

"Crosk orrin!—crosk orrin! My pastchee boght!—my pastchee boght!" (May the cross encompass me! My poor children!—my poor children!)

Once when wandering in county Galway, down by old Cloghmore, I saw a stranger "convoing" party than could be found in any other portion of Ireland. I had been sauntering among the Connemara "knitters," "fullers," "poteen-makers and antiquities of the ancient Celts with which this region abounds, and my mind was full of the pagan and early barbaric life whose rude stone monuments were on every hand. Suddenly looking down upon the sea, I beheld a scene in keeping with the times of which I dreamed. A fleet of rotten dories, ragged smacks and currachs, or skin-keeled craft, precisely the same as used in these islands 2,000 years ago, was approaching the shore.

The occupants were skinny and white. They were dressed in rags and with little of these. The men wore skin shoes from which the hair had not been removed, which the natives call "pam-pootas." The women were barefooted and barelegged to their knees, and their bonnetless heads were covered with great shocks of coarse black hair. It was a Dantean picture of hunger and want, framed in a setting of ancient, barbaric times. They were a party of nearly 100 God-forsaken Arran Islanders, accompanying a family of emigrants to Cloghmore, whence the latter would walk to the train at Galway. They nearly stood upright as they neared the main-land and were chanting the wildest, most dolorous Celtic strain human ears ever heard.

What a host of shuddering reflections this sea pageant of poverty-stricken peasantry crowd upon you! Your eye follows the dark shore-line. Behind are the mountains. There are the peasantry and the ruins. Two thousand years ago there stood the watch-towers, the raths, the places for Pagan pyrolatry. In the valleys were the herds and the helots. The signals flashed from crag to crag. Some savage chief with his thousands of serfs has come to give battle perhaps to old Beola himself. The bellowing herds are huddled in the glen. The shrieking women are herded within the raths. On came the fierce invaders by land. Here, skulking along the bays and bights, come the invaders by sea. Their shields are of rawhide. Their war raiment is of rawhide. Their navy is afloat upon rawhide. Then, slaughter by land and by sea, while the day lasts. Fire and sword, rapine and pillage, while lasts the night. The grass grows richer in the valleys for the blood left there that day!

They set the departing ones upon shore in silence and tenderly. No words could depict the agony of that separation. These went forth to unknown dangers in untried lands; these went back to hopeless starvation upon the barren Arran Isles. But not at once. Past old Cloghmore, past Ballynen, yes, past far Caher, the currachs and the dories and their motley crews followed those that went, wailing farewells, fiercely shrieking *grahs*, and straining their eyes until the last fluttering rays disappeared beyond the Connemara hills over against ancient Galway. Not until then did they, still waiting, turn towards the hovels among the howling Arran rocks.

I can never forget a "convoing" incident and its strange outcome which I

witnessed, and indeed in which I participated. I had been visiting the battlefield of Aughrim, where, on that awful Sunday of 1691 was a battle such as we who have been in battles know, where Ginkel's hosts, in that mad charge upon leaderless heroes, ruined the fortunes of the Stuart dynasty; and where the whirlwind of death which swept over Aughrim's morass and bog set the final seal of servitude, but never of servility, upon the people of Ireland; and, turning into the old Dublin and Galway road, towards Ballinasloe, was at once one of a singular "convoing" party from the rural districts of Kilreekill. The strangest feature of this, so invariably a friendly, procession, was its double character, and its remarkably contentious nature.

Some tremendous excitement seemed to wildly influence both lines of march. On one side of the way was a bright Irish maiden surrounded and protected, as it were, by parents, relatives and at least two-score of aggressively-defensive followers. On the other was a smart-looking Irish youth in a state approaching frenzy, surrounded and restrained from some violent purpose by a like retinue of family, friends and loyal followers. Dropping quietly into line behind, among the nimblefooted, least partisan, and one might say commiseratingly-blended followers, I speedily learned the cause of the otherwise inexplicable spectacle. Nora, the daughter of a Kilreekill peasant, had been wooed by and betrothed to Dennis, son of a peasant of Ballynoe. The Kilreekill father disliked the match, and, bent on irrevocably breaking off, had got Nora started thus far toward America.

