

# THE KINGDOM OF DREAMS

## An Interesting Outline of a Holiday Trip to the West of Ireland.

The Deserted Streets and Wharves of Westport—The Charming Lakes of Killarney and Other Scenery Described.

[In the current number of Travel, the talented and clever young Irish writer, Mr. Justin Huntley McCarthy, presents the following beautiful pen picture of a holiday trip which he made to the famous spots in the West of Ireland.]

I HAVE made holiday in many parts of the world and in many pleasant places. In memory I can re-visit some of the fairest and the most famous spots on earth: can wander at will among the Isles of Greece or across the American plains; can drift along the Nile or the Mississippi; can dwell at ease at Athens or Grand Cairo; can recall the thrill of the first entry into Rome, the first entry into Jerusalem, can contrast Smyrna with Algiers, and Madrid with Buda Pesth. But after experience of a great many dear and distant places, I can surely say that some of the dearest places are not distant, that they lay hard by, close at hand; that there are places within the compass of the three kingdoms that can hold their own for beauty with any places in the world.

The English-speaking traveller—he who has the wander-spirit in his bones and brain and blood—is too ready to neglect England, and especially too ready to neglect Ireland, in his wanderings. The spirit of adventure spurs him far afield: he wants to be off on the Old Trail; like the wanderer of Kipling's ballad, he would

"Sell his tired soul  
For the bucking beam-sea roll  
Of a black Bilbao tramp,"

and he yearns for strange stars and tropic suns and alien woods and water, and all the while close at hand there are scenes as fair, sights as wonderful, as he should find if he followed the courses of the four winds to their farthest hiding-place. Let the wise man take a leaf out of Laven-gro's book, and tramp the English high-ways. Let him visit Scotland and wander in wild Wales. Let him cross a strip of sea and drift at all adventure along the valleys and among the mountains of Ireland.

It is of one special holiday that I once made in Ireland that I am going to give the itinerary. Ireland is a country where an idle wanderer might make many holidays. In the great central plains, where the world seems grided by the sky, and where cloud effects are to be seen stranger and more splendid than anywhere else; in the dreamy legendary land "where Shannon and Barrow and Blackwater flow"; in the Wicklow Hills; in the grandeur of the north; in the regions haunted by the ghosts of epic heroes and the shades of women for whom heroes have fought and died; the traveller "qui a du bleu dans l'ame," who has some blue in his soul, may find as much delight and as much novelty as if he were making his way through some mid-African forest or drifting along the caravan track towards some sacred city of the East. But it is not of the North of Ireland, where the shadows of Fionn and the Fení still fall across the mountains, nor of the South, with its green valleys and its rushing rivers, nor of the hills and hollows of the East, that I wish to speak at this moment. My memories now are of a holiday expedition along part of the West of Ireland, through some of the most beautiful scenery whereof this world holds witness.

Those who have not seen the west of Ireland, have not seen some of the fairest works of nature. It is not altogether a joyous region; there is a certain native melancholy about it as about most beautiful things, and the melancholy in this instance is heightened by causes that are not nature's work. The traveller in this part of Ireland must have what Octave Feuillet calls a strong dose of poetry in his composition if he wishes fully to appreciate all the sights and sounds, all the visible loveliness and all the magic of association that belong to this wonderland. It is not a land of laughter. It is often sad and often stern, and often brooded over by grey skies, and often sea and shore are threshed by rain. But rain or shine, blue sky or grey sky, whether the wind blow sharply from the east or comes softly from the west, bearing with it into your very soul the ache of unutterable memories, you will, if you have the love of nature in your heart, be ready to cry aloud with wonder and delight at the inexhaustible charm of this kingdom of dreams.

My starting point was Westport, the stately, the melancholy, that looks as if it were once so prosperous, and is now fallen in fortunes. It seems to me as if there was a time when Westport was on a small scale a sort of Irish Genoa, when commerce was busy in her buildings, when her streets throbbed with life, when merchants bought and sold within her ways, and her treasures choked with money. Now, all seems sadly changed, and Kinnak is scarcely a more melancholy sight than Westport. Commerce has ebbed away from her like a retreating sea; great houses stand empty that once throbbed with the hum of busy men; prosperity has departed, and grass grows in deserted wharves and silent streets. But there is a charm about the place in its very desolation, the charm that clings around some beautiful woman grown old and grey before her time and deserted by the friends and the lovers of her youth. So Westport seems to me in my memories of the place. It rhaps in days to come the pride of her youth may return to her. It would be worth while to visit West-

port for the sake of visiting Sligo's beautiful and handsome park, with its mighty trees and its winding walks and its penetrating atmosphere of pensive melancholy. It is like the park in some old story; it ought to have, and perhaps it has, its legends; it ought to have, and perhaps it has, its ghosts.

