The number of electors in the last of these returns gives an average of one elector to every 106 individuals, or of one to every eighteen heads of families of six individuals each.

The county is in the home circuit. The assizes are held at Mullingar. General sessions of the peace are held alter­nately in that town and in Moate. The local government consists of a lieutenant, fifteen deputy-lieutenants, sixty- nine unpaid magistrates, and a stipendiary, under whom there is a constabulary force, consisting of a county inspec­tor, six sub-inspectors, seven head constables, and 272 con­stables and sub-constables. The county infirmary is in Mullingar, a fever hospital at Castlepollard, and fifteen dispensaries in various places. Lunatics are sent to the district asylum at Maryborough, where forty patients from the county are received. Mullingar and Athlone have been fixed on as sites for the workhouses of poor-law unions.

All kinds of grain thrive well in this productive soil. The English system of tillage is adopted by all except the poorer farmers and cottagers. Wheat forms a part of every succession of crops, and green crops are very fre­quent. Limestone gravel, which is to be had in abun­dance in most parts, is the usual manure. The fences are bad, except in the demesnes of the gentry. The low lands and valleys produce abundance of rich grass ; from which cause, and as the management of cattle has been found more profitable and less laborious than tillage, most of the land in the county is assigned to the former department of rural economy. Great attention is paid to the breeds of cattle, which, both great and small, are purchased chiefly at the fairs of Ballinasloe. The long-homed cows are pre­ferred, as being large, and good milkers. The breed of horses is excellent. Many are brought young from Con­naught, and reared here till fit for the market. Dairies are frequent, and butter is made in large quantities. The method of haymaking is bad, the hay being allowed to stand in small stacks in the field till late in the season, in conse­quence of which it is much injured both by the heat and the rains. Like most other parts of the island, timber was abundant, until destroyed by a lavish and improvident use of it, which made no provision for a fresh supply. The de­ficiency is severely felt ; but here, as elsewhere, great exer­tions are making to remedy it by young plantations, which are now rising in many parts.

The manufactures are not, nor were they ever, of any magnitude ; the making of woollen and linen cloths being almost wholly confined to the domestic demand, and the operations carried on in the farmers’ houses. Fish is abun­dant in the lakes and rivers. Bream, trout, pike, and eels, are taken in the Inny ; salmon in the same river and in the Brosna. The goaske, a fish about the size of the herring, is found in Lough Dereveragh ; a thin-shelled mussel in some of the bogs. The Royal Canal passes through the cen­tral part of the county from east to west ; a branch of the Grand Canal proceeds from near Philipstown in King’s county to Kilbeggan. There are three banking establishments, one a branch of the Provincial, the other two of the Na­tional Bank of Ireland. There are nine loan societies, in which the total amount of the loans in the hands of borrow­ers at the close of 1839 was L.10,675, and the total num­ber of borrowers during the year 9071. Under the direc­tion of the late Commissioners for Railroads in Ireland, a survey has been made of a line from Dublin, to enter the county near Killucan, and to proceed to Mullingar, whence it is to diverge in two branches, the one north-west through Longford to Sligo, the other westward through Athlone to Galway ; but no steps have yet been taken to carry the plan into execution.

A considerable number of the landed proprietors reside on their own property ; hence the county contains many elegant mansions and villas, surrounded by well-planted demesnes, which add very much to the natural beauties of the landscape. In the demesne of Mount d’Alton is an obelisk fifty feet high, erected in honour of the empress Maria Theresa, the Emperor Joseph, and King George III., by a late member of the D’Alton family, a retired of­ficer in the Austrian service. An obelisk of similar dimen­sions stands on the estate of Lowville, near Kilkenny-west. The character of the middling and lower classes is superior to that of those in the adjoining county of Meath. The peasantry are described as being lively, intelligent, and quick-witted ; hasty in their tempers, and prone to litiga­tion ; unwilling to deviate from the habits and customs of their forefathers ; lax in their ideas of morality towards their superiors, but rigidly observant of the engagements voluntarily entered into with one another, and of the reli­gious observances imposed on them by their clergy. They are also much addicted to superstitious practices. The horses are bathed in one of the lakes on the second Sunday in August, called Garlic Sunday, from a belief that they will thus be secured from injury during the rest of the year. Fish taken out of the stream that sinks into the ground near Fore will not be eaten, in consequence of the religious respect with which the water of it is honoured. A disinclination to improvement in their farms, and to do­mestic neatness, is also observable. The cottages are ill constructed and badly furnished, the roofs being made of boughs of trees with the leaves on, covered with sods of turf or peat called scraws, and thatched with straw. Many are without chimneys, the place of which is supplied by a hole in the roof. The furniture consists of a deal table, a few stools, an iron pot, and a dresser, with a few plates and dairy utensils. Yet their clothing is comfortable, usually of home-made gray or drab frieze. The use of linen has of late been almost universally superseded by cotton. The favourite garment of the men is a large loose coat, wrapped up in which they go to the fairs and markets even during the heat of summer, followed by their wives, who transact most of the business there. The women spin the wool and flax for their clothing, perform the household work, and take a large share in the labours of the field. When mar­ried, they still retain their maiden names. English and Irish are spoken, but the use of the latter is more general in their intercourse with one another.

Many remains of antiquity still exist. The parish of Rathconrath takes its name from a rath or moat of large dimensions and peculiar construction ; besides which, nine of smaller size have been discovered within its boundaries. A still more remarkable pile of the same kind exists at Bal- lymore. It had originally been a Danish fort, and its posi­tion was so well chosen for military purposes, that it was strongly fortified by the Irish in the wars of 1641 and 1688 ; and after its capture by the English in the latter period, it was made the head-quarters of General Ginckell when pre­paring to besiege Athlone. A third, called the Fort of Turgesius, as being the reputed place of residence of that monarch during his reign in Ireland, is to be seen near Lough Lene. Those of inferior note are too numerous to be particularized. The ruins of ancient castles are also visi­ble in many places. The origin of several of them can be traced back to Hugh de Lacy, the first lord palatine of the county. His chief place of residence was at Kilbixy, where he had a large and well-fortified castle, and where also stood a town of such importance as to be governed by a mayor or sovereign, and burgesses, with their usual append­ages of inferior officers. The site of the former is now merely matter of conjecture ; and the privileges, and conse­quently the importance, of the latter have been transferred to Mullingar. Another of this nobleman’s castles was at Ardnurcher, better known by the name of Horseleap, from the romantic tradition of an extraordinary bound made by a horse across a cleft between two steep hills, in effecting