

Jaunt Through Donegal

On an Irish jaunting-car through Donegal and Connemara

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WE leave Derry with regret, and take the train for Fahan. This brings us to the shore of Lough Swilly, where we embark on a ferry-boat and cross the lough to Rathmullen. While crossing I saw Buncrana, a short distance down the lough. This is a pretty village containing the castle of the O'Dochertys, now in ruins, and near it the castle erected by Sir John Vaughan at a later period. Half a century ago the latter became dilapidated, but it was restored and has ever since been rented "for the season" as an investment by the owner. One of my pleasantest recollections is the week's-end visit I made many years ago to its then tenant. It had fine, terraced gardens, its outer walls were skirted by a trout and salmon river, and there was a vast court-yard behind it with cell-stalls for the cavalry horses, and even a gallows on which to hang captured invaders—and many of them were hanged on this same gallows. It was not a pleasant outlook from one's bedchamber window, but then the victims had been a long time dead, and no trouble came from their ghosts.

We soon arrived at Rathmullen, a historic spot where many things happened in the days of yore. It occupies a sheltered position at the foot of a range of hills that intervene between Lough Swilly and Mulroy Bay, of which the highest point is Crochanaffrin, one thousand one hundred and thirty-seven feet. It is worth while to make an excursion either up this hill or Croaghan, one thousand and ten feet, which is nearer ; for the extraordinary view over the inlets and indentations of this singular coast will put the traveller more in mind of Norwegian fiords than British scenery. Close to it are the ivy-clad ruins of a priory of Carmelite friars, consisting of two distinct buildings erected at an interval of nearly two centuries. The eastern portion, of which the tower and chancel remain, was constructed by the McSweenys in the fifteenth century. It exhibits considerable traces of pointed Gothic architecture. Over the eastern window there still remains a figure of St. Patrick. The architecture of the remainder of the building is of the Elizabethan age, a great part of it having been rebuilt by Bishop Knox, of the diocese of Raphoe, in 1618, on obtaining possession of the manor of Rathmullen from Turlogh Oge McSweeney. The *Annals of the Four Masters* (to which we will refer later), states that in 1595 it was plundered by George Bingham, son of the Governor of Connaught. McSweeney's castle is supposed to have stood west of the priory, but it was destroyed in 1516. It was from here that the young Hugh O'Donnell was carried off in 1587, and kept a prisoner in Dublin until he made his romantic escape in 1591. In 1607, the Earls of Tyrone and Tyrconnell took their "flight" from Rathmullen in a small vessel. "The entire number on board was ninety-nine, having little sea-store, and being otherwise miserably accommodated." After a hazardous voyage of three weeks, they landed at the mouth of the Seine.

There is a monument in the churchyard to the memory of the Hon. William H. Pakenham, captain of the British man-of-war *Saldanha*, wrecked on Swilly Rock in 1811. Every soul on board was lost ; the only living thing that reached the land was the captain's gray parrot, which the wind carried in safety to the rocky shore.

Here, too, Wolfe Tone was taken prisoner on board the French frigate *Hoche*, in 1798. Tone was a talented young Irishman, and pleaded the Irish cause so eloquently in Paris that a fleet of forty-three ships, with fifteen thousand men, was sent to Ireland in 1796, Hoche commanding. A tremendous storm scattered the fleet on the Irish coast, and the ships returned to France in broken order. Nothing daunted, Tone again persuaded the French to give him a trial with a new fleet. They gave it, but this expedition was even more unfortunate than the first one, and the end of Tone's tragic career dated from his arrest on the shores of Lough Swilly.

A few miles above, Lough Swilly divides into two forks, one running up to Letterkenny and the other to Ramelton, a little town located at the point where the river Lennon meets the tidal salt water. This interesting place is celebrated for the fine views it affords and for its salmon and trout fishing. I was exceedingly anxious to visit it, but time would not permit the shortest deviation from our rigid itinerary, as we had purchased a state-room on the *Etruria*, sailing from Queenstown on July 28th.

It was at Rathmullen that we hired our first jaunting-car ; and it might here be said that of all the vehicles ever invented the modern Irish jaunting-car holds first place for the use of the traveller ; it is unique and there is nothing that can take its place for an easy and comfortable lounging ride, when balanced by two passengers and a driver. It is now improved with a circular back and rubber tires, while the very latest has a driver's seat behind, like a hansom cab. We can speak truthfully of the jaunting-car, after having tested its qualities for three hundred and fifty miles on this trip ; but would add that care is requisite in arranging for and selecting a car, as many of them are old and worn out.

