

LEINSTER PROVINCE.

at large, and two each for the boroughs of Granard, Lanesborough, Longford, and Saint Johnstown; but since that period the two members for the county have been Henry White, Esq., Seamus, Stillorgan, county of Dublin; and Anthony Levey, Esquire, Carrickglass, in this county. Lieutenant and Custos Rotulorum, Luke White, Esquire, Rathcline, in this county. The town of Longford confers the title of Baron on the family of Pakenham.

LOUTH.—This is a maritime county, the smallest in Ireland, bounded on the east by the Irish Sea, on the west by the counties of Monaghan and Meath, on the north by Carrlingford Bay and the county of Armagh, and on the south by that of Meath. Its greatest length in the direction of south by west is twenty-eight miles; and its greatest breadth west by north is eighteen; comprehending an area of 201,906 acres; of which about 179,000 are arable; 5,300 of plantations; 1,200 occupied by towns; 800 covered by water, and the remainder, about 15,600, irreclaimable or uncultivated land. Although the smallest county in the island, it presents distinguished features, as to its scenery and soil, well deserving attention. The surface of the county is uneven and studded with lofty hills, many of which bear thriving plantations, which contribute to the beauty of the scenery. Louth constituted the centre of the English pale, originally extending from Wicklow on the south, to Dunluc on the north; and its fragments of ancient monuments are interesting and numerous, some bearing marks of considerable magnificence. The soil is generally fertile, producing fine grain and heavy green crops; indeed, Louth may be considered as an agricultural county of considerable value. The manufacture of sheet-ings, and other kinds of coarser linen cloth, is carried on, in the neighbourhood of Drogheda, to a considerable extent, and there are large bleach-works in and around that locality. There are three places of export for the agricultural and manufacturing produce—Newry in the north, Drogheda in the south, and Dundalk midway between the two; and inland communication is effectually facilitated by the Dublin and Belfast railway, which passes through the county, and Lough Carrlingford, which leads up to the Newry canal, and by it with the inland navigation of Ulster. There is an oyster fishery at Carrlingford Bay, the produce of which is held in great estimation, and finds a ready market in Dublin and other towns. The climate of Louth is mild, but humid; not more so, however, than other sea-bound counties generally are. The geology of the county is very simple. The mountains in the north are chiefly composed of granite; and clay slate, limestone, impure ironstone, and pyrites of iron, form the sub-strata of other districts. The rivers which have connexion with this county are the Flurry, the Stramara, the Cully, and the Creagh—flow into the sea from the north, and the Fane from Monaghan, flow into the sea from the south. The lakes within the county are Newtown-balegan, Cortal, Kercock, Beaulien, Drumeah, and two or three smaller sheets of water. In Sept. 1843, there were (including those at Drogheda) 62 national schools attended by 10,500 children.

DIVISIONS, POPULATION, REPRESENTATION, &c.—The number of baronies comprised in the county are six—namely, Ardee, Drogheda, Dundalk Lower, Dundalk Upper, Ferrard, and Louth: these are divided into sixty-four parishes (including those comprehended in the county of the town of Drogheda). The population of the county, by the census taken in 1841, was, males, 62,297; females, 65,943; total, 128,240. The number of houses inhabited, at that period, was 22,836; uninhabited, 1,286; and houses building, 98. Prior to the Union Louth sent ten representatives to the Irish Parliament; two for the county at large, and two each for the boroughs of Ardee, Carrlingford, Dundalk, and Dunleer; at the period referred to all the boroughs were disfranchised except Dundalk, which sends one member to the Imperial Parliament, and the county at large two—the present representatives for the latter are Richard Monaghan, Esquire, Barneath, in this county; and the Hon. Thomas Vesey Dawson, of Dartrey, county of Monaghan. The county of the town of Drogheda is represented by one member, in the person of Sir William Meredith Somerville, Baronet.

