

G L E N C A R .

By "PADRAIG."

This beautiful and romantic spot which lies between the counties of Sligo and Leitrim, is about six Irish miles from the town of Sligo. The lake, which is at the southern end of a long valley which stretches from Sligo Bay at Drumcliffe to the northern boundary of the County Leitrim, is plentifully stocked with fish of every description, and in the late spring and early summer is a favourite resort of the angler. It is one of the best lakes in Connacht for night fishing, and its shores are during the times mentioned often the scenes of some blood curdling adventures by the nocturnal visitant in quest of the living inhabitants of its depths; but of this more anon.

The lake is surrounded by high hills which will well repay the tourist for the climbing, as the scenery is magnificent. Immediately on starting, and at the base of the rugged path which leads to the hill top is "the waterfall"; the mountain river rushes over a rock and descends in white foam to the bottom, a distance of some 90 feet; after heavy rain this is especially well worth seeing. Farther up the mountain there are several smaller falls all of which can be seen as the tourist goes along the path. When the mountain top is reached the scenery is of the most beautiful description, and the tourist who manages the ascent of Fermoyle is well rewarded for his toil up the side of the steep hills. To the north-east rises in rugged grandeur the hoary magnificent Benbulbin, which for centuries witnessed the clashing blades of the contending tribes of Connacht and Tirconnell. Stretching out to the sea, lies the fertile plain of Machaire Eabha, which is studded over with historic sites, the principal of which is Cuildreimne, where the bloody "battle of the book" was fought, and which resulted in the exile of Columbkille. Away to the north its shores, bathed by the white waves of the Atlantic, may be seen the lonely island of Innishmurray, which was the first part of Ireland to witness the descent of the Danish hordes. To the southward are Oyster and Coney Islands, and that favourite resort of sea-bathers, Rosses Point, which was known to the ancients as Ros Ceide, where a terrible battle was fought in the 13th century between Godfrey O'Donnell of Tirconnell and Maurice Fitzgerald, the founder of Sligo Abbey. Across the lake, and almost opposite Fermoyle, may be seen that precipitous peak known to the country about as *Leim-na-n-Albanach* or the Scotchman's leap, where tradition has it, a large party of Scotch soldiers who were re-

turning to Manorhamilton after a midnight raid on Sligo, in the year 1642, were led over the side of the steep cliff by a maniac guide, and all of whom were dashed to pieces amidst the rocks beneath. If the tourist now descends half way the mountain and takes a path to his right which goes through the woods immediately over the lake, he will get some splendid views principal amongst which is the Swiss Valley so called from its resemblance to a piece of landscape in the country of the Alps. Here may be seen very fine specimens of wild goats browsing on the side of cliffs, on which it would seem a bird would scarcely get foothold. Farther to the north is the famous *Shru-na-mi-ard*, so called from a phenomena which occurs when the wind is blowing from a certain direction and gives the impression to an onlooker at a distance that the water is going against the hill. This fall is over a hundred feet high, and is specially awe-inspiring when the river is full after a mountain torrent. When our tourist has done feasting his eyes on the majestic grandeur of *Shru-na-mi-ard* he can return along the lake shore about a quarter mile to the cottage, where he will satisfy his keen appetite on home-made buns and the most delicious tea, in the brewing of which the proprietress, Mrs Siberry, cannot be beaten.

Glencar, like most places of interest, has its ghost and other stories galore, and if the tired tourist has a little time on hands, after taking his much-needed refreshment, he will come away with a whole volume of them told by the genial proprietor of the cottage in his own inimitable manner. He tells a good yarn of a poor half-witted chap who lived on the mountain side in a mud cabin all alone. His name was Barney; he was passionately fond of horses, and the height of his ambition was to be owner of one of the equine species. Barney got tips off and on from tourists visiting the falls, and between this and the hospitality of the neighbours he was enabled to exist. He happened to be down in the valley one day when the youngsters about the district were playing football, and the ball being driven across the fence into the field where he had stood in amazement to watch the proceedings, one of the players followed to bring it back. Barney did not know what the ball was, but asked the player, whereupon he was told it was a mare's egg. His long-sought-for opportunity had come at last, and in his simplicity he saw himself the prospective owner of a horse. He asked if he could buy it, and as Barney had the name of having a little money, a bargain was made for all the cash he had, in exchange for the football, which by no means was very valuable as after events will show. Having paid over his life's hoardings he departed for the mountain side with the much prized mare's egg under his coat intending to have it hatched by a large turkey hen he had. He had only got about half way up the hill, when on crossing a loose

stone fence his foot slipped, and he fell heavily on the ball which burst with a loud report, and caused a large hare to start up from its cover on the opposite side of the fence. He felt inside his coat for the coveted egg, but not finding it there, and seeing the hare run off he took his caubeen in his hands, and after the manner which farmers adopt to catch horses at grazing began plaintively to call: "Psthegh! Psthegh! Foal-y, foal-y, foal-y." Needless to say his foal-y did not come back.