Port Salon To Dunfanaghy

LEAVING Rathmullen, John, our driver, took us a short cut over the Glenalla Mountains to Port Salon, through Mr. Hart's demesne of fine timber. As we drove along, our interest was excited by the masses of furze to be seen on all sides. This shrub grows about five feet high and is thickly covered with sharp, dark-green prickles and innumerable flowers of the brightest yellow known to botanists. Its popular name is "whin," and it is extensively used as food for their horses by the farmers, who pound the prickles into pulp in a stone trough, and when so prepared the horses eat them with great relish. "Whins" grow all over the north of Ireland in wild profusion, and the startling blaze of their bright yellow bloom may be seen for miles ; to those not accustomed to their beauty they are a most interesting novelty.

After driving about twelve miles through this kind of country, we arrived at Colonel Barton's handsome hotel on the bluffs of Lough Swilly, at the point where it opens into the Atlantic. I can hardly describe the beauty of this spot—its hard, yellow strand, its savage mountains covered with blooming heather, its sapphire sea in strong contrast to the deep, rich green pines. The Atlantic was booming into the numerous caves that line both sides of the lough, and so seductive was the influence of this sound that at our first view we lay down, tired and happy, in the deep heather, and fell asleep for an hour, undisturbed by fly, mosquito, or gnat. A British iron-clad was anchored a little above, which gave a note of distinction to the charming scene ; we were told it was the celebrated *Camperdown*, that did the ramming in the Mediterranean disaster.

We stayed overnight, and made an excursion next morning to the “Seven Arches.” This is a short and interesting trip, about a mile and a half north of the hotel. Here is a series of fine caverns scooped out of the limestone rock by the action of the waves, which can be easily reached by land, but the approach by water is grander and more imposing. From the strand where the boat deposits the visitor, a cave with a narrow entrance runs one hundred and thirty feet inland, and beyond this are the “Seven Arches,” one of which, forming a grand entrance from the sea, one hundred yards long, divides into two. Beyond the left-hand cave is another, one hundred and twenty feet long. The right-hand cave is again divided into four beautiful caverns, through any one of which a passage may be made to the boulder strand, whence another arch leads towards the north.

We left Colonel Barton’s and drove along the coast for a few miles to Doaghbeg, where we stopped to admire a magnificent sea-arch called “Brown George” the most remarkable natural feature, perhaps, on the whole coast of Lough Swilly. Doaghbeg is a very primitive, native village and is the capital of the district called Fanet (sometimes Fanad). This was the birthplace of the Honorable P. C. Boyle, who has made his mark in Pennsylvania. Further driving brought us to Fanet Head, one of the most northerly points in Ireland, on which is erected a large light-house, one hundred and twenty-seven feet above high-water. This has a group of occulting lights showing white to seaward and red towards land. After inspecting the lighthouse, we took our last look at Lough Swilly, that lake of shadows with its marvellous scenic splendor, almost unrivalled also as a safe and deep harbor. I have seen the British fleet manœvered in its confines, and it could easily anchor every man-of-war in commission to-day, giving them all enough cable to swing clear of one another on the tide.

We coasted the Atlantic for a few miles, and then turned into the hills that surround Mulroy Bay, which soon came into sight. When we reached the shore a council of war was held, and it was decided to save some twenty miles of driving up round the head of the bay, by crossing, if possible, at the lower end ; so a broad, heavy, but unseaworthy boat was chartered, and we took Bob, the horse, out of the car and rolled the latter into the stern of our marine transport. It was no easy task to get Bob to face the water ; however, after beating about the bush for half an hour, he suddenly grew tractable, and we pushed him into the boat by main strength. The passage was ludicrous in the extreme ; at every high wave Bob would lash out his heels and prance. The captain of the boat (who, by the way, was an Irish-woman) would berate John for owning a horse “ whose timper was so bad that he might plouge us all into etarnity without a minit’s notice !” John kept whispering in a loud voice into his horse’s ear promises of oats, turnips, and a bran-mash by way of dessert, if he would only behave himself. The tide was running strong, and when we were swept past our landing we each became captain in turn without appointment, and a variety of language was indulged in that would have made the Tower of Babel seem like a Quaker meeting. The farce was suddenly ended by Bob’s breaking loose from his owner and jumping ashore like a chamois. We then ran the boat aground, took out the car, and, after capturing Bob with the promised oats, were soon on our way again.

