

Route 34: Ireland 1878

*Handbook For Travellers in Ireland.*

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Although the following extract from a leader in the Times did not give rise to the Handbook for Ireland which was nearly printed at the time it appeared, it furnishes at least a justification for such a guide-book, in pointing out how great are the attractions for travellers and visitors which Ireland possesses, and how little they have hitherto been explored.

Extract from the ‘ Times,’ 1864.

“ There is nothing in these isles more beautiful and more picturesque than the south and west of Ireland. They who know the fairest portions of Europe still find in Ireland that which they have seen nowhere else, and which has charms all its own. One might suppose the island just risen from the sea, and newly beamed on by the skies—as if sea and land were there first parting, and the spirit of light and order beginning its work ; such is the infinite confusion of surge and beach, bay, headland, river, lake, grass ; of land and sea, sunshine in showers, and rainbow over all. Thackeray doubted, and any one may doubt, whether there is in all the earth a grander view than that over Westport to Clew Bay. But the whole coast west and south, indeed all round the island, has beauties that many a travelled Englishman has not the least conception of. The time will come when the annual stream of tourists will lead the way, and when wealthy Englishmen, one after another, in rapid succession, will seize the fairest spots, and fix here their summer quarters. They will not be practically further from London than the many seats of our nobility in the North-Midland counties were thirty years ago. Eighteen hours will even now take the Londoner to the Atlantic shore, and twenty will soon carry him to the furthest promontory of the island. There are those who will not welcome such a change upon the spirit of that scene ; but if we see in the beauty of Ireland even a surer heritage than in hidden mine or fertile soil, why may we not hope that it will again cover her land with pleasant homes, and a busy, contented, and increasing people, such as we see in many other regions with nothing but their beauty and salubrity to recommend them ?”

ROUTE 34.

*Mallow To Killarney*

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The opening of the Great Southern and Western branch from Mallow was a real boon to the tourist, whom a run of 2½ hours places at once in the heart of the most lovely and far-famed scenery in Ireland, the lakes and mountains of Killarney.

For a great portion of the distance the line passes through an uninviting country, in which extensive stony uplands, watered by broad open streams, are the general features, occasionally diversified by wooded slopes and ravines. But as soon as the distant outlines of the Killarney Hills break upon the eye, all else is forgotten in watching the fantastic outlines and purple hues of these magnificent ranges.

Crossing the clear stream of the Blackwater, we leave the main line to follow up its picturesque valley for several miles.

At 1 m. the little river Clyda is crossed, having on l. of rly. Dromore House (A. Newman, Esq.), and on rt Oyda, Woodfort (N. Ware, Esq.), and Dromaneen, the grounds of these last skirting the banks of the Blackwater. On the opposite side of the river are Summer-ville (R. Bolster, Esq.) and Longueville (B. Longfield, Esq.), both occupying commanding situations.

2 m. l. is the prettily wooded knoll of Gazabo Hill, crowned with a turret, which is said to have been erected by a former proprietor of Woodfort to protect his estate.

At the further end of the demesne of *Dromaneen* is the old castle rising from a steep escarped rock overhanging the Blackwater, with its square mullioned windows and gable ends. The ruins are less those of a castle than of a fortified house of the date of Elizabeth or James I., about whose time Dromaneen belonged to the family of the O'Callaghans.

7 m. l. Mount Hillary (1287) is an outlying portion of the Bochra Mountains, a dreary and uncultivated range intervening between the valley of the Blackwater and that of the Lee near Macroom. The road from Kanturk to Cork crosses them at a height of about 1000 ft. Near the junction of the Glen River with the Blackwater is, 9½ m., Kanturk stat.

#### *Detour to Kanturk and Newmarket.*

3½ m. to rt. of stat. is *Kanturk* (*Inns* : Tierney Arms ; Egmont Arms), a pretty little town, situated on the banks of 2 streams, the Duallua and the Allua, each of which is crossed by bridges of 5 or 6 arches. The former river gives name to the barony of Duhallow. Kanturk became a place of some importance in the days of Elizabeth, owing to the building, by MacDonagh Carthy, of an immense castle (still called McDonagh's Folly), of such proportions and vast strength, that the jealousy of the English Government was roused and a veto placed on any further proceedings. "It occupies the 4 sides of a quadrangle 120 ft. in length by 80 ft. in breadth, being 3 stories high, and flanked at each angle by a square tower of 4 stories, having 3 windows in each story in the central portion ; the groins, mouldings, belt-ings, and other ornamental parts, are of hewn stone. The battlements, if ever carried up, have fallen down, and the additional story mentioned by Smith in his 'History of Cork' is only apparent on one side, where it forms the underground or cellar floor."—*Lewis*. The castle stands about ½m. to the S. of the town.

The R. C. Chapel in the town is worth visiting for its entrance gateway and font, both the work of a native artist.

[5½ m. to E. of Kanturk, passing on the way Rathmaher, AHanlim, and Ballygiblin (Sir H. Wrixon-Becher, Bart.), are the village of Cecilsown, and Lohort Castle (Earl of Egmont), a fine baronial residence, approached by a long straight avenue.

Near Newmarket, which lies to N. Kanturk, are Newmarket House (B. Aldworth, Esq.), and the Priory, once the residence of John Philpot Curran, whose convivial proceedings with the chosen wits and talent of that day have been described by Lever under the designation of 'The Monks of the Screw.'

