

## IRISH INDUSTRIAL ENTERPRISES.

From *Mulholland in the N. Y. Catholic Review.*

The great institution of the asylum for the Blind at Merrion, near Dublin, which employs and supports four hundred souls, is instanced as a type of a work of women which is beyond all praise; and yet another unique among all, is that of the Hospice for the Dying at Harold's Cross, near Dublin, instituted and carried on by the Sisters of Charity. In this kind of women's work in Ireland the religious orders, of course, take the lead—their enterprises dwarf all those of their secular sisters, whether Catholic or Protestant. Yet it is pleasant to know that a great many useful industries have sprung up throughout Ireland, many of them initiated and carried on by Protestant ladies, and the histories of some of these works make particularly interesting reading. Most people who are concerned about Ireland know how remote from the world are the peasantry of Connemara, surrounded by their lonesome mountains, many and many a mile from a line of railway, cut off from employment, and from all market for the product of any labor they might undertake. At a place called Letterpuck, beside the Twelve Pins of Connemara, a kind hearted lady named Miss Sturge has taken up her abode for the purpose of instructing the young people in the art of making wicker-work. Her plan was to bring over a skilled wicker-worker from France, and thus she succeeded in doing. A loan of the court-house of the district was obtained as a workshop for the first start, and afterwards a technical school for the teaching of the art was erected, besides a factory, all enclosed within a large iron building which is now a centre of industry, sending forth beautiful delicate work in wicker, all kinds of useful household articles, including beds, chairs, tables, book cases. Almost any article can be made in wicker, to order, by Miss Sturge's clever young people, who are said to possess great delicacy and taste in the style of their work. The employment given, of course, brings its remuneration, for Miss Sturge manages to find a market for the goods produced, and the condition of the peasantry of the countryside is materially improved by her brave enterprise.

Another highly successful undertaking for providing remunerative employment for the population of very poor districts of Ireland is carried on by Mrs. Rogers at Carrick in Donegal, and Carna in Connemara. Mrs. Rogers had engaged to provide a large number of knitted gloves of a particular and difficult pattern for the English market, and came to Ireland to seek for workers. At first, on arriving at Carrick, she met with great difficulties. Everyone distrusted her, no one would put her in the way of getting what she wanted. It happened fortunately that she had brought with her an Irish Catholic young lady who bethought her of making known the wishes and intentions of the travellers to the parish priest of Carrick. The priest of course soon perceived the blessing which Providence was sending to his poor half-famished flock, and warmly entered into the plans which Mrs. Rogers hastened to lay before him. On the following Sunday he addressed his congregation from the altar on the subject of the proffered employment, and urged the women and girls of the parish to come in their numbers and receive instruction which the ladies were anxious to give them, and which would enable them to earn food for themselves and their families.

Very touching is Mrs. Rogers account of the haste and ardor with which the poor women responded to the priest's appeal; of how they travelled long miles from the hills and valleys, and crowded into and around the rooms where she was prepared to

receive them, in such numbers and with so great eagerness that she was at first almost impeded in her movements for their benefit by the intensity of their desire for the work. The intricate pattern of the knitting was a difficulty even to practised knitters and these poor women were quite unacquainted in the use of the needles, yet with patient and determined persistence they came and went long journeys every day to and from their distant homes, and labored indefatigably until one obstacle after another was overcome, and each ignorant beginner developed gradually into a skilful and experienced worker.

After six months' of hard struggle and incessant toil, life began to look much brighter for the women about Carrick. Steady wages were earned, great packets of goods were sent off to London, and in one year the money received by the knitters amounted to £1,000, a vast sum in a district where there had been "no earning," and where the people had been accustomed to live in a state of semi starvation. For two years the women of Carrick were kept busily employed in knitting gloves, and when these gloves went out of fashion, Mrs. Rogers instructed her workers in the knitting of children's underclothing. Carrick has developed into a prosperous little town; most of the miserable huts have disappeared, and nice new cottages have taken their places. Shops with plate-glass windows have lately appeared. Seeing the thriving state of Carrick, Mrs. Rogers was induced to carry her industry to Connemara, to a place called Carna, where the people were in a state of terrible distress. Here she was welcomed and assisted by Father Tom Flannery, who had long been fighting almost single-handed to keep famine away from his flock. In both instances Mrs. Rogers owes her success to the zealous efforts of the priest of the district to which she brought her enterprise, who from the altar steps, Sunday after Sunday persistently urged the women to persevere, and encouraged them with promises which they could hardly have believed in from any other lips but his own.