MEATH is a large maritime county, bounded on the north by the province of Ulster, and the county of Louth, on the north-west by the county of Cavan, on the east by the Irish Sea for an extent of about eight miles, on the south-east by the county of Dublin, on the south by that of Kildare, on the south-west by King's County, and on the west by Westmeath. Its length, due north and south, is nearly forty miles, and its breadth from the sea coast, on the east, to the north-east corner of Westmeath, is about the same extent. The area of the county comprehends 579,899 statute acres, of which about 547,400 are arable; 12,700 plantations; 460 occupied by towns; 3,200 covered by water, and the remainder, about 16,000 acres, irreclaimable or uncultivated land. The soils of Meath vary from deep rich loam to the lightest sandy soil; but those which prevail are strong clayey loams of various depths, and lying upon a substratum of limestone gravel. The entire surface of the county may, in a general view, be pronounced as the chief and characteristic portion of the great central plain of Ireland, pre-eminently fertile and verdant. It is hilly over a small district in the west, and variegated by hills and swells in some districts of the north and the interior, but nowhere mountains or rugged, or comprising its rich character of the very finest champagne country. There are parts yet engrossed by the feed of innumerable herds and flocks, and the general agricultural interest of the county is of the first consideration. The average rent of land is 18s. an acre, being the highest in Ireland, except that of the county of Dublin. The manufactures of the county are unimportant, except for domestic consumption. The weaving of Drogheda; and many females are occupied in making straw plat for bonnets. The other branches are of the usual character found in agricultural counties. The elegant mansions and highly cultivated demesnes of the gentry, while they add to the beauty of the scenery, indicate the prosperity of the county; and the mouldering piles of ruined castles, monasteries, and abbeys, exist as monuments of the ecclesiastical grandeur that in past times characterized the district of Meath. The minerals of Meath require but little notice; it forms part of the great limestone field of Ireland—that mineral constituting its general substratum, except in some parts of limited extent, where the clay slate formation is found. The climate of Meath is genial, and less rain falls than even in the upland counties of the north and south. The principal rivers are the Boyne and the Blackwater; the former divides the county nearly into two equal portions, from its entrance at Clonard, &c. A it falls into the sea below Drogheda. The Blackwater comes out of Cavan, and falls into the Boyne at Navan. The other streams are tributaries to the two main rivers, and intersect the county in different directions. In September, 1843, there were one hundred national schools in Meath, attended by more than 11,800 children.

DIVISIONS, POPULATION, REPRESENTATION, &c.—The county of Meath is divided into the two great districts of Dunshaughlin and Kells, the former on the east, the latter on the west of the Boyne. The district of Dunshaughlin is divided into the baronies of Devese Lower, Devese Upper, Drogheda, Duleek Lower, Duleek Upper, Dunboyne, Fore, Lower Moyferagh, and Ratoath. Kells district is divided into the baronies of Demerly Lower, and Slane Upper. These are divided into one hundred and forty-six parishes. The population of the county, by the census taken in 1841, was, males, 92,494; females, 91,334; total, 183,828. The number of houses inhabited, at that period, was 30,785; uninhabited, 877; and houses building, 98. Prior to the Union Meath sent fourteen representatives to the Irish Parliament; two for the boroughs of Athboy, Duleek, Kells, Navan, Ratoath, and Trim, and two for the county at large—which latter, since the Union, has been its only member—these are Henry Grattan, Esquire, Moyrath, in this county, and Stephen's-green, Dublin; and Matthew Corbally, Esquire, Corbally Hall, Meath. Lieutenant and Custos Rotulorum the Right Hon. Lord Dunsany, Dunsany Castle, Meath. The Brabazon family takes the title of Earl from this county.

