1 – The Exhibits of the Donegal Industrial Fund
*(*The Queen, *28 July 1888)*

The Irish Exhibition at Olympia, 1888

BRENDAN ROONEY

ORGANISED AND FINANCED BY MEMBERS OF THE NOBILITY AND PERSONS DISTINguished in the fields of politics, literature, science and commerce, the Irish Exhibition in London was held at Olympia, Addison Road, West Kensington from 4 June to 27 October 1888. It was a large-scale, ambitious affair, and, located in fashionable central London, was well placed to draw the attention of the British public and press alike. It happened to coincide with other major events taking place that summer, namely the triennial Handel Festival at Crystal Palace, the Italian Exhibition, and the vast Glasgow International Exhibition (which ran from the beginning of May to the end of October), but exhibitions of this kind were very much part of Victorian urban society, and audiences were used to dividing their attentions between 'rival' events.[1]

The Irish Exhibition occupied the vast covered building itself called Olympia – the largest exhibition building in Britain – and six acres of adjacent grounds. It was easily accessible to visitors arriving on foot, by train (West Kensington Station was nearby) or by carriage. For the standard entrance fee of half a crown, they were presented with an array of Irish attractions, ranging from displays of Irish arts and crafts, to industrial demonstrations, military manoeuvres and performances of Irish music.[2] The floor space in the main hall was divided among the exhibitors who, at stalls and in show cases, displayed and sold Irish wares. The grounds outside were given over to structures intended to evoke the Irish landscape and the activities, culture and history of its people. Irrespective of its minor status, and indeed scale, when compared with contemporary international exhibitions, it was a significant undertaking – both in terms of administration and engineering – and the bodies responsible for its success were understandably large. Though these bodies had no explicit political agenda, the exhibition was more than simply a commercial and cultural festival.

THE ORGANISERS

The party allegiances of many of the organisers was the most obvious link between the Irish Exhibition and politics. All major parties in the House of Commons featured on the list of organisers and patrons. The primary planning body, the Executive Committee, counted numerous MPs among its members. Lord Arthur Hill, Honorary Secretary of the committee and MP for Down West, and Lord Charles Beresford, former MP for Co Waterford, represented the Unionists.[3] Sir R.N. Fowler, MP for London and former Lord Mayor of the City, and the Earl of Latham were the Tory MPs on the council. The Liberal Unionists were Sir John Lubbock and the Duke of Westminster. Lubbock, MP for London University and honorary graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, was also an important member of London County Council.

Significantly, Irish Home Rule interests were also well represented, albeit from varying perspectives. Liberal MPs Herbert Gladstone, son of the Right Hon W.E. Gladstone, then leader of the Opposition, and Sir Charles A. Russell QC, advocated Home Rule. Russell, the Attorney General, was Irish born and educated. The sole member of the Home Rule Party itself was Mr Justin McCarthy, MP for Londonderry and soon to take over from Parnell as the leader of the party. Not only, therefore, was the input from major parliamentary figures considerable, but many of them could claim Irish connections and/or concerns.[4] Ernest Hart, editor of the *British Medical Journal*, and political campaigner, also sat on the Executive Committee.[5]

AMBITIOUS AIMS

The committee outlined its intentions in the catalogue accompanying the art gallery exhibitions. Curiously, not to say unrealistically, in view of the high number of politicians on the controlling council, all concerned wished that the exhibition would be 'non-political'. This was, at least, an interesting and, one assumes, philanthropic ambition. The reality was somewhat different. The aims of the exhibition were listed as being:

1 To place before the English public a clear view of the predominant industries in Ireland.

2 To awaken public interest in the efforts being made to revive her trade.

3 To exhibit to the many thousands of persons in England who have never

crossed the Irish Channel somewhat of her deeply interesting Historical and Antiquarian treasures.

4 To illustrate the worth and significance of Irish Art, and, finally to help to moderate the prejudices which, frequently tending to fetter the judgement, are at the very root of misunderstanding between people and people.[6]

All profits which might accrue from the exhibition were to be invested in the development and promotion of industrial technical schools and cottage industries in Ireland.[7] The committee asserted that if Englishmen were to actually go to Ireland, they would learn more than could be gleaned from 'all the speeches, books and pamphlets on Ireland ever made or printed'.[8] The Irish Exhibition, therefore, represented an explicit attempt to recreate Ireland in central London, thus educating, or perhaps more precisely re-educating, the English public. The most telling statement of all comes at the end of the introduction, where the organisers define themselves as belonging to a

> movement entirely outside the arena of politics; freed from all sectarian or class influence; initiated and undertaken with a worthy purpose; encouraged and directed by persons of energy and practical experience.[9]

An anomaly lies therein. Simply by attempting openly to depoliticise themselves, the committee was acknowledging the political dimension and politicising itself, or more correctly, the exhibition, in the process. This becomes more evident when the exhibition is viewed in the context of the prevailing attitudes in England towards the Irish and Ireland, and representations thereof by the British press. It took place at a time when Irish affairs were very much at the forefront of British government policy-making. The issue of Home Rule featured high on the political agenda, frequently splitting the main parties, and its cause was well served by some formidable members of parliament, both Irish and English. Many of these were vilified regularly by the press. The exhibition also coincided with the Parnell commission, which occupied column after column in the English broadsheets, and pages in the corresponding illustrated newspapers.[10] The Plan of Campaign, initiated in 1882, continued, and was viewed with much distrust in England, not least because of its suspected connection with militant nationalism.[11] At one level, therefore, one might view the Irish Exhibition as a rather extravagant public relations exercise, designed to appease the English public and amend their image of Ireland and the Irish in general. Therefore, though neither reactionary nor revolutionary, the exhibition was fundamentally political.