From Westport I went by car to Leenane, an exhilarating drive through attractive scenery. An outside car is not the best vehicle in the world for seeing scenery from; you get a magnificent panorama on your own side, but to see what lies on the other side of the road you have to sit askew or turn your neck uncomfortably. But an outside car is a conveyance that has its own qualities; there is something tonic in its swiftness, something bracing in the way in which it bounds and skips along a good road as if it had a consciousness of its own and gambolled for sheer lightness of heart. This good spirit communicates itself to the rider, and imparts an element of mischief even under conditions that are depressing. For I remember that it rained a good deal that day during the drive to Leenane, and that I swathed myself in a waterproof, with a peaked hood to it that I had got a year or two earlier in Athens, and enjoyed myself immensely in spite of the rain, and was infinitely amused by the vagaries of two pigs—a great black sow and her little black pigling, which pursued me and my car along the wet road for miles. Leenane is a very picturesque place, with beautiful views of hill and water. From Leenane a charming excursion to Croispatrick, where if you will but be at the pains to climb the side of a mountain, you shall get as good a sight of the Atlantic as any man could wish to see. Most of the sea men in this region speak Irish. Those who speak English speak it as men speak an acquired language, with a curious choice and precision in their sentences and an affection for words of stately sound. From Leenane I went, still by car, to Glendalough—not the Glendalough of the saint, but a very beautiful place, the drive to which takes the traveller through some very wild, desolate scenery. From Glendalough I made my way to Galway on one of those curious long passenger cars which I think were invented by Bianconi. They are shaped like the ordinary outside car, but are much longer and capable of carrying a considerable number of persons on each side. Galway is a most attractive old town, steeped in historical and legendary association, where one might spend many days well. From Galway I went by train to Limerick—also rich in natural beauty, rich in historic association—and from Limerick after a few days I went, also by train, to Killarney.

For the end of this particular holiday was at Killarney. Few places on the face of the earth have been more rapturously praised than Killarney, few places have better deserved to be praised. The disciples of Wordsworth and of Coleridge are not more enthusiastic in their admiration of Windermere and his sister waters than those who have once fallen in love with Killarney are of her enchanted lakes. Much as I love the Italian lakes, Maggiore and Como and Lugano, much as I love the Swiss lakes, I am glad, yea, glad with all my heart, that I can find that the lakes of Killarney are their peers and perhaps more than their peers. There is an exquisite softness about them which their Continental rivals lack; they have a tender grace which is denied to their kindred lakes of Scotland. I know of lovely lakes in America; I know of none more lovely than Killarney. I am not sure that I can say that I know of any quite as lovely, with the peculiar, haunting loveliness of the Irish lakes. The spirits of the mist seem to brood over those beautiful waters, softening with their caresses all forms and colours into the rarest, into the finest harmony, suffusing them with a liquid light that is at times almost unearthly in its beauty. These wooded hills, where still—or is that a legend and a dream?—the red deer lingers, those great sheets of water that change their mood and their aspect with every changing hour and are always beautiful, steep the mind of the beholder in a sensuous delight that is hard to describe in words. To me the lakes, like all beautiful scenes in nature, look their best in the splendour of a summer's day, when the waters are very still, when the woods are hushed in the heat, when the spell of the golden sunlight is upon everything. Then Killarney is an earthly paradise, then the youth of the world seems to have returned. But on dark days when the storm is threatening, or in those hours when the threatened storm breaks and the water blackens under the rain and races into great waves before the wind, then, too, Killarney is beautiful with a beauty that is wild but not terrible. Killarney's woods and waters may inspire awe when the thunder is rumbling among the hollows of the hills and the lightning is cutting slices out of the livid sky, but it never inspires terror. Its terrors are the hot furies of a friend, not the forbidding wrath of an enemy. In storm or in sunshine, there is a charm about the place that is all its own, a charm that it would be worth while to travel thousands of miles to experience and to appreciate to its heart's content. Many people, it is true, visit Killarney, but many more should go, and would go, if they only understood how adorable the place is.

