

**IRISH COUNTRY FAIRS.**

**SIGHTS IN THE MARKET TOWNS OF THE EMERALD ISLE.**

*Favorite Place of Resort for the Peasantry—Where Chaff and Gossip Abound—The Heated Arguments That Arise in the Course of Ordinary Examining.*

LONDON, April 25.—The Irish fair, whether held at the little village in Donegal or Kerry, or attended by thousands, as at Ballinasloe, Athlone, Cork, Belfast or Dublin, is an affair for the display and sale of animals only—horses, cattle, asses, pigs, sheep, goats, and occasionally poultry. Perhaps 60 Irish towns and cities hold from one to four fairs each year. Some are for the sale of one class of animals only; of hogs as at Limerick or Athlone; of cattle as at Ballinasloe; of horses, as at probably the greatest horse-fair in the world, that of Dublin, or as at Cushendun, for the exclusive sale of the noted Cushendun ponies, bred on the heathery mountains of Antrim overlooking the weird and stormy Irish Sea. But at most of the Irish fairs all animals bred in Ireland are exposed for sale; at many others farm products may be found; while the great butter fairs of Cork would almost give one the notion that half the world's butter is made in the sunny vales of Ireland's South.

The market-day, on the other hand, is a universal and interminable affair. Hardly a day passed in my nearly a year's wandering in Ireland when I did not come upon some town or village where the fair or the market was in full progress. Ireland boasts of 266 market towns where market-days are held from one to three times every week in the year. All this is picturesque and interesting to the traveller; but my observation leads me to believe that there is vastly too much market, of the sort, and vastly too little to market, of any sort, in Ireland. Whatever trifle the tenant-family may have for disposal on market of fair day, the entire family accompanies it. The old mountain-bred cart is got out and sparingly greased the night before; the ragged donkey or illy kept horse, is given an extra portion of food and additional combing and scraping, that his old bones may gain new luster; and long before day-break, from mountain breen and mist-hidden valley chattering groups begin moving towards the village.

"The childe dear" are stowed away alongside the pigs, ducks, chickens or vegetables, for the common excitement has kept them awake all night, and now over the stoniest of Irish roads they are "slapin rings around the ir swate selves;" the youths may be trudging hopefully alongside; but the "ould woman" and "ould man" are ever found lovingly humped together upon the only seat the cart affords, often agreeably exchanging puffs from the same comfortable pipe.

Every manner of cart drawn by every manner of animal, but chiefly by rebellious donkeys, and all piled with every manner of Irish produce and humans, clatter and rattle through the misty morning—carts with sheep bleating piteously, with geese craning their necks in viciously-bissed interrogation; with goats and kids lamenting in pathetic altos and trebles; with pigs springing on all-fours from side to side while snorting violent protest and surprise; and you will notice as you must all over Ireland, that the Irish pig boasts a pink in color that vies with the most radiant flush of the rarest sea-shell.

All along the way are old men, humped and severe, admitting and protesting in ethics and politics with other old men who argue, in the blandest and most convincing tones. There are maidens, too, straight as a Crough Patrick fir, glancing with those entrancing Irish eyes, smiling with those ruby Irish lips, and setting the lads wild with that most delicious of all rhodomontade, the lovable blarney of the musical Irish tongue; while the great packages of yarn they carry without effort would break an American woman's back completely. Not far from them ever, are the old, old women with braiden-covered baskets on their backs.

and going with the large numbers belonging to each cart, all engaged in heated arguments over values, make much good-natured squeezing and pushing a matter of necessity. There are seldom inner enclosures. Cattle are herded against the walls at one point; asses at another; pigs on foot, kept gently moving in circles by the skilful use of their drivers long ash pikes, will be massed at another point; goats and sheep, both extraordinarily combative by the enforced association at still another; while all manner of lollipop sellers and brave-voiced market-amusement purveyors are huddled together in any extra space that may be found.

For the first hour or two of the morning the sale of the small truck, such as butter, eggs, poultry and vegetables proceeds merrily enough; but the attitude of buyer and seller, of whole cartloads of potatoes and of all animals, is amusing indeed. Beviets of buyers for the Dublin and London markets, men of gigantic stature with red, puffy faces, and great-coats hanging over top-boots to their heels, each carrying a whip of tremendous length, will saunter in, take a hasty run about the place, shrugging their shoulders as if nothing worth their attention had been seen, and finally hastily depart. The while the Irish yeomen, with folded arms, and nose in air expressive of fine scorn, bid them all a cheerful defiance in ludicrous attempts to appear unconscious of their presence.