In tone, it was quite different from the Irish exhibitions, both national and international, which had preceded it. The rhetoric, for example, which accompanied

the Exhibition of Irish Arts and Manufactures in Dublin of 1882 was markedly different from that of the exhibition in Olympia. Held in the Rotunda in Dublin, this event was also concerned with defining an Irish identity through the arts and the manufacturing industries, but was essentially introspective.

In London, the challenge lay in redressing the Irish image amongst the English. In Dublin, no such distinction applied. Here, the emphasis lay instead on establishing a national cohesion, both economic and social. It was also much more clearly politically and historically defined. 'It was felt', wrote the organising committee of that exhibition 'that in spite of all opposition and difficulties an Irish Exhibition should be held in 1882, the year of the inauguration of the O'Connell monument, and the Centenary of the Volunteers'.[12] Even the site had a political significance, and the organisers made sure to point out that the Rotunda's walls 'echoed to the eloquence of all the great Irish leaders and thinkers': United Irishmen, O'Connell, Home Rulers, Nationalists, leaders of the Land Movement etc.[13] Finally the committee asked,

> Can these associations be more fitly crowned than by an Exhibition intended to mark the progress of Ireland in the paths of peace, to forward the cause of peaceful industry in the future, and to help to unite in common love and common duties all sections of Irishmen and Irishwomen?

No members of the Irish nobility or aristocracy featured among the committee members, and only one official was subsequently involved in the administration of the London event.[14]

'PATRICIAN VISIONS'

Ostensibly the committee took for its inspiration the Irish industrial exhibitions that had taken place in Ireland, and sought to transplant them onto English soil. However, the exhibition remained a singular venture in terms of its design and execution. Though one of its main purposes was to elevate the Irish peasant classes, both economically and socially, by focusing on the quality and individuality of their produce as well as their industrious character, it effectively realised the visions of a patrician and, therefore, largely detached community, motivated in many cases by a sense of *noblesse oblige*.

This detachment had a direct impact on the formation and presentation of the exhibition. Speaking of the supposedly authentic native villages which had become a standard feature of international fairs, and of which there was one at the Irish Exhibition, Paul Greenhalgh says that

> the presentations ... were less to do with accuracy or with the encouragement of tourism than with the relationship they were in with the English ... Ireland had to be different ... in order for the English to be able to differentiate themselves and rule.[15]

Despite the 'Irishness' of many of the organisers, this principle applied equally to the Olympia exhibition. What really interested the organisers was the presentation of a positive side of Ireland as they themselves envisaged it, which would be both intelligible and palatable to an English audience. It was therefore, always and necessarily, a simulacrum, an imposed, unavoidably subjective and narrow interpretation of Ireland.

A BROAD SCOPE

Irrespective of the possibly deluded approach of its organisers, the exhibition was an imaginative and wide-ranging project. As many elements of Irish industry and custom were incorporated into the exhibition as was feasible. Agriculture, engineering, mining, brewing and distilling, printing and book-binding, chemical and allied manufacturing were among the industries represented. Education and science also featured. These appeared alongside more entertainment-oriented attractions which were the *sine qua non* of any exhibition of this kind. There were, for example, both a switchback railway and a toboggan run, dramatic and musical performances and military manoeuvres (Plate 2).[16]

The Great International Exhibition in Dublin of 1853 had been ground-breaking in terms of the emphasis placed on the arts. This was repeated at subsequent exhibitions of its kind in Britain and further afield, and, once again, at Olympia. Here, an attempt was made to present an overview of Irish arts, both current and historical, through the acquisition of important and prestigious art works spanning the centuries. Attempts were made to obtain on loan for the Department of Ancient Irish Art both the Cross of Cong and the Book of Kells, but the requests were, understandably, refused by the respective custodians of these antiquities. However, the committee still managed to put facsimiles of both on display during the exhibition, as well as one of the Ardagh Chalice and other fine objects.

Under the direction of dynamic patrons and with the support of numerous local industrial funds, Irish arts and crafts had been revitalised in recent years. All