*Newmarket* is placed at the foot of a very dreary and barren range of hills which, with but few breaks, may be said to extend north-wards to the banks of the Shannon, and westwards to the coast. From Charleville to Listowell, and from Newmarket to Tralee, the whole district is occupied by this wild and bleak region, each range taking a different name. Those near Newmarket are the Use Mountains, while to the N.W. they are called Mullaghareirk, and still westward the Clanruddery and Flesk Mountains. Woe betide the pedestrian who gets

benighted here, “ for there is not between Mr. Aldworth’s seat at Newmarket and the Knight of Glin’s on the banks of the Shannon, a distance of 34 m., a single house worthy of the name of a gentleman’s residence.”—*Fraser*.

*Return to Main Route.*

Close to Kanturk stat. is the village of Banteer, and 1½ m. to E. Clonmeen, a residence of the O’Callaghans.

Still following the Blackwater, and leaving on rt. Rosnalee (Mrs. Leader), Dromagh Castle (N. Leader, Esq.), Keale, Rathroe (D. McCarthy, Esq.), and Flintfield, we arrive at

20 m. Millstreet. A little before arriving at the stat. on 1., on the banks of the river Finnow, is *Drishane Castle* (the residence of Col. Wallis), a castellated building flanked by a square tower at each end and incorporated with the old fortress, the ivy-covered tower of which rises from the modern portion. Drishane was built by Dermot McCarthy in 1436.

The most attractive point about Millstreet (*Hotel* : Wallis Arms) is its situation in an open wooded valley on the Finnow, surrounded by mountains, which at Cahirbarnagh to the S.W. attain a height of 2239 ft. In fact they are the advanced outposts of the Killarney group, that has for some time past been looming in the distance. The scenery of Millstreet is enhanced by the woods of Drishane, Altamont (Kev. G. Morgan), Coomlogane (McCarthy O’Leary, Esq.), and Mount Leader, the residence of the Leader family, at the foot of Mount Clare.

Near the mountains, on the road from Millstreet to Macroom, are the ruins of Kilmeedy Castle, which commanded the descent into the valley from the Muskerry Hills. After passing Shinnagh stat. 26 m., where the river Awnaskirtaun is crossed and the Blackwater turns off to the N., the interest of the landscape is all concentrated on the 1., when the noble Cahirbarnagh, and the still more conspicuous range of the Paps 2268 ft., herald the approach to the finest scenery in Ireland. To the Paps, which are easily recognizable by two conical eminences separated by a deep ravine, succeed Crohane 2102 ft., and Mangerton 2756 ft., one of the principal lions of Killarney. Immediately to the S. this range of mountains is separated only by the lofty highland valley of the Flesk from a fresh range known as the Derrynasaggart Mountains, which spread over a large area, and in fact extend with more or less interruption all the distance to Gougane Barra and the source of the Lee.

33 m. Headfort stat, passing which the line runs parallel with the Flesk River, that leaps from rock to rock with impetuous torrent. A very fine mountain road runs S. from Headfort to Macroom.

Soon a sudden turn of the valley brings us in sight of Flesk Castle, the seat of D. Coltsman, Esq., crowning a wooded knoll, round the base of which sweeps the river. It commands one of the most enchanting views over the lake and mountains that it is possible to conceive.

41m. *Killarney* stat. Here the train, though by no means near its journey’s end, usually discharges 9-10ths of its passengers, the greater part of them eager for the Lake beauties which nature has scattered so prodigally over this favoured region : a region so charming, that no amount of journeying to reach it can be considered too great or too wearisome.

The hotels at Killarney are generally good. “ The Railway,” built by the Great Southern and Western Railway Company, adjoins the station, standing in pleasant ornamental grounds of its own.

The Royal Victoria Hotel is about a quarter of an hour's drive from the railway terminus (1½ m.). It is finely situated in its own grounds, sloping down to the N. shore of the Lower Lake. It is convenient for excursions to the Gap of Dunloe, and that neighbourhood.

The Lake Hotel, Castlelough, is on the eastern shore of the Lower Lake. It is 1½ m. from the rly. station on the Kinmare Road.

These 3 have the appliances of first-rate hotels, and are generally well managed, but they have an unfortunate reputation for high charges. There may be some foundation for this, but tourists should remember that in such places all the costs and profits of a whole year have to be earned during a season of only a few months' duration.

The *Muckross* and *Sullivan's*—3 m. S. of Killarney at Muckross, near to the entrance of the grounds of Muckross Abbey. These two hotels, though smaller and less pretentious than the above, are (especially the Muckross, Ross's) comfortable, well-conducted hotels, with good *table-d'hôte*, moderate charges according to a printed tariff. They are well situated, near the middle lake, and consequently in about the centre of the objects of interest, but have not the fine views commanded by the "Lake" and the "Victoria."

In the *Introduction*, we have cautioned the traveller not to give to beggars in Ireland, and we would particularly impress upon him the necessity, on public grounds, of resisting the importunities of the Killarney mendicants. It is not pleasant to comment on the acts of the local authorities, but we cannot refrain from saying that the beggar nuisance might be considerably abated, if not altogether done away with, by a positive determination on their part that it shall no longer exist. With the exception of a few shops containing local curiosities, such as ornaments made out of arbutus trees and such like, there is very little to detain the traveller in the actual town of Killarney ; for, notwithstanding the enormous number of visitors who annually resort here, it has a wretched decayed look about it, with scarcely a single good street. The only building in Killarney worth inspection is the R. C. Cathedral, a very elaborate Gothic building after the design of *A. W. Pugin*. It contains some beautiful interior decorations by Mr. McCarthy.

