublin, which union still exists. To this see many valuable endowments were given by Innocent III, and by King John. The Archbishop of Dublin was formerly a member of the Privy-council of England: he had the rights and privileges of a prince