Tour in Ireland

A holiday tour in Europe

Joel Cook

1889

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HOLYHEAD, July 25.

There is in Chester a venerable structure known as the Church of St. John Baptist, which is said to be as old as the Cathedral. Much of it is in ruins, with ivy and moss over-running the broken arches and half-destroyed stone-work. It is preserved with scrupulous care, railed in to protect it from vandalism, and is regarded as one of the greatest curiosities of this very curious town. It adjoins Grosvenor Park, a very fine bit of beautifully-ornamented grounds, running down to the river Dee, and containing a statue of the late Marquis of Westminster, and two large cannons captured from the Russians at Sebastopol. In this park I observed our well-known weed, the mullein, growing in the flower gardens, and evidently cultivated very carefully. I asked a native what it was, and was told it was a " hexotic, and very rare, indeed, sir." Among other curiosities of Chester were four battle-flags, set up in the nave of the Cathedral, two of which had been at Waterloo and two at Bunker Hill ; but the latter were British flags. The old inns of Chester are some of them very curious, and, like many of the other houses, are ancient buildings, set gable-end to the street, and sometimes protruding upon it. Whether they violate street lines and boundaries or not, they are carefully preserved in their old-time condition. I saw among these inns the " Bear's Paw," the " Liver," and the " Old Nag's Head." Some of their signs were very odd. They announced that they kept newspapers, also " tea, coffee, and hot water ;" and in one case " ham and eggs, good beds, and beer." The Grosvenor family, who are the chief people here, and of whom the Duke of Westminster is the head, appear to be most liberal benefactors of the city. The home of the duke, at Eaton Hall, outside the town, is one of the famous great houses of England, surrounded by magnificent grounds, and itself a palace of large proportions. Its interior decorations are magnificent, among them being a small tessellated pavement, which cost eight thousand dollars. It contains many costly paintings. Its architecture is Gothic, and repairing and altering are continually going on, the duke being one of those unsatisfied men with full purses who are always tearing down and building up. It is probable before he dies he will get the house so built as to suit him ; but then, as we were told, his son, when he comes into possession of the title and estate, intends to tear it all down and build it over again, as it does not please him at all. " But it is all right, you know," said our informant ; " makes trade, you know."

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The Irish Mail.

The great mails between England and the United States, although carried upon steamers sailing to and from Liverpool, do not pass through that city. They are taken from and put on board the steamers at Queenstown, and they are carried to and from London on one of the fastest trains that run in this country of fast railway travelling. This train is known as the Irish mail, and it passes through Dublin, Holyhead, and Chester, crossing the Irish Channel by

express-boats, so that the time occupied in making the journey is several hours shorter than the steamer time between London and Queenstown, thus expediting the mails. The road over which this mail goes is one of the most costly in Great Britain. It runs from Chester west along the river Dee to the sea, and thence along the bases of the Welsh mountains westward through Wales, Anglesea, and Holy Isle to Holyhead, the most westerly projecting point of Wales, jutting out into the sea and surmounted by a revolving light, which is one of the great landmarks of this coast. It passes through a rugged and picturesque country, but is so frequently interspersed with tunnels to get through the mountains that it really seems as if one-fourth of the entire distance ran through the bowels of the earth. The entire line is a succession of rock-cuttings, galleries, retaining-walls, tunnels, and costly bridges, which must have cost millions of money to construct. On this railway is Stephenson's tubular bridge, erected across the Conway River in 1848, and also the stupendous Britannia tubular bridge which crosses the Menai Strait, and is famous the world over. This bridge was erected by Stephenson, is one thousand five hundred and thirteen feet long, cost five million dollars, and stands one hundred and four feet above the water, being elevated to allow vessels to pass under. It was nearly five years building, and gets its name from the Britannia Rock, which stands in mid-channel, and supports the central pier. It consists of a pair of square wrought-iron tubes, through which the trains run as through a tunnel. Huge lions, carved out of the solid rock, stand on both sides of each entrance, elevated high above the track. This bridge, and, indeed, the entire line of railway, is a monument to the genius of Robert Stephenson, whose engineering skill is held in fond memory throughout the entire country, and is marked by frequent statues and other memorials. The railway runs through rich pasture-lands in portions, in which graze many sheep and large herds of coal-black cows ; in fact, cows of any other color seem to be scarce in this part of Wales. It runs past collieries, slate-mines, and any number of castles perched on the hills, relics of feudal times, and of the days when the Welsh had to keep a sharp lookout for marauders from the sea. Nearly every station is a watering-place, and bathers could be seen going into the surf from the cosy little bathing-machines, which are wheeled out into the water. The railway train shoots past the ponderous ruins of Conway Castle, and almost under the bastioned and crumbling walls of that ancient burgh. In St. Mary's church-yard of that city are many ancient tombs of the good people of a day far gone, and among them is the tomb of a Welshman, of a family who, evidently, served their country well,—Nicholas Hookes, of whom it is recorded that his father had forty-seven children, while Nicholas himself had twenty-seven children. The American tourist, however, in this land, should not venture far away from the railway carriage door, unless he does not fear getting lost. If he once got out of sight of the railway he would have difficulty in inquiring his way back again. In order to make a record of the route followed by the railway between Chester and Holyhead, through Wales, I will mention that it passes by stations known as Gwyrck Castle, Prestalyn, Rhyl, Colwyn, Tal-y-Caln, Bettws-y-coed, Penumaenmawr, Llanfairfechan, Pontrhytholtt, Cwmyglo, Llanwmda, Tycroes, and a few other important places of the same sort. If the tourist cuts this out for reference he will stand some chance of not going astray on the Irish mail line through Wales. But if he should get lost in this neighborhood it is only necessary to inquire for Tanyrallt, Caen Gwyllym, or Caerheddynog, and all will be right.