Miss Dorothea Roberts, another English lady, has established a somewhat similar industry of knitting in another remote corner of Ireland, known as "the Rosses." In Irish "Ross" means headland. For ten years past an average of ten pounds a month has been paid into the Rosses for work done. Recently an order for thirteen thousand pairs of Army socks has been executed by Miss Roberts' knitters, and much exceptionally fine work done by them has been purchased all over England. On account of her enterprises Miss Roberts writes:—"Our Rosses stretch out into the Atlantic like the fingers of some giant hand. America we say, is our next parish. The great new world seems all the closer because there is not a family in our parish which has not some of its members living there across the wild Atlantic billows. By that stern seaboard the harvest of the land is scanty, grown only on such washings of soil as can accumulate in cups between big rolling, stony mountains. The harvest of the sea, rich as it is, remains ungathered for the most part, awaiting such generous help as that which has turned Baltimore, in the county of Cork, into a busy hive of industry. For half a century past the women of Rosses have been excellent knitters. The late Lord George Hill and Mr. Foster, his agent, greatly encouraged this work by industrial shows and prize giving in the neighboring parish of Gweedore.

"Ten years ago the excellent parish priest of the Rosses, Father B. Walker, received my first banks of wool, which he promptly returned to me in London, knitted into shapely stockings. The work begun by me in so small a way

has grown and flourished by the kind help of sympathizers all over Great Britain. Our parish lies remote from the Donegal centres, where agents give out yarns for Scottish and other hosiery. These beneficent new railways which I see opening up who congested districts elsewhere can scarcely climb over our rugged mountains, or cross the long fords which wind up amongst the cliffs of our western sea board. The parcolpost, is our main dependence at present, both for delivery of yarns and export of goods.

"The eager, bare-footed, Irish speaking women who crowd in from remote islands to my agents when the news of the coming of a bale of wool has spread, are quick to seize new ideas, and very quick with their fingers too."

In this book is found a slight record of one work by a remarkable Irish-woman, who has during this month passed away from among us, one whose great and good works—intellectual and charitable—would fill a long record. Mrs. Sarah Atkinson will be known to many as the author of the "Life of Mrs. Aikenhead, foundress of the Irish Sisters of Charity." Of this important book and its author I hope to tell you more another day. The paper in "Woman's Mission" alludes to the work done many years ago in the South Dublin Union Workhouse by Mrs. Atkinson and the late Mrs. Ellen Woodlock, who with great difficulty effected an opening for lady visitors into that dismal interior, devoting their energies to training and assisting the young woman who had grown up from infancy under the blighting shadow of the walls of "the House."

## Mrs. Hart's Irish Village.

Mrs. Ernest Hart's Irish Village is fated not to be forgotten. The doors of Drogheda Gateway had not closed upon the public in the Midway Pleasance before Mrs. Hart had received an offer from Mr. John Wanamaker of Philadelphia, to transport her village, with its cottages, its spinners, weavers, dyers and lace-makers, to his great store, which covers not less than fifteen acres of floor space was set up a street of cottages, where under the thatched roofs and beside the hooded chimneys, the boys and colleens were again to be found dyeing the wool in the potato pot from the wild plants of the bog, spinning the thread on the humming "wee wheel," and weaving the solid "Hand and Heart Home-spuns" which Mrs. Hart had made so famous. Here the "Kells Linens" of brilliant colors are again woven, and a splendid exhibit of linens of iridescent tints and magical colors just invented and imported by Mrs. Hart, attracted the attention of all visitors.

