

DESTRUCTIVE INUNDATIONS AT CORK AND MALLOW MALLOW.

The City of Cork has just been visited by a fearful inundation, stated to have been the greatest calamity of the kind which has taken place in Ireland for upwards of seventy years. The excessive rains with which this part of the country has been visited, added to the violent hurricane from S.E. which prevailed on Tuesday (last week), and both acting with an unusually high spring tide, produced the most serious floods.

The rains of Monday and Tuesday, as indicated by the gauge kept at the Cork Institution by Mr. Humphreys, amounting in the aggregate to two inches and a half; besides which, nearly five inches had fallen the preceding fortnight. New moon took place on the 1st instant, and the tide consequently would have risen to the height of 20 feet 4 inches; but this elevation was prodigiously increased by the hurricane which had blown from the S.E. for some days previously. The consequence was that on Tuesday evening, the water commenced rising at about four o'clock, and in the space of half an hour the whole flat of the city was inundated. The Western-road to Mardyke, and all the adjacent fields at both sides, were one sheet of water; and the City Park as well as many fields in the neighbourhood of the city, were completely flooded to the depth of some feet. The water continued rising higher and higher every moment, until the turn of the tide, which took place at five o'clock, when the flood slowly and gradually subsided, but not until considerable damage had been done.

Next morning the flooding of the fields near the Western-road, the Mardyke, and the upper portion of the river, had not subsided in the slightest degree, but had rather increased. At eight o'clock, though the tide had been three hours on the ebb, the rush of water from near Sunday's Well commenced rapidly increasing; and it tore down the channel in turbid waves, inundating the Western-road and the Mardyke, which were speedily impassable. The baths on the Western-road were carried away by the torrent.

Soon after ten o'clock, the rush of water at North-gate-bridge, the arches of which are narrow, became so great that the torrent speedily overflowed its banks, and bore down Great George's-street like a river, inundating the lower parts of the Grand Parade, George's-street, and all the streets and lanes in the vicinity.

The Parade and Patrick-street, as well as the two Main-streets, were filled with water to the depth of some feet at eleven o'clock. Cars, carts, wheelbarrows, and vehicles of every sort, were in full requisition, and were dashing in every direction through the water. At twelve o'clock every shop was closed, and the streets ran like a river in every direction.

At this moment one of the houses in Fishamble-lane (which are some of the oldest buildings in the city), gave way, and fell in a heap of ruins, completely blocking up the passage, filling it with great beams of timber and masonry. Fortunately the house was

unoccupied, and no loss of life occurred.

At this time the flood was rushing furiously through every street in the city, bearing on its muddy and swollen surface evidences of the devastations which had marked its course, in the betaken themselves to the upper stories.

The authorities had judged it prudent to take precautions to prevent any fatality taking place in case North-gate-bridge should be destroyed. The bridge being unequal to convey away the vast body of water, and, overflowing its banks, the water rushed rapidly along until coming to the New-street it parted, and sent a portion of its waters down the South Mall, and a portion down George's-street, from which it flowed with great rapidity until it poured into the river at Anglesey-bridge. Similar overflows took place at Parliament-bridge and other localities; and of George IV's bridge, not a vestige was to be seen. The entire country for miles around was a waste of water. But fears being, as before stated, felt for the safety of North-gate-bridge; the police slung chains at each end, and a number of men were stationed to keep the public from crossing. No fear at this time were felt for Patrick's.. bridge, as the force of the water had considerably subsided before arriving there. The traffic of North-gate-bridge was thus completely thrown upon Patrick's bridge, and many persons were standing near the battlements watching the flood.

At this crisis a circumstance occurred which might have given warning to the authorities that Patrick's-bridge was not so secure as they imagined. Half-way down Lavitt's quay there stood a fountain, at the immediate edge of the river. Suddenly a loud crash was heard, and the fountain had disappeared, and about thirty feet of the quay wall had also been carried away. The torrent having thus secured another vent rushed impetuously over the quay, deluging the house with water to a depth of some feet. A rush of spectators was of course made in the direction of the accident; and after their arrival, the water tore down another portion of the quay wall, and a considerable portion of the quay was borne away. At the opposite side of the river, a portion of the sewer burst, and part of the quay fell in.

It was now about half-past twelve o'clock, and the flood, so far from diminishing, was every moment acquiring additional fury. The waters were dashing under the arches of Patrick's-bridge, carrying chairs, beams of timber, trees, &c. At this instant a terrific crash was heard followed by a piercing shriek, and it was discovered that a great piece of the bridge had given way, carrying down, it is believed, eleven persons. They were borne down the tide, and all were drowned, with the exception of one, who was rescued. Barriers of timber were immediately placed across both ends of Patrick's-bridge, and the police were soon in attendance to warn persons not to attempt to cross it. A party of military soon after arrived, under Major-General Mansel, and formed themselves into a line at each end of the bridge. In a few moments another large mass of masonry gave way, and was carried into the tide.