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Holyhead.

Holyhead gets its chief importance from the fact that it is the point of transfer from train to boat on the route to Dublin. It evidently has a large trade, for no less than nine steamers of the through lines were in harbor when I sailed. It is an ancient city, and has various quaint build-

ings, whilst the proprietors of its inns spend their time chiefly in endeavoring to get the passengers to stop for refreshments,—a task which seems to be but poorly rewarded. Holyhead has a good harbor, protected by a fine breakwater, and is used as a port of refuge for vessels in the Irish Channel. The railway is building a new station, which, when completed, will be a finer station than any we have in Philadelphia, and apparently as large as our largest. Like all the railway construction here, it is being built in most imposing style, of cut-stone and brick, and in connection there is being constructed a basin, so that the steamers can enter at all stages of the tide. Five dollars per week seemed to be the prevailing wages for labor on this work, the men working from 6 A.M. to 5.30 P.M., with a half-hour for breakfast and an hour for dinner. This seemed to be the standard rate for most male labor, so far as I could learn, whilst female domestic servants get from one dollar and twenty-five cents to one dollar and fifty cents per week. At Holyhead I was much impressed with the fact that the schools kept all summer. We saw a school dismiss at 5 P.M., and asking for a look at the boys' books, found they were learning to write, presenting very fair copy-books. They were all chubby-faced Welsh boys, in perfect health, and claiming a thorough knowledge of English. They understood our language when spoken to, but when they answered I found their English was not the kind that I had learned. The attempt to talk finally became so ludicrous that the boys could stand it no longer, but pointing to our straw hats, which seemed to amuse them very much, they gave us three cheers as we retreated discomfited before this new Welsh invasion. We discovered enough, however, to be able to note that in that school at least there was no summer holiday. How the teachers must long to emigrate to free America, where education works somewhat differently !

Holyhead is among the high hills, which run down abruptly to the water, presenting an iron-bound coast, but a most picturesque one. As the steamer receded from the shores of Wales we saw the white light-houses ranging along the coast. The excellent lighting of all the British shores was again most forcibly impressed upon us.

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Brown Stout and The Phœnix.

DUBLIN, July 27.

Dublin, as most Irishmen and a few Americans know, stands on the Liffey River, a beautiful stream, but full of shoals, and navigable only a few miles from its mouth. The entrance from the Irish Channel is beautiful, the renowned Hill of Howth guarding it on one hand, and Kingstown on the other. Very large amounts have been spent in keeping the channel open so as to maintain navigation up to the city, but only with indifferent success, for as soon as dredging ceases the channel fills. The entrance is, therefore, a perfect marvel of light-houses, buoys, dykes, etc., showing that only the utmost perseverance will accomplish the result desired. The buoys are huge beacons, some with balls, others with lights, and three or four dredging-machines were at work as we passed. This work maintains a large and valuable commerce. The quays are lined with vessels, and the trade of the city, judging from the shipping in port, is of great importance. In fact, the largest ships are able to enter the port through the means employed to maintain the channel, and, as the second city in the British Islands, Dublin deserves an open road to the sea.

You no sooner land at Dublin than you find unmistakable evidences of being in an Irish city. At the quay, when the baggage is brought to the place of delivery—a hundred or more trunks piled on a huge car—a score of Irishmen rush at the pile with a cheer, and carry it off

with a struggle suggesting Donnybrook Fair. You select your man, show him your trunk, and without check or any other certificate he grabs it, upsetting whatever may be between. Mounting on a jaunting-car, with your legs dangling over the sides, you travel to the hotel ; and then, when you put your hand in your pocket to pay the fare, it is naively suggested by the cabby, " Your worship, for the love of your children, plaze remember the driver." There's luck in odd numbers, said Rory O'More; therefore, when the hotel guests sat down to dinner, the head-waiter carefully counted them, and finding the number even, he sent out for a representative of the house to come in and sit down, so as not to spoil the adage ; and not to forget old friends, this Irish hotel, remembering the ancient alliance, served dinner with a French bill of fare.

Most tourists visit Dublin to see the buildings, and, like the rest, I thought this the necessary thing to do. But whilst outside of Dublin, the Cathedral, the Castle, Christ Church, the Bank, the Four Courts, Custom-House, and Trinity College were greatly praised,—yet inside the city, in the estimation of most of the denizens with whom I came in contact, these were cast in the shade by the greater glories of Brown Stout and the Phœnix. The buildings I have named are all of them fine structures, well worth going a long distance to see. The Castle, with its broad court-yards and its beautiful little chapel ; the huge Four Courts ; the spreading greens and spacious buildings containing the one thousand students of Trinity College ; the grand semi-circular front of the Bank of Ireland, with its imposing colonnade ; the beautiful ornamentation of Christ Church, the Cathedral of the English Church ; the hundreds of magnificent private buildings ; the columns, statues, monuments, squares, and quays,—all make Dublin one of the most attractive cities of the Old World. The atmosphere gives them all the sombre appearance customary in every town in the United Kingdom, and this flavor of antiquity adds to their attractions. It is probable that the Bank of Ireland is historically the most famous of all these buildings. Before the Union Act was passed, at the beginning of this century, which united Great Britain and Ireland under one parliamentary government, the Irish Parliament met in this building, with its two Houses of Peers and Commons. The last sitting of this Parliament was held October 2, 1800, when the Irish Union bill was put through by methods which the Irish people will never forget, and which dwarf anything that is told of American legislative doings. It cost, to get a majority sufficient to pass the bill, according to the standard guide to the city, fifteen million dollars compensation to members, twenty-nine new peerages, twenty promotions in the peerage, and six million three hundred and sixty thousand dollars compensation to boroughs ; or, as the guide-book says, " rather to those who considered themselves, from their influence, owners of the same." It evidently paid in those days for a politician to " run his division" in Ireland. The Bank of Ireland now has its chief office in the spacious hall formerly occupied by the Irish House of Commons. St. Patrick's Cathedral is probably the largest church in Ireland, and is a beautiful structure, which was not long ago reconstructed at the expense of Sir Benjamin Lee Guinness, who paid about one million dollars for the work, an act of munificence which has enhanced the Dublin veneration for brown stout,—A. Guinness, Son & Co. being the great brewers here, and being known in the remotest parts of the world, wherever their single or double stout may have penetrated.