In a short time after again starting, we ascended a hill and could clearly see the spot where Lord Leitrim was assassinated in April, 1878. It lay up the bay in a clump of woods, close to the water. Lord Leitrim had been very harsh with his tenants and had evicted large numbers of them from their farms ; they therefore determined to “ remove” him, and a select band of them lay in ambush along the road and succeeded in killing his lordship, his driver, and his secretary while they were driving to Derry. There were many trials in court, but those arrested could never be convicted. As a boy I have been more than once startled by the appearance of

a pair of cars with eight men on them, each having a couple of double-barreled shotguns. Lord Leitrim was one of them ; the others were his guards, going to Milford to collect the rents. His temper was so violent that the government removed him from the office of magistrate. His son, the late Earl, was a very different kind of man ; he did everything within his power to advance his tenants' interests. After his death, a few years ago, the tenantry erected a fine monument to his memory in Carrigart Square. We later read the inscription upon it, which was, " He loved his people."

After a pleasant drive we reached Carrigart and had a good lunch there ; we tried the Carrigart " perfectos" afterwards, and their memory clings to us still! We then started for the Rosapenna Hotel, which was not far distant—less than two miles. This hotel was built of wood, after the Scandinavian fashion, by the trustees of the late Earl of Leitrim, and opened in 1893. It was designed in Stockholm, whence the timber was shipped to Mulroy. It stands at the base of Ganiamore Mountain, on the narrow neck of the Rossgull peninsula, between Mulroy Bay and Sheephaven. Fine golf links have been laid out with eighteen holes, the circuit being three miles and a half. For visitors there is excellent fishing in the adjacent waters, by permission of the Countess of Leitrim, and good bathing on the strands of Sheephaven, which afford a smooth promenade of six miles. From the top of Ganiamore a good view is obtained of the coast from Horn Head round to Inishowen peninsula, and from its hills a fine sweep inland to Errigal Mountain. At Downing's Bay there is one of the finest views in Donegal, looking up and down Sheephaven, the woods of Ards and the tower of Doe Castle backed up in the distance by the ponderous mass of Muckish. Within a short distance of the hotel are three caves which can be entered, one from the brow of the hill and the others at low water. Near it also is Mulroy House, the residence of the Countess of Leitrim.

From Rosapenna we drove to Doe Castle, built on the shores of Sheephaven. This was a stronghold of the McSweenys, which has been, to a certain extent, modernized and rendered habitable by a late owner, who in doing so pulled down some of the walls. It consists of a lofty keep with massive walls, which enclose passages and stone stairs. It is surrounded by a " bawn," or castle-yard, defended by a high wall, with round towers at intervals. The rock on which it stands is not very high, but from its almost insulated position it was difficult to approach. It was garrisoned by Captain Vaughan for Queen Elizabeth, but was betrayed to the followers of Sir Cahir O'Doherty. It was besieged in 1608, and Davis says : " Being the strongest in Tyrconnell, it endured one hundred blows of the demi-cannon before it surrendered."

A little to the north, but separated by a prolongation of the marsh at the head of Sheephaven, is Ards House, owned by Alexander J. R. Stewart. This demesne is fenced with a cut-stone wall which we skirted for many miles. It is a great show place, with its extensive mansion, fine gardens, and beautiful woods, fronting on the bay where the Lackagh River runs into it. We drew rein on the Lackagh bridge to see Mr. Stewart's men draw a net with eight hundred pounds of salmon in it ; there were about eighty in the haul. William Wray, the old master of Ards in the eighteenth century, had a strange history. He lived here in luxurious state and " dispensed hospitality with true regal splendor." His ambition, indeed, appeared to be to see daily as much eaten as possible ; and to facilitate the arrival of guests, he engineered a road over Salt Mountain. Extravagance, however, at last told its tale, and the old man, broken down, went over to France, where he died, " poor, unfriended, and forgotten."

