WO SHILLINGS

CYCLE AND CAMP

BY T.H. HOLDING

LONDON WARD, LOCK & CO, LTD.

The Sparkbrook Grand.

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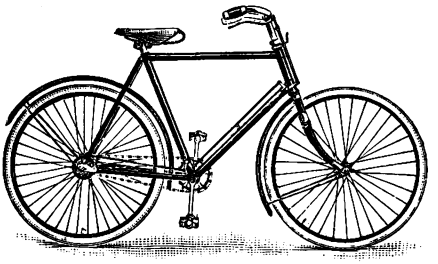

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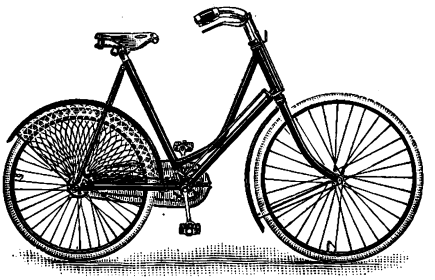

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ERRATA.

PAGE.	LINE.	
22	4	after "*friend*" add "*one is.*"
39	4	replace "*shores*" by "*bed.*"
66	27	replace "*smelt*" by "*felt.*"
97	20	after "*potatoes*" add "*he was missing.*"
109	6	add commas after "*Wylde*" and "*Father.*"
113	6	after "*views*" add "*for owners.*"
113	20	after "*i.e.*" add "*not.*"
136	20	replace "*by*" with "*as.*"
140	9	replace "*hill*" by "*flank.*"
149	16	after "*returned*" add "*with.*"
152	11	erase "*y*" in "*fully.*"
102	3—6	transpose sentences.
162	13	replace "*t*" in "*whisket*" by "*y.*"
162	15	"*proferred*" should be "*proffered.*"
164	10	replace "*they*" by "*riders.*"
172	11	replace "*were*" by "*was.*"
175	6	replace "*enumerated*" by "*named.*"
179	12	"*policeman*" should be plural.
189	8	after palatable add "*and.*"
190	14	replace "*faction*" by "*factor.*"
199	11	erase "*at.*"
211	1	erase second "*i.e.*"
213	13	after "*tinned*" add "*inside.*"
221	8	after "*linen*" add "*thread.*"
232	1	"*protudes*" should be "*protrudes.*"

CYCLE & CAMP.

ALL ON.

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MACMILLAN & CO., LIMITED,

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BOMBAY, CALCUTTA AND MADRAS.

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ALL ON.

CYCLE AND CAMP.

BY

T. H. HOLDING,

Author of "Watery Wanderings 'Mid Western Lochs,"
&c., &c.

LONDON :
WARD, LOCK & Co., LIMITED,
Warwick House, Salisbury Square, London, E.C.
New York and Melbourne.

CONTENTS.

DE VERE & Co.,
OXFORD CIRCUS PRINTING WORKS,
4, LITTLE MARLBORO' STREET,
LONDON, W

DEDICATION.

—o—

IN MEMORIAM.

I VENTURE TO DEDICATE THIS LITTLE WORK TO THE MEMORY OF

JOHN McGREGOR.

Had the Cycle been "in" when from controversy, preaching and shoeblack brigading, "Rob Roy" went canoeing, he would have been as enthusiastic a Cyclist as he was a Cruiser. He revived the pre-historic pastime of canoeing, and his books popularised the sport and led to the formation of Canoe Clubs. Its devotees, his disciples, made portable camps and carried them all over Europe. In the "Canoeist," of twenty-five years ago, a Mersey C.C. man gave drawings of a tent. From that, year by year improving upon it, the Author developed Canoe Camping until he took the first prize in the Royal Canoe Club for his camp kit on two occasions.

"Rob Roy" took the Alpine Club as his model for the Royal Canoe Club, founded at Putney, 1866. I took the idea of the R.C.C. as the basis of the proposals I published in 1875 in the "Bicycle News" for the CYCLISTS' TOURING CLUB, *which thus became its origin. From this great Club sprang the League of American Wheelmen, Cyclists' Touring Club of France; National Cyclists' Union, etc.*

It would be easy to moralise:—How the seed of a good idea takes root, and is seen growing "after many days," as the Book has it.

"Rob Roy" was brave and daring as a man. He was equally unselfish and original as a Christian philanthropist. In his person and life healthgiving pleasures were united with a living and fearless zeal for the waifs and strays.

T. H. H.

London, December 24th, 1897.

INTRODUCTION:

HOW IT CAME ABOUT.