A visit to the brewery will very well inspire equal veneration in the stranger. It is a brewery covering forty acres, compactly occupied by brew-houses, malt-floors, stables, packing- and cleansing-rooms, and, vast as the establishment is, it is evidently not large enough for its growing trade, as there is building another huge brewing-house of large dimensions with the necessary adjuncts. Everything necessary to the trade is constructed on this ground, even the water being pumped from its own well, over one hundred feet deep, and the latest appliances are in use for every part of the work. Machinery does almost everything, and yet fourteen

hundred men are employed in the establishment. A railway siding enters the works ; a special narrow-gauge railway with five locomotives and one hundred cars connects different parts of the brewery and transports the casks to the quay on the Liffey River, in front, whence they are shipped on nine steamers to the lower portion of the river, where they are transferred to the shipping ; and one hundred and thirty horses are necessary to draw the wagons serving the town, and provide other transportation not covered by steam. The extensive stables are among the great curiosities of the place. Each horse has a wide stall with separate hay and feed boxes and drinking basin, supplied by a separate faucet. On the wall above the horse's name is inscribed on a plate.

The brewing capacity of the works is about two hundred and fifty thousand gallons daily, and for storage, prior to shipment, one hundred and fifty vats, each holding nearly one hundred thousand gallons, are used, and yet there is not enough room. Everything is done on the most enormous scale. There are acres covered with machines washing, steaming, and drying barrels, of which over four hundred and fifty thousand are in use, and long lines of pipes filling barrels. Everything is utilized. The waste that flows over the bung when the cask is filled is run into drains and pumped into vats. The yeast skimmed off is put under a press, drained of every drop of beer, and then, when in a condition resembling oil cake, is sold to distillers, who manage to extract spirits from it. So vast an establishment is well calculated to increase any one's veneration for brown stout.

The Phœnix, which is also the admired of all Dublin, stands on a high column in the centre of Phœnix Park, surrounded by rural loveliness of every description. The beautiful green sward, the grand old trees, the brier and furze, the deer and cattle in the grand old park, with its long vistas of view disclosing the Wicklow Mountains, and its lovely slopes down to the Liffey, here a narrow but pretty stream, are well calculated to win admiration. This, some seven or eight miles in circumference, and covering over seventeen hundred acres, is said to be the largest park at any city in Britain. It reminds me in many respects of Fairmount Park, though it has nothing like the river views, for it is generally level, and its gardeners seem to endeavor to preserve nature in the shape of green grass, fine trees and shrubbery, rather than pile up artificial views and mounds and dig out artificial valleys at enormous cost. The Phœnix, indeed, well deserves to be the Irishman's delight, and his home is one of the loveliest on the face of the earth. In Dublin we were reminded of Philadelphia by finding the Baldwin Locomotive Works Catalogue and the Pennsylvania Railroad excursion route book in the hotels ; both being well studied by the visitors.

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The Dublin Suburbs.

The suburbs of Dublin, in every direction, are beautiful. There is every variety of hill and vale ; of landscape and water ; of highly-ornamented and cultivated grounds, with pretty hedges, and solid stone fences dividing the fields. Occasionally there is seen a wooden fence, but they are rare. Some of the houses are ornate, and there is every evidence of wealth and refinement in the villas of the gentry surrounding the city. The country is also full of low-thatched cottages, generally one-story stone buildings, with steep roofs. The thatch is very thick, and fastened down with wires. Ruins are occasionally seen, which are turned into dwellings. In one case—a small church—families lived in the nave and transepts, and hung out their wash-clothes and kept their donkeys in the roofless choir. All the roads are good, but the wagons, as in all parts of the British Islands, reverse the American rule, and keep to the *left* instead of the *right*. This is the ancient British custom, allowing the vehicle approaching

to pass on the side on which the driver sits, and is more convenient than the American rule. But I am told it was reversed in the United States after the Revolution, our people desiring to do nothing in the same way as the mother-country did, and, therefore, determining to “ keep to the right,” whilst the Englishmen did the other thing. I do not vouch for this, but give the tradition as told to me. There are plenty of little donkeys on these roads dragging loads that would be sufficient for most horses. In many cases women guide them, and look very odd trudging along with their shillelahs and having confidential talks with the “ baste,” the object of which is to get him to go faster. Throughout all this region, as in England, the idea of privacy and exclusiveness prevails, as shown by the height of boundary walls and the wholesale manner in which broken glass is stuck endwise in mortar on the top to keep people from clambering over. The fashion in the United States of tramping at will over any man’s land is here repressed with severity. Dublin, like most English cities, is a sufferer from the smoky atmosphere, which makes everything dingy, and the appearance of its many statues is marred by their very dirty faces. Dublin street naming and numbering might also be improved by adopting the Philadelphia system. A street will have a new name every few squares, and each section of the street has its own set of numbers, which begin at one end, run along consecutively on one side to the other end, and then back again along the other side to the place of beginning, the last number on the street thus being exactly opposite the first.

