

TIPPERARY— The End of the Long, Long Way



By Waldon Sweetser.

For residents of the United States it is in literal truth a long, long way to Tipperary, but it is most emphatically "worth while." And it is readily understandable that once a person with an appreciation for the beautiful has visited this fascinating portion of the Emerald Isle his heart would ever after be "right there" even if there were no such sentimental consideration as it is attributed in the popular marching song of the allies which, because of its swing and go, has become the vogue on lawns and whistlers and instrumentalists care not a whit for the martial significance of the song.

Old Tipperary, rich in historical associations and prodigal of natural beauty, needed no modern catchy song to bring it fame. Indeed, it is only fair to confess that there are many loyal Irish in Ireland and in America who do not a bit fancy this ditty of the day. They even denounce it as "rag time" and hint that its purpose is to induce the fighting Irish to make common cause in fighting England's present battles.

In the case of Tipperary, as in that of Dublin and almost all the centres of population in Ireland, the name stands for a town and for a county as well. Tipperary is unique among Britain's thirty-two counties in that it is the only large county that does not border the sea. But a short journey by rail through the neighboring county of Cork will bring one from any part of Tipperary to Queenstown, the great port of embarkation for the United States, and thousands of Tipperary's sons and daughters have sought fortune in the "other Ireland," as they are wont to term America. How many of these exiles there are in the republic is eloquently attested by the number and strength of the Tipperary associations in our large cities.

Pre-eminently agricultural in character, is this goodly slice of the province of Munster. To be sure, most of the counties of Ireland are given over to one form or another of rural industry but this is particularly true in the case of Tipperary. And such farm land. Almost any one of her million acres would gladden the heart of any man or woman who has a love for growing things. Along the banks of the Suir are gems of pastoral beauty that would tempt any artist that ever manipulated pencil or brush or camera. Withal these placid stretches of green have, in many instances, the mountains for a background, for Tipperary possesses the Silvermine Mountains and no mean store of mineral wealth as



An Old-Timer

PHOTOGRAPH BY WALTER WALKER. COPYRIGHT LAWETT, WASH.



Bringing Home the Taters

well as bogs that yield a seemingly inexhaustible supply of the peat or "turt" which the Irish use as fuel.

Tipperary.

The town of Tipperary is located almost in the centre of the famous Golden Vale, a level stretch which when seen at harvest time gloriously justifies its name and which for fertility is probably not exceeded, if indeed it is equalled, by any garden soil which is in itself an adequate explanation of why Ireland is called the Emerald Isle.

If you walk through the Golden Vale on a summer day you may meet rather fewer people than you would expect to encounter in a domain upon which Dame Nature has smiled so indulgently. And, perhaps, if you ask a native for an explanation he may reply mournfully that "The people are all gone to America. There is no person here any more but those of us who are too old to go." That is, of course, somewhat of an exaggeration, but there is more than a grain of truth in it. It is grazing which nowadays engrosses the attention of a large share of the people in rural Tipperary rather than general farming, such as in days gone by caused the fields to be alive with

followers.

Cattle are more profitable, say the landowners who have an eye for something more than the pictures-que, and any layman can appreciate that this is prime country for dairying—Tipperary's new vocation. How matters are working out may be surmised when it is stated that upward of three-fourths of the entire area of the country is now given over to pasture and dairies are very numerous, many of them being conducted on the

co-operative plan such as is now being urged upon American farmers.

The Population Slips Away.

After you have journeyed by laundry car twenty miles from north to south through Tipperary or have skirted the county along the forty-mile stretch between Limerick and Kilkenny, you will not need the aid of a map to tell you that the population, particularly the young blood of both sexes is surely and steadily slipping away to the land of promise beyond the Atlantic. The vacant cottages attest the desertion no less than the silent expanses of greensward and finally the population statistics detail the tragedy in cold figures. In 1875 the county of Tipperary had 175,000 people. Ten years later the number had fallen to 160,000 and another ten years showed a drop to 152,000 or one-seventh less than had been there two decades before. Likewise in this score of years did the number of occupied houses in the county drop from 35,000 to 32,000. No wonder there are many absentees who might rightfully say that their hearts are back in Tipperary.

Tobacco in Tipperary, Too.

Americans may be interested to learn that the Tipperary of song and story is just now the scene of a notable effort to revive the Irish tobacco industry. Several years ago the Irish Development Commissioners set aside the sum of \$210,000 to be used in experiments in tobacco culture—an activity that had thrived on the island long years ago but was stifled by adverse legislation. The experiments have proven that Irish tobacco growers can count upon a profit of \$75 per acre, and it is interesting to note that one of the first successful tobacco plantations has



At Work in the Golden Vale



Buying Sheep at the Fair



Buying Sheep at the Fair

been established at Cordangan, in County Tipperary, which is not so far distant, as the crow flies, from the coast town of Youghal, where Sir Walter Raleigh, when mayor of that town in 1588, introduced from America tobacco and that other American emigrant, the potato, which was to obtain in Ireland, a place of honor, it never enjoyed on its native soil.

Towns of County Tipperary.

When one thinks of Tipperary there comes to mind not merely the metropolis of the Golden Vale but the other towns of the county, each of which has some claim to distinction. There is Thurles, where a famous horse fair is held once each month to which come buyers from all parts of England and the continent. There is Templemore with an ancient castle of the Knights Templar, and there is Caher, a delightful "Quaker town" on the banks of the Suir. Carrick-on-Suir is a lively manufacturing town, and at Roscrea visitors to County Tipperary may see one of the famous Round Towers of Ireland.

In point of ancient historic interest, however, everything else in Tipperary county—and indeed, pretty near all else in Ireland—pales in comparison to Cashel or Cashel of the Kings, as it is usually designated, from the fact that it was once the residence of the kings of Munster. Out of a rich and extensive plain rises with great boldness and abruptness to a height of 300 feet the Rock of Cashel on top of which is a great group of the most notable ruins to be found anywhere in the world—chapels, tombs and fortifications many portions of which date from the tenth century or earlier. Not the least interesting circumstance in connection with the ruins which surround the remains of the noble cathedral atop of the rock of Cashel is that Saint Patrick spent much time at this retreat, which was once the educational center as well as the ecclesiastical capital of Ireland.

After all, however, without underestimating the importance of Tipperary's relics and monuments it must be confessed that, for most present day visitors the chief attraction of this portion of the "sunny side of Ireland" will be found in the people themselves. Indeed, speaking generally, it is the magnetism of the natives—their wit and sentiment and charming, instinctive hospitality, that renders travel in this Isle of dreams so much more satisfying to head and heart than a sight-seeing excursion in any other part of the world.

SHORTAGE OF LABOR.

The Question Becoming More Acute in Britain.

London, Jan. 29.—Reports from various parts of the country indicate the increasing shortage of labor. At a meeting of the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce the chairman said the question was becoming more acute. Many firms could employ thousands more men if the men were available. In Llanelli one firm alone requires a thousand men.

A report to the *Standard* from the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce states that he is unable to carry out certain repair work, because he cannot procure the assistance of the casual laborers all in the district being now employed.

It is better to occasionally do a foolish act of charity than to commit the folly of an uncharitable life. The greatest trouble with the fool lies in the fact that he does not stop talking without much thinking.

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