Before describing the scenery of this neighbourhood, it is as well to touch upon the guides, a necessary concomitant to every tourist according to the notions of the hotel-keepers and the natives themselves. As most visitors are tied to time and are anxious to see as much of the district as they can, a guide cannot well be dispensed with, and even should the visitor wish to do so, it is not easy to make the guide dispense with the visitor. In justice to the guides ; it is but fair to add that they are generally intelligent, good-humoured, always talkative, ready to protect their charge from being bothered by others, and useful in carrying any overcoats or superfluities. If the visitor is staying at an hotel, he should consult the landlord, who will provide him with an accredited guide at a fixed tariff ; but if he takes one of the irregular guides, he should be careful to make his bargain with him before starting. The hotels also provide ponies and boats for lake excursions at a fixed price, which the visitor can see before starting, and thus calculate beforehand the expense of his excursions ; but he would find it save him a great deal of trouble, and be quite as economical in the end, if he were to get guides, boats and boatmen, cars and driven, and ponies, all charged in his bill.

The tourist will have to take some small change with him on excursions, for he has to buy (in order to protect himself from persecution) either some bog-oak and arbutus ornaments, or a "choice" collection of selected ferns ; besides, it will be necessary for him to accept the hospitality of the mountain-dew women tribe, who for a small consideration will present draughts of whisky and goats' milk. It would be no doubt more pleasant and satisfactory to enjoy the scenery without being pestered by these itinerant vendors ; but it is just as well to take it all with good humour.

Whichever hotel the visitor may select for his stay, it will add very much to his pleasure if he thoroughly studies the physical geography of the neighbourhood before commencing his excursions.

The Lake of Killarney may be described as a large irregular sheet of water lying in a basin at the northerly base of a very high range of mountains.

In the journey from Millstreet it will be remembered that a range of mountains running nearly E. and W. commences with Cahirbarnagh, and joins on to the Paps. Then comes the highland valley of the Flesk, causing a deflection of the range a little to the S.W. in Croghane and Mangerton. At this latter, or more correctly at the Torc Mountain, which may be said to belong to it, the easterly group of Killarney comes to an end, being divided from the western group by what is called the Middle Lakes. The westerly group rises precipitously from the opposite side of this narrow strip of water, and runs for many miles nearly due E. and W., forming the finest and most lofty mountains in the kingdom. The mass immediately overhanging Killarney are called the Tomies and the Purple Mountain. These are imaginarily separated on the W, by the Gap of Dunloe from the Alpine chain of McGillicuddy's Reeks, commonly known as the Reeks, the centre of which is Carrantuohill shooting upwards to the height of 3414 ft. These 2 groups of the Reeks and Mangerton are those with which, broadly speaking, the Killarney tourist has to do at present ; but it must not be imagined that they are isolated or detached chains of mountains ; for, on the contrary, they extend on the W. as far as the sea-coast, and similarly to Kenmare on the S.

In a basin then between these groups lies the Lake of Killarney, the first and by far the largest portion bounded on the W. by the Toomies and the Glenna or Purple Mountain ; on the S. by Tore Mountain, on the N. by gently swelling hills, of no great height (between 400 and 500 ft.), and on the E. by the undulating and wooded slopes that fringe the base of Mangerton. Like most highland lakes, the chief grandeur of Killarney is at its head ; for just at the point of separation between Tore and the Glenna Mountain runs a narrow prolongation, a river in fact, called the Long Range, which, gliding round the Eagle's Nest, expands into the Upper Lake, embedded in the very heart of the mountains. This portion is fed by a stream which rises from the Dark Valley, or Cummeenduff, one of the most sublime glens skirting the southern base of the Reeks, and dividing them from the remainder of the Kenmare group.

If the tourist will study these broad outlines and take the following objects of bearing, viz. the Victoria Hotel for the N., Torc Mountain for the S., the Tomies to the W., and the Lake Hotel, or Ross Castle, to the E., he will not be so liable to be puzzled, when he gets on to the Lake, as to his whereabouts.

The *Lower Lake*, otherwise called Lough Leane, comprises 5000 acres of surface, and is 5 m. in length to 2½ in average breadth. Its longest axis is from S.E. to N.W., which portion is the broadest as well as the most free from islands. The number of islands is one of the most characteristic features of the Lower Lake, there being upwards of 30, embracing a total area of 52 acres, varying in size from 21 acres (Innisfallen Island) to a mere rock of 9 perches.

In addition to these islands, the greater number of which are congregated on the eastern side of the Lake, there is also the peninsula of Ross, generally called Ross Island, jutting out from the E. bank between Kenmare grounds and the mouth of the Flesk. The bay between Ross Island and Muckross is called Castlelough. The Upper Lake is on the same level with and separated from the *Middle* or *Muckross Lake* by a narrow peninsula extending from the mainland at Muckross nearly across to Dinish Island on the extreme S.W. side, the connection between this latter island and Muckross being maintained by Brickeen Bridge, so that the waters of the 2 lakes are only connected at Brickeen, and that portion of the Long Reach which winds round Dinish, called the Meeting of the Waters.

The islands in Middle Lake, therefore, are 4, of which Brickeen and Diniah Island are 19 and 34 acres respectively.

From the S.W. corner of the Lower Lake, joining this narrow outlet at Dinish with the Middle Lake, there is a tortuous stream, known as the Long Range, of about 2½ m. in length, which connects both Lower and Middle with the *Upper Lake*, the most beautiful, though the smallest, of all. It is 5 ft. higher in level than the others, about 2½ m. in length, ¾ in breadth, with a surface of 430 acres, and contains 8 islands of 6 acres altogether. It is nearly separated from the rest of the Lake by the Purple Mountain, which projects between the two, the Upper Lake thus occupying a basin at the foot of the Cummeenduff, or Black Valley. It is fed by the Cummeenduff River, by the Owenreagh, a stream that flows into the same glen from the S.W., and also by a small stream from the S. flowing past the Police Barracks, and forming the Derrycunihy cascades. The Middle Lake receives the waters of the Mangerton group, flowing in at the Owengarriff River, while the Lower Lake is supplied by the small Muckross River, the Flesk running in on the E. shore, and the Deenagh close to Killarney town. There are also 2 or 3 little mountain streams on the W. shore.