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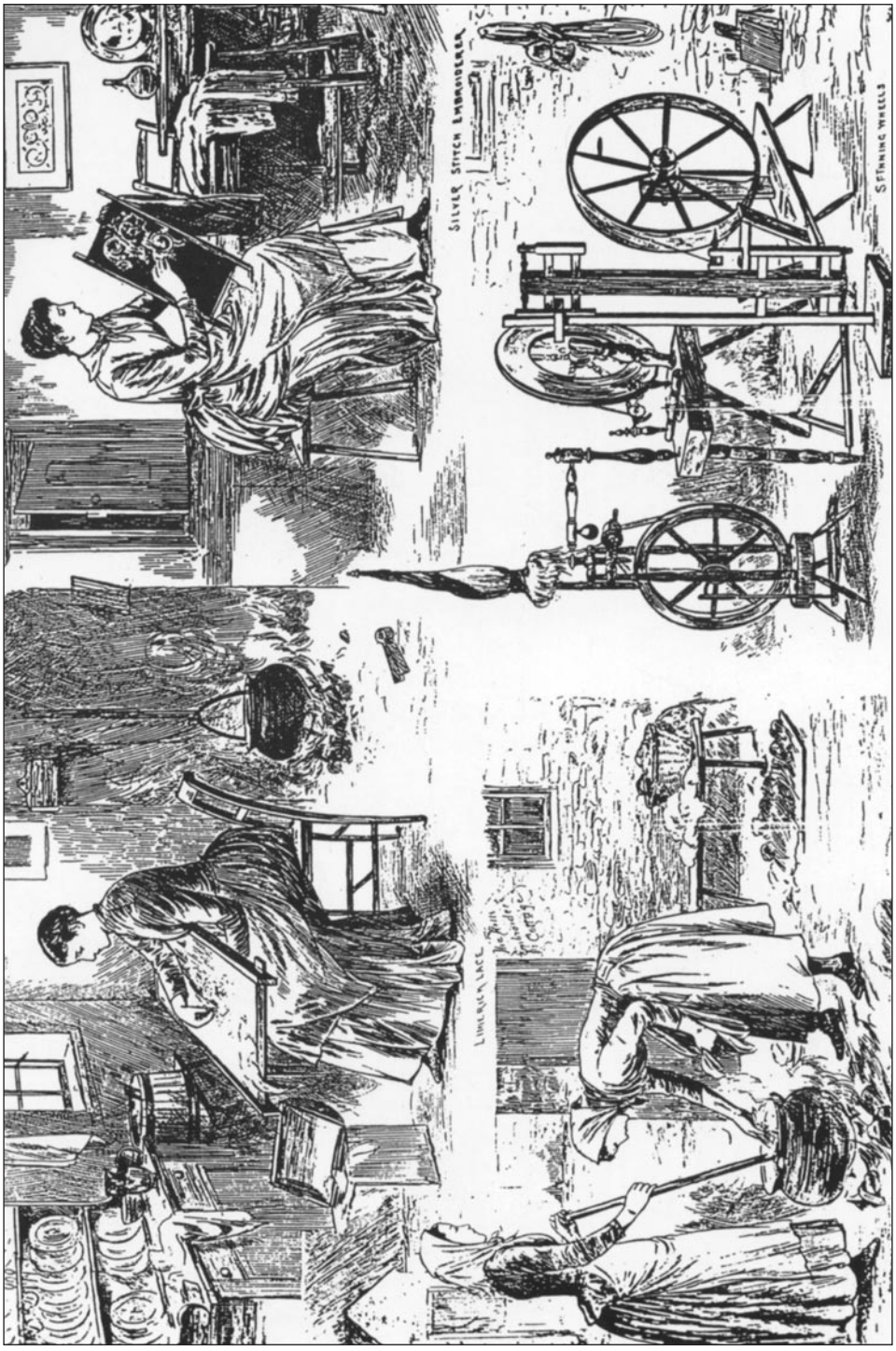
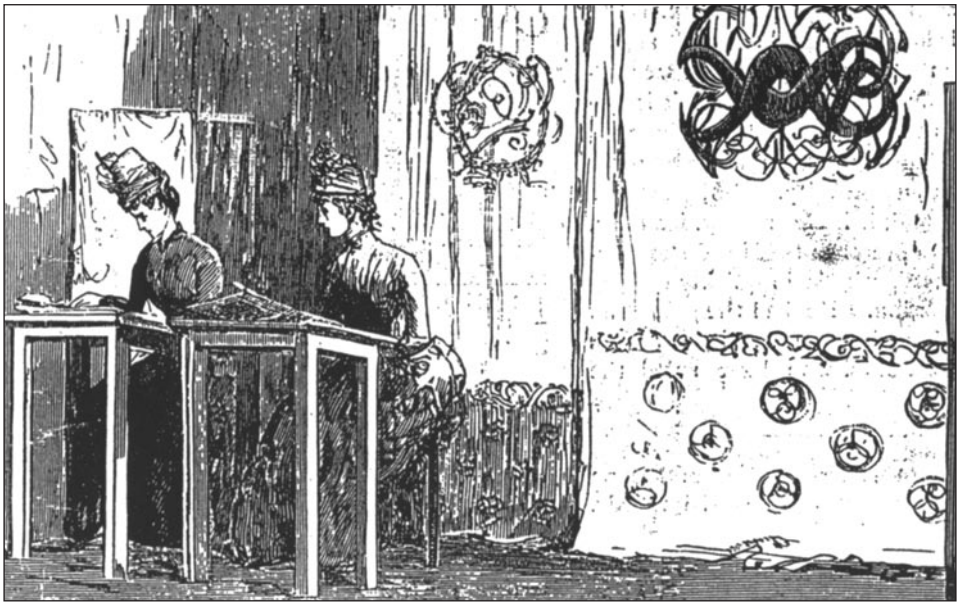
page 106 *2 – At the Irish Exhibition* (The Graphic, *4 August 1888)*

page 107 *3 – Irish Peasant Workers in Their Cottages* (The Queen, *28 July 1888)*


Leaping - The vaulting horse: in 2 Acts.
Slipping over.
Irish Regiment under fire
"Could we but see ourselves as
"Getting over like a Cat"
The double ditch and bank.


SILVER STITCH EMBROIDERER
SPINNING WHEELS
LIMERICK LACE



4 – Kells Embroideries Worked under the Direction of the Donegal Industrial Fund
*(*The Graphic, *9 June 1888)*

5 – A Village Street in Donegal
*(*The Queen, *7 July 1888)*

manner of crafts were on view to the public at the exhibition, and much of the produce was on sale for the duration. Traditional and modern crafts on show included spinning by hand and weaving of homespuns and linens, dyeing, carding, weaving of damasks, lace-making, sprigging (embroidering of sprigs on muslin handkerchiefs), knitting and hemstitching (Plate 3). Kells embroidery, a style that had been developed to be distinctly Irish in character, drawing its ornament from early Irish manuscripts, also featured strongly (Plate 4). Crafts proved to be one of the most popular attractions, thanks in no small measure to the endorsement and presence of important patrons, among them the irrepressible Lady Aberdeen. Essentially the figurehead of the Irish home industries movement, Lady Aberdeen had been committed to its development since her arrival in Ireland with her husband, the Lord Lieutenant, in 1886, and, as Jeanne Sheehy expresses it, had that 'romantic partiality for Ireland to which some English are prone'.[17] Mrs Ernest Hart, who had been instrumental in the development of Irish craft industries, setting up the Donegal Industrial Fund in the early 1880s, was even more directly involved. She and the Earl of Leitrim were responsible for the design of the Donegal Industrial Village, which was the largest single section of the exhibition, and emphasised both local industry and indigenous crafts (Plate 5).