In the Hill of Howth, however, Dublin has its greatest admired suburb. This is a hill six hundred feet high, jutting out into the sea and guarding the entrance to the river. It commands a glorious view and slopes down abruptly to the water, the breakers beating against its base. Whilst the Liffey washes one foot of this hill, a deep bay, converted at large cost into a harbor of refuge, is at the other. This bay was filled with fishing-vessels with dark-brown sails. The base of this grand hill has an occasional beach, which is availed of as a bathing-place, and its slopes are very beautiful, covered with heather and furze, with variegated wild-flowers, scarlet, yellow, and blue, adding to the charm. It is just such a place as would attract vast crowds if near an American city ; but, excepting on Sunday, but few seemed to visit it from Dublin. Near by is a strange rocky island, called Ireland’s Eye, while the Devil’s Bed was a curious rock near the shore. Howth, we were told at the inn, was the last place his Satanic Majesty stopped at in Ireland, and he slept the last night in this bed. He did not leave for good, however, our informant added, as he now comes back occasionally to look after all persons “ who take lodgings in the town, but are too mane to ate anything at the howtel.” We lunched there to avoid any difficulty.

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Crossing Boyne Water.

BELFAST, July 29.

Irish politics transferred to America usually culminate on July 12, when the anniversary comes of the famous Orange crossing of Boyne water. I never could understand why this conflict of two centuries ago should be transferred to American soil, and I understand it less now that I have also crossed Boyne water, and found it a very peaceful stream of small dimensions, dyked in to preserve the channel, and in this way narrowed to but little more than the width of the canal through Smith’s Island. Although it was only about two weeks after the anniversary of the crossing, I saw nothing of any indication of party conflict about it, and at Drogheda, on the river, I asked a native what he knew about the famous battle, and he replied that he had lived in those parts these five-and-thirty years, and no “ foight” had taken place there to his knowledge. Yet the result of the Battle of the Boyne was that Drogheda

surrendered to the Orange party, and James II. was overthrown, though the Droghedans of the present day may care little about it. There is certainly ground for the belief that Irishmen going to America are foolish in carrying over that water the strifes which may distract the old country they have abandoned. I crossed Boyne water in the opposite direction from the Orangemen. I came from Dublin, whilst James II., after his defeat, ran away to Dublin on his way to France, and, blaming the defeat which his own weakness and incapacity caused upon the Irish troops who stood manfully by him, he said they had run away very fast. To this an Irishwoman, Lady Tyrconnel, quickly retorted, that His Majesty had certainly won the race, as he had got to Dublin first. The Boyne at Drogheda is a beautiful stream. The railway bridge is raised high above it, affording a charming view up and down the river, where the slopes of the old banks have been highly cultivated, and most of the river-bed outside the dykes has been reclaimed and converted into rich fields. The Boyne was as peaceful and its verdant banks as smiling as they could possibly be. Although the train was chiefly laden with red-coat soldiers there were no other signs of war.

These red-coated soldiers and some in darker uniforms have been a leading feature in the scene ever since I landed in Her Majesty's dominions. Large numbers of them have been met everywhere, with their short-tailed scarlet coats, almost dazzling the eyes, and their little apologies of visorless caps stuck on one side of the head, which the wind would blow away were they not fastened at the chin. The darker uniforms are not so glaring. These soldiers are chiefly the reserves, got under arms and put in camp during the conflict with Russia, but now being disbanded and sent home. They appear by hundreds everywhere, but in a few days will probably all be sent home ; then only the regulars in the garrison towns will be seen. Crowds assemble at the railway stations to welcome the returning troops, and give the scene some-what the appearance of that at the close of the Rebellion, when our regiments were returning home to go out of service. These British troops carry their clothing in white canvas bags, usually tucked under the arm. They have only very small knapsacks.

From Dublin, past Dunkalk, Balbriggan, Newry, Portadown, and Balmoral to Belfast is a beautiful ride. At first the line skirts along the Irish Sea, and gives splendid views over the water. Then it strikes inland into a rich agricultural country, interspersed with bogs, and gives an idea of this part of the Irish life. Sometimes when the railway ran along a hillside a beautiful view would be disclosed for miles across a country, showing the richness of the land and the thoroughness of the agriculture. The view from Basbrook across the valley of Newry was particularly fine, reminding one of the Chester Valley, excepting that hedges and stone walls replaced the fences of that beautiful region, and low thatched cottages represented the thrifty farm-houses. Hundreds of women as well as men were working in the fields, for it was harvest-time. Before we left Philadelphia we had seen the hay and wheat-harvest there, but now, more than three weeks afterwards, came upon the Irish gathering their crops. And such crops ! especially the hay. The yield is enormous, larger than it has been for many years, and much larger per acre than around Philadelphia. The oats, barley, and potatoes are still growing, and promise also a good yield. The smallness of the fields particularly surprised me, for it was a rarity to find one of over four acres. The carefulness with which every inch of available ground was cultivated was also plainly shown. They even mowed the railway embankments, and gathered crops from every portion of the land not actually occupied by the tracks. The women worked as hard as the men, stopping a moment to look at the train and then going on again. The peat-bogs were being dug for turf, which was cut out into pieces resembling large bricks and piled up to dry. Much of this sort of work was going on, as a large portion of this country seemed boggy. Nearly every cultivated field was provided with underground drainage, showing what an expensive business farming in this moist country is. As the railway—which, by the way, was in some portions so constructed as to give more