The following is a fishing story which I have heard of Glencar lake, and I need scarcely say that my narrator vouched for its truth. Three young men from Drumcliffe, about 4 miles distant, set out for a night's angling on the lake some years ago. All went well for some time, and each of them had a fair amount of luck till the witching midnight hour approached; then the lake which previously had a beautiful ripple in its surface, such as fishermen love to see, suddenly became dead calm, fish refused to take, and a perfect stillness came over everything. The birds, which are continually chirping their night-songs in the wooded shores of the lake, ceased their carolling; the dogs which can be heard for miles around bay-ing at imaginary moon quieted down, and in fact all nature seemed to be in a state of coma. A brilliant light shone over the face of the lake although no moon could be seen, and the fishermen distinctly heard a clash of swords, as if contending armies had met in battle; the sound of horses' hoofs beating on the hard side of *Leim-nan-Albanach*, added to the clanging of harness and accoutrements, filled the listeners with fear. The phantom host took a circuitous route by the north side of the lake, and, finally, before the eyes of the fishermen, entered the mountain-side in a great opening directly over where the boat-house now stands. Immediately the last horseman had disappeared everything around assumed its normal appearance, the face of the lake became rippled as before, but there was no more fishing that night. I believe that the parties concerned never visited Glencar to fish at night since, having been evidently frightened by "the ghost of the *Albanach*." For my part, I must say, although I have been round the lake shore at all hours of the day and night, I never met any but a human ghost who haunts the waters in quest of what is known as black trout, and woe to the unfortunate fish of that description which gets entangled in his feathery web.

Some years ago there was a gentleman who went for a fishing expedition on a summer night, and having two men from the district rowing him, he thought to while away the time by indulging in a little practical joke at their expense, more especially as fishing was very bad on the occasion. He pretended that by some means known only to himself he could raise the spirits of the dead, and thereupon began his machinations. He being a bit of a wag, and putting on such serious airs, one of the oarsmen seemed to be getting a bit un-

easy, and from his movements in the boat one could imagine that he would prefer to be on terra firma. Not so, however, with his friend, who knew a little of the spiritualist's work, he appeared calm, awaiting the moment when the ghost would appear. By this time the men stopped rowing and the baits dipped rather much, so that when our spiritualist friend began to take in his line he felt a heavy weight on the end of it. He began to pull steadily, and having all his line nearly in, told the men to look out, and proceeded to make some further invocations, when lo! up by the side of the boat came a large stump of a tree which had been carried down the river by a recent flood. "You have him," says our friend at the oar, and a sigh of relief escaped from his nervous companion.

MUCKELTY HILL.

BY L. F. DONNELLAN, Tubbercurry.

There's captivating scenery throughout loved Innisfail,
Historic glens, sequestered dells, and many a smiling vale;
But of those haunts my memory knows the sweetest spot to me,
Is the flowery braes and winding ways round the hill of Muckelty,

The lordly river Moy doth flow adjacent to the hill,
And on its way is brightened by many a lucent rill,
Whose waters flow through fertile land, until it joins the sea,
And swells the Atlantic ocean far, far from Muckelty.

Achonry's fair and fertile fields are looming now in view,
And every touch of nature yields with lavish hand and true,
Her valleys fair and verdant groves doth fill my heart with glee,
As I take a panorama from the hill of Muckelty,

What a scene of tranquil beauty on a lovely eve in June,
When the flowers gaily blooming fill the air with sweet perfume,
'Tis then the tuneful blackbird's voice is heard on bush and tree,
Pouring out their sweet melodious lays round the hill of
Muckelty.

Though many a day is past and gone since last I caught a gleam
Of the green fields round my native hill where nature's beauties
teem,

And where I played in early days with comrades kind and free,
And trod the green grass over round the hill of Muckelty.