Designed to be educational, faithful to reality and picturesque, the village was based on the layout of a typical Donegal hamlet. 'Authentic' Irish peasants were invited over from Donegal to inhabit its twelve thatched cottages and demonstrate their respective skills, which included many of the aforementioned crafts, as well as undergarment and shirt-making. A cross was placed at the centre of the village, and the ruins of an Irish tower formed the focal point of the western side. Attention to detail was of paramount importance, and even the fires inside the cottages were to be lit with Irish peat.

A subway passed from the Great Hall into the grounds, where one was presented with a reconstruction of Blarney Castle.[18] Further on, an old Irish castle was located in the centre, complete with portcullis, drawbridge and moat, and nearby stood what the *Freeman's Journal* described as 'that great mystery of the Irish antiquary, an old round tower'.[19] The organisers even went to the lengths of building an Irish dairy, housing sixty cows, in the grounds, which was worked by Irish dairymaids in national costume. The whole project was an undeniably ambitious undertaking, not to be outshone by larger or better funded alternatives. Ireland was to be presented as steeped in history, industry and creativity, but also commercially attuned and viable.

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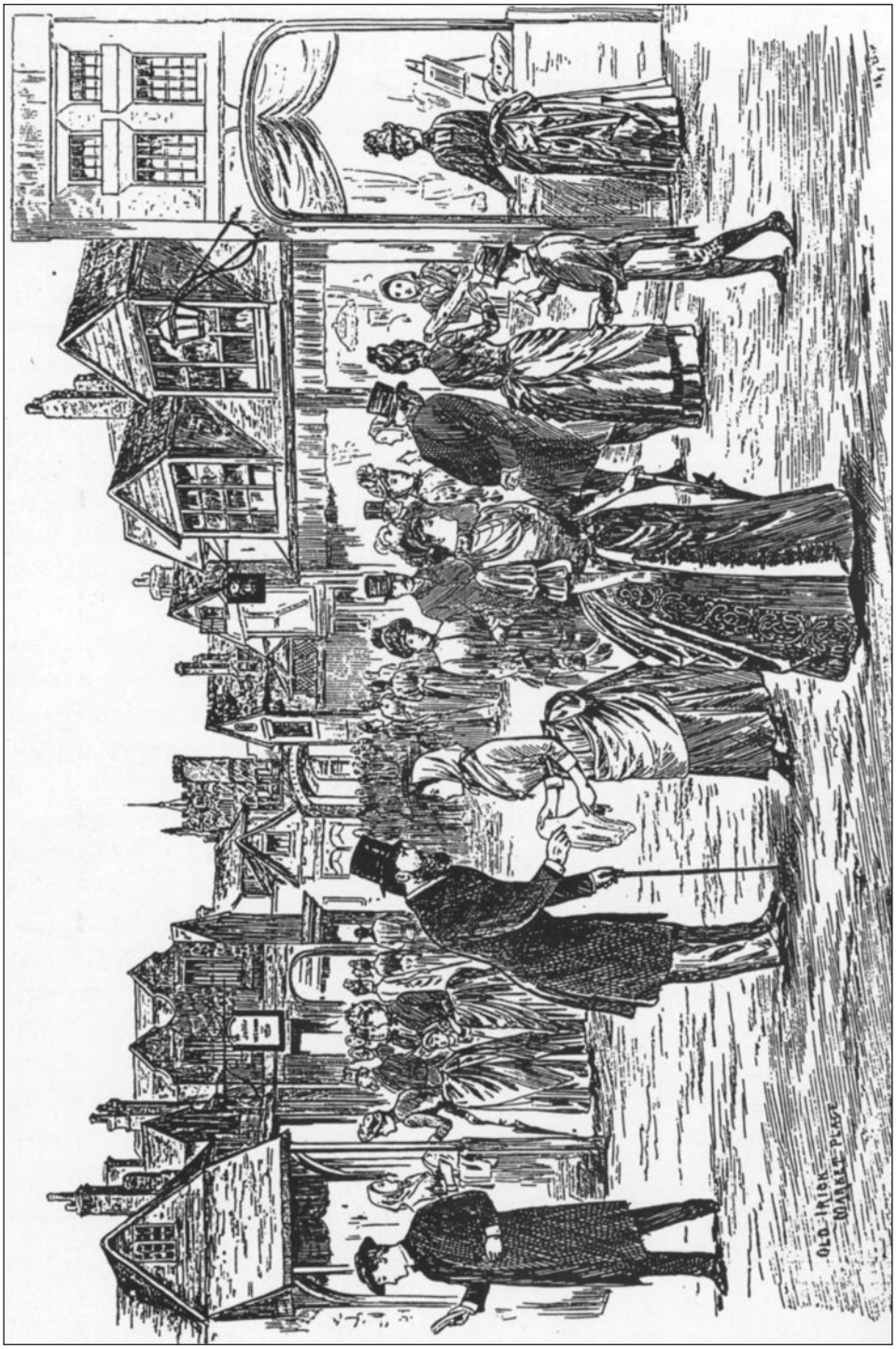
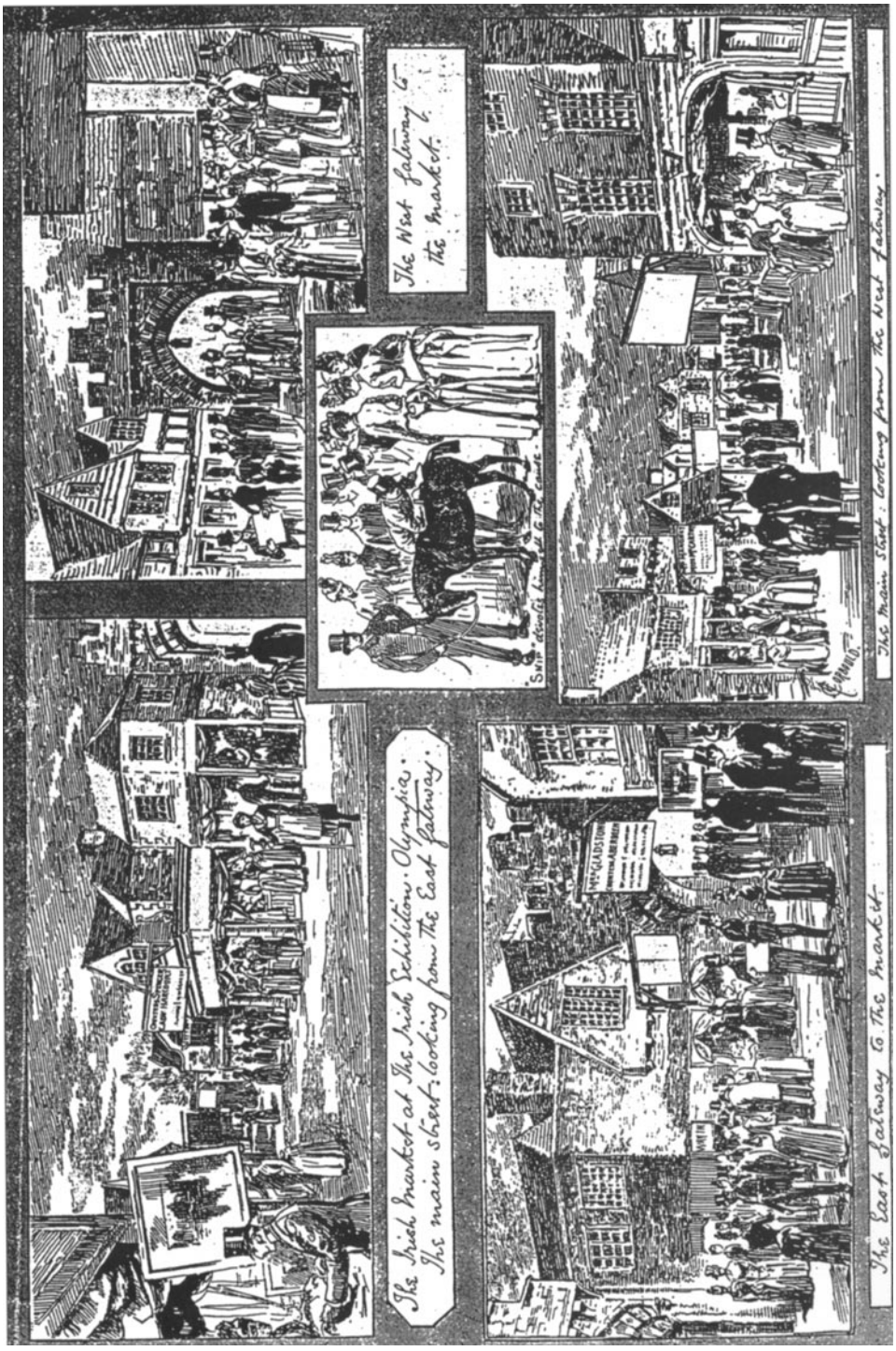
page 112 *6 – Old Irish Market Place (*The Queen*, 7 July 1888)*

