DISCOVERING DUBLIN

Dublin was a new and complex sensation. Uncle Charles had grown so witless (1) that he could no longer be sent out on errands and the disorder in settling in the new house left Stephen freer than he had been in Blackrock. In the beginning he contented himself with circling timidly round the neighbouring square, or, at most, going half way down one of the side streets but when he had made a map of the city in his mind he followed boldly one of its central lines until he reached the custom-house. He passed unchallenged among the docks and along the quays wondering at the multitude of corks that lay bobbing on the surface of the water in a thick yellow scum, at the crowds of quay porters and the rumbling carts and the ill-dressed bearded policeman. The vastness and the strangeness of the life sugges-ted to him by the bales of merchandise stocked along the walls or swung aloft out of the holds of steamers wakened again in him the unrest which had set him wandering in the evening from garden to garden in search of Mercedes. And amid this new bustling life he might have fancied himself in another Marseille but that he missed the bright sky. A vague dissatisfaction grew up within him as he looked on the quays and on the river and on the lowering (2) skies and yet he continued to wander up and down day after day as if he really sought someone that eluded him .

James JOYCE

(1).- witless : *faible d'esprit*
(2).- to lower : *se couvrir*