exercise to the mile than any American railroad I have ever been on—reached Belfast, a change came over the scene. The large linen-factories, for which this section is famous, began to appear, and the ground was covered with myriads of pieces of linen laid out to bleach. It was laid upon delicate green sward, each field having a pond in the centre, where the water to be sprinkled upon the linen was obtained. Millions of yards were thus spread out, in long pieces, all around us, presenting an odd sight. And then we soon came to Belfast, the headquarters of the trade, nestling under the high limestone hills, which not only make the scene so picturesque, but also give the city protection from the severity of northern and western gales.

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Linen and The Absentee.

The crowning summit of the range of hills protecting Belfast is a noble peak known as Cave Hill, from the slopes of which there is a glorious view over Belfast Lough, the city and the sea, whilst from the summit, on a clear day, Scotland is visible. On this hill-side is the castle of the Marquis of Donegal, about a mile from the highway, and in a park said to be four miles in circumference. The marquis owns the land on which the city is built, whilst linen has built it up. Yet, with an income from his leases estimated from one million to one million five hundred thousand dollars, the host of this princely estate has never made it his residence, and only built the castle five years ago, to which he makes probably one or two visits a year. “ The Estate,” as it is popularly called in the town, spreads everywhere, being managed by agents. Imagine a city, one-fourth the size of Philadelphia, paying rent to one man, giving him a princely income, and he spending his time and money elsewhere. Such a thing would be in conflict with every American idea, yet it seems to be the rule with Irish landlords, and is the absenteeism of which the Irish so justly complain. Belfast, however, barring the rents, is as well off without as with its absent patroon. It is the only Irish city that grows, and in many characteristics reminds one of an American city, although there is a continual reminder of “ the Estate,” by seeing on signboards announcements of “ this building ground to be let forever ;” “ this concern to be let in perpetuity ;” “ apply to the Estate Agent.” Belfast has all the bustle, vigor, and push of an American town, and its streets and buildings and the smart movements of its people are a continual suggestion of the American way of doing things. Excepting that it would be wider and generally better paved, a section of a business street in Belfast is much similar to a section of a business street in Philadelphia. It is entirely unlike the other Irish cities in being just the opposite of them in the aspects of the people. Dublin appeared sleepy and languid, whilst Belfast rushed about with overflowing life. Yet Belfast keeps Sunday most rigorously ; the street-cars do not run, and everything is closed tight, the streets, excepting at church-time, being almost deserted. Whilst Belfast is up at daylight on week-days, it is very lazy on Sundays, and the morning church services do not begin until half-past eleven. The city is full of churches,—the Presbyterians being exceptionally strong,—and many are very fine buildings. The Scotch-Irish race impresses its marked characteristics upon everything about the city. St. Patrick’s Catholic Cathedral is also a beautiful building, and the front is adorned with a statue of Ireland’s patron saint. The Queen’s College, the Ulster Bank, the Presbyterian and Methodist Colleges, the Custom House, and several other structures, are also ornate buildings, though none of them are on the stupendous scale of similar buildings in the large cities of England. The Albert Memorial, on High Street, is a very fine clock tower. The Royal Botanic and Horticultural Society’s gardens are a fine enclosure, containing most beautiful flower-beds, exceeding anything of the kind yet attempted in Philadelphia. St. George’s Episcopal Church, a square structure similar to the olden style Philadelphia church, and much resembling it in the interior, required four clergy-

men to conduct the morning service, though it was done without the superfluous ceremony of Chester Cathedral. Rev. Dr. McIlwain, the vicar, rather astonished me by *not* preaching from a written sermon, but making an extemporaneous address from the pulpit, illustrated by quotations from a small pocket Bible, to which he frequently referred. The address, which was a fine specimen of educated Irish eloquence, was a strong political argument, urging that if the honor of the kingdom was at stake it was the duty of the people to fight ; praising the Ministry for having maintained the nation's rights and yet secured peace ; and declaring it to be the height of folly at this late day for Irishmen to keep up the Orange feud and on Orange day go out for a "commemoration," which meant getting drunk and into a broil. This doctrine he thrust home with strong illustrations from his small Bible, and he certainly made a good and sensible argument, declaring that in Ireland now all reputable people of whatever politics or religion abstained from Orange commemorations.