It will thus be seen that the lakes form a great reservoir for the waters of this important group of mountains, discharging them into the Atlantic by the river Laune, which emerging from the N.W. of the Lower Lake finally empties itself into the sea at Castlemaine. They are regarded by geologists as mainly due to glacial erosion, but extended, especially the Lower Lake, by the solvent action of the carbonic acid on the limestone. The tourist will see evidence of this in the jagged and perforated structure of the limestone projecting above the water on the island shores of the lake. “The narrow rock basin of the Upper Lake of Killarney, which fills the bed of the deep gorge of the Black Valley, is itself in the line of an ancient glacier which descended from the base of the Reeks, and debouched on the Limestone plain.”—*Hull*. The evidences of glaciation abound on all sides of these lakes—the smoothed and striated surfaces of the rocks showing the direction in which the ice has travelled.

The next point which the tourist will have to settle will depend on the time which he has to spare for seeing Killarney, which will of course be influenced by many circumstances, such as weather, or the visitor’s capability of fatigue, &c. Should only one day be available, a good deal may be seen in that one day ; although only in the most cursory manner. In this case, an early start by car to the foot of Mangerton is recommended (if the morning is clear). The car should wait at the foot and take the visitor to Muckcross and the Torc Waterfall. Having completed this, another car should be engaged for the Gap of Dunloe, and an arrangement made that a boat should meet the tourist at Lord Brandon’s cottage on the Upper Lake, and bring him back to the hotel.

For 2 days.—Mangerton, Torc, Muckcross, and a drive to the Police Barrack on the Kenmare road will suffice for the 1st day ; while the 2nd may be employed in the Gap, taking on the way Aghadoe and the castle of Dunloe, and visiting on the return water excursion, Glena, Innisfallen, Ross, and O’Sullivan’s Cascade. A third day may be devoted either to a row round the lakes, or the ascent of Carrantuohill and the Reeks.

It need scarcely be observed that these rides, drives, walks, and water excursions may be spun out and diversified *ad infinitum*.

### *Excursions*

1.—*To Gap of Dunloe, and hence by water.* Leaving the town at the western side and passing the R. C. Cathedral, a private road (open only to pedestrians) leads through a portion of the demense of Lord Kenmare, emerging near the grounds of the Victoria Hotel ¼ m., the

view from which over the Lake and opposite mountains is one of the attractions of this establishment. A little farther on, a lane turns off to the rt. and breasts the upland for about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of m. to

*Aghadoe* (Ir. Achadh-da-eo, “Field of the Yews”), celebrated for its ch. and round tower, once the seat of a bishopric, and stated in the Annals of Innisfallen to have been the burial-place of a son of O’Donoghue. This singular building consists of 2 portions of different dates : the nave being considered by many antiquaries to be as old as the 8th cent., while the choir was an addition of the 13th. The latter, which contains some tombs, is lighted at the E. end by a double-light lancet window splayed inwardly. The nave was lit by round-headed windows, and is entered by a magnificent Romanesque door in the W. wall, which even now in its decay shows many traces of exquisite architecture. It consists of 4 recessed arches, the 8 outer ones springing from pillars about 8 ft. high, and ornamented with chevron, bead, and tooth mouldings, continued under the crown of the arch. Notwithstanding the apparent Norm. age of these mouldings and decorations, Dr. Petrie has shown in his work on the ‘Round Towers of Ireland’ (p. 260) that the use of such ornaments in Ireland was of an age considerably anterior to the importation of Norm. architecture into the country. The round tower stands a little distance from the N.W. angle of the ch., and is in fact incorporated with the wall of the enclosure. The height of what little is left is about 12 ft., and its circumference is 52 ft., the masonry of which it is composed being remarkably regular. On the opposite side of the town is a massive round tower belonging to the castle of Aghadoe of rude materials and workmanship, and evidently of early date, although history mentions it not. There are traces of earthworks all round it.

Even if the visitor does not care for archæology, the view from Aghadoe will be sufficient recompense. That to the N. is bleak and desolate, but on the S. it beggars description, embracing the whole panorama of Killarney lakes, mountains, woods, and islands, with their glorious lights and shades—such a panorama as once seen, never leaves the memory.

$2\frac{1}{2}$  m. rt a road is given off to Milltown and Castlemaine 10 m., and occupying the angle of junction is *Aghadoe House*, the very charming Italian mansion of Lord Headley, the owner of nearly all the land to the N. of the lake. Farther on l. is Grenagh House (D. Shiel, Esq.), and at 5 m. the Laune is crossed at Beaufort Bridge. A beautiful spot is this, and a paradise for salmon fishers, who can have fine sport from the pools underneath the bridge, while the trout fisher will find ample employment in the still backwaters at the side of the stream underneath the shady fringe of wood. A road on N. bank continues to Killorglin 7 m.

Passing the grounds of Beaufort House (Rev. Fitzgerald Day), the tourist should diverge to the l. to visit *Dunloe Castle*, originally a mountain stronghold of O’Sullivan Mor, and now the modernised residence of D. Mahony, Esq. Some of the most exquisite views of the Lake, looking westward, are to be obtained from the grounds.