And day by day, and one by one, some of those friends have fled;
Some toil afar in alien lands, some slumber with the dead;
I sadly mourn the loss of each they were so kind to me,
They shed a brilliant lustre round the hill of Muckelty.

A LEITRIM TURKEY COCK.

The following letter first appeared towards the end of 1904 in a London daily, having been surreptitiously obtained from a clerk in the Congested Districts' Board Office. It afterwards appeared in the Christmas Number of a Dublin illustrated journal. From these it was copied into the columns of almost every newspaper in the United Kingdom, and even of America. The last place it appeared was in the September, 1905, number of the half-crown monthly, "The National Review," in an article written by Miss Edith Balfour.

It seems the Congested Districts Board having determined, among other things, to improve the breed of turkeys in the country districts in Ireland, sent turkey cocks to persons in several villages who kept turkeys, and who were allowed to let them out for breeding purposes for the sum of sixpence. Among others one was sent to Mrs M'Ternan.

The letter is perfectly genuine, and after an enquiry on the spot the Congested Districts Board have given the writer £3 on requital of her claims.

to

The congested district board
dublin.

the humble petishun of Anne M'Ternan, of Creevelea, in the Co. Leitrim, a poor lone widda woman to your honour able board of gintlemen, that is if yeh are honour able. Humbly showeth that i take my pin in hand to rite that i received from your honour able board a magnifeyent merrican bronis turkhe cock (which was to be) but was insted a poor diang craithur of a thing which was no use to king or counthry, but took and died sthraight six week ago as he would have done at first but for me nursing him and him al magets and i had to throw him into a shough and wash my hands three times with sope and soft wather, and which was to improve the hole turkhees in this quarter but didnt, and hadnt one single chicken good or bad affther him, and has me et up alive with this one and that one complaneing and scoulding as if it was my fault as I tells them. and it the biggest loss of al to my self, and me having nothing but the day lite and the waater the Lord help me, and me duzin of hens and to turkhees which I used to make severl pounds of other years til i was desaved by that durty brat of a turkhe cock that ye sint me and made a complemint of by the way, and had me kilt riting and riting

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and binding me up same as if i was a roge or a thief or as if ye were givin me an estate or a cow or somethin usefull. But now it is in tbis agreyment that if I carry out every thing rite i will get 10s. This i clame and why not secondlie as in al like dealings i am bound to give back the six pnces they gev me. i al ways held up my head in dayciency and honor in the counthry and al belonging to me til i got in with your board. i have to give them back their pays so i have and sorry i am for them God nose and i have no muneey to give them. This muneey was to be for feeding that turkhe cock and hinse i claime it from you, and he was sic from the time i got him i told Father Meehan he was dawny but he only laffed at me and sed that it was what the dublin foul took aither the dublin people, an the were quite and aisy going in their minds which the tuk to be for the hoight of gentilly which proved that he was a well bread goble hur oute and oute. i wouldn't tell a lie on the priest of the parish far be it from me but may the Lord forgive him. i was fortellin the congested hen spektor that when she kem roun she was such a sweet craythur the Lord love her that i had not the harte an it her firs visit, but still an with ail an with all her sweet an waays, what wud the likes of her no about the trubbles of the poor and her a boggin ln carpets up to her hipps up in dublin wit yeh. and forby these to things an me havin to make a sup of tay for awny dacent body or any poor craythur that kem far. as i had no chickens it was a loss to me of severl pounds and am i to go into the wurkhousè this winter, or why did ye sind me that turkhee cock at all, the likes of which was never in the counthry afore to drive me into the wurkhousè an him stuck up with impidence. And to see the poor turkeys there lieing on their eggs for four long weeks an their no chicken an the are now going about as lonesumlike an not a bit on their bones no more than on the roks of Graghmaglugh you would pity them, the Lord help them.

an if you sind me down me tin shillings in a cord hince with your agreeyment, and sind me the pays to sind back to the daycient people that kem here, and forby sind's me down tree pounds for loss and damagis by rayson of having know turkhee foul this blessed year, i will ever pray and will forgiv ye my bother and trouble and unaisement of mild, and the bildin of a hin ouse for the turkhe cock, but if ye do not considhre my case i will rite to the lord left tinent, or with God's help the house of lards, an i'll trot down every inch to mannor hamilton to torney ray, an thats the man that will make ye all hop. so ye need not think ye are goin to have it al yer own way tho i am poor itself, so no more at preasent but still remains still your ebaydient servant,

Yourè obaydent servantt,

ANNE M'TERNAN.