After crossing the bridge, we took up the road to Creeslough, where Balfour is building a narrow-gauge railroad for the purpose of giving employment to the poor ; and by driving till

quite late we reached Dunfanaghy. "A great day's work," as John put it, while cracking his whip during the last half mile.

Dunfanaghy To Fallcarragh

WE put up at the Stewart Arms, and next morning when we looked over the town we came to the conclusion that Paris had nothing to fear from Dunfanaghy. It hasn't even a Moulin Rouge to boast of, but it's a first-class place to sleep in when you're worn out on the road, as we were.

We engaged a large boat with four men to row us out into the Atlantic to see the famous Horn Head from the sea. The sight has really no equal anywhere. The writer, having seen it many times since boyhood, is more impressed with it on each occasion, and this last time it seemed more entrancing than ever. Horn Head is a range of beetling mountains projecting into the Atlantic, and covers in extent some ten miles. The crags and horns are six hundred and twenty-six feet high, and are of all the colors of the rainbow, from deepest black to red, yellow, gray, purple, and green. The formation is vast galleries or amphitheatres, broken by the nature of the rock into rectangular shelves, on which perch myriads of birds, which are as the sands of the sea for multitude. Some of these birds migrate from Norway, lay one egg, and when the young are able they return home, only to come back again each succeeding summer. There are many varieties of them, in part consisting of guillemots, sheldrakes, cormorants, the shag, the gannet, the stormy petrel, the speckled diver, and the sea-parrot. One variety will fly with greater ease under a boat when pursuing fish than it can in the air, and in the clear water they may be seen at great depths, using their wings in this way. They have seen but few men, and do not rise when approached. Their cawing and cries are fearful and awe-inspiring, owing to the vast numbers of birds that are always in the air or on the rocks. The whole panorama as seen from the boat is something the beholder will remember as long as he lives.

We also saw many seals close to the boat ; these live on salmon. Mr. Stewart used to pay a crown each for their scalps, but since retiring he has withdrawn the bonus and they are now increasing in numbers. The sea is very lumpy at the head, owing to the squalls that blow down over the cliffs ; we encountered half a dozen, and any one of them would have put a sailboat out of commission in a few minutes. They keep a great ground-swell in constant motion, and the boat rose and fell on these waves like a cork in a whirlpool. When rowing home we passed a salmon net at a jutting point, with one end of its rope fastened to the rocks. We asked why had such a place been selected when there were so many others easier to get at, and the man replied : " Salmon are queer fish ; they have a path round the headlands when going to the spawning-grounds, and never leave it. If that net were moved out fifty yards it would never catch a salmon." Two men were perched on a small ledge close to the water, watching the net against seals, as the latter will tear the fish out of the nets with the ferocity of a tiger. These men had six hundred feet of sheer rock above them, and we asked how they ever got down or up again. " Oh, they're used to it ; they've been at it since they were boys, and they can scale the rocks like monkeys."

We again slept at the Stewart Arms, and we felt so much impressed by what we had seen from the sea that we determined to go on the head itself and view the surroundings ; so next morning we started on the car and were soon driving over the long stone bridge with its many arches. On the way over the bridge we passed Horn Head House, the residence of C. F. Stewart, a property that has been in the possession of the present family since a Stewart

raised men to fight for King James against the O'Neills, in the Irish wars. The road winds up between vast sand-hills, the sand being of a remarkable orange color, fading into pink in the distance, while large tufts of rich, deep green bent-grass are dotted over its surface, making such an unusually striking contrast that we stopped the car for full five minutes to admire it. These hills are alive with rabbits ; they scampered off in all directions at our approach and quickly disappeared into their holes.

One mile to the west in a direct line is " McSwine's Gun," concerning which marvellous fables are told. The coast here is very precipitous and perforated with caverns, one of which, running in for some distance, is connected with the surface above by a narrow orifice, which is very difficult to find without a guide, or very specific directions and the close observance of landmarks. Through this, in rough weather, the sea dashes, throwing up a column of water accompanied by a loud explosion or boom, which is said to have been heard as far as Derry.