In a field adjoining the high road, near the entrance to the Gap, is the celebrated cave of Dunloe, discovered in 1838, which must be regarded “as an ancient Irish library lately disinterred and restored to the light. The books are the large impost stones which form the roof. Their angles contain the writing.”—*Hall*. This writing consists of Ogham characters, the age and reading of which has long been a disputed point amongst antiquaries. “The conclusion to which Prof. Graves has arrived, as regards the age of the Ogham writings is that it does not belong to the period antecedent to the introduction of the Latin language and Christianity into Ireland, in short, that it is an invention of the early monkish period. That the alphabet is not a very ancient one is sufficiently manifested by the arrangement of the letters. The five vowels, a o u c i, are formed into a group arranged in that order, thus manifesting the art of the grammarian in distinguishing vowels from consonants, and again in dividing the vowels into 2 classes of broad and slender. A comparison of the Ogham alphabet with the

Persepolitan and Phœnician alphabets, manifests that the pretended relationship between it and them has no existence.” The alphabet consists of series of scores or short lines branching off in different portions from a centre line called the Fleasg, which may be likened to a stem, the scores attached to which are the branches. The relative position of these scores to the main line constitute the difference of the letter. Generally speaking the corner angle of the stone is made use of as a Fleasg or medial line, though in the Ogham stone on Slieve Callane (Rte. 38) the Fleasg is in the centre. For recent researches on this subject, see Fergusson’s ‘ Rude Stone Monuments.’

The visitor soon enters the *Gap of Dunloe*, which for savage grandeur is usually described by Irish writers as equal to anything in Great Britain, an assertion scarcely admissible by any tourist acquainted with Glencoe, or other wild passes of the Scottish highlands. “ The road now mounts up the hill by the side of the Loe, the ravine becoming more wild and sombre, the hill-sides more precipitous and frowning ; while as you gain each successive step of tableland, the little dusky ravine expands itself at the levels into dark and gloomy tarns which add wonderfully to the effect.” When fairly within the entrance, the car pulls up at a cottage, where dwells the representative and granddaughter of the fair Kate Kearney. Unfortunately the beauty has not descended with the name to the dispenser of mountain dew, of which the tourist is expected to partake ; being the first instalment of successive troops of attendant Hebes, who pertinaciously follow everybody up to the top of the Gap, utterly destroying the charm of the solitary grandeur by their ceaseless gabble and importunities for money. At one place a cannon is fired off, producing a really fine echo.

About the 9th m. the Loe is crossed as it issues from a savage-looking tarn, rightly called the Black Lake, and here the car returns, leaving the tourist to walk up to the head of the Gap and down again to the head of the lake on the other side. A magnificent pass it is, guarded on each side by two precipitous crags of the Tomies (2413 ft) and the Purple Mountain (2739 ft.) on one side, and the Reeks on the other, the summit of the former group being frequently visible. One singular feature of the Gap of Dunloe is the comparatively large population that is scattered through it. Although at a distance appearing as though far removed from man’s haunts, the eye soon detects the little sad-coloured cabins with their plot of potato or rye ground perched here and there amongst the rocks and streams. Just before arriving at the head of the Gap, there is a fine view looking back to the N., but the moment the summit is reached, the panorama is glorious—one which should be enjoyed silently and at leisure. If the lights are good, the effect is perfectly magical in the transition from the dark gloom of the Gap to the brightsome lake lying at one’s feet in still repose.

The lake is, of course, the chief point of attraction, although the eye catches only the Upper Lake, with a portion of the Long Range and the river that feeds it, flowing from the rt. through the wonderful Cummeenduff, a savage Alpine glen that runs up into the heart of the Reeks for some 4 m., terminated by a semicircular cwm, from which the precipitous mountains rise sheer up on all sides but one. Should the Black Valley be overcast by lowering clouds, while the lake is in sunshine, an effect is produced quite unsurpassable for contrast. At the head of the valley is a series of small tarns which give birth to the river. Soon after beginning the descent of the zigzag road to the head of the lake there is a singular logan or balancing stone on the side of the hill to the l. Arrived at the bottom, the tourist follows the stream of the Gearhameen from the Black Valley and arrives at a bridge, the gate of which is kept locked, until a silver key is applied to the janitor. From the Black Lake in the Gap of Dunloe to Lord Brandon’s cottage, at which the tourist has now arrived, it is 5 m., that is, providing the road has been followed all the way instead of the short cut down the mountain. This is practicable, yet, although it appears to be plain sailing, it requires care, especially on the flat near the river, where the bogs are very awkward, and more particularly after wet weather. The boat should be waiting here by appointment, and now the tourist is in the hands of another class of Killarney guides, good-humoured, intelligent fellows, with a story for



every rock, and a fable for every island. Their ingenuity in finding out impossible likenesses for each stone or stomp is only equalled by the bold audacity with which they swear to the truth of the legend with which they have invested it. The principal islands in the Upper Lake are Eagle, Juniper, Ronayne's, and Arbutus Islands : the latter preeminently conspicuous for the indigenous arbutus (*Arbutus unedo*), the great peculiarity and glory of Killarney. " This is the only shrub peculiar to Killarney ; it is also found at Glengarriff, and in other parts of the barony of Bear. It prevails to a great extent throughout the Killarney woods ; in sheltered places attaining to a great size ; and by its foliage and fruit adds much to their interest and variety."—*Fraser*. There is something peculiarly weird and wild in the twisted boles and gnarled stems of this tree, covering the island with an interlacement of wood down to the water's edge; and Mackay, in his ' Flora Hibernia,' mentions a tree near O'Sullivan's Cascade which he measured and found to be 9½ ft. in girth. The brilliant red berries are in perfection about October and November, and add an additional glow of colour to the scene. Not only on the islands, but from the water's edge along the banks (of the whole of the Upper Lake in particular), rises mass after mass of foliage, so dense as scarcely to allow the scars and peaks of the mountains to appear. As the altitude becomes greater, the vegetation thins and the character of tree is smaller and less dense ; till at length the mountain soars far above, as though it rejoiced to have escaped the close companionship of the forest below. It is this wonderful succession of vegetable beauty, varying in its colours from the brightest green to russet brown, and contrasting with the gleaming scars, each one of which is tufted with its miniature tree-garden, that gives Killarney such a magic about its scenery, and confers such superiority over all other British lakes.

