

## A Motor Tour Through Ireland.

(Continued.)

**G**ALWAY was once of great importance, and even to-day retains many souvenirs of the time when it was a strong walled town and its harbor crowded with Spanish war-ships and merchantmen from many a distant port.

"The City of the Tribes" still contains many of the houses in which the Tribes, i.e., the Lynches, Blakes, Joyces, etc., lived. The most interesting one we saw was the Lynch mansion, whose walls still boast their coat of arms. Queen's College we found to be a handsome Gothic building containing a splendid library and museum. The church of St. Nicholas is very fine. It was built in 1320, and contains monuments to a large number of ancient Galway families.

A peculiar part of the town is that called the Claddagh, inhabited by the fisher folk, who elect their own mayor. The dwellings here are low thatched cottages, and the manners and customs of the people are very quaint and ancient. One of the heirlooms of every family is the Claddagh ring—two hands holding a heart—which is transmitted from mother to daughter.

Looking out across the waters of Galway Bay we could see in the distance the famous Arran Islands, once the refuge of the Fírbolgs, and later one of the most glorious seats of Irish Christian learning.

We would fain have spent some days in Galway, for the district is rich in antiquities, but many places yet remained to be seen, so climbing into our tonneau we journeyed once more eastward till we reached the town of Eyrecourt, seat of the once powerful Eyre family. The castle is still there with its massive walls and large demesne, while not far off is the Abbey Church, with its huge Celtic cross—

"Which stands unchangeable as Death,  
The emblem of a changeless Faith."

After visiting the castle and neighborhood, we continued our route till we reached Athlone. This old town was the scene of many stirring events in the reign of James II., when it was defended with heroic bravery by the Irish under St. Ruth against