Both the bridges leading to the north of the city being now barred to the public, the ferries were put in requisition for the conveyance of passengers.

A calamity of nearly as fearful a character as that which had occurred on Patrick's-bridge, took place in a different part of the city at about the same period of the day. A portion of the rear of the Messrs. Perrot's foundry was swept away, carrying with it five persons, three of whom were irrecoverably hurried away, and perished. The remaining two were borne down by the tide, but one was saved.

The house which fell down in Fishamble-lane was one in the occupation of a person named Kingston, opposite the centre of the Court-house. The inhabitants had, fortunately, perceived their danger, and had taken refuge in the adjoining house. Fears for the stability of the latter house were shortly afterwards entertained; and the occupants were breaking a hole in the wall in order to get into the next house. The officers of the Court-house, however, procured a boat, into which the parties got, and were conveyed to the Court house.

The Mayor was absent in Dublin, on official business. His secretary Mr. Pierce Fitzgerald, was actively engaged through the city all day. Towards evening, many of the inhabitants of Nile street, and the more lowly-satiated districts of the town, began to utter cries for bread, having been unable to procure any provisions all day. On hearing of the circumstance, Mr. Fitzgerald procured a boat, which he loaded with bread and distributed it to the people. This he continued to do during the entire night, up to twelve o'clock. The High-Sheriff, A. J. Wood, Esq., gave orders to the bakers that the police should be furnished with bread, on his responsibility, to any amount they might require. The accompanying illustration shows the condition of Patrick's-bridge immediately after the giving way of the abutment.

Upon the same day as that of the calamity at Cork, the town of Mallow was visited by similar inundation. The alarm was considerably augmented by the rise of the water commencing at a very early hour of the morning, when the majority of the inhabitants of the town were asleep. At about midnight the Black water began to flood the Long Meadow, from which the waters spread at both sides, and, rising rapidly, the lower portions of the town at both sides of Macroom-bridge were soon laid under water to the depth of three or four feet.. The rush of the inundation now assumed a terrific appearance, and the inhabitants of the town, awakened by the sound, speedily collected at the windows of the upper stories, but too late to save the most valuable portion of their property. At eleven o'clock a.m. the water rushed down along Bridge-street and all the lanes and stores of the town, bearing away on its surface chairs, tables, bedsteads, &c. At nine o'clock the water obtained such an elevation that the houses in the lower portion of the town were submerged over the first floor, and the occupants had to

clamber out through the garret windows on to the roofs.

At this period of the day (nine a.m.) the poorer residents being greatly in want of provisions, which they had been unable to procure, a raft was constructed of planks, on which constable Enright and sub-constable Wilson proceeded through the streets with a cargo of bread, with which they supplied the privations of those most in need of assistance. When this seasonable supply was exhausted, the raft was replenished by several of the town bakers, and money was also contributed by the more comfortably-circumstanced residents, by which the necessities of their poorer neighbours were supplied. The inhabitants were all bivouacked on the roofs of the houses.

At about half an hour subsequently, Mr. H. Rice, with acting constable M'Cluskey, procured a boat, and proceeded through the town to put in safety any persons who might be imperilled from the inundation. The water at this hour of the day had risen to an astonishing height, and was flowing down with terrific violence, submerging many of the smaller houses at the lower end of the town. Several persons had clambered up to the tops of the chimneys, from which they were calling loudly for assistance. They were conveyed on board the boat, and placed in safety at the upper part of Bridge-street.

In Spa-walk, numbers of persons, consisting of the poorest residents of the town, were in extreme danger. Boats, rafts, and ladders were provided, and the sufferers were rescued and placed in a position of security.

An hotel, kept by a person named Stack, in Bridge-street, was completely submerged. The occupants were, however, fortunately rescued, having been carried away in one of the boats. The house itself was greatly shaken, and all the effects it contained were destroyed. During the entire day the stream was covered with furniture.

At about seven on Wednesday evening the waters subsided; and on Thursday morning the spectacle which the town presented was deplorable in the extreme. The houses were completely gutted, not a vestige of furniture, or even the stairs, in many cases remaining. The streets were strewn with large heaps of masonry, broken furniture, casks, and other property.

In the early part of Wednesday our Artist took the Sketch which we have engraved. He states that the Blackwater, which flows past the town, rose to an enormous height; in one part of the street it actually measured 15 feet. In the Sketch the figures on the raft are policemen distributing provisions to the poor people. Horses, cows, sheep, and pigs, with an immense quantity of corn and hay, were swept down the stream; and the loss of property of every description was prodigious.

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