The village ran for two months and was visited by thousands of people, and excited a most lively interest. Exhibits and shows are, however, only temporary and a means to an end. The end being a solid and permanent business in the country in which attention had been attracted by the exhibit. So much attention has been aroused throughout America by the exhibition of the beautiful linens, woollens, laces and embroideries, shown at Mrs. Hart's Irish Village, and which obtained for their excellence no less than thirty-five medals, being a higher number of awards than was obtained by any other exhibitor at the World's Fair, that we feel sure that all those who are interested in the development of Irish industries will be glad to learn that the products of Mrs. Hart's industries are to be found in most of the leading retail houses in America. At Messrs. Arnold and Constable's, of New York, the beautiful colored Kells Art linens, the "Hand and Heart Home-spuns," and the popular Irish laces are to be obtained, and Messrs. Hollander, Hovey and Stearns, of Boston, Wanamaker,

Homer and LeBoutillier of Philadelphia, and Marshall Field, of Chicago, have all either placed or promised orders for the products of Mrs. Hart's trained workers.

It will thus be seen that Mrs. Hart is not content with merely creating a public impression and arousing enthusiasm. She has established permanent industries in the poorer parts of Ireland, and she aims at obtaining permanent outlets in the wealthier parts of America. In selecting to place her goods with the leading distributing houses of America she is showing accurate business judgment, and the great houses in placing their orders for these goods demonstrate that they are in the highest degree marketable and excellent. Mrs. Hart has also opened an office at No. 208 Rothschild Building, West Broadway, New York, where all information can be obtained and where communications should be addressed to her.

Not neglecting, however, the exhibition element, she has at the Midwinter Fair at San Francisco a large space in a prominent place in the Manufacturers Building for a collective exhibit of Irish industries. To this effort to introduce Irish goods to the notice of our compatriots of the West all Irishmen should give a warm and hearty support. The Irish stall at the Midwinter Fair will be found opposite the main entrance and next the offices of the Commissioners of Great Britain and Ireland.

We should not forget that Mrs. Hart was the first to hoist the Irish flag at the World's Fair, and to maintain it there to the end, and for this service alone all Irishmen should serve her, as well as for being the promoter of the Irish cottage industry movement. The success of her enterprise in America means the removal of much of the poverty of Ireland.—*Chicago Citizen.*

## Seeing Rome in Four Hours.

Seroux d'Agincourt, the learned archaeologist, who loved the Eternal City intensely, and who knew it, if I may be permitted the expression, from basement to garret, received a visit one day from an Englishman. Introducing himself with characteristic brevity, he said: "Here is a letter from Lord N.; he recommends me to you. Will you give me a rapid programme of what I can see at Rome in four hours?" "Four hours!" Seroux d'Agincourt, although of a calm, even phlegmatic temperament, was quite agitated and at a complete loss for once in his life. He had drawn up plenty of plans for visiting Rome in eight, or even four days; but he had never thought of making one for four hours. However, as there was no time to lose, he gave the following brief orders to the coachman, which were faithfully executed:

"Conduct his Excellency to St. Peter's, drive round the Piazza, but do not allow him to enter the Basilica, it would be lost time. From thence go to the Coliseum; useless to get out of the carriage. After this drive to Piazza del Popolo, passing by way of the Forum and Capitol. Go slowly, but never stop. You will name all the monuments you may happen to pass, without, however, giving any explanation. Then take his Excellency back to his hotel, for he will require the remaining hour to take his tea." He then turned to his visitor and said: "Good bye, sir; bon voyage. I will not shake hands so as not to detain you."

On February 28th, the Assizes were opened in Longford by Justice Johnson, who was accompanied by the High Sheriff (Mr. H. B. Armstrong), Mr. J. Robinson, Sub-Sheriff, and Christopher Reynolds, Clerk of the Crown and Peace. Addressing the grand jury, Judge Johnson said he was happy to inform them that the county was in a peaceable and orderly condition, and there were only four trifling cases to go before them.