whom probably O'Connell frequently saw, and perhaps heard what Lecky, the historian, describes as the "outburst of unparalleled enthusiasm of the populace," as through the parted ranks of 60,000 Ulster volunteers, drawn up in front of the old Parliament House of Ireland, Grattan passed to move the emancipation of his country. It is said that one day, when O'Connell was very young, the subject of conversation at his father's table was Ireland's leading men, and Grattan's eloquence. A lady present, observing young Dan's unusual meditation asked him the cause, and the young fellow cogitating said, "I'll make a stir in the world yet!" In most cases this would be regarded as the idle boast of a child, but in his case, it was prophetic. Just before O'Connell left France, he had also heard the "Equality and Sovereign rights of the people" declared in the Revolution, and he had arrived at manhood when the Irish Rebellion of '98 had risen, was suppressed, and the heroic lives of such men as Lord Edward Fitzgerald, the two Sheares, and Wolfe Tone, sacrificed in their country's cause. It will be interesting to remark that one of the chief articles of Grattan's Declaration of Independence, was that expressive of rejoicing at the relaxation of the disabilities affecting Catholics, viz: "As Irishmen, as Christians and as Protestants," they "rejoiced in the relaxation of the penal laws against their Catholic fellow-subjects." One cannot pass from the subject of the Penal Code without briefly illustrating one or two of the humorous, though sad incidents of apostacy under its operation. O'Connell himself used to tell many anecdotes of the strong temptation to apostatise frequently yielded to. One he relates of a Mr Meyer, of the County of Roscommon, who,being threatened with a confiscation of his lands, instantly galloped off to the Protestant Archbishop of Dublin, with the view of turning Protestant. The Archbishop, finding Meyer naturally not well versed in the differences in religions, handed him over to an old hunting companion of Meyer, the Rector of Castlerea, then in Dublin. The pious convert and the Rector dined together every day until the Sunday of Meyer's public recantation. The jovial Rector assured his Grace that Meyer was well up in his theology. Accordingly, the solemn abjuration of Popery was made, and to celebrate the happy event, his Grace invited Meyer and several friends to dinner. The cloth removed, his Grace thus addressed the convert:—"Mr Meyer you have this day renounced the errors of Popery—for this you should thank God with all your heart. I learn with great pleasure from the worthy Rector of Castlerea, that you have acquired an excellent knowledge in a very short time of the basis of the Protestant religion. Will you kindly state, for the edification of the company, the *grounds* upon which you have cast aside Popery, and embraced the Church of England?" "Faith," said Meyer, "I can easily do that, your Grace. The *grounds* of my conversion to the Protestant religion are 2,500 acres of the best *grounds* in the County of Roscommon." Another incident is related of a parishioner of Corofin, like many of other parts of Ireland in those times, who was tempted by sore need to renounce his faith, and for a weekly stipend agreed to go regularly to the Protestant church and act like a reformed sinner. On the first Sunday after his agreement, he was sorrowfully going to the new place of worship, but having to pass the old chapel on his way, his conscience smote him, and falling on his knees before the humble little edifice of prayer, he cried: "I am going from ye, alanna; good-bye, good-bye—till the praties grow." Upon this fervid but temporary farewell has been founded a beautiful and pathetic poem, from which I cannot resist quoting a couple of stanzas—

Asthore, my heart is breaking' as I pass your holy door,
An' see the open portal all invitin' to go in,
An' hear the childher's voices as in sacred song they soar,
The priest's subdued "Oremus" and the people's loud "Amin"!

But, oh! I dare not enter, for a compact I have made—
Like Lucifer at Heaven's gate, no farther can I go!
Don't frown on me, my darlin', nor a broken heart upbraid;
Good-bye, asthore alanna—till the praties grow!

I'm passin' by your angels, an' I'm passin' by your saints,
But, oh! the weary trouble, an' the hard and bitter year!
An' you know, when the flesh is weak the proudest spirit faints—
For while you point to Heaven we are sinnin' on down here.

But sure as at your altar, I exchanged the marriage vow
As sure as from your sanctity all streams of mercy flow,
As sure, achor alanna, though I sadly lave you now,
I'm back within your bosom whin the praties grow.