The dwellings of Belfast all look comfortable, and nearly every house has its window garden, giving a very cheerful appearance. The suburbs contain many fine villas, and jaunting-cars jog merrily along the well-paved roads, while the populace, of all degrees, ride in them, these being the chief method of conveyance. Many of the sidewalks are made of cobble-stones, not the uncomfortable kind that we have at home, but small ones, about two inches in diameter, carefully laid, and presenting a surface almost as good to tread upon as brick. The street numbering is also upon the satisfactory plan of odd numbers on one side and even ones on the other. Whilst Belfast has a large trade in cattle and agricultural products, and has to keep open its road to the sea by continual dredging, and is also a large cotton-manufacturing place, yet the chief glory of Belfast is the linen trade. For this it is renowned in all parts of the world, and by this its wealth has been made. Enormous mills surround it for miles, and its Exchange is known as " Linen Hall." Around this structure, which stands in a park and has a fine court-yard, cluster rows of warehouses, in which are stored the manufactured fabric, which, when bleaching, covers the fields for many miles around the city. One of the great mills, that of the Messrs. Mulholland, is an enormous pile of buildings, the firm employing in one way or another twenty-five thousand persons, of whom over three thousand work in the Belfast mill. Here the whole process of ordinary flax manufacture can be seen, from the rough hackling to the final weaving of the linen cloth, which is sent out to the greens in the country to dry. On entering the engine room of this great factory, I heard the familiar sound of the Corliss cut-off on the huge steam-engine which was driving the machinery. The engine was a new one, having been run but six months, and had been built expressly to have the Corliss attachments, which the Centennial Exhibition had brought to the attention of the house, and which the engineer warmly praised. Said he, though this new engine has seventy per cent, more power than our old one, this attachment enables us to drive it with less fuel ; we save thirteen bushels of coal a day. Only the cheaper linens are made by steam-driven machinery in the mills, of which there are a great number in and around Belfast. The finer linens and damasks are all made by hand, and, unless specially ordered, the finer qualities rarely reach America. The most famous Belfast factory for the character of its work is M. Andrews' royal manufactory of linens and damasks, at Ardoyne, in the suburbs of Belfast. Here, on hand-looms, are woven the finest fabrics for the royal families of Europe, goods being made to a fineness of one hundred and sixty threads to the inch. This factory, which is cheerfully shown, is one of the curiosities of this part of the world, the mysteries of weaving the beautiful patterns seen in table linen being of great interest. When I was there, three special patterns were going through the looms, decorated with special crests and coats of arms, one for the Duke of Edinburgh ; another for the Fishmongers' Company of London, one of the famous corporations of the metropolis ; and the third, an American order, which was a great rarity, was a pretty and appropriate design for Battery M, of the First Regiment of United States Artillery. This linen traffic appears in all parts of Belfast as its prominent

industry, and as a bustling business city, full of life, and, as it were, of American ideas and systems of doing things, it has no rival in Ireland. Belfast is well worth a visit from any American who desires to see a good representation of industry and thrift, and to get in what he sees a reminder of what he is used to at home.

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The Giant's Causeway.

PORT RUSH, IRELAND, July 30.

To go to the great Irish national curiosity, the Giant's Causeway, you take the Northern Counties of Ireland Railway, between Belfast and Londonderry (or, as it is universally called here, 'Derry), to Port Rush, on the extreme northern coast. This railway passes through a rich agricultural region, cultivated down to the very edge almost of the Atlantic Ocean, and on the way stops at the well-known towns of Ballymena, Culleybackey, Ternplepatrick, Ballykelly, Moneymore, Liuavady, Magilligan, Ballymagarrettknock, Cookstown, Carrickfergus Junction, Ballymoney, and several other places of like repute. These are all pleasant villages, and some quite large towns, with great linen-factories raising up their tall chimneys. They have first-rate railway stations, and exhibit a general appearance of thrift, beggars being few, and the industry of the Scotch-Irish race strongly developed. On all sides there are green fields, divided by hedgerows or walls, cultivated to the highest degree, peat bogs being industriously dug for the turf, which is stacked in piles to dry ; neat thatched cottages with their stacks of peat fuel ; flax ponds, around which the manufactured fabric is laid out to bleach ; and among all these is seen the gathering of the hay and flax harvests, both men and women working in the fields, making hay with their hands, without rake or fork ; or pulling up the flax and leaving it in long rows behind them, getting for their labor, as I was told, from thirty-five to fifty cents per day, according to whether the landlord provided their food. In one flax-field of about fifteen acres I counted forty of these working men and women gradually crossing it in a long row, pulling flax, which is dragged by hand out of the ground, roots and all. Around nearly every cottage are little flower-beds, the prominent growing plant being the fuchsia, which grows to large size in the open air and flowers beautifully. Nearly every window also has its garden. Throughout all this north end of Ireland, so far as I could judge, there was but little outward evidence of poverty, and the humblest thatched cottages I saw seemed cleanly and well cared for. This region has good landlords, I was told, who looked after the popular interests, and were well thought of. Across, on the west side of Lough Foyle, however,—the lough that leads up to 'Derry,—there was a different story. There were the estates of the late Lord Leitrim, and the people had no good word to say of him.

Whilst the railway approach to the Causeway is thus pleasant, the continuation of the journey from Port Rush eastward along the coast is decidedly primitive. Here is one of the wonders of the world, of equal fame with Niagara, yet no railway goes within eight miles of it, though, so far as engineering is concerned, its construction would be easy. These eight Irish miles have to be travelled in a jaunting-car, and the journey fully maintains the elastic reputation of the Irish mile, for it grows to about fifteen before the Causeway is reached, and requires nearly an hour and a half of fast trotting to accomplish, over a road which is a very good one. When St. Patrick measured the Irish mile he had with him a mad dog, whom he held with a woollen string. At the end of the mile the dog gave a leap, stretching the string, and this accounts for the elastic character of the Irish mile. It has only been within a brief period that there has been a well-kept hotel at the Causeway ; and in fact this great wonder is shown in the most un-American style possible. It was the height of the season, and one of the

finest days of the summer, yet not over a dozen visitors were at the place. If this great curiosity were as near Philadelphia as it is to Belfast, we would be running cheap excursion trains to it over broad and narrow gauge railroads, emptying out thousands of passengers to cut their initials in very bad letters upon the basalt rocks. It would be overrun with booths selling questionable drinks, and basket merchants vending peanuts. Yet not a booth was to be seen anywhere near the Causeway, and I do not believe there is one peanut in all Ireland. That great American institution is yet to be introduced into Her Majesty's dominions.