To the south of the rocks lies the fine stretch of Tramore Strand. A little to the northeast of this spot is a circular castle. Continuing by the shore, Pollaguill Bay is reached, joined by cable with Tory Island. As seen from the land, the coast is rocky, broken, and indented, and in about two miles rises into the precipitous mass of Horn Head, over six hundred feet high. This headland somewhat resembles in shape a double horn, bordered on one side by the inlet of Sheephaven, though on the other the coast trends away to the south. The cliffs present a magnificent spectacle of precipitous descents, shelving masses of rock and yawning caverns lashed by the furious waves of the Atlantic. The view from the summit of the head is one of boundless ocean, broken only on the northwest by the islands of Inishbeg, Inishdooy, Inishbofin, and Tory, and on the northeast by the different headlands of this rugged coast — *i. e.*, Melmore, Rinmore, Fanet, Dunaff, and Malin heads, while on the east is seen in the distance the little island of Inishtrahull.

As we drove down from the head, a drizzling rain began to fall and we were glad to reach the shelter of the hotel and fortify the inner man by a substantial dinner.

At this stage in our tour we were quite undecided as to our route. We did not like to give up a visit to Glen Veigh, Gartan lakes and the " Poisoned Glen," as these are considered the finest things of their kind in Ireland, but finally decided that a *détour* which would cost us two days of driving would be impossible, owing to pressure of time ; so after sleeping another night in Dunfanaghy, we pressed on to Fallcarragh. Inasmuch, however, as I often visited and fished in these glens and lakes, I may be pardoned for attempting to give the reader a short description of their principal features.

Lough Veigh lies to the east of the Derryveigh Mountains, occupying the opening to Glen Veigh. It is a long, narrow sheet of water ; on the north side, and running into it, a rocky, almost perpendicular, wall rises to over twelve hundred feet, covered with Alpine vegetation. Over the top of this wall several large streams fall and break into cascades as they find their way to the lake below. Back of this and framing the whole, rises the majestic Dooish, the highest ridge in the Derryveigh range, standing two thousand one hundred and forty-seven feet above the tide. In old times I have counted a dozen eagles that built their nests on the topmost crags over-hanging the water, their majestic, circling flights giving life and interest to the scene. The south side is a steep hill on which grow in riotous profusion the wild rose, bracken, creeping plants, ferns, lichen, moss, the primrose, the bluebell, the yellow gorse, and hazel ; while in trees, it abounds in the gray birch, mountain-ash, larch, yew, juniper, white hawthorn, and laburnums with their glorious rain of gold—a mass of teeming harmonies and

contrasts. But by far the finest display is its panoply of purple heather, which in some places reaches a height of ten feet ; nowhere else can such heather be found. This is the beauty spot of Ireland ; the lower part of the lake equals the best bit of Killarney, while the upper reaches of the glen surpass it in grandeur ; it is indeed the wildest mountain-pass in Ireland. It may be described as, one might say, a salad of scenic loveliness, made up of countless varieties of color, form, and garniture ; for I could pick out parts of it that resemble spots I have seen at the base of the Himalaya Mountains in India, and others where I have noticed a similarity to some places I visited near the Hot Springs of Hakone, in Japan. A comparison with the Trosachs of Scotland will result in no reflection on Glen Veigh ; in fact, there is a close resemblance between them, and I cannot do better than quote Sir Walter Scott's celebrated description in *The Lady of the Lake*, Sir Walter, the greatest word painter of them all, the wizard of the pen, the man who could pick the magic word and almost paint a scene with it :

“ The western waves of ebbing day
Rolled o'er the glen their level way ;
Each purple peak, each flinty spire,
Was bathed in floods of living fire.
But not a setting beam could glow
Within the dark ravines below,
Where twined the path in shadow hid,
Round many a rocky pyramid,
Shooting abruptly from the dell
Its thunder-splintered pinnacle ;
Round many an insulated mass,
The native bulwarks of the pass.
The rocky summits, split and rent,
Formed turret, dome, or battlement
Or seemed fantastically set
With cupola or minaret,
Wild crests as pagod ever deck'd,
Or mosque of Eastern architect.
Nor were these earth-born castles bare,
Nor lacked they many a banner fair ;
For, from their shivered brows displayed,
Far o'er the unfathomable glade,
All twinkling with the dew-drop sheen,
The brier-rose fell in streamers green ;
And creeping shrubs, of thousand dyes,
Waved in the west wind's summer sighs.