Dennis, wild with grief, had scoured Longford barony for friends, for a rescue; and all the way from Kilreekill the factions had attacked each other, retreated, parleyed, blarneyed, scorned, truced, and so it went on again to Garbally hamlet when a cheer of hope arose in the ranks of Dennis' followers; for down the hill from behind, a sight to do Cupid's sorry eyes good, came a host of "the byes" from about Oghil and Keltomer. These rushing down and reinforcing our side—and I say "our side," for in some way I found myself giving an elbow to the cause of Dennis—we made as fine a rally and sally as any one would joy to see; captured the blushing and willing Nora; bore her triumphantly into Balinasloe; and had her safely and securely married to Dennis by an obliging priest within a glorious half hour thereafter.

EDGAR L. WAKEMAN.

#### OUR STOCKHOLM LETTER.

STOCKHOLM, April 26.—[Special]—The Verdens Gang published a few days ago an editorial which was evidently inspired by the leaders of the most radical wing of the Left, its aim being to demonstrate that the present union of Sweden and Norway is unnatural in several respects: "The Swedes and Norwegians are two different nations," the paper says. "We are placed close together, but we differ greatly from each other. Norway turns chiefly to the West, across the North Sea and the Atlantic. We have been, we are still at home by and on the sea more than the Swedes. Our historical traditions connect us chiefly with Iceland, Greenland, Finland, Scotland, Ireland, Normandy

and the Netherlands. \* \* \* Sweden turns chiefly to the East and South, Finland, Esthland, Pomerania, Germany.

"Phrases do not count much. The forests and mountains between Norway and Sweden separate more than they connect the two nations. . . . A history of more than a thousand years separates us. Our internal development, our external connections, have been different; hence the results are different. In Norway we have independent farmers tilling their soil; in Sweden, a rich development of landlordism. Sweden has fostered a pronounced type of aristocracy; Norway an equally strong type of democracy.

"All attempts since 1814 to assimilate the two nationalities have failed, while on the other hand we have always been successful in developing profitable intercourse by opening avenues of trade, building international railways, etc. This is a pointer to us in what way we are to co-operate for the benefit of both nations.

"We do not believe Sweden wants to treat us in the same manner as Russia is treating Finland. Will Sweden interfere and impede a free development in all directions in our country? Impossible! At the close of his life the Swedish statesman, DeGeer, admitted our right to an independent life, and did not even deny our right to secede from the Union if it were felt as an oppression. We do not doubt that every Swede who conscientiously studies the question will arrive at the same conclusion."

This editorial seems to indicate that the Left looks on the crisis as the thin edge of the wedge, which may possibly split the Union in twain—and they almost court such a possibility.

When King Oscar was out walking the other day, near the Blasieholm harbor, past came two laborers, who were removing ice from the street. One of them knew the king, and said to the other:

"Stop, the king is coming!"

"What do I care," said the other. Meanwhile the king had come close enough to hear the remark, and he asked the irreverent laborer:

"What did you say?"

"What did I say? What does the gentleman mean by that?"

"Well, I am the king."

"That's more than I knew."

The chamberlain who accompanied the king was already on the way to a patrolman, who arrested the laborer, and brought him to the police station. But here the laborer denied having said what he was accused of and, to the honor of the police of Stockholm be it said that the man was set free again without any further ado.

The Norwegian crisis is looked upon by many Swedish statesmen as threatening to the very Union itself. During a recent discussion in the upper house of the Riksdag, which house is very conservative, it was, however, surprising to see the liberal tenor in which many of its members spoke on the subject.

Senator Klinckowstrom thought the Norwegian people had not considered how much it costs to run an independent national government, so that even if Norway should secede from the Union, the Norwegians would in a few years realize their folly and apply for re-admission.

Senator Treffenberg had always been a friend of the original union, but not of the present caricature of a union.