

The famine has come, is in every house, Bishop's Hill, Pinmakers Hill, Hollywood, and the Radcliffes Mountains. Every neglected property, in short.. the poorhouse is full, 1100 where there never was 200 and sheds erecting for hundreds more; the price of provisions is so enormous, three times the wages would not give sufficient food to a family. After Christmas, food kitchens must be set up. We have been trying rice and found it liked, so have sent for a further supply although we cannot get it so cheap in a small quantity in Dublin as it could be got in Liverpool or as we hope to get it shortly from John Robinson, who has been written to by a London house on the subject, they offer it at from 13 /6 to 16/- the cwt. We are paying 24/- and even at that price it is the cheapest food to be had. Old Peggy sells it at 3d a lb and sold a stone a day the two first days when few knew she had it, so we have ordered 2 cwt, and we will order a tonne if necessary, and buy coarse beef which Peggy can make into soup to sell at cost price or below it where needful.

BISHOPS HILL MENTIONED ABOVE IS CLOSE TO BALLYMORE EUSTACE. PINMAKERS HILL TOOK ITS NAME FROM THE FORMER PINMAKING FACTORY NEAR WEAVERS SQUARE, AND THE RADCLIFFE MOUNTAINS WERE NAMED AFTER A MIDDLEMAN WHO HAD LEASED LAND IN THE HILLS SOUTH EAST OF BALTIBOYS

Alas the famine progresses, here it is in frightful reality to be seen in every face. Idle, improvident, reckless, meanly dependent on the upper classes whom they so abuse; call the bulk of the Irish what we will, and no name is too hard almost for them, here they are starving around us, cold naked, hungry, well nigh houseless. To rouse them from their natural apathy may be the work of future years. To feed them must be our business this. Baltiboys is in comfort, few of our people in real distress, some in want of assistance and they get it, others in need of nothing. My habit of going constantly about among them keeps me pretty well acquainted with their condition, but lest I should miscalculate I am taking the whole estate regularly through at this time. Two days of visiting introduced me to no distress, only to two cases of struggling – that expressive word. I mean to make a catalogue *raisonne* of our population to leave among our family archives as a curiosity for future squires and a guide to us now.

Hal has killed a beef for our poor and we make daily a large pot of good soup which is served gratis to 22 people at present. It is ready at one o'clock and I thought it quite a pretty sight yesterday in the kitchen all the workmen coming in for their portion, a quart with a slice of the beef; half of them get this one day for a dinner with a bit of their own bread; the other half get milk and the cheap rice we have provided for them. Next day they reverse the order. The Colonel is giving them firing too; so they are really comfortable; they are twelve of them and ten pensioners, old feeble men and women, or those with large families of children, some of them no longer living on our ground yet once having been connected with us we can't desert them.

So far well; but beyond our circle what a waste of misery; how are we to relieve it? Such a dense population squatted here and there upon neglected properties, dying with want, wretched every year but ruined this. At the relief Committee yesterday it was resolved to institute soup kitchens at proper stations for general relief, to be supported by subscription, each subscriber to have a certain number of tickets. I think the gentlemen doing this, the ladies must combine for clothing fund. The rags are scarcely coverings for decency; beds and bedding there are none, among the mob I mean; such misery crushes hope, yet hope I will. Hope and wait as was Dante's motto.

ELIZABETH DREW UP FOR HERSELF A DAILY ROUTINE OF VISITING ON FOOT WHENEVER THE WEATHER WAS FINE OR ON "MIDDLING" DAYS TAKING THE LITTLE COVERED CARRIAGE. FOR HER, EVERY WALK OR DRIVE HAD AN OBJECT; A FARM, THE REPOSITORY, A SICK CALL, ETC, AND WHEN THE WEATHER WAS BAD SHE BUSIED HERSELF AROUND THE HOUSE WITH THE STORE ROOM, THE WORKROOM, THE ACCOUNTS, THE GARDEN, THE PROVISION STORES AND SO ON. "WHO WOULD EXCHANGE FOR THIS RATIONAL FURTHERING OF THE HUMAN RACE", SHE ASKED, "THE LIFE OF A TOWN FINE LADY?"

AFTER THESE EXTENDED VISITS TO ALL THE TENANTS ON THE ESTATE, ELIZABETH EXCLAIMED THAT;

Its nonsense to talk of good landlords as the rule, they are no such thing, they are only the exception. In my walks about this little locality have I not found evidence against them that would fit me for a witness before a committee of the House on the causes of Irish misery? When I pass the limits of our own ground, nothing meets me but wretchedness. The other day when looking for a family we thought it our business to relieve, in the Weaver's Square where no looms are to be found now, every house that I entered on my search broke my heart. The particular circumstances of this afflicting year have much increased the misery, for the little farmers having no food to spare have dismissed their servants, the men leave their ground untilled, the women have eat their poultry, sold their pig, so do not want the help of a maid, thus young men and girls are returned to their poverty stricken parents, while between want of seed and want of hands to sow it, the prospects of a harvest are blighted; all rush to the roads which are rendered by this unprofitable labour impassable; there are two or three at hand actually shut up by the diggings and shovellings going on upon them and we are to pay for this waste, and for our ordinary and extraordinary expenses out of diminished funds. From Lord John's (the Prime Minister's) tone we hope they don't meant to tax the land with this missapplied million. If they do it will be very unjust. All exclaimed against the scheme as useless in itself, preventing useful work and loosening the few remaining relations which yet attached the employed to the employer.

The potatoe crop gone, here and everywhere, the root I suppose extinct.. Here comes the famine too, the rain has spoiled the few miserable potatoes left. The markets are higher than they were ever known to be since the Napoleonic war; work is over, the Irish Landlords generally are bankrupt, three fourths of the land mortgaged to full value, with, therefore nominal large rentrolls they have not a penny to spend in labour. From some hitch between the government and the Board of Works, no public works are going forward, the ministry don't choose to interfere with the provisions trade, so here we are, the peasentry starving.. Mr Gilhooley for whom a bankruptcy sale had been conducted, everything went cheap because of the depressed state of the economy and the general shortage of money, at the conclusion, the poor drunken body brought out the drunken wife and insisted with the auctioneer on her being auctioned; there was no bid.. Irish fun even in ruin. What a curious people.