“ Boon nature scatter'd free and wild,
Each plant or flower, the mountain's child.
Here eglantine embalm'd the air,
Hawthorn and hazel mingled there ;
The primrose pale and violet flower,
Found in each cliff a narrow bower ;
Foxglove and nightshade, side by side,
Emblems of punishment and pride,
Group'd their dark hues with every stain
The weather-beaten crags retain.

With boughs that quaked at every breath,
Gray birch and aspen wept beneath ;
Aloft, the ash and withe of oak
Cast anchor in the rifted rock ;
And, higher yet, the pine-tree hung
His shattered trunk, and frequent flung,
Where seem'd the cliffs to meet on high,
His boughs athwart the narrow'd sky.
Highest of all, where white peaks glanced,
Where glist'ning streamers waved and danced,
The wanderer's eye could barely view
The summer heaven's delicious blue ;
So wondrous wild, the whole might seem
The scenery of a fairy dream."

The "Poisoned Glen" lies to the southwest, and is a startling contrast to Glen Veigh. It has no vegetation of any kind, and is a weird, savage canon ending in a *cul-de-sac*. It looks uncanny and forbidding, and seems as though it might be possessed, giving the visitor a creepy feeling as he drives through its gloomy defiles. No animal or bird is ever seen within its confines, as its barren sides will not support life in any form.

Gartan Lough is seen a few miles to the south. It is celebrated for its fine views and its fishing, and as the birthplace of St. Columba, who was born just where a ruined chapel now stands and which was originally erected, it is said, to mark the spot. St. Patrick made a pilgrimage to this place in 450 A.D.

Twenty-three thousand acres, covering Lough and Glen Veigh and the Gartan lakes, were originally owned by the Marshall brothers, one of whom, John, was brother-in-law to the writer. Owing to the agricultural depression of the times, the Marshalls could not collect their rents, and rather than evict their tenants they sold the estate to Mr. J. G. Adair. Mr. Adair had visited the place and become so enthusiastic about it that he not only bought it but built a splendid castle near the lake and constructed an imposing avenue, eight miles long, of which he was very proud. Soon afterwards he stood for a seat in Parliament, as a tenant-right candidate. Notwithstanding his politics, he had troubles with the tenantry, his manager and one of the shepherds being killed in one of the numerous affrays that occurred on the property. Conditions went from bad to worse, till at length Mr. Adair decided to clear his estate of tenantry by evicting them. Upon this, such strenuous resistance and threats were made that the matter attracted public attention and became a source of anxiety to the British government ; so troops were sent down with tents and military equipments, and after a time a general eviction took place. The tenants had no means of support, and national sympathy went out to them. Finally, the government of Victoria offered to take all of them out to Australia, free of charge, and as most of them accepted the offer, this closed the unfortunate incident.

Personally, Mr. Adair was a gracious and upright man, but he contended, as a matter of principle, that he owned the land and could do as he liked with it. This was precisely the same ground that Mr. Morgan took when being examined in New York recently on the witness-stand, with regard to his connection with American trusts.

Since Mr. Adair's death, his wife has resided at the castle a part of each year, and has recently entertained some eminent personages there, as the following item from the Londonderry *Sentinel* of September 13th will show :

“ Lord Kitchener and the distinguished party forming the guests of Mrs. Adair at Glenveigh Castle have enjoyed an excellent week's sport. Several fine stags have been killed in the deer-forest. There was a very successful rabbit-shoot at Gartan on Wednesday. On Thursday, Lord Brassey's famous yacht *Sunbeam*, which has been at Londonderry since Monday, left for Lough Swilly, and yesterday the house-party embarked for a cruise round Horn Head. The house-party consisted of the following : Lord Kitchener, Lord and Lady Brassey, the Duchess of St. Albans and Lady Alice Beauclerk, Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace, the official historian of the voyage of the *Ophir* ; Lady de l'Isle, Captain Arthur Campbell, Captain Butler, and the Duke and Duchess of Connaught. The departing guests were conveyed to the *Sunbeam* and to the railway station in Mrs. Adair's powerful motor car.”

Fallcarragh To Gweedore

WE are now on the road to Fallcarragh, seven miles distant, and we pass his Majesty's mail, northbound from Letterkenny, a crimson car loaded with mail-bags and luggage, and a driver wearing a bright-yellow sou'wester. Everything was drenched and the horse in a steaming lather—truly a novel sight for a denizen of Broadway.

