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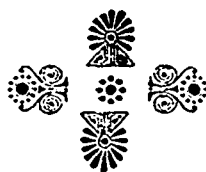
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THE FIRST IRISH POTATOES.

Sir Walter Raleigh was an unprincipled adventurer and failed as an administrator and colonizer, but he had a most commendable taste for planting and gardening, and in these branches of effort his influence remains potent. Three hundred years have passed since he lived in Ireland, in the county of Cork, on the vast estate which had been bestowed upon him, but the yellow wall flowers which he brought to Ireland from the Azores still

flourish and bloom in the very spot where he planted them.

Near by, at Youghal, near Cork, on the shores of the Blackwater estuary, stands the Affane cherry which he planted. Some cedars which he brought to Cork are still growing at a place called Tivoli. Four yew trees, whose branches have grown and interlaced into a sort of summer house, are pointed out as having sheltered Raleigh when he first smoked tobacco in his garden at Youghal.

Raleigh tried to make tobacco grow in

Great Britain, but the climate was not found suitable to it. He succeeded, however, by introducing the habit of smoking it, in making it grow in plenty in other places.

More important to the world than the spot where Raleigh sat and smoked his Indian weed is another spot in his garden at Myrtle Grove, in this same Youghal. This spot is still bounded by the town wall of the thirteenth century. It was here that Raleigh first planted a curious tuber brought from America, which thrived vastly better than his tobacco plants did.

This tuber Raleigh insisted was good to eat, though common report for a long time pronounced it poisonous. Some roots from his vines he gave to other land owners in Munster. They cultivated them and spread them abroad from year to year.

This plant was the Irish potato. Before many generations, it became the staple food of the Irish people—almost the only food of a great many of them.

It was the "Irish potato" which came back to America and became the groundwork, so to speak, of the American farmer's and workingman's daily breakfast and dinner. Sir Walter's curious experiment in acclimatization became an economic step of the very first consequence, and the spot at Youghal which was its scene deserves marking with a monument much more than do the places where the blood of men has been shed in battle.