page 113 *7 – The Fancy Fair at the Irish Exhibition (*The Graphic*, 28 July 1888)*


OLD IRISH
MARKET PLACE


The Irish Market at the Irish Exhibition, Olympia.
The main street, looking from the East gateway.
The West Gateway to its Market.
The East gateway to the Market.
The main Street, looking from the West gateway.

THE FANCY FAIR

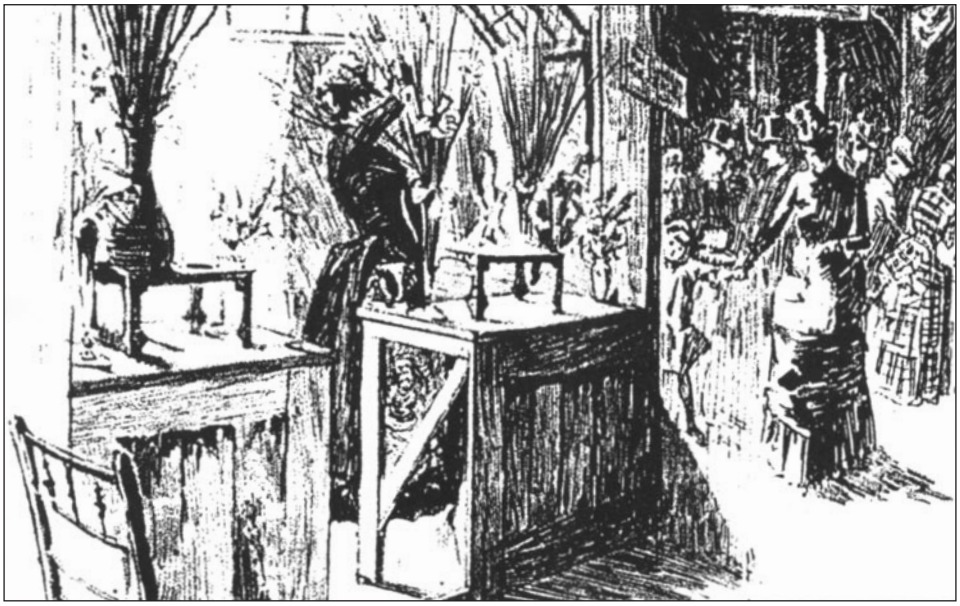
Of all the individual events that took place during the four month duration of the exhibition, the Fancy Fair, held in the Old Irish Market Place for four days in mid-July, seems to have attracted most attention (Plates 6, 7). To some extent, it brought glamour to the proceedings and provided a counterpoint to the rustic village described above. The great novelty of the event was that 'Ladies of distinction', as they were referred to in the *Cork Examiner*, rather than the Irish peasants themselves, worked at the stalls.[20] The women taking part were among the most famous and fashionable personalities of their day, and it was believed that such a gathering would be sure to draw the crowds.