These double pretenses may proceed until noon with now and then a bargain struck on the sly; but the entire populace at the market are on the alert for the seductive wiles of the buyer, and to protect each other valiantly from being carried away for fleecing singly to the noticing groggeries near. This metaphorical throwing of dust in each others' eyes is carried on during the Belfast fair days, on the first Wednesday of each month, with greater finesse and contempt between buyer and seller, than I have seen in any other portion of Ireland. This is particularly true between the factors, or flax-buyers from the mills and the hard-headed peasantry in charge of their cartloads of flax.

Scores of factors will make their appearance; surround the carts; handle the silken "stone" bundles as though it were a pity to bring such stuff to the attention of men whose time was valuable; and condescendingly clap a counterfeit price and order for payment on their respective houses in the sellers' hands, as if a disagreeable charity had been performed; whereupon the sellers toss them back disdainfully or light their pipes with them in fine scorn. Then the factors disappear. But that is not the last of them. One by one or in two little groups they return. These stubborn people must be somehow saved from their fatal ignorance. Then follow protestation and rejoinder, blarney and blackguarding, as silvery and fine as ever human ears overheard. It is of no avail. Away they all go again. "The byes" calmly resume their pipes and their "gosthering" with the old women and young. The next assault by these sleek and ruddy Belfast factors, who are undoubtedly the canniest buyers in the world, is on the confidential line. It is getting late in the day. They come in droves. With military precision the sellers are herded in squads. Palaver, concession, sacrifice and deterrence (for prices, plunder and division are already unyieldingly agreed upon) effect purchases with marvelous rapidity, and in half an hour the entire great market is completely cleared of flax—the same old games having been played in precisely the same manner for the past hundred years.

In the average village market along towards noon buying is likely to begin in what would seem to a stranger as an alarming riot. The big traders will make an onslaught upon a willing subject. Bravely he apparently resists their efforts to bully or deceive him. It by main strength he is taken from among his friends they will rally and set upon the traders and rescue him. Some rough tussling may follow, but nobody is alarmed at this. It is a way they have of impinging upon formality. The ice once broken, buying begins in earnest, and higher and higher rise shrill voices, often aided in pitch and intensity by John Barrycorn, who is ever the real master of ceremonies here, until one would think murder must follow the excited dickerings. Buyers thrash the air with their whips, and pour fearful objurgations on the poor animals and their owners; while the latter, aided by their valiant wives, pay back the fierce blackguarding with rich interest. The "luck-penny," which goes with each single beast or group of animals sold is shrieked over as though it was the value of all the market holds. Babel has begun. The lesser sellers crowd around and "raise their voices" lugubriously. Every person has drunk enough to be interested in every other person's affairs.

Sales are now rapidly made. "dirtying the bastes" sold, or rubbing mud on their haunches to so distinguish them, and driving them from the grounds creates constant commotion; cartloads of pigs are dumped, amid deafening porkers' shrieks, from the farmers' carts into carts of the buyers, whose donkeys are pounded and rushed through the crowds vociferously; an escaping hog drives through the forest of legs madly, often giving old ladies and young enforced aerial experiences amid shouts of laughter; the hurdy gurdies blare; candy-sellers roar; pipers add to the universal din; the young people crowd the dancing spaces and beat the turf or improvised floors amid whoops and yells.

The entire place until the evening comes is a wild conglomerate of commotion, courtship, laughter, yelling and rude but good-natured enjoyment, which for unrestrained heartiness and unqualified decency is something delicious and wonderful to behold. Irish literature is full of the Irish shelegh and broken heads. It is untrue of these people as I have seen them; for over 150 fairs and market-day scenes I have visited, I never yet saw a human being harmed save by whiskey; and that is the "heartsome stroke" no true-born son of Erin ever feared.

EDGAR L. WAKEMAN.

**An Orchestra of Ladies.**

Somebody has said it and so it has got into the papers. It is this that nothing but an iron-bound custom ordains that an orchestra must be exclusively composed of men. Meanwhile, the fair sex may take comfort in the fact that they have a powerful champion in the Duchess of Albany, who has promised to be present at the concert to be given at St. James' hall on May 12, by the orchestra of ladies conducted by the Rev. E. H. Moberly.