O'Connell's childhood and youth were surrounded, then, with scenes and events of extraordinary national persecution, whilst at the same time this was a period of national sacrifices, and of great political leaders and patriots of the highest order and varied eloquence, all combining to impress his youthful heart with the wrongs of his country, and create the resolve to consecrate all his talents and energy to their redress. Any concessions to Ireland have been prompted by fear more than by a just appreciation of right, or as O'Connell used to say, "England's adversity is Ireland's opportunity." In 1792 and 1793, therefore, owing to a dread of the progress of the French Revolution, some slight concessions were made to Catholics, one at least of which enabled O'Connell to enter the arena of the Bar, where he afterwards won some of his most glorious laurels. We find him in London (not Dublin) in 1794 keeping his terms as a law student, during which time his principal amusement was boating on the Thames. Whilst in London he was a frequent visitor at the House of Commons, and absorbed the delightful speech of Fox and majestic declamation of the younger Pitt. In 1797 he attended also one or two of the meetings of what were called the "Reformers" of that period, a set of young lawyers, among them the two Sheares. O'Connell was only an on-looker, not yet being admitted to the Bar. He says: "As I saw how matters stood I soon learned to have no secrets in politics. Other leaders made their workings secret and only intended to bring out results; they were therefore perpetually in peril of treachery. You saw men, on whose fidelity you would have staked your existence, playing false when tempted by the magnitude of the bribe on the one hand and terrified on the other by the danger of hanging." This proclaims the text of O'Connell's whole subsequent career, and which, though subjecting him to bitter adverse criticism, he maintained to the end. He was called to the Bar in the melancholy spring of 1798, and early one morning in 1799 set out on horseback from his father's house to go on his first circuit. He had a powerful constitution, as may be imagined from the fact that he rode sixty miles the first day, and at the end of it, being invited to a ball, "sat up all night dancing" (which sounds like an Irish bull) and rode on next morning to the Limerick Assizes. At Tralee Assizes he got his first brief, and undertook, though acting as a junior, the cross-examination of an important witness. O'Connell says: "I remember this witness stated he had his share of a pint of whisky, whereupon I asked him whether his share wasn't all except the pewter. He confessed it was, and the oddity of my mode of putting the question was very successful and created a general laugh." Jerry Keller, an eminently able but eccentric barrister who was present encouraged O'Connell by saying, "You'll do, young gentleman, you'll do." Not long after he was complimented also, but in a rather equivocal manner, by a man whose acquittal he had secured. "I have no way here to show you my gratitude, your honour, but I wish to God I saw you knocked down in my own parish, and maybe I'd bring a faction to rescue you. Whoop! long life to your honour." In the same circuit O'Connell and another barrister, Harry Grady as he was called, had to travel through the Kilworth mountains, then infested with robbers, and regarded always as such a "delicate bit" of the journey that the two legal gentlemen desired to carry their pistols loaded, but had run short of powder and ball. The inn at which they were staying was crowded with the judges and suite, and their yeomanry escort, so that O'Connell and his friend had to dine in the taproom, where there were a corporal of dragoons and some privates drinking. Grady, addressing the corporal, said: "Soldier, will you sell me some powder and ball?" "I don't sell either," said the corporal. "Well, will you have the goodness to buy me some?" because, being just after '98, it was difficult to procure ammunition. "Go yourself; I am no one's messenger but the King's," was the reply. O'Connell took in the situation. Grady had offended the corporal's rank and dignity by calling him "Soldier," and whispered the blunder to Grady, who, after an interval, diplomatically accosted the military magnate with "Sergeant, I am very glad you and your men have not to escort the judges this wet day. It's very well for these yeomanry fellows." The corporal became civil immediately he heard the newly acquired rank, and Grady adroitly followed up with the renewed request for the powder and ball, which were graciously supplied. In this same journey, during which there was a fierce storm and torrents of rain, O'Connell's cousin, Captain Hennessy, lost his life by remaining in wet clothes, and O'Connell in relating the sad occurrence gives, though gratuitous, good sound sanitary advice. "Never remain an instant in wet clothes after ceasing to be in motion. On reaching your house throw them off, and get between the blankets at once. Thus you become warm all over in an instant. To rinse the mouth once or twice with spirits and water is useful." I suppose the expression "rinse" is a euphemistic term for taking a glass of whisky and water, to be repeated until the necessary glow through the system is established. O'Connell's fees for the first year of his practice amounted to £58, the second year to £150, the third £200, the fourth £300, and in the last year of his practice his fees amounted to £9,000. As no period was the wit of the Irish Bar so famous as at the close of the eighteenth century, and Curran was the most brilliant of them all. O'Connell admitted this, though with perhaps pardonable vanity he himself said, "As for myself, to the last hours of my practice I kept the Court alternately in tears and roars of laughter." He speaks also of Plunket's great wit, and gives an instance, where in arguing a commercial case before the Irish Chancellor, Lord Redesdale, Plunket had frequently applied the term "kites" to what we call bogus P.N's. At last the Chancellor said, "I don't quite understand your meaning, Mr Plunket. In England 'kites' are paper playthings used by boys. In Ireland they seem to relate to monetary transactions." "There is another difference, my Lord," said Plunket. "In England the wind raises the 'kites,' but in Ireland the 'kites' raise the wind." I have said Curran was admittedly the most brilliant wit of his time at the Irish Bar, and though it would be too