Again, many had Irish family connections, while for others contact was linked to their husbands' political career. In some more peripheral cases, their associations with Ireland may just have been through friendships. Prominent amongst the ladies was the aforementioned Lady Aberdeen. Her friend, Lady Gladstone was also on hand, as were the Countess Spencer, Lady Arthur Hill, the daughter of Mr Justin McCarthy, the Countess of Crawford, Lady Herschell, Countess Tolstoy (the wife of Leo Tolstoy), Constance Wilde, Lady Castletown and Lady Fanny Marjoribanks (Plates 8, 9). In claustrophobic and frenetic surroundings, they sold the produce of the Irish workers. The newspapers reported that many had dressed in Irish 'national costume'. In reality, they were dressed in highly fashionable and expensive dresses made from Irish materials, and any concessions to Irish traditional attire were made by some of the ladies' children who wore peasant-like clothing.

THE FINE ART SECTION

The fine art section of the exhibition, comprising of a north and south gallery, was housed in the main building. Both galleries were sub-divided into 'suitably draped' bays, which themselves were devoted to specific media and genres, including watercolour, oil painting, drawings, bas-reliefs, photography, and loan collections of silver and sculpture.[21] One of the bays was reserved for works by deceased Irish artists, another featured solely black and white illustration. The catalogues boasted that the collections represented an assemblage of some of the greatest masterpieces by major Irish artists, and elsewhere claimed, of another medium, that 'photography in Ireland is more successful than in England, owing to the clearer atmosphere'.[22]

The fine art galleries provided the audience with an excellent and unusual opportunity to enjoy and judge Irish artists as a group in their own right. Under normal circumstances in England, Irish pictures were hidden among all the other works



8 – Lady Salisbury's Stall
*(*The Illustrated London News, *28 July 1888)*

9 – Mrs Gladstone's Stall
*(*The Illustrated London News, *28 July 1888)*

in exhibitions of British or European art (as would have been the case at, for example, the Royal Academy or the Grosvernor Gallery). No doubt it was one of the aims of the organisers to illustrate through this show that one could speak of such a thing as an Irish school, distinguished by its vitality and originality. This was a common refrain in the Irish press, though somewhat rash and misleading, as most of these artists were following a British or Continental artistic model for their style (if not necessarily the subject matter), and many were trained abroad. Nevertheless, it was certainly valuable for these artists to have a major platform on which to show their work and to be identified as a talented group with a particular culture and vision.

The limited number of exhibiting artists prompted the *Irish Times* to state, almost apologetically, that 'it would be unfair to say that the picture galleries at Olympia contain thoroughly typical specimens of Irish painting.' [23] Nevertheless, what remained was an impressive if not quite comprehensive collection. Above all, this exposure was of benefit to the younger generation of Irish artists. To exhibit with the likes of Maclise, James Arthur O'Connor, Catterson-Smith, John O'Connor, Alfred Grey and Sir Thomas Jones (then the president of the Royal Hibernian Academy) allowed them to define their work as continuing a distinctly Irish tradition. Thomas Jones was on the Dublin Committee of the exhibition, and is likely to have had a decisive influence over the choice of artists whose works were accepted for inclusion, and his endorsement would have carried considerable weight. The familiar names of James Brenan (Master of the Cork School of Art), William Henry and John Butler Yeats also featured prominently.

Many of the older, more established Irish artists were spoken of in customarily deferential tones in the Irish newspapers, but the real excitement was focused on the younger generation. Though there were notable absentees, not the least of whom was John Lavery, the group of young artists included a number who were destined to attract considerable plaudits and success in their careers, and in some cases to become major figures in the Irish artistic establishment.[24] Aloysius O'Kelly supplied a large selection of paintings, eleven in total, as did Richard Thomas Moynan, while William Gerard Barry, Margaret Allen, Col Egerton B. Coghill, Mildred Anne Butler, Edith Somerville and Walter Osborne collectively presented a strong selection. An entire bay was reserved for works by students of the Cork School of Art.

Remarkably, the largest representation was reserved for Henry Jones Thaddeus. He was far and away the largest and also the most expensive living artist on show. With twenty-two of his paintings on exhibit at Olympia, he was the only single painter in oils to have had a bay devoted to his work in the main area of the exhibition.[25] Thaddeus's solid reputation within fashionable British society must go some way to explaining his strong showing. This is borne out by the fact that the

Irish Times deemed Thaddeus's reception of a party led by his old friend the Duke of Teck newsworthy. The article relates that the Duke was accompanied by Lieutenant Colonel Gore, the 6th Earl of Arran, and a distinguished and highly decorated soldier, Dr McNaughton Jones, Professor at Queen's University in Ireland and surgeon to the Cork Ophthalmic and Aural Hospital, the aforementioned Mr Justin McCarthy, Mr Robert Percy Ffrench, a high-ranking diplomat and a personal friend of Thaddeus, and George Faudel-Phillips, the son of a former Lord Mayor of London, who ultimately became Lord Mayor of London himself.[26] That such an apparently inconsequential event should have been recorded at such length says much of the social standing of both visitors and host.