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QUEEN'S COUNTY.—This inland section of Leinster province is bounded on the east by the county of Kildare, on the west by King's County and an inscribed projection of Tipperary, on the south by the county of Kilkenny and a small extent of Carlow, and on the north by King's County. Its extent from north to south, by an imaginary line drawn through the centre, is about thirty miles, and from east to west thirty-five. The area comprises 424,854 statute acres, of which about 312,400 are arable; 11,600 of plantations; 1,120 occupied by towns; 400 covered by water, and the remainder, about 11,600, irreclaimable or uncultivated. The soil, originally marshy, has been greatly improved; and that of the south-eastern angle of the county is remarkably rich: the north-western district, in the neighbourhood of the Slievebloom range of mountains, is somewhat hilly; the remainder, which is generally level or gently undulating, is fertile. The average rent of land is 14s. an acre. The useful minerals raised or found within the county are coal, iron, copper, manganese, mica, limestone, sandstone, marble, ochre, fullers' earth, and a great variety of clays, fit for all the coarse and the middle qualities of pottery. The manufacture of woollen and cotton goods is carried on, to a limited extent, in some of the towns and their vicinity; but by far the larger part of the trade of the county consists in the raising of agricultural and dairy produce, and the rearing of store and fat cattle for different markets. The climate of Queen's County is equal in salubrity to any other district in Ireland; nor are the exhalations from the numerous bogs at all detrimental to health, for the inhabitants in their immediate vicinity, and even in the midst of them, are robust and healthy. The principal rivers are the Barrow and the Nore, and the nameless streams are their tributaries. There are several lakes, of which the chief are the Kellyville, the Erno, the Granstown, the Annagh, the Duff, and the Ballyfin; and the canals are the Mountmellick branch of the Grand Canal, and another cut to the neighbourhood of Athy. In September, 1843, there were sixty-four national schools in this county, attended by eight thousand children.

DIVISIONS, POPULATION, REPRESENTATION, &c.—The number of baronies comprised in the county are eleven—namely, Ballyadam, Clandonagh, Clarnallagh, Cullenagh, Maryborough East, Maryborough West, Portlanch, Slieve-Margy, Stradbally, Tinnahinch, and Upperwoods: these are divided into fifty-three parishes. The population of the county, by the census taken in 1841, was, males, 76,403; females, 77,527; total, 153,930. The number of houses inhabited, at that period, was 25,438; uninhabited, 853; and houses building, 117. Prior to the Union Queen's County sent eight representatives to the Irish Parliament; two for the county at large, and two each for the boroughs of Ballinakill, Maryborough, and Portlanch; but since that period the only borough represented is the last named, which returns one member to the Imperial Parliament, and the county at large two—the present gentlemen sitting for the latter are Sir Charles Henry Coote, Bart., Ballyfin, Mount-rath; and the Honourable Thomas Vesey, Abbeylisk House, Abbeylisk, in this county. Lieutenant, the Right Honourable Viscount de Vesci, Abbeylisk. Custos Rotulorum the Right Honourable Earl Mornington, Abingdon Hall, Cambridgeshire.

WESTMEATH is an inland county, bounded on the east by the county of Meath, on the west by the counties of Longford and Roscommon, being separated from the latter by Lough Ree and the Shannon; on the north by a small portion of each of the counties of Cavan and Meath, and on the south by King's County. Its greatest extent, north-east and south-west, is about forty miles, and its breadth, in a direct line east and west, is twenty miles, comprising an area of 453,468 statute acres, of which 330,000 are arable or other cultivated land; 11,800 plantations; 20,500 covered by water, and the remainder, occupied by towns, and unimproved mountain and bog, or irreclaimable land. The surface of the county, though nowhere rising into tracts of considerable elevation, is much diversified by mill and dale, is highly picturesque in many parts, and abounds in all the essentials of rural beauty except timber. Both the pasture and arable land of the county is exceedingly fertile—the latter especially, occupying tracts of from 10,000 to 30,000 acres, the soil of which is so deep and rich as almost to defy abuse or exhaustion. The southern part is flat and overspread with bog; and the hills on the shores of Lough Deraveagh have their sides clothed with stunted oak and underwood, the remains of ancient forests. The average rent of land is 13s. 7d. an acre. The manufactures are merely such as supply the demands of the inhabitants being confined to flannels, flannels, and coarse linens. The mineralogy of the county is not important; it is included within the great limestone plain of Ireland. Copper, lead, coal, and marble, have been found, but not sufficiently abundant as to induce speculation or search for the different beds. The Brosna and the Liffey are the only important rivers of the county; but the Shannon is a boundary stream on its western side, and there are several inferior ones; together with a number of beautiful lakes, of which Lough Deraveagh, Lough Annagh, Lough Ennel, Lough Leign, and Lough Drin, are the principal. They all or nearly all abound with various fish, particularly trout; this fish, taken in the last named lake, is said to possess an emetic quality. In Sept., 1843, there were 44 national schools in Westmeath, attended by 5,500 children.