Another scenic advantage that the Upper Lake possesses is in its solitude and absence of habitations ; indeed, the only trace of man, save Lord Brandon's cottage, is the large castellated Police Barrack that overlooks the lake from the Kenmare road. We now arrive at the outlet of the Upper Lake, which is so narrow and hidden by the little bays and jutting promontories, that it is difficult to foretell from which side it may emerge ; an opportunity not lost by the boatmen, who cunningly lay on their oars and offer a small bet that the visitor will not be able to guess it. The narrow passage is close under the W, bank, and is called Colman's Eye, soon after which is Colman's Leap. " This Colman, once upon a time, was lord of the Upper Lake, and instead of following the example of his namesake, who, as a saint and peacemaker, assisted St. Patrick in converting Ireland to Christianity, spent most of his time in quarrelling with the O'Donoghue, and in provoking him to single combat. Being in a minority at one of these diversions, it appeared to him a predestinal course to fly, and, closely pursued by his adversary, took this celebrated jump over the river, where the guides show you his footprints on the rock."—*Little Tour*.

And now the tourist enters the Long Range (2½ m.), replete and overflowing with delicious beauty, such as is described by Shelley—

" Where the embow'ring trees recede and  
leave  
A little space of green expanse, the cove  
Is closed by meeting banks, whose yellow  
flowers  
For ever gaze on their own drooping eyes  
Reflected in the crystal calm : the wave  
Of the boat's motion marred their pensive  
task  
Which nought but vagrant bird or wanton  
wind  
Or falling spear-grass, or their own decay.  
Had e'er disturbed before." ALASTOR.

The banks on either side are covered with arbutus, and fringed along the water-side with the lofty *Osmunda regalis*, while a sudden turn of the river often brings in view the stately form of the red deer (*Cervus elaphus*) which still holds covert in the woods and forests of Killarney, the only other habitat in the island being the mountains of Erris, in the Co. Mayo. Indeed, a stag-hunt is still a great event at Killarney, although it is but seldom that such an exciting incident occurs, the last occasion being on the visit of Her Majesty to Mr. Herbert, at Muckcross.

About half-way down the range one of the most striking scenes in Killarney district occurs, as the river grinds round the foot of the *Eagle's Nest*, a gigantic precipice of about 1200 ft., presenting a bold front so beautifully draped with wood and vegetation that it is like a vast mass of green wall. At the summit of this cliff the Eagle still builds its nest, and various stories are told by the boatmen of bold attempts to capture them. Here, if the boatmen possess a bugle, is the place to try the sweet echoes, and here, in former days, it was the practice to fire cannon, the reverberations of which are described by those who have heard them as something peculiarly wonderful. But in consequence of a frightful accident that happened in one of these fusillades, the practice is forbidden.

Onward drifts the boat with the current, until it comes to the end of the Long Range, where the channel contracts, the banks become lined with overarching trees, and the tourist sees a-head of him the Old Weir Bridge, through the arches of which the water rushes with a rather fearful rapidity. But if he expects to land, he is mistaken, for with an admonition to sit quiet and keep up his pluck, the boatmen make preparations for shooting the rapids, which they do with admirable coolness and nerve. Indeed, so used are they to this difficult passage, that they can steer through it by night equally as well as by day, and all chance of danger is in reality very small, provided the passenger does as he is told. Once in still water, however, it is, indeed, a lovely spot. This is the Meeting of the Waters, where the Long Range is deflected by *Dinish Island*, the stream to the l. going off to the Lower Lake, and that to the rt. to Muckcross, or Middle Lake.

The boatmen supplied from the hotels are not only steady and well conducted men, but extremely intelligent and communicative. They have a good deal of poetry and sentiment about them, which Samuel Lover expresses in a charming little poem, 'Macarthy's Grave' :—

“ Where weeping birches wildly wave  
The boatmen show their brother's grave,  
And while they tell the name he bore.  
Suspended hangs the lifted oar ;  
The silent drops thus idly shed  
Seem like tears to gallant Ned,  
And while gently gliding by  
The tale is told by moistened eye ;  
No ripple on the slumbering lake  
Unhallowed oar doth ever make,  
All undisturbed the placid wave  
Flows gently o'er ' Macarthy's grave.' ”

The visitor will scarcely have time in this excursion to visit Muckcross Lake, but he should not neglect to do so, for it is most charmingly sheltered, almost entirely cut off on the N. from the Lower Lake, save by the 2 narrow passages of Dinish and Brickeen, and surrounded on the E. shore by the groves and grounds of Muckcross. On the S., too, rises that wonderful landscape mountain, the Torc, 1764 ft., which with its tiers of wood passing from thick groves to the slender bushes that catch footing in the crevices of the summit, is one of the

most striking and picturesque features in all Killarney ; it is more-over such a changing feature that it is not always easy to recognise it.