There are those to whom Killarney is especially dear because of the sport it affords. Impassioned fishers of my acquaintance, men who know no keener

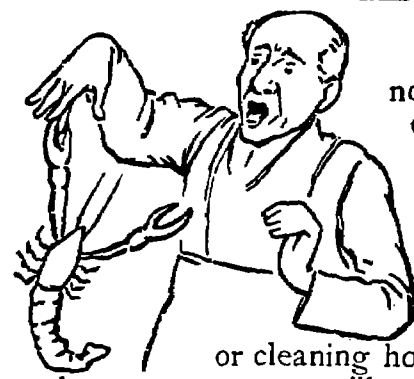
pleasure than to stand for hours on the edge of a stream on a grey day, rave about the Killarney lakes for, to use the old Irish phrase, their fishal waters. Their hearts warm at the mention of Killarney; their memories kindle, they flow forth in recollections that are so many rhapsodies of the days they have lived there and the fish they have caught, of the joys of long hours passed in an open boat on the still surface of the flood, of the taste those salmon-trout had—a taste superior to that of any other trout that ever rose to the hook in any other water in the world. These are fierce delights I have not experienced. I have indeed tasted the salmon-trout, but it has been caught for me by others; I do not long to waste the days with a rod and line. For me Killarney is a place of dreams, a place wherein to wander in tranquil enjoyment of the surrounding delights, the laughing lakes, the thick haunted woods, the brown mountains, the colored skies. Surely there, if anywhere still in Ireland, the fairies linger, the "Good people," whose existence was once so confidently believed in. To the lover of the legendary, the fantastic, the mystic, the woods and waters of Killarney are the woods and the waters of fairyland. Not a hollow of the hills, not a green glade of the woods, not a creek of its lakes, that have not or that might not have their own delightful legend. And though the place is popular the lover of solitude need not fail to find it. No place will more richly justify the pride of an Irishman in the beauty of his country. In no place need he remember with more rapture the eloquent words of Meagher: "Were Ireland an ill-favored country—were it sterile, bleak, inhospitable—were there no scenes there to delight the eye and captivate the heart—were there no sweet valleys, no laughing rivers, none of the graces and grandeur of nature, such as have inspired the melodies of Moore and given to the pencil of MacLise some of its finest themes; had the country no picturesque history—were it a desert in the light of an unpropitious sun and a blank in the literature of the world—even so as the place of our birth—we should love it. But our love for Ireland has no such rigorous conditions to test and vindicate it. Heaven has been most bountiful to that land. As it came from the hand of God it has all the rare excellence that makes it a singularly favored land." And no part of it gives a greater proof of that favor than the region that boasts of Killarney's mountains and Killarney's lakes. It is for me the most delightful memory of a delightful holiday.

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A German railway some time ago paid six hundred dollars for one cherry tree which stood in the way of an extension. The owner asked nine hundred dollars for the tree, and proved that its crops sold for sums equivalent to the interest on that amount. This is really the true way to estimate the value of a fruit tree. The value of a business or a house is usually estimated by regarding the annual income derived from it as interest on the capital, and there is no reason why the value of an orchard should not be estimated in the same way. However, the labor of caring for the tree, picking the fruit and marketing it must be taken into consideration.

If any farmer will estimate the average annual crop obtained from one of the best fruit trees in his orchard, ascertain its average market price, deduct the cost of production, and then calculate how large a sum of money must be put out at interest in order to secure as large an income, he will be surprised at the result. Suppose the rate of interest to be five per cent., then a tree whose average annual crop sells for ten dollars above the cost of cultivating and marketing it, is worth two hundred dollars. If



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Of course, in making calculations, a certain allowance must be made for the aging of the tree. A tree may have a certain value as timber apart from its crop, and it is important to know how long it may be expected to bear fruit and what its value as timber will be after it is cut down. Certain kinds of wood are very costly, and trees that do not bear fruit at all often command very high prices. Unfortunately, the profit from trees of this class usually falls to speculators or middlemen instead of to producers. There are men who make a business of inspecting logs and buying up the valuable ones, often paying a mere trifle for what they are sure of selling for a small fortune.