**SQUIRE TAPLEY SPEAKS.**

**THE EX-POLICE MAGISTRATE OF OLD PORTLAND CITY**

**Gives Evidence in an Important Matter Now Before the Public.**

There is no more familiar figure in St. John than ex-Police Magistrate Tapley, who for so many years presided over the court of the old city of Portland. Squire Tapley, as he is familiarly styled by everybody, has been very ill, and in fact says himself that he had at one time not much hope of regaining his health. But today he is well again and able to attend to the duties of his office without fatigue or exhaustion. It has been stated that this remarkable change, which has been noticed and commented on by all the friends and acquaintances of Squire Tapley, was due to the use of Hawker's nerve and stomach tonic and Hawker's liver pills.

On Wednesday last Manager Russell of the Hawker Medicine Co. invited a Sun reporter to join him in a call on Squire Tapley and ascertain if this treatment were true. They were heartily greeted by the venerable magistrate, and he spoke freely regarding his cure. It was absolutely true, he said, and the case could not be put too strongly, that Hawker's nerve and stomach tonic and Hawker's liver pills had restored him to health and vigor from a state so serious that it had caused both himself and his friends the greatest anxiety. Loss of appetite, weakness, nervous prostration, sleeplessness, and a general breaking down and decay of vital powers were, in brief, the symptoms; but they had all vanished under the influence of these wonderful restorative remedies. He began to take Hawker's nerve and stomach tonic and Hawker's liver pills about two months ago. Within a week after beginning their use, he was frequently stopped on the street and asked the secret of the marvellous change in his manner and appearance. To all such enquiries he had but one answer: Hawker's nerve and stomach tonic and Hawker's liver pills had wrought the miracle. That was two months ago, and today, after having used about eight bottles of tonic and two boxes of pills, at a cost of only \$1.50, Squire Tapley declares himself a new man. His appetite returned, his sleep restful and refreshing and he feels thoroughly renewed and invigorated in every respect.

"You may use these statements freely," said Squire Tapley to Manager Russell. "I feel that I ought to recommend Hawker's nerve and stomach tonic and Hawker's liver pills; and I am doing it every day. Many of my friends are using them on my recommendation. In fact I consider these remedies the best in the world."

Fellow sufferer, here is encouragement for you. Hawker's nerve and stomach tonic is a perfect nerve restorer and invigorator, and blood and flesh builder, as well as a valuable stomach tonic and aid to digestion. It is a certain cure when faithfully used for all diseases arising from nerve exhaustion, weakened or impaired digestion, or an impoverished or impure state of the blood, such as nervousness, weakness, nervous headache, sleeplessness, neuralgia, partial paralysis, St. Vitus Dance, loss of memory, loss of appetite, dyspepsia, hysteria, and the prostrating effects of la grippe or any nerve weakness of heart or brain arising from worry, overstrain of mind or body, or excesses of any nature.

Hawker's tonic is especially adapted to the diseases peculiar to women, giving tone to the nerves, vigor to the mind and body, and restoring the bloom of health to the pale and delicate.

The remedies can be obtained of all druggists and dealers, or direct from the Hawker Medicine Co., St. John, N. B. Postpaid to any address on receipt of price as follows: Tonic, 50c. per bottle, or 6 bottles for \$2.50; pills, 25c. per box.

**AN ARTFUL VIZIER.**

**He Sent the Court Physician as a Proxy to be Kicked.**

In the year 1829, when the Russians had taken Varna, nobody would venture to break the news to the Sultan, Mahmoud. The Vizier Khosru (at that time Seraskier and general in the army) was to have undertaken this duty as befitting the dignity of his rank.

But on meeting the Sultan he detected signs of a coming storm, and feeling that the moment was unpropitious, he confined his remarks to subjects of trivial importance and took his leave.

On coming away he met Abdullah Effendi, physician to the court, who inquired in what mood he had left his majesty.

"I am thankful to say," Khosru promptly replied, "he has taken it better than I expected."

As soon as the doctor entered the audience chamber he said, with an air and in a tone of sympathy—

"Sire, the Almighty does all things well, and we shall have to submit."

"What has happened?" said Mahmoud, rather surprised.

go home about five o'clock in the evening the first thing they do is to put on their slippers. The result is that the feet are always cool, the pressure never constant, and no muscle tried beyond its power. Far otherwise the American. He goes down to work at eight o'clock in the morning, and is hurrying and scurrying in the same boots until six o'clock. Then he hurries home to dinner, hurries through dinner and, still wearing the same boots, goes to his lodge or elsewhere and returns at midnight, his feet having been cramped up for fourteen hours out of the twenty-four in the one pair of boots. The result is corns and bunions."

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