

**A LITTLE TOUR IN IRELAND: BEING
A VISIT TO DUBLIN, GALWAY,
CONNEMARA, ATHLONE,
LIMERICK, KILLARNEY,
GLENGARRIFF, CORK, ETC., ETC.**

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A Little Tour in Ireland: Being a Visit to Dublin, Galway, Connemara, Athlone, Limerick, Killarney, Glengarriff, Cork, Etc., Etc. by Samuel Reynolds Hole

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SAMUEL REYNOLDS HOLE

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A LITTLE TOUR IN IRELAND.

CHAPTER I.

PREFATORY.

THERE are two species of Undergraduates, the Fast and the Slow. I am now of the former persuasion. Originally, having promised my relations that I would take a Double First-Class and most of the principal prizes, I was associated with the latter brotherhood, but was soon compelled to secede, and to sue for a separation, *a mensâ et thoro*, their tea-table and early rising, on the plea of

incompatibility of temper. One young gentleman, who described himself as being very elect indeed, candidly told me that, unless my sentiments with reference to bitter beer and tobacco underwent a material change, he could give me no hope of final happiness; and another impeccable party, with a black satin stock and the bandiest legs in Oxford, felt himself solemnly constrained to mention, that he could not regard horse-exercise as at all consistent with a saving faith. I spoke of St. George (though I dared not say that I had met him at Astley's), of St. Denis, and St. Louis, of the Crusaders, and the Red Cross Knight; but he only replied that I was far gone in idolatry, and he lent me the biography of the Reverend T. P. Snorker, which, after describing that gentleman's conversion at a cock-fight, with the sweet experiences of his immaculate life, and instituting a comparison between his preaching and that of St. Paul (a trifle in favour of Snorker), finally declared him to be an angel, and bade all mankind adore, and reverence, and buy his sermons at seven-and-six. When I returned the publication, and told him that, though I had been highly entertained, I liked the Life of George Herbert better, he called me a hagiologist (a term which struck me as being all the more

offensive, inasmuch as I had no idea of its meaning),* and murmured something about "the mark of the beast," whereupon, I regret to confess, that I so far lost my temper as to address him with the unclassical epithet of "a young Skunk," suggesting the expediency of his immediate presence at Jericho, and warning him, that, if he were not civil, "the beast" might leave a "mark" upon *him*. That very day, I wrote to the butler at home, to send up my pink and tops, and "went over to roam" in happier pastures.

I find them more healthful also. I find that so far from my perception of right and wrong being destroyed, as the disciples of Snorker prophesied, by a gallop after the Heythrop hounds, and my appreciation of Thucydides being expelled by my morning pipe, I have, mentally and bodily, a better tone; and though my former condiscipuli groan when they meet me coming in from the chase, as though I were the scarlet lady herself, I still venture to appear at chapel, and will back myself to construe the funeral oration of Pericles against the ugliest of the lot.

* "Egan, in addressing a jury, having exhausted every ordinary epithet of abuse, stopt for a word, and then added, 'this *naufraigeous* ruffian.' When afterwards asked the meaning of the word, he confessed he did not know, but said 'he thought it sounded well.'"—*Sketches of the Irish Bar*, vol. i. p. 83.

Oh, that fox-hunting were the worst enemy to me, a student, for I might be a class man still! But I have contracted a habit desperately antagonistic to literature,—*I am always falling in love.* The moment I see a pretty face, I feel that sort of emotion which Sidney Smith used to say the late Bishop of London rejoiced to contemplate in his clergy, "a kind of drop-down-deadness." I cannot walk out, or drive out, or ride, or row out, but I am sure to have an attack. I have had as many, indeed, as two in one day. With the daughters of Deans and Presidents, with visitors, with ladies come in from the country to shop, I am perpetually and passionately in love. I don't like it, because there is not the most remote probability of my ever exchanging six syllables with these objects of my devoted affection, not to mention that they are equally beloved by some three or four hundred rivals; but I am powerless to oppose; I can't help it. My life is an everlasting "dream of fair women:" I know it is a dream, but I cannot waken.

Others have roused me, though, and most uncomfortably. I heard a Devonshire girl, whom I met at a wedding breakfast, and with whom I thought I was progressing favourably, whispering to her neighbour

"This tipsy child is becoming a nuisance, and I really must ring for nurse," when I was as sober as Father Matthew, and had whiskers of considerable beauty, if viewed in an advantageous light. Still more sadly and recently, another "daughter of the gods, divinely fair," dissipated Love's young dream, and sent me forth to a foreign land to forget my sorrows, as, indeed, I immediately did.

The catastrophe, which caused our happy days in Ireland, befel as follows.

"'Twas in the prime of summer time, an evening calm and cool," that I found myself wandering among the shrubberies of—— Castle with a most lovely girl. A large picnic party had been enlivened by archery and aquatics, and I fancy that the glare of some new targets, and the sheen of the "shining river," had not only dazzled my eyes, but likewise had bewildered my brain. In spite of the cooling beverages, the cobbles and the cups, I was actuated by an extraordinary liveliness. I sang songs for the company, not quite reaching the high notes, but with intense feeling, doing all in my power to indicate to the lovely girl that she was *my* Annie Laurie, and that for her I should consider it a pleasant gymnastic exercise to expire in a recumbent position. I made felicitous altera-

tions in the words, such as "hazel is her e'e" for "dark-blue;" and in the song of "*Constance*," instead of "I lay it as the *rose* is laid on some immortal shrine," I contrived, with immense difficulty, and by means of a terrific *apoggiatura*, to substitute the word *stephanotis*, of which I had that morning given her a bouquet. But "*brevis esse laboro*;" we were alone, and I resolved to propose. I seized her elbow with both hands, a ridiculous position, but I was very nervous, and was about to ask the momentous question, when she said with such a tone of gentle pity as took away half the pain, "Philip, I am engaged to Lord Evelyn. Shall we go back for coffee?" I seconded the motion, but oh, what an amazing period of time we seemed to occupy in carrying our proposition out! The first idea which presented itself to my mind was suicide, but it met with an unfavourable reception; the second, to enlist immediately, and to secure the earliest *coup-de-soleil* possible; the third, to insult Lord Evelyn (the beast was at Christ Church, and I knew him), and subsequently to shoot him in Port-Meadow. "What right had he," I asked myself, "to anticipate me, and win her heart? I hate these accursed aristocrats, who suck the life-blood of the people."

This is the accursed aristocrat who sucks the life-blood of the people !

At last, we rejoined the party, and found them talking the silliest rubbish conceivable, and apparently enjoying the nastiest coffee I ever remember to have drunk.

That night, and at the witching hour, when men and wom-

en tell each other everything, (in the strictest confidence), they in their dormitories, and we in our smoke-rooms, I revealed my misery to my friend Frank C——, who happened happily to be staying with me. Frank has Irish blood in his veins, and his first impulse was to have "a crack at the Viscount," but he ultimately took a less