It would pay our farmers to make a thorough study of tree culture, the best methods of packing fruit and the value of various kinds of wood. If farmers realized the real value of trees of all kinds they would treat them most tenderly and would view with horror their indiscriminate cutting. They would take care to replace the large trees that they cut down, either for use or for sale, by young shoots that would grow into valuable trees.

Aside from the direct income to be derived from an orchard or a plantation of high-priced wood trees, if farmers in general devoted more attention to tree culture they would all be directly benefited. It has been demonstrated by experience both in Europe and America that after a country is denuded of its trees seasons of prolonged drought and annual spring floods are certain to follow. Many districts of Europe formerly renowned for their fertility are now desert wastes, owing to the destruction of trees, and in some sections of the United States similar results have already been noticed. The floods on several American rivers with important cities on their banks have caused serious damage during recent years, and all who have studied the matter unite in saying that they are due to the destruction of the trees. The snow in an open, treeless country melts rapidly instead of gradually as in a well wooded country.

### WOMEN AND AESTHETICS.

Mr. Havelock Ellis, in his interesting book, "Man and Woman, a Study of Human Secondary Sexual Characters," shows that woman, far from being "undeveloped man," is really leading evolution in various ways, mental and physical. To the proofs of this position given by him might be added the appreciation of literature and music. Books are read almost exclusively by women, and if women gave up going to concerts and operas such entertainments would collapse immediately. At evening enter-

tainments there is indeed a sprinkling of men, but at matinees—a Philharmonic, Paderewski, etc.—there are always 25 to 50 women among a hundred spectators. It is useless to say that men are too busy to seek amusement in the daytime. Thousands are rich enough to afford shortening the work for a few hours, and if they were so civilized as the women they would do so. Men are apparently becoming more and more absorbed in business, politics, gambling, racing, athletics and various other amusements which the lowest intellects can share with them, whereas it would seem as if the future of matters aesthetic lay entirely in the hands of women.

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THOMAS FURLONG, THE WEXFORD POET.

A very commendable movement is afoot on foot, to erect a suitable memorial to Thomas Furlong, the Wexford poet. Next year, the seventieth anniversary of his death will occur; and it would be a graceful tribute, if the people of his native county should celebrate the occasion by erecting a suitable monument to perpetuate the memory, and testify to the virtues and many noble traits in the character of their gifted fellow-countryman. The movement was initiated by Mr. M. L. Murphy, of Bonalaby, an admirer of Thomas Furlong, who has been indefatigable in collecting all the available particulars of the poet's too brief career.

Furlong, the poet and translator of "Carolan's Remains," was born near the town of Ferns, in 1794. He was the son of a small farmer, and early in life, with a very imperfect education, was apprenticed to a grocer, in Dublin. His case, however, is one of the many where genius has asserted itself under the most adverse circumstances. All his leisure moments he devoted to the improvement of his mind. His first contributions to literature appeared in "The Ulster Register." In 1819 he published a poem entitled, "The Misanthrope," which took the popular taste and gained for him the friendship of Thomas Moore, the Irish poet. Furlong then became a regular contributor to the "New Monthly Magazine," and about 1821 he assisted in founding the "Irish Magazine," where in many of his productions afterwards appeared. In 1824 he published a satirical poem entitled "The Plagues of Ireland," levelled against the state of parties in the country at the time. Furlong was a member of the Catholic Association, and a strenuous agitator for Emancipation. He was an intimate friend of Daniel O'Connell. The labor of giving to Irishmen the songs of their beloved bard, Carolan, in English, occupied his attention for a time, and his flowing translations of "The Remains of the Irish Bards" claim for him the grateful remembrance of his countrymen. In 1825 he wrote a few songs for Hardiman's book of "Irish Minstrelsy." But, alas! like so many sons of genius, his race was but a short one. He died July 25, 1827, aged 33. Furlong is described as of low stature, with very refined features, and eyes remarkable for their great brilliancy. A portrait of him is preserved among those of the leaders of 1829, in recognition of the services done by his pen to the popular cause. His last poem, "Loved Land of the Bards and Saints," written only a few days before his death, shows his ruling passion—love of native country. His prose remains—which consist chiefly of political articles, and the lighter magazine tales and sketches—have never been collected. But it is as a poet he was best known—Irish American.

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