

**PAST TIMES AND
PASTIMES. IN TWO
VOLUMES. VOL. 1**

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Past times and pastimes. In two volumes. Vol. 1 by Earl of Dunraven

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Photo F. A. Szwed

THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN, K.P.

PAST TIMES
AND
PASTIMES

BY THE
EARL OF DUNRAVEN
K.P., C.M.G.

IN TWO VOLUMES
VOL. I

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FOREWORD

WHEN I bethought me to spend the autumn evenings in jotting down reminiscences, I had no desire to write a biography or an outline of history. I could not have done so even if it had been my wish, for the material necessary for the purpose was lacking, and I could not view Irish politics with an impartial eye. Nevertheless, when I came to think about politics and events in Ireland, some material was available, and I have referred to it. In all other respects I had to rely entirely on memory, for the following reason.

In the summer of 1894 my yacht *Valkyrie II*. was in collision with *Satanita* at Hunter's Quay on the Clyde, and sank in about four minutes. Of course everything went down with her, and, for a long time after, the disappearance of anything was accounted for by "It must have gone down in *Valkyrie*." About some of the objects I had my doubts; but, unquestionably, a diary that I had kept did go to the bottom of the sea in over twenty fathoms of water, and I never had the courage to re-write the diary or to start another. I could not, therefore, place events in proper chronological order. I was forced to deal with topics rather than years; and so, sitting musing by the fire on winter evenings and talking to myself, I just

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tried to gather together the withering leaves of memory as they came fluttering down, and made notes of my impressions of episodes and subjects, just as they presented themselves to me, without reference to dates. If, therefore, my recollections of facts and people and occurrences overlap, or are in dates inexact, the blame attaches to *Satanita* for sinking my ship and my diary, not to me.

DUNRAVEN.

January 3, 1922.

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I

IRELAND

EARLY RECOLLECTIONS

I WAS born in Ireland, at Adare in the good little old county of Limerick, the one exception in a family of six; and my natal advantages were impressed upon me at an early date. As a very small boy I used to wander about among the nearest tenants' houses, and would be hoisted on to a table to make a speech. I always made the same speech, concise and to the point—"I am an Irishman bred and born," and it was always greeted with more applause than has often been given to later and more ambitious efforts. My grandfather died in 1850, and up to that date my father and mother lived at Dunraven, in Glamorgan; and my early years, full of all the joys of childhood, were spent there; but, as in memory I always project myself to Adare, I confine my early recollections to Ireland.

I remember both my grandfathers—my maternal forebear, Thomas Goold, Serjeant-at-Law, very slightly; in fact, all I remember about him is his rescuing a very small boy eating grapes at Dunraven from the attack of a tame (so-called) eagle. He must have been a notable man; but all I know about him is that he was a great athlete and a "man of parts," that he dissipated a large fortune, and in middle life took to the law, amassed another fortune, and rose

to the top of his profession in Dublin. He was a strenuous and vehement opponent of the Act of Union—made, I think, the last speech against it in the Irish House of Commons. How prophetic were the speeches of the Irish “die-hards” of those days! With what accuracy they foretold all the disasters—financial and other—that would befall Ireland from abolishing her constitution and depriving her of the right to legislate for herself! And how clearly they foresaw the evil consequences to Great Britain!

For a trace of my grandmother, Mrs. Goold, I search my memory in vain. Not so with my paternals. I remember them very well. That grandfather was devoted to shooting and fishing and a country life. I do not think he was interested in politics, science, or art. I knew him as a kindly, delightful old gentleman, but all crippled up with gout—a martyr to it. Denied all the field sports he had loved, he built himself a house—I verily believe as much for something to do as for any other reason, for he had a very good house already. I remember my grandmother very well—a charming and benign old lady. During the thirty odd years the house took in building my grandparents lived in the old house, pulling it down bit by bit, and inhabiting remnants until a few rooms in the new house were ready for occupation. The discomfort must have been awful; but the building was their hobby, and I suppose they did not mind it. Every stone quarried, and every tree cut for the building, was native produce. My grandfather employed no architect, no contractor, just took the ordinary stonemason and village carpenter, trained them, and built a goodly house. Every bit of carving in stone and wood is the work of native village talent; and the work is very good.

In Irish controversies any one who received a