

[From the Scottish Guardian, February 23.]

## FAMINE AND PESTILENCE IN IRELAND.

The "Diary of a Dispensary Doctor," published in the *Cork Reporter*, continues to present a horrifying catalogue of victims. From the Doctor's last communication we extract the following:—

"On Tuesday, January 26, my services were required for a family in High Street, a locality infested with fever, and I was walking along, meditating on the scenes of desolation, when I recognized the widow Keating, mentioned in my last diary, whose son Mr. Crowley and I buried in a kitchen garden a few days before, and who brought in for interment her daughter, who died the previous morning. 'Doctor,' she said, 'won't you send for my boy? The pigs got into the field where you put him, and I fear they will root the grave, and as no christian would come near me, I brought in little Mary myself to lay her alongside of her father in the chapel-yard.' I employed two men to remove the body from where Mr. Crowley and I had laid it; but they found it in such an advanced state of decomposition, as not to admit of its being raised; however, on the next day the mother exhumed the putrid corpse herself, brought it into Skibbereen, and buried it with the remains of her husband and daughter. On Tuesday, February 2, Mrs. Keating again met me, and demanded another coffin for the last of her children and family. I yielded to her entreaties—the coffin was purchased—she placed it on her head, when I remonstrated with this dying creature, and pointed out the risk that would attend her undertaking such a task. She disregarded my advice, walked home with a heavy coffin on her head, reached her cabin door, fell to the ground before entering the threshold, and expired a victim to her fondness for her family and reverential respect for their remains. After leaving High Street, I visited a family named Collins, living about two miles from Skibbereen; there were four children, and their mother recovering from fever; they had no nutriment of any kind, and although now convalescent from disease, will, no doubt, perish of want. In returning, I passed a house where I had attended a family named Donovan, in fever; it consisted of an old couple, four daughters and a son; the young man was in the habit of coming to my door for assistance for them; and not having seen him for some time, I concluded that he too was ill. On entering I saw my female patients sitting in their chemises around a single lighted turf, and inquired why they left their beds, but might have saved myself the interrogatory, as there was not even a wad of straw in the house; my next inquiry was for their messenger, and I was told that he, a few moments before, 'dragged his father out, and that she did not know whether he went east or west.' I asked why did he do so? 'Because,' said the famishing widow, 'my poor man is dead these five days, and no person would help to bury him, and Jerry pulled him out to put him into the dyke.' I followed the track of the body, and on passing through a gap, found the young man, whose pallid cheek and blanched lip told he was a famine patient, trying to commit his parent's corpse to the earth. As he was exhausted from the sad office, I took the spade and tried to effect the interment myself; the ground was too hard, and we threw down a portion of an old fence on the body, and left it to be perhaps to some future generation, a monument of the horrible famine era of 1847. Twenty two strangers who came into Skibbereen to beg, had taken up their abode in a house in Bridgetown, and I was sent for in a couple of hours after being present at Donovan's interment, to see five sick of fever. The appearance of this lazaretto, when a bit of bog deal was lighted to shew me the patients, baffles description. Four bare walls and an old straw roof constituted the habitation, and there was not in it a single pound of straw for bedding; a shower of liquid soot was falling from the thatch, and a fetid fog was rising from the filthy wet rags that constituted the only clothing of the inmates. I prescribed for my patients, and was about to leave when my attention was attracted by a group at the opposite end of the house, engaged about an old woman and child lying on the ground. 'Doctor,' said one of the party, 'my child is dead, and my mother is going, won't you give her a drink?' 'Oh, thank God, I won't want your drink long,' replied the dying woman, 'for it will soon be all over with me; will I live until morning?' I assured her that before an hour she would be transferred to another world, and she exclaimed, 'Well, I will be soon out of want and hunger, but won't you get me and the little girl put in the abbey?' I promised to do so, but in the hurry of business forgot my promise, and was reminded of my neglect when, on entering the house some days

after, I found the bodies in the same position in which I saw them expire. I then redeemed my pledge. This very day, the 10th of February, I saw three corpses in this same abode of wretchedness, and they were this moment removed by a man who has contracted for burying the dead, without coffins, at the rate of a shilling a head, and whose cart goes round every morning to collect the bodies. I never beheld such a combination of distressing circumstances as in the case of a family named Barrett, who were the last patients that I had occasion to see on the night of the 26th. Six members of this family labouring under fever had been turned out of their lodgings near the old chapel yard, and had struggled to that burying ground, and literally entombed themselves in a small watch-house, that was built for the shelter of those who were engaged in guarding the bodies against exhumation by the doctors. This shed is exactly 7 feet long by about 6 feet in breadth; by the side of the western wall is a long newly made grave; by either gable are two of shorter dimensions that have been recently tenanted; and near the hole that serves as a door-way is the last resting place of two or three children, the victims of famine; in fact, this hut is surrounded by a perfect rampart of dead bodies, and to such a height have they accumulated that the threshold, which was originally on a level with the ground, is now two feet beneath it. In this horrible den six individuals, males and females, were indiscriminately huddled together. The time that I visited them was midnight—it was blowing a perfect hurricane. I was accompanied by my worthy assistant at the dispensary, Mr. Crowley, and we took with us some bread, tea and sugar. When we reached the shed I thrust in my head, but had to draw back, so intolerable was the effluvia both from the living and the dead. I had them removed to the fever hospital, where they are recovering, and the account which they gave me of their sufferings whilst immured in this dungeon, exceeds anything that I have ever heard or read of. For two days they were left without drink, and although funerals came to the burying ground, so faint were there voices that they could not make themselves heard, and on the night before I visited them, the expedient that they adopted for allaying thirst was to thrust straw out of the doorway, and suck it when saturated with moisture."

## NOTICE.

ALL Persons liable to pay Rates in the Parish of Fredericton, and Agents for Non-Residents, are hereby notified to give in forthwith to either of the Subscribers, Assessors for the said Parish, Statements of their Real and Personal Estates, under oath, agreeably to Law.

MARK NEEDHAM, }  
JOHN S. COY, } Assessors.  
JOHN F. TAYLOR, }

Fredericton, 28th April, 1847.

## TO BE SOLD BY PUBLIC AUCTION,

ON Thursday the 29th day of April next, at twelve o'clock, at the Office of Asa Coy, Esquire, Queen Street, Fredericton, for the payment of the debts of the late Henry Smith, of Saint Mary's, in the County of York, Esquire, deceased, in consequence of a deficiency of the personal estate of the deceased for that purpose, pursuant to a Licence obtained from the Court of Chancery, the Lands and Premises following, that is to say:—

1st.—The upper half of lot 83, fronting on King's Street, Fredericton, 33 feet in width, under lease to John M'Sorley, at a rent of £6 per annum.

2nd.—A piece of Land in rear of the Madras School, Fredericton, 80 feet by 27.

3d.—That tract of Land in the Parish of St. Mary's, adjoining the lower side of the Monckton Grant, and known as the upper half of the Henley Gore. This tract will be sold in lots, agreeably to a plan to be seen at the office of the said Asa Coy.

Terms at Sale.

D. LUDLOW ROBINSON, Administrator.  
Fredericton, February 23, 1847.

In consequence of the probably unsafe state of the Ice on the River, the sale of the above Property is postponed until Thursday the thirteenth day of May next, at noon, then to take place at the Office of Asa Coy, Esquire.

D. LUDLOW ROBINSON, Administrator.  
Fredericton, 7th April, 1847.

All Letters must be Post-paid.

Printed and Published at the Royal Gazette Office, near the Province Buildings, by JOHN SIMPSON, Printer to the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty.

Wednesday, May 12, 1847.