To the credit of the Earl of Antrim, the lord of the manor, it should be said that, without getting a penny of revenue from this noted possession of his, he has thrown it entirely open to the public, free of any fee or reward, and is in every way protecting it from vandalism. The Causeway is carefully preserved from relic-hunters, and I did not see any one's name carved or written upon any portion of it ; or any one's advertisement of soap or bitters or pop-corn adorning the rocks. The freedom of access is in marked contrast to the system at Niagara, where it is impossible to get a near view of the Falls without paying a tax to the proprietor of some garden or bridge, who purposely obstructs the view to gather the toll. Beggars and print and specimen venders are, however, the annoyance at the Causeway, and to an extent unknown in America. They dog the footsteps of visitors, and interfere seriously with the enjoyment of the visit. When the Emperor of Brazil was here, in 1876, a force of constabulary had to accompany him to keep off the horde who would quickly have despoiled him of all his loose change. A vigorous application of Anglo-Saxon is the best protection, for the kind of English an angry American talks is an unwonted tongue to these harpies, and it strikes them with awe.

Fin McCool was the Irish giant who made this region famous. He constructed this Causeway as a road to Scotland, landing at Staffa, for the purpose of inviting over a Caledonian giant for a fight. The Scot came, and, as the story is told in Ireland, got whipped. Perhaps if the story was told in Scotland the result might be different. Be that as it may, however, Fin McCool, with true Hibernian magnanimity, became the friend of the Scot, induced him to marry and settle in Ireland, " which everybody knows is the best country in the world ;" and then the Causeway being no longer wanted by the giants, it was sunk under the sea. only leaving a portion visible here, a little at Rathlin Island, ten miles off the coast, and the portals of the entrance at Fingal's Cave, in Staffa. Thus originated the Causeway, according to tradition. Geologists have some idea that it had a different formation, but as no two of them can agree on a theory about it, possibly we will be as well off if we adhere to the tradition. All the way from Port Rush to the Causeway are seen relics of the great Irish giant. The entire coast is a wonderful formation : a high, bold, rocky coast, of limestone and basalt, towering sometimes as high as four hundred feet above the water. These rocks are hewn and wrought by the constant action of the waves into caves, archways with natural bridges, enormous cauldrons, curious profiles, honeycombs, and every sort of fantastic shape. Here we have Fin's Punch-Bowl, wherein the sea, when a northern gale blows, boils around furiously ; his face, a rock one hundred feet high, which is a colossal forehead, nose, mouth, and chin of almost perfect form, and a much larger formation than the profile on the White Mountains in New England ; his grandmother, a perfect representative of an old woman stooping over and bent with age, this rock, weighing seven tons, being declared to be a petrifaction of his grandmother, thus punished for having three husbands ; his loom, whereon he formerly knit his garters and stockings, and his wash-tub at the mouth of a cave, always filled with soapsuds, wherein he washes his shirt in the mornings. On the Causeway itself we have the giant's crown ; his pulpit, from which his sermons when he preaches can be heard all the way to Scotland ; his church, with its steeple ; his organ, which every seventh year on Christmas morning plays while all the rocks dance, the tunes being " St. Patrick's Day in the

Morning" and " Boyne Water," both being adopted so as to secure strict impartiality ; his chimneys, which rise up like so many chimney-pots above the Causeway, and the Scotch cap of his foe, which was dropped in the water when the Scot was vanquished. These things are no mere fanciful representations, but are almost as perfect resemblances of the things named as if the sculptor had gone there and carved them. The organ has all its pipes. The Scotch cap has the knot tied behind. The church has nave, transept, and peaked roof. The crown is massive, but true to its name. The chimneys possess everything but the smoke. There is also a rock called the Lion's Paw, an extraordinary formation, jutting out into the sea, and looking just as if some colossal lion had gone there and laid down his foot upon a huge pedestal. On this coast there is also a remarkable ruin, which is a curiosity of human work, as strange as the natural ones referred to. This is Dunluce Castle, also belonging to the Earl of Antrim. It stands upon an isolated rock rising precipitously over one hundred feet above the sea, standing close to the rocks on shore, but cut off from them. On this rock, and entirely covering it, are the roofless ruins of the old castle, hoary with age, with vines overrunning them, and dating back no one knows how far. The dark-brown ruins are very picturesque, and are accessible only by a narrow bridge, raised high above the water, and not three feet wide. It is the subject of endless tradition and romance, and is underlaid by a cave only accessible from the sea at low water. This entire coast is honeycombed and washed by the sea into extraordinarily fantastic shapes. Against it beat the waves of the broad Atlantic, no land being interposed between this coast and the hyperborean regions.

