

Forty Years Ago.

WENT WITH SIR THOMAS ES-
MONDE'S HOUNDS.

The highly interesting sketch of Sir Thomas Esmonde's life which appears in a recent issue of your paper encourages me to attempt a description of a hunt we had one Patric Day forty years ago with his father. In committing the incident to paper I know that my inexperienced pen will lose much of the excitement which I and scores of others went through on that cold March afternoon. As these in my early teens, my contemporaries being a few years younger, Sir Thomas would be about six or seven years older; he was away travelling, and the beagles had so successfully hunted North Westford were lying idle in their kennels at the south side of Ballynastraw Lake, or pond, at the 12th of March Jas. Fortune, Thomas's best groom, received from his master, directing him to take out the hounds on St. Patrick's Day and to be ready to start at a moment's notice. To the late Mr. David Kinsella entrusted the task of providing necessary for or hare.

DRAWN BLANK.

A few days before the 17th word sent round that foxes were non-existent, and that so far Kinsella had failed to find pussy's so that in all likelihood, the hunt would be a fiasco—a general, disappointing affair. Up to the evening of the 16th, no fox was to be traced, tracked, or any things were looking blue. The scene of action is a place known as "The Rock"; it is a meeting place for all the young bloods of the rising generation, and on the morning of the 17th, the subject of the hunt was the hunt on St. Patrick's Day. The hunt was a big damper on all spirits, as the foxes were scarce, and the dogs were not in the best of health. These days Sir Thomas rode a bay horse, and Fortune followed the "little mare," but no matter how many were there it was as we had it in the song—

"As we came to Joe Wood-Byrne's hounds, there was no one to be seen but Sir Thomas and the hounds." Those that know the Laken cutting will understand the impossibility of any but the most daring of hunters and the best of hunters to cross the "Laken cutting." "Joe Wood-Byrne's hounds"—The others around, Sir Thomas came across. I am deterring. At our council at the rock, we, the rising generation, and our name was "legion in the district in those days," decided that we would have a hunt, and a good hunt one that would test the mettle of the farmer's favorites and the gentleman's glanglers. We would have a hunt, and they would run "faster" far faster than they would either reward or the hare.

A DRAG.

Somebody may not know what a drag really is—ours was to be (but not) a lump of horse flesh about the weight of a pound, soaked in water to create the necessary scent, as a stout cord, and dragged across country. If, say, six men ran a drag from given points, one being where the other was to end, the course was complete, and the drag might safely be "laid on" at the starting point runner or hares would be going simultaneously or very nearly so. The drag resolution having been made, on the next business

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was the prearranging of the horse flesh. After a lively but brief debate, the writer and another "groom" were detailed owing to our local knowledge of Ballynastraw to proceed to the carriage house where the dead cattle for feeding the beagles were kept. We knew the spot intimately, we knew where to find the crook to haul the meat out of its pickle with. We knew (or thought we knew) everything, but we did not. It did not work out according to plan; a few loose breeding beagle bitches frustrated our arrangements.

Having stilled into demense across the stile at the left of Sir Thomas's main entrance, we trotted gaily along a bye path, past the farmyard, still keeping on our course, ran on to the pond, or lake, underneath the big house. Wheeling here to our left, on we went by the fringe of the lake and to the wood. By devious ways and uncertain paths we at last arrived within nasal knowledge of the carriage house and bleaching bones there-by. Cautiously now we moved near and still nearer, peeping around the bushes and brambles—keepers we were thinking of—when suddenly, and to our dismay, at least six big bitches ran, roaring in our direction. It was terrific in the dead of the night in that quiet secluded valley.

It goes without saying that we ran, fell, got up, ran again—got home somehow. It would seem that these beagle bitches were having a small Patrick's party on their own when we disturbed them. The night was too dark and the danger too terrible for us to make a minute investigation, but, if my memory serves me, those animals had one leg of meat, be it mutton, beef, or sausage flesh. I know not, nor do I know how they raised it from the hole. If they had caught us, and given us half the mauling that they had given the meat, then there would have been work for coroners. The first real sprint was, I should say, one of about 240 yards; we did not note the time, but I have no doubt it was a record.

Ornestfallen and defeated, early next morning we reported events and results to our directors, but it was not until we had a full quorum at the Fort at Tinnashine Hill, about mid-

day, that anything definite was decided. The meet of the hounds had already taken place, it was large in respects of huntmen and horses, and pedestrians lined the roads and hillsides. Sheehan's Bogs, Coolteggart Laken, and part of Ballynary had been tried in vain. Time something was being done, but what? One old wise-acre came closer to our little group, got into the chat, and informed us that a red herring, half-roasted, was the very best drag known. He vouched that the dogs would not only "run" it, but they would "cry" it.

Myself and two confederates were at once despatched for red herrings to farmer's houses, having orders to proceed thence to our starting points as pre-arranged, and run the drag accordingly. I should have said that we were to tie the heated-herrings in muslin, so that they would not wear out too soon. We had no difficulty in getting the herrings, but muslin—there was none. Having the drags ready, it was every lad to his post or starting point by the most direct route. I was to start from the Tinnashine. I did so, dropped my "drag," and dragged it at a brisk pace in the Ballynary direction, on to Mullawn, wheeled here for the "Barnland," en route lost my drag—it was worn out bit by bit, nothing but the bare head and eyes left, and I not half my journey over.

Into the farmstead of Mr. Bass I steered and by good luck met that affable gentleman in his own yard. I grasped out my dilemma, and it amused him immensely.

THE MOTHER OF INVENTION.