Fallcarragh is the place from which you take a boat to visit Tory Island, some eight miles out in the Atlantic. It has been called “ the Sentinel of the Atlantic,” and it is well named, being the first land one sees when nearing Ireland. Its name means “ the island of towers,” and it looked from the deck of the *Columbia* as though it had been built up by some titanic race of old. It did not seem to us that it could be of much value, but it was considered important enough to fight for in the early days “ when giants were in the land.” The *Book of Ballymote* states that it was possessed by the Fomorians, a race of pirates and giants who inhabited Ireland twelve centuries before the Christian era. Their chief was “ Balor of the Mighty Blows,” and two of the rocks on the east coast of the island are called “ Balor's Castle” and “ Balor's Prison.” One of their number, named Conaing, erected a tower on the island, as recorded in the *Book of Lecan* :

“ The Tower of the Island, the Island of the Tower,
The citadel of Conaing, the son of Foobar.”

It contains a portion of a round tower, built of undressed boulders of red granite. It was never more than about forty feet in height, is seventeen feet two inches in diameter, and the walls at the base are four feet three inches thick ; the doorway is five and a half feet high and is eight feet from the ground. There are also ruins of two churches (a monastery having been founded here by St. Columba), and a peculiar tau-cross. On the northwest end of the island is a fine light-house, illumined by gas, and it has also a fog-siren and a group-flashing light ; it stands a hundred and thirty feet above high-water. Near it is the new signal station of Lloyd's, which is in telegraphic communication with Dunfanaghy. There are a chapel, school-house, and post-office also on the island. The rock scenery of the northeast coast is very fine and characteristic ; the southwest coast is low and flat, and fringed with treacherous rocks. It was here that the gunboat *Wasp* was wrecked on the 22d of September, 1884, and all its crew

except six drowned. Fishing is the chief industry, and the islanders are good fishermen, pursuing their avocation now chiefly in Norway yawls instead of "currags." The Congested Districts Board have aided the inhabitants by supplying these vessels, the cost to be repaid by small instalments, also in building a curing station and teaching the people how to cure fish. Quantities of lobsters and crabs are caught, and a Sligo steamer calls once a week for fish. There is a lack of fuel, which has to be supplied from the main-land. The inhabitants have paid no rents since the loss of the *Wasp*, which was sent to enforce payment or evict the tenants. St. Columba, the patron saint of the place, is reported to have landed here in a curragh.

From Fallcarragh you get a fine view of Muckish, with its twenty-two hundred feet of altitude. While not the highest mountain in the Donegal highlands, Muckish is longer and of greater bulk than any of its rivals, and is also more imposing. Its name in Irish means "a pig's back," which it very much resembles. Here is Ballyconnell House, seat of Wybrants Olphert, Esq., where the "Plan of Campaign" was originated, so well known in connection with the landlord and tenant troubles in Ireland.

We now took the shore-road through a district known as Cloughaneely, where English is rarely spoken and we had to make our way by signs, spending a few minutes en route at a national school and hearing them teach the children both Irish and English. Continuing, we passed close to Bloody Foreland, a head one thousand and fifty feet high, so called because of its ruddy color. Arriving at Bunbeg, we stopped to feed the horse and take some lunch ourselves, and then "made play" for the Gweedore Hotel. Our road took us past the spot where Inspector Martin was clubbed to death when executing a warrant for the arrest of the Rev. James McFadden, P. P., in February, 1889, in connection with the Gweedore evictions.

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Gweedore To Glenties

THE Gweedore is a famous inn, built over fifty years ago by Lord George Hill on the river Clady ; it has held its supremacy as a centre for salmon-fishing and grouse-shooting for half a century. The guests supplied the table so bountifully with fish in the early days that the writer has recollections, as a boy, of thinking that scales were growing on his back after having been at the hotel for a week. Many celebrities have fished and shot there— Thackeray, Dickens, Lord Palmerston, Carlyle, and a host of others have had their feet under its mahogany and have looked out of its windows at Errigal, popularly known as the "peerless cone," the base of which is not over a mile distant. This mountain rises to a height of two thousand four hundred and sixty-six feet, scarred and naked to its peak. Slieve Snaght, two thousand two hundred and forty feet, is another fine peak near it.