DIVISIONS, POPULATION, REPRESENTATION, &c.—The number of baronies comprised in the county are twelve—namely, Brawdy, Clonlough, Corkaree, Delvin, Farhill, Partullagh, Fore, Kilkenny West, Moyashell and Magheradenon, Moycashel, Moygoish, and Rathconrath: these are divided into sixty-three parishes. The population of the county, by the census taken in 1841, was, males, 70,383; females, 70,917; total, 141,300. The number of houses inhabited, at that period, was 24,002; uninhabited, 687; and houses building, 114. Prior to the Union Westmeath sent ten representatives to the Irish Parliament; two for the county at large, and two each for the boroughs of Athlone, Fore, Killebeggan, and Mullingar; but since that period the representation has been confined to one member for the first named borough, and two for the county—the gentlemen sitting at present for the latter are Benjamin James Chapman, Esquire, Killua Castle, Clonmellon; and Hugh Morgan Tuile, Esquire, of Sonna, Mullingar, both in this county. Lieutenant and Custos Rotulorum the Most Noble the Marquess of Westmeath, Clonlough, in this county, and Clonkeen, Roscommon.

WEXFORD.—This is a maritime county, and the most southerly one of Leinster, situated at the south-eastern extremity of Ireland, bounded on the east by St. George's channel, on the south by the Atlantic Ocean, on the west by the counties of Kilkenny and Carlow, and on the north by the latter county and that of Wicklow. In length from its north-eastern extremity to the south-western apex, next Waterford haven, it is upwards of sixty miles, and its breadth, east and west (from Wexford Bay to New Ross) is about thirty. Its area comprises 576,588 statute acres, of which about 511,000 are arable, or other cultivated land; 14,300 of plantations; 3,600 covered by water; 2,400 occupied by towns, and the remainder, about 47,000, uncultivated or irreclaimable land. The soil is mostly of a cold clayey nature, being deficient in the substrata of lime-stone, found in the midland counties; on the whole the maritime districts may be pronounced superior to those of the interior as to fertility, and the entire county may be considered aggregately fertile. The average rent of land is 14s. an acre. The county is remarkable for its beautiful scenery, its verdant eminences, its delightful bays, fine coast and salubrious climate. Snow seldom continues on the ground; and although the southern district is subject to storms and heavy rains at certain seasons, vegetation and crops are as early in this county as in the opposite Welsh counties of Pembroke and Carmarthen, and earlier than in the north of Devon. The manufactures of the county are of little importance; the woollen trade, formerly so flourishing, now languishes, and the fisheries have lately failed. Marble is quarried on the right bank of the Barrow, about ten miles from New Ross; and ochres are found on the coast district. The chief rivers connected with the county are the Slaney and the Barrow; these have several tributaries, and there are a few independent but small streams which flow into the sea. The only lake meriting notice is Lady-Island's Lake, in the barony of Forth, remarkable for its having no natural outlet. In September, 1843, there were 64 national schools in Wexford, attended by about 8,500 children.