In some cases, there was an interesting juxtaposition of the work of these young artists. One example was the hanging of an orientalist work, *Doorway of the Mohammedan Almshouse, Cairo* [no. 33] by Aloysius O'Kelly near Thaddeus's painting of the *Old Prison Annecy* [no. 32], a curiously and idiosyncratically coloured picture. Here, beside the more recognisably colourist O'Kelly, Thaddeus was able to present himself as perhaps more expansive than some might have expected. Not far away hung a painting entitled *Meditation* [no. 26], by Richard Thomas Moynan. Moynan's work was regularly singled out for praise by members of the Irish press, who admired his draughtsmanship and the atmospheric qualities that distinguished his work. His pictures often had a hazy, greyish tone, reminiscent of Bastien-Lepage and his followers, which was still so popular among critics and public alike at this time.

Appropriately, many artists exhibiting in the art section included works of Irish subjects. There was a predictably large selection of landscapes, but also a substantial number of genre scenes. Of the latter, scenes of Irish peasant life predominated, some purely descriptive, such as Hablot Browne's *Interior of an Irish Cabin* [no. 315] and *A Load of Turf, Connemara* [no. 42] by Aloysius O'Kelly, others with a pronounced narrative. The most challenging among the latter for a bourgeois, politicised audience were those pictures which referred directly to the 'Irish situation'. These included *Bad News in Troubled Times* [no. 97] by Margaret Allen, *The Village Politicians – A Scene from Real Life in Ireland* [no. 115] by Louisa d'Arcy, and *Notice to Quit* [no. 198] and *Bankrupt* [no. 98] by James Brenan.

None of these was what one could describe as subversive or revolutionary in concept, but they provided some commentary at least on a world with which the majority of their audience would have had limited knowledge and even less experience, and which was not represented elsewhere in the exhibition. Brenan's pictures, which echo themes he chose on numerous occasions, reflected the artist's personal sensibilities and heartfelt concern for the plight of the rural poor. Brenan, in fact, would have been very much in touch with the philosophy expounded by many of

those involved in the exhibition with regard to the strengthening of the rural economy. Having taken over as headmaster of the Metropolitan School in Dublin, after serving as head of the Cork School of Art for over twenty years, he sought to extend its influence into the community, and promoted lace-making and weaving as cottage industries. His work in this area had begun some years earlier when he helped to establish lace-making classes in Co Cork.[27]

AN UNFORGIVING PRESS

Despite its association with so many members of British and Irish high society, the Irish Exhibition management came under constant criticism from the press for its adjudged ineptitude. Progress ran constantly behind schedule, and even as the lord mayors of London and Dublin led the opening ceremony, building work continued in the background, as it was to do for some more weeks. Even the *Irish Times*, which never wavered in its support of the exhibition, had to concede that all was not proceeding according to plan. However, it managed to do so in as positive a manner as could be expected. Speaking of the 'auspicious inauguration', it stated that the great hall, which was the scene of the opening ceremony, was very fine in appearance, and that the 'work of decoration so late of being taken in hand had been gone about with an energy and skill which reflect the greatest credit on the contractor'.[28]

Delays were, admittedly, a standard feature of exhibitions of this kind, and time invariably worked against the more extravagant projects. Some members of the press, however, were less forgiving than might have been the case in other circumstances. Whether the logistical and administrative problems that plagued the event were oversights or symptoms of either inexperience or plain ineptitude on the part of the planners was largely a question of interpretation, but the exhibition's critics were unconcerned with such distinctions. 'Very Irish', wrote Florence Fenwick-Miller of the *Illustrated London News*, 'is much of the management of the Irish Exhibition. The grounds are, up to this moment, in a state of squalid looking dirt and disorder, the grand stand is yet in a process of building, and the special attractions – feats of horsemanship and the like can hardly be presentable till the time comes for the whole affair to end.'[29] This vitriolic and essentially bigoted response, published almost two months after the opening of the event, evidently was not the kind of publicity that the executive committee had aspired to at the outset of the project.

In practice, the organisers were actually quite innovative in their handling of the delays, and managed to incorporate some of the construction work into the displays. This was particularly effective in the case of the Donegal Peasants' Village,

where visitors could watch roofs being thatched. They were thus afforded the opportunity of appreciating quite how dark the working conditions endured by some people were, as all they had to do was compare the light entering those houses with roofs and those without.

It seems that the art section suffered the same fate, although here the problems may have been rooted in procrastination as much as in poor organisation. Those responsible had simply not allowed themselves enough time to assemble a satisfactory collection. To compound this, the hanging of the collection, which had begun on the 7th of June, was not completed until the beginning of July, and the catalogue took even longer to become available.[30]

The correspondent for the *Irish Times*, with palpable regret, writes that the exhibition

> was far too hurriedly got up to admit of such a display as was witnessed on great occasions in Dublin. Justly to represent our artistic faculties, such bodies as the National Gallery, the Royal Dublin Society and the Royal Hibernian Academy should have been requisitioned for loans upon long notice, and Irish noblemen and gentlemen, in whose residences some of the rarest treasures of native art lie perdu, should have been approached.[31]

While it would be simplistic to suggest that some artists were encouraged to 'bring up' the numbers, it does seem reasonable that they were invited to submit as many pictures as was practicable at that time. It is noticeable how many works by the living artists on show were borrowed directly from the artists, and how few private collectors, relative to other major exhibitions, lent works. Richard Thomas Moynan, for instance, owned six of the seven paintings that he exhibited; Mildred Anne Butler owned all of her paintings on show, as did Margaret Allen. All eleven of the paintings by Aloysius O'Kelly in the galleries belonged to the artist.