The name of Lord George Hill, the late proprietor of the estate, is so thoroughly identified with that of Gweedore that it will not be amiss to retail a few facts concerning him. He first settled in this part of the country in 1838, purchasing twenty-three thousand acres in the parish of Tullaghobegly, which he found in a state of distress and want so great that it became the subject of a parliamentary inquiry. Although there appeared to have been a considerable amount of exaggeration in the statements made, enough remained to show that famine, pestilence, and ignorance were lamentably prevalent. The prospects of the landlord were far from encouraging, on account of the stony nature of the ground, the severity of the climate,

and the difficulty of collecting his rent ; but, more than all, the extraordinary though miserable system of rundale, which was universal throughout the district. By this arrangement a parcel of land was divided and subdivided into an incredible number of small holdings, in which the tenant very likely held his proportion or share in thirty or forty different places, which had no fences or walls whatever to mark them. The utter confusion and the hopelessness of each tenant's being able to know his own land, much less to plant or look after it, may well be imagined. And not only to land was this system applied, but also to portable property. With much perseverance and many struggles, Lord George Hill gradually changed the face of things. He overcame and altered the rundale system, improved the land, built schools, a church, and a large store at Bunbeg, made roads, established a post-office, and, what is perhaps of more importance to the traveler, a hotel. He took a direct and personal interest in the good management of the hotel and in the comfort of the guests who patronized it, frequently stopping at the house himself, dining and spending the evening with them. Since his death, in 1879, the hotel has kept up its traditional reputation for comfort and general good management.

Carlyle visited Lord Hill at Gweedore in 1849, and this is the way in which he described his host afterwards : “ A handsome, grave-smiling man of fifty or more ; thick, grizzled hair ; elegant nose ; low, cooing voice ; military composure and absence of loquacity ; a man you love at first sight.” This was indeed high praise from a man of Carlyle's cantankerous temper. Lord Hill was so popular with his tenantry that when his horse broke down they would take the animal out of the shafts, fasten ropes to the car, and pull it home triumphantly with the owner seated in state, no matter how many miles they had to cover. He was a most courteous and obliging man. I well remember how, in the early sixties, he walked a considerable distance and took particular pains to show me the best fishing spots on the river.

They tell a joke at the hotel, on an English dude who asked Pat, the gillie, “ Aw, my good man, do you mind telling me what—aw—sort of fish you catch here ?” “ Well, to tell ye the truth,” was Pat's quick reply, “ ye niver can tell till yez pulls 'em out !”

There was a big fishing crowd there, and when I announced at dinner that it was more than forty years since I had sat at that table and fished in the river, they all doffed their caps to me—metaphorically—and gave me more salmon and other good things than I could eat or drink.

We hadn't time to fish, and so we pushed on next day through the Rosses district, with all its innumerable fresh-water lakes and salt-water inlets. So intermingled were they that it was hard to decide which was which, and we finally got to know that where wrack grew on the shore the water was salt and connected somewhere with the sea. We stopped at Dunlow for lunch and then descended into the Gweebarra River valley and crossed the large, new steel bridge of that name, erected by the Congested Districts Board to give the people employment on that and the roads connecting with it at both ends. The way lies through an untamably wild country, but with such constant and shifting panorama of mountain scenery that the attention is never fatigued. You see in review the Dunlewy Mountains, Slieve Snaght, Errigal, Dooish, and the Derryveigh chains ; in fact, if the weather is fine—and it all depends on that—there is scarcely such another mountain view in the kingdom.

The head of Gweebarra Bay, where the river joins it, is a queer-looking place ; we skirted its shores for miles and enjoyed its peculiarities. When the tide is out the water is of a seal-brown color, due to the peat ; when it is in, the color is bright green. Where the tides meet is a mixture of both colors, and frequently some of the shallows, side by side, will be of either brown or green, making a checkered appearance. While all this is going on, water-falls from

the hillsides pour their brown waters into the bay and very often into pools of green. This phenomenon, in connection with the pleasing picture formed by the numerous small islands which dot the surrounding waters, makes it well worth while to wait and witness the tide in its changing stages. We finished our twenty-five mile drive in an hour or so, and put up for the night at O'Donnell's, Glenties.

On an Irish jaunting-car through Donegal and Connemara ([1902])

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