The tourist may, if he prefers, land on the Kenmare road, and walk or drive back to Killarney, visiting the waterfall and the Abbey. Emerging from the Long Range on the W. bank of Dinish Island (on which there is a very picturesque cottage embowered in trees), or from the Middle Lake by Brickeen Bridge, we now enter the Lower Lake at its narrowest portion, and row into the Bay of *Glena*, where the lofty *Glena*, a portion of the Purple Mountain, casts deep shadows over this quiet nook, the clear water of which reflects the green forests which so densely cover the face of the hill—

“ From Dinis’ green isle to Glena’s wooded shore.”

Lord Kenmare has a cottage ornée on the bank, a perfect little gem as regards situation, and he has, moreover, with a kind thoughtfulness, built a similar one for the use of tourists. Here all necessaries are provided for cooking a dinner ; and for a picnic party bent on combining lovely scenery with their creature comforts, there is not a more beautiful place to be found. You can catch your salmon in the Bay of Glena, and have it broiled directly afterwards on arbutus skewers, and appreciate the difference between salmon fresh caught and salmon that has been lying for hours on the fishmonger’s slab.

From Glena it will be as well to coast round the wooded face of the Tomies for about 2 m., and land at *O’Sullivan’s Cascade*. There is, however, a very fine fall called the Minister’s Beck, soon after turning the corner of the promontory. The adventurous who do not mind a sharp struggle up-hill, through an almost primæval forest and over boggy ground, will be repaid, but the way is not by any means fit for ladies or for the delicate. Sullivan’s Cascade consists of 3 distinct falls ; the uppermost, passing over a ridge of rock, falls about 20 feet perpendicularly into a natural basin underneath ; thence making its way between 2 hanging rocks, the stream hastens down a second precipice into a similar receptacle, from which, concealed from the view, it rolls over into the lowest chamber of the fall. Beneath a projecting rock, overhanging the lowest basin, is a grotto, from which the view of the cascade is peculiarly beautiful, appearing as a continued flight of 3 unequally elevated, foaming stages.”—*Wright*.

From this waterfall it is a short mile across to the exquisite island of *Innisfallen* (Ir. inis-faithlen), the gem of Killarney, “ in which is found hill and dell—wood as gloomy as the ancient Druidical forests, thick with giant ashes and enormous hollies—glades sunny and cheerful, with the beautiful underwood bounding them—bowers and thickets—crocks and old ruins—flight and shadow—everything that nature can supply, without a single touch from the hand of art, save the crumbling ruins, and all in a space of 21 acres, makes Innisfallen justly the pride of the worthy denizens of Killarney.”

“ Sweet Innisfallen, long shall dwell,  
In memory’s dream, that sunny smile,  
Which o’er thee on that evening fell  
When first I saw thy fairy Isle.”

MOORE.

Close to the landing-place are the ruins of an abbey founded at the close of the 6th cent, by St Finhian Lothar (the Lesser), and adjoining these ruins is a chapel or oratory, with a Romanesque doorway, decorated with tooth-moulding. In this remote and sheltered spot were compiled the Annals of Innisfallen, “ a composition usually attributed to the early part of the 13th century, though there is very good reason to believe that they were commenced at least 2 cent, before this period.”—*Prof. O’Curry*.

Strange to say there is no copy in Ireland, and only one in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, which possesses 57 leaves.

“ These annals contain a short account of the history of the world in general, and very little of Ireland till the year 430, when the author professedly begins a chronicle of Ireland thus :—‘ Lasgairé Mac Neil regnavit annis xxiv,’ and thenceforward it contains a short history of Ireland to 1318.

“ These 3 manuscript chronicles, the Saltair of Cashel, Tighemach, and Innisfallen, are written in Irish characters and in the Irish language, intermixed with Latin. They were formerly collected, with many other valuable MSS. relating to Ireland, by Sir J. Ware, and came first to the Earl of Clarendon, and then to the Duke of Chandos.”—*O’Connor*.

The visitor who has no interest in the annals will find plenty in rambling about this charming island, and taking in the opposite views of the Tomies and Torc on the S., the Slieve-mish mountains overlooking Tralee and Castlemaine on the W., and Ross Castle, with the Kenmare woods, on the E., and will return to Killarney after a day of such varied scenery as seldom fims to his lot

## 2. *Excursion to Muchross, Ross, Mangerton, Torc, and Lough Looscannah.*

This is essentially a land excursion, and keeps all the way along the eastern side of the lake.

Immediately on leaving the town on rt. are the woods and mansion of Kenmare House, the residence of the Earl of Kenmare, the principal landlord of the neighbourhood. The house itself is plain, but the gardens are worth visiting, and the grounds, from many points, offer most enchanting views of the lake. The demesne extends from near the Victoria Hotel on the N. to Ross Peninsula inclusive on the S. The little river Deenagh divides it into 2 portions, in one of which is Knockrier Hill,—a hillock generally ascended for the sake of the view.

The peninsula of Ross is 158 acres in extent, and is connected with the mainland by a causeway, which in the high level of winter is flooded, so as really to make it what it is generally called, Ross Island. On this neck of land is *Ross Castle*, a fortress of about the 15th cent., consisting of a graceful tower or keep—

“ Where ivy clasps the fissured stones  
With Its entwining arms,”

surrounded by outworks, flanked by small circular towers at the angles.

The interior contains apartments from which exquisite lake views are obtained : indeed, it is to its situation more than its intrinsic interest that Ross owes its celebrity. Although its founder is unknown, there is every reason to believe that it was the residence of O’Donoghue, the Lord of the Lower Lake, or rather of O’Donoghue Mor, one of the 3 families into which the main branch was divided.

It played no inconsiderable part in the civil war of 1641, when it surrendered to Ludlow, “ who was attended in the expedition by Lord Broughil and Sir Hardress Waller, and was the last place that held out in Munster against the English parliament. At the end of the siege the son of the LordMuskerry (who held the castle) and Sir Daniel O’Brien were delivered up as hostages for the performance of the treaty ; in consequence of which about 5000 Irish, horse and foot, laid down their arms and delivered up their horses.”