SUCCESS AND SIGNIFICANCE

Despite the relative chaos that accompanied the setting up of the galleries, and the unorthodox nature of the collection itself, it was quite a success. Writers spoke of paintings being sold before they had even been put on display. It was hoped that the galleries would prove a focal point of the exhibition as a whole, which, contrary to expectation, attracted large crowds in its opening few days, and continued to do so throughout its duration.[32]

The success of the exhibition is difficult to gauge. Coverage in the Irish press was regular and generally positive, but in Britain it enjoyed, at best, a muted recep-

tion, at least among the papers with large circulation.[33] Attendance appears to have been more than reasonable, particularly in the early weeks, but whether or not it had a direct effect on the public's image of Ireland is another matter. It was certainly not a financial success. Realistically, such an exhibition, however ambitious, was never going to be able to compete for attention with larger, ongoing issues regarding Irish unrest and related governmental policy. However, at a more modest level, but very importantly, it served to maintain the momentum that had built up within the Irish arts and crafts movement, and which would continue well into the next century (Plate 1).

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ENDNOTES

1 London had hosted major international exhibitions on a regular basis since the mid-century. Most recently, the Colonial and Indian Exhibition had run for six months in 1886. The Glasgow International Exhibition was opened by the Prince of Wales on Wednesday, 9 May 1888, and ran almost to the end of October.

2 Olympia stood 100 feet high and had an area of 232,200 square feet. There was an entrance fee for some attractions.

3 Lord Beresford was also the second son of the 4th Marquess of Waterford.

4 This list represents almost the full complement of members on the committee, but within that, the prime movers appear to have been the Earl of Leitrim, Lord Arthur Hill, Justin McCarthy, Ernest Hart and Herbert Gladstone.

5 Hart was also a collector of and a writer on art, particularly Japanese. The trustees of the exhibition were no less distinguished and included the bankers Alfred de Rothschild and Henry F. Slattery.

6 Irish Exhibition in London 1888 – Catalogue of Works of Art.

7 In practice, the exhibition made a significant loss, and members of the executive committee, including the impoverished Justin McCarthy, were held accountable.

8 *ibid*.

9 *ibid*.

10 This was a special commission appointed to investigate various charges made in *The Times* newspaper against Charles Stewart Parnell and others.

11 The Plan of Campaign was an attempt by the National League to pursue the Land War through agitation. Parnell had actually distanced himself from it in May of 1888, but related incidents remained a regular feature in newspapers.

12 *Complete Official Catalogue of the Exhibition of Irish Arts and Manufactures* (Rotunda, Dublin 1882).

[13] *ibid*.

[14] Mr John C. Rooney was Secretary of the Irish Exhibition Company in 1882, and Honorary Secretary of the Dublin Committee of the Irish Exhibition in London.

[15] Paul Greenhalgh, *The Exhibitions Universelles, Great Exhibitions and World's Fairs, 1851-1939* (Manchester 1988) 107.

[16] Most of the music was provided by bands of various Irish regiments. Invited musicians also played traditional Irish music. Theatrical productions included dramas with generic titles such as *Paddy's Wedding*. The army re-enacted famous battles as well as providing formal displays.

[17] Jeanne Sheehy, *The Rediscovery of Ireland's Past: the Celtic Revival 1830-1930* (London, 1980) 103. Lady Aberdeen founded the Irish Industries Association in 1886. See also Nicola Gordon Bowe, 'The Irish Arts and Crafts Movement (1886-1925)', *Irish Arts Review Yearbook 1990-91*, and for a more personal account of Lady Aberdeen's involvement in the movement, We Twa, *Reminiscences of Lord and Lady Aberdeen* (London 1925).

[18] Blarney Castle also featured in the Irish Industrial village designed by L.A. MacDonnell for Lady Aberdeen at the 1893 World Columbian Exposition in Chicago.

[19] *Freeman's Journal*, 29 May 1888.

[20] *Cork Examiner*, 14 July 1888.

[21] *Freeman's Journal*, 2 July 1888.

[22] Irish Exhibition in London, 1888 – Official Daily Programme, 10 October.

[23] *Irish Times*, 4 July 1888.

[24] John Lavery was otherwise engaged at the more prestigious International Exhibition in Glasgow. He and other members of the Glasgow School of painters who exhibited there were lionised by the Scottish press who were caught in a frenzy of national and civic pride. Ultimately, as Kenneth McConkey suggests, Lavery became 'a sort of artist in residence at the exhibition, painting all aspects of its daily life.' *Sir John Lavery* (Edinburgh 1993) 54.

[25] Bay XIII in the Southern Gallery was occupied by views of Ireland by Miss Jane Inglis.

[26] Faudel-Phillips' association with Ireland was made formal in 1894 when he was appointed Governor of the Irish Society, responsible for the managing the Irish Estates of the Corporation of the City of London.

[27] See *Illustrated Summary Catalogue of the Crawford Municipal Art Gallery* (Cork 1992).

[28] *Irish Times*, 5 June 1888.

[29] *Illustrated London News*, 28 July 1888, 106. With a touch more humour, she proceeds to suggest that the Fancy Fair was 'quite properly prepared, no doubt because a committee of ladies managed it!'

[30] *Freeman's Journal*, 2 July 1888.

[31] *Irish Times*, 4 July 1888.

[32] In the first week, roughly 20,000 visitors per day passed through the gates.

[33] Coverage in the British press was rather infrequent and tended to focus on the social events – who was involved and who attended specific events – rather than on the content of the exhibition proper. *The Times* showed most interest when a furore developed following the refusal of the Barrack Street Band from Cork to play 'God Save the Queen' at the end of their performance.

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