"I have the very thing you want, young man," he said, at the same time opening a house door, and picking up the carcass of a newly demised fat hen. We ripped her open lively, and thrust her into the fire (to create the necessary scent, you know). The "hunt" and was in the act of annexing her to the cord when I heard the boys at the Fort shouting, "view, hallo, hallo, away away," to the huntmen who were nearly a mile distant. The hunt of course concluded that a pussy had been found and rode hell for leather for the scene and at once got on the scent. True for the old

hunter they cried it beautifully, one big dog named Nocco giving tongue first, and immediately Fortune shouts "ahead, ahead, Nocco likes it."

My winning post was a hole in Gorcey Park wall, at Knockanna, on Foley's land, and for that point I was going strong along the bogs and bottoms when my heart failed me. On the hill over-land I saw the entire pack and all horses as near me as I was distant from the "hole in the wall." I raised the drag, to wit the fat hen, off the ground to throw the dogs off the scent. The game worked well. In Fritz's fields the dogs lost scent. This gave me time to recover my breath, but yet I plodded on as best I could, knowing that the dogs would soon be on me again, as I had only kept the hen up for a field or so. Through Murphy's land I went like greased lightning, and down a vast rocky precipice into a breen, when once again the music arose upon the breeze.

PUSSY ESCAPES.

Now it was only two short fields for me, and though it was an uphill made it, mounted the wall, took one last look to see if the hunt was in view—it was not. I dropped inside the wall, plugged the hole with a bush in accordance with my instructions, and ran down to the foekery, where I climbed a tree to behold the hunt.

Thus ended the first section of the drag, a fellow runner had started from where I ended, his route lay first in the Ballynary direction thence across Knockanna, Roans ranches, and Chonilla heights. From a given point on this hill the third dragger took on for the Coolteggart direction ending up near the Laken "cuttings" where scent gave out and "pussy" got away. She deserved her luck.

From start to finish there was but one check to the chase. It must be forty years ago but my recollection seems as clear as if it happened only yesterday. Big Pat O'Brien led the hunt for most of the journey, and the pace himself and Nocco set was tremendous, going across Webeters twelve acres where the ground was level it was clinking.

Our instructions were to cross every difficult obstacle in or near our course, knocks, rocks, bogs, boreens. Since that memorable day I have seen the Duhallow, Galway Blazer, Killiney Kildares and the Royal Meaths in their respective areas at times all going great guns, but I cannot believe that I ever witnessed swifter going over a stiffer bit of country than that of the Ballynastraw beagles that Patrick's Day when following the fish and the fowl so generously provided by the genial farmers from the Tinnashine. I was to start from the Tinnashine. I did so, dropped my "drag," and dragged it at a brisk pace in the Ballynary direction, on to Mullawn, wheeled here for the "Barnland," en route lost my drag—it was worn out bit by bit, nothing but the bare head and eyes left, and I not half my journey over.

LITTLE LIMERICK.

West African Morals Not up to Standard.

LONDON.—The natives of Togoland are a race of liars, says an official report on that British mandated sphere in Africa which was taken over from Germany. The report has just been issued as a "White Paper." Togoland was at one time a German Colonial possession in West Africa, and has a population of 800,000. "The natives have no letters, arts or science," says the report. "Concealment of death is the first element of safety, and as this axiom has been consistently carried out for generations the native character is strongly marked by duplicity. Even in matters of little moment it is rare for them to speak the truth. "They are unstable of purpose, dominated by impulse, unable to realize the future and restrain present desire, callously indifferent to suffering in others, but profuse in protestation of affection and good intention, afterwards woefully belied by actions. "The native is attracted irresistibly by noise and uproarious gaiety, he loves music, rhythmic sound and motion, and has a pronounced aversion to silence and solitude, an excessive excitability, and utter lack of reserve. "There are no specific grounds for divorce," continues the report. "The mere disinclination of one of the parties to continue the union being sufficient to warrant its being dissolved. Moral laxness is not unprevalent."

Home Rule is India's Hope.
FREEMANTLE, Australia.—Home rule for India, with Dominion status, is the objective of the Indian people, according to Mrs. Annie Besant, the well-known Theosophist leader, who arrived here recently. In the course of an interview Mrs. Besant said everything would be well in India, she thought, if Britain only would grant the country home rule. The people, since Ghandi's imprisonment, were beginning to appreciate that he was not the divine being, able to work miracles, which they had believed him to be. She anticipated that agitation along constitutional lines would replace revolutionary tactics and would bring peace to India within a reasonable time.

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A Sun Puzzle.

Is there such a thing as being able to see the sun before it has risen? There is; so if ever you see it appearing on the horizon early in the morning, you may be certain that it has not appeared at all, but that it is still just a little way below the skyline.

The explanation lies in the fact that before the sun's light reaches your eye it is bent upward by the atmosphere through which it passes. This bending, at the horizon, is just about equal to the sun's breadth.

It follows, therefore, that when the sun is on the point of rising, its light is curved round to meet the eye, and to the eye, consequently, it seems as if the sun were actually resting on the horizon, instead of really being invisible just below that point.

The bending of the light coming direct from an object varies according to the density of the atmosphere; the denser the atmosphere the greater the amount of bending.

It also varies with the position of the object; it is greatest at the horizon, and it gradually decreases the higher the object is situated, until this bending of the light (known as refraction) has disappeared altogether by the time the object is overhead.

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Friendship.

Friendship is a great thing, not only to the man who receives it, but to the man who gives it. When a man passes on, his friends and acquaintances are wont to gather round, with tear-dimmed eyes and solemn faces, and tell what a splendid fellow Jim was and how much he was loved by all who knew him, and how many were his virtues.

approval or commendation. Such a word at an unexpected moment might have been the means of spurting him on to greater heights of accomplishment and broader fields of endeavor.

We are all of us too prone to withhold the word of friendly praise—to knock and criticize rather than to boost and endorse the actions and motives of others; because it takes courage to go to a man and tell him face to face and man to man, that he