The remainder of the peninsula of Ross, which is generally the place of embarkation for Killarney visitors, is prettily laid out and planted. A copper-mine was opened at one time, and promised to be productive, until the water got in and drowned it. The visitor should not omit to try the echoes under the castle, if the guides or any of the party happen to have a bugle.

From the entrance to Kenmare House the well-sheltered road continues due S., crossing 1 m. the Flesk at a pretty reach in the river. On the l. is Danesfort (S. Horsley, Esq.), and rt. the Lake Hotel.

2½ m. is the hamlet of Cloghreen, and on rt. the exquisite grounds of Muckross Abbey, the seat of Henry Arthur Herbert, Esq. Here is one of the portraits of the old Countess of Desmond.

The visitor who has rowed round the Middle Lake will have seen a great portion of the beauties of this charming place, which as far as landscape goes is not surpassed in the kingdom.

A very handsome Elizabethan building has been built of late years to supersede the old house, from designs by Mr. Burns. The attraction of Muckross, in addition to its scenery, is the *Abbey*, the entrance to which is at the further gate, near the village and hotels.

The Franciscan monastery of Irrelagh (or Muckross) was founded early in the 15th centy., by Teige McCarthy, Lord of Desmond, head of one of the strongest clans that held property near the lake ; and it was restored in 1626, as we learn from a Latin inscription on a stone in the N. wall of the choir. The plan of its ch. includes nave, transept, and choir, with a low square central tower. At the W. end of the nave is a pointed doorway, deeply moulded. The tower is supported by four narrow pointed arches, and contained one bell, which has long since vanished. At the E. end of the choir is an exquisite 4-light window, and in mid-choir the modern tomb of the family of McCarthy Mor. N. of the nave are the cloister, refectory, dormitory, and warden's house. The chief beauty of Muckross is the cloister, which is entered by a small door from the N. transept. It is remarkably perfect, and exhibits a series of graceful arches, ranged around a quadrangle about 50 feet square, and lighting a vaulted ambulatory. On the S. and E. sides these arches are roundheaded, while the rest are pointed. The buttresses are carried sloping from the ground without any uprights. The interior of the square is overshadowed by a gigantic yew-tree, with a girth of 13 ft., spreading branches throughout the whole area. At the angles of the ambulatory are staircases mounting to the domestic apartments, viz., kitchen, refectory (with large fireplace, and arched recess for sideboard), dormitory, &c. The care which is bestowed upon this monastery contrasts pleasantly with the neglect usually apparent in Irish monastic ruins, where in nine cases out of ten the mouldering relics of humanity are left bleaching in the open air.

Close to the hotel a road turns off on the l. to *Mangerton*, which rears its huge mass to the height of 2756 ft. It is not by any means a picturesque mountain, being rounded and monotonous in outline ; but it is a favourite ascent with Killarney visitors, on account of the magnificent view gained from the summit, and its easy accessibility, a fair road winding up almost to the top, so that ladies can ride up. When the visitor gains a plateau at about a third of the height he finds, as usual, the ad libitum accompaniment of mountain-dew girls, buglers, and idle guides, who from their elevated resting-places can spy every traveller. The pedestrian need not imagine, therefore, that he can dodge them by leaving the road, for they are sure to cut him off somewhere. At the steepest point, ¾ of the way up, it will be observed that Mangerton, although so regular in outline from below, is abruptly divided into two great depressions, the one to the W. being a crater-like hollow, from which the mountain rises

steeply on every side, the hollow being occupied by a considerable tarn known as the Devil's Pundibowl from which issues one of the streams that contribute to form Torc waterfall.

An old hag has her station at a little well at the mouth of the Bowl who, true to the creed of the nation, endeavours to levy a toll on the credulous visitor.

From hence a very steep "breather" lands the visitor on the summit of Mangerton, when he will perceive that the eastern boundary wall of the Punchbowl is very narrow, and separates it from a much more precipitous and magnificent cwm or corrie, known as Glenacappul, or the Horses' Glen, as fine a bit of scenery as any in the district. A chain of 3 small tarns, Lough Erhogh, Lough Managh, and Lough Garagarry, are almost entirely hemmed in by the precipitous cliffs of the mountains around, the hill which immediately adjoins, and in fact forms part of Mangerton, being called Stoompa.

A little more to the E., situated in a basin at the junction of the bases of Mangerton and Crohane (2102 ft.) is the large deep lake of Lough *Guitane*, where the fisher is sure of good sport. The trout grow to a great size, one weighing 50 lbs. having been captured in this lake. It is, however, not easy to fish without a boat.

The view from Mangerton is superb, embracing in the E. Crohane, the Paps, Cahirbarnagh, and all that extensive country lying between Millstreet, Mallow, and Tipperary, with the blue range of the Galtys in the far distance. Northward, and to the W. is Tralee, with the Slieve-mish mountains in the neighbourhood of Dingle and Ventry, while a faint white line in the horizon marks the north estuary of the Shannon as it flows past Tarbert and Kilrush. Due west are the Torc, the Purple Mountains, and the Reeks, with Castlemaine Haven and the Laune running at their feet; to the S. is an immense sea of hills occupying the district towards Kenmare. The Bays of Kenmare and Bantry are prominent objects in this view—a view which never can be blotted out from the memory. At the foot lie the Lakes of Killarney in all their beauty, with the thick woods and groves encircling their shores. It ought to be mentioned that views, much superior to Mangerton, can be obtained from the Purple Mt.

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