Of the Giant's Causeway itself it is difficult to give an intelligible description. It is certainly unlike anything I have heretofore seen, and also unlike the idea I had formed of it from reading descriptions. If descriptions could not give me the proper idea, I must hesitate to communicate it by any words of mine. Two grand amphitheatres facing the north are hewn in the rocks on the coast, their background rising to a height of four hundred and twenty feet above the water. On the upper faces of those amphitheatres are columnar rocks, not unlike the palisades of the Hudson, but more perfectly formed. On the easternmost verge a high, bold headland extends into the sea. Between the two another headland not so bold, but broken down at the end, also extends into the sea. On the side of this is the organ, and from the top rise the chimneys. In front is the Lover's Rock, a leap from which, four hundred feet, into the sea, is a sure cure for love. These two amphitheatres are the setting enclosing the Causeway. It stretches out from the western amphitheatre for one thousand feet into the sea. It is low down,—so low that during gales the water entirely covers it,—and it gradually slopes down until lost to view under the water. Suppose that some one had driven about four thousand piles into the water, as closely together as they could be placed, with their tops very nearly levelled off, though somewhat irregular, and an idea can be got of the Causeway. Suppose, further, that all these piles were stone columns, accurately cut and polished into prisms varying from three to nine sides, no two of them shaped exactly alike, yet all of them so accurately fitted together that water can scarcely penetrate the seams, and there will be an idea of the formation. Then take every column and break it into pieces from one to two feet long, but leave them all standing, and cut off the tops so that some will be a foot higher than others, and there will be an idea of the surface. These columns, whilst so accurately fitted, can yet be taken apart with-out trouble, and, in fact, the Causeway was in danger, some time ago, of being carried away bodily, until the lord of the manor stopped it. No stonemason could do better work than this wonderful formation shows, and it looks as if set up block by block in the amphitheatre, and then gradually sunk into the sea. The visitor can tramp all over the Causeway, excepting where the water covers it, and in doing this will walk over the heads of some four thousand columns. In the midst of it, he can take a drink from a spring which has some wonderful quality which I have forgotten, the water of which is said to weigh one ounce less per pint than any other water in Ireland. He can also sit in the " wishing chair" and

have his desires fulfilled in a twelvemonth. Cows and sheep were grazing on the borders of the Causeway where the grass grows among the rocks, and I learnt the important fact that white sheep eat more in Ireland than black ones, because there are more of them.

Two extraordinary caves are shown adjoining the Causeway, one of which penetrates over three hundred feet and the other over six hundred feet ; both being very high, one having an ornate Gothic arch at the entrance, and into both the boat into which you get to visit them is rowed for some distance, a pistol being fired off and noises made to develop the echoes, whilst the coloring on the rocks under water is magnificent. It is no easy task for the four stout oarsmen who pull the boat to breast the waves of the Atlantic, and force her around the rough rocks to get at the entrances of these caves. At the same time it is impossible to get a view of the surroundings of the Causeway, which are very grand, without going in the boat, whilst a guide is also necessary. This great natural curiosity ought to be made more accessible, but it is still possible by an early start to see it all and get back to Belfast in a day ; and at a cost, including all fees and swindles,—for there are some practised upon the visitor,— of not over five dollars for each person, if there is a party. The railway fare is two dollars and twenty-five cents, the jaunting-car fare sixty-two cents, the boat two dollars, and the guide one dollar and twenty-five cents, all reasonable, and the fees for boat and guide being the same for one person or a half-dozen. But the jaunting-car driver wants sixpence and each boatman sixpence extra for himself, besides forcing you to buy specimens at fifty cents a box, and raising a commotion if you don't buy a box from each boatman. These are swindles, and ought to be suppressed, especially as good specimens can be got on shore for half the money, but the aggregate swindle does not amount to any great sum, and is, probably, much less than it would be if a genuine Yankee were imported to " run" the Causeway. As it is impossible to see such an extraordinary formation anywhere else for less, or indeed for any money, we may possibly be willing, in the interests of sight-seeing, to permit these descendants of Fin McCool to swindle us to the modest extent which seems to content them.

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The Two Clydes.

GLASGOW, August 1.

It is a very common thing in Philadelphia to speak of the Delaware River as the Clyde of America, but, excepting that iron ships are built on both and both run down to the sea, there is no resemblance between them. Glasgow would be a proud city and would have saved millions of money had she such a noble highway as the Delaware leading to her quays. She would make very much more of her facilities in such a case than Philadelphia does. But, instead of a river of the width of the Delaware, I found the Clyde a stream much smaller than the Schuylkill, and corresponding about to the Rancocas Creek. It would be perfectly feasible to make the Rancocas as famous and as deep as the Clyde (it is now as wide) if it had Glasgow located upon it, with Scotch energy to do the work. There is no better evidence of the ability of human hands to make a seaport where nature did not intend one to exist than is to be seen at Glasgow. In former times, Greenock was the port of Glasgow. Greenock stands at the point where the Clyde River debouches into the Firth of Clyde, and above it in those days the river was an insignificant stream, with barely nine feet depth in the twenty-two miles of water up to Glasgow. But the canny Scots determined to have a port, and their achievements in deepening, embanking, and preserving the river, and making their city one of the great ports of the world, have brought them renown.

I came across the Irish Sea in a Cunard steamer from Belfast, Ireland, one of a fleet of no less than seven large steamers, that leave Belfast every evening for British and Scotch ports, laden with cattle and food supplies, for which Ireland is drawn upon so largely to feed her neighbors, and carrying hundreds of passengers. The commerce between these islands is very great, and requires a large amount of tonnage. On our steamer were no less than a hundred beef cattle. On another were large droves of sheep. Ireland is the grazing farm for Britain. The journey is performed during the night, and the Firth of Clyde is entered about three o'clock next morning, it being already almost sunrise.

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