THE only excuse a Rational Cyclist can have for bothering with a camp outfit on a tour is either, that he is poor, or has too much of the savage remaining in his composition. Rationally speaking he need not be ashamed of either.

The Author of this little book and designer of the new lightly-built yet efficient outfit—described later on—began camping on the Prairies of America at nine years of age. He is now over HALF A CENTURY and has averaged a month a year camping in portable camps during 4,000 miles on river, lake and estuary throughout the United Kingdom.

But before proceeding let the reader and writer mutually sink all shyness. So to be frank and plain I wish to write in the first person. To drop the "we" is a huge relief to an editor, and, possibly, will not detract from the interest of the little story. May it not become offensive in a single sentence in consequence.

We will now begin our journey in Company. So far from being a'weary of Camping, in my fifty-third

year, I have at last carried out a simmering project cherished for fifteen years. It came on with the old "Ordinary" which was practically an impossible machine to camp with. The idea lay dormant from the blessèd birth of the "Safety" until July, of this more blessèd Jubilee Year of 1897. Its fruition was an unexpected accident as it were. My friend H——, (whom I had not seen lately save by a glance over the left shoulder as he good humoredly gave me a stroke with his stick, as I wheeled round that awful corner out of Bond Street into Grafton Street, one evening in May,) called on me in July. "We," Mrs. H—— and himself, "are thinking of camping out with our tandem, in Scotland, on our holiday, and knowing you have had a wide experience in camping, want you to come round to B—— House to see some plans I have sketched out for a tent."

That settled it! A night's discussion, my complete condemnation of all *his* schemes and the adoption of simpler ones in all points was sufficient gratification to one's vanity and egotism on one subject.

Within eight days two complete outfits were made —made in four towns by seven separate people at a cost of about three guineas each—either lot weighing when in bulk some fourteen pounds, and so easily carried on a Tandem or on two Safeties, and practically carriable with almost equal ease on *one* machine.

One of these outfits was sent home, the other put in my large kit-bag which annually takes flight to Ireland. Our party consisted of four, all of whom had camped while cruising on rivers and lakes in England, Scotland and Ireland during the past dozen years or so, on various occasions. We were now resolved to try

CYCLE - CAMPING.

We vainly believed we were the pioneers of it. We succeeded; the camp succeeded! It is now clear the poor clerk or workman who wishes to see fresh countries at home or abroad may gratify his whim and have a fine holiday on the weekly expenditure of his pocket money and be independent of weather, distance or to him the prohibitive tariff of hotels.

The above statements are not written in a wilfully bombastic spirit. As we proceed the facts shall appear little by little verifying the possibilities therein foreshadowed. Personally, I like the Camp so much better than the Hotel—which I could afford—that, apart from the economy of camping, it is a real luxury in its freedom, and with one or two campers incontestably jollier.

No man can tour in England under seventy shillings per week. In Ireland it may be a trifle more and in Scotland, surely, more still.

Two men camping with their Cycles could nohow spend more than four shillings per day for the pair or, to do it luxuriously, say thirty shillings a week for

both. Thus the cost of the camp is saved, and, say fifty shillings besides towards next year's mount out of ONE week's holiday to each man. All this will be proved later on, much, I hope, to the promotion of Touring-by-Cycle-Camp.

I have no animosity to the Hotel—many and savoury were the nice meals they have supplied when I was hungry, and hard and cold many of the beds in the winter nights, sweet have been the smiles of the waiting-maids, and flattering too the blandishments of "the boots," and nobly high too the bills, as witness:—3/9 for a tea, at Windsor; 7/- for four hours sleep at the G———, in London. The rich need not be mean with these modern palaces; but let these tariffs no longer stop the poorer cycle man from his rightful feast of fresh air and the grandest scenery his country affords.

CHAPTER I.

ADVANTAGES OF CAMPING.

 HO can question them? Only those who have never tried camping. All the horrors which outsiders fear and with which they threaten us we neither meet nor find. In fact, they don't exist. Camping is nearly always delightful, for a holiday at least, and if well-managed is pleasant and healthy, as well as cheap, for a more protracted period. But it is not a lazy life—far from it. The question comes in here, perhaps, as to which holiday is most beneficial—LOAFING or ACTIVITY? He who would spend a holiday of sheer laziness should take luxurious lodgings or quarter himself at a splendid hotel, and next to the strain and exertion of eating, do literally, nothing. To most men, however, young or middle aged, who lead active lives and who are gifted with average energy, something less dormant is, surely, an advantage. The camp affords this:—Exercise without fatigue; fresh air night and day, and sufficient excitement to create interest.

That sounds well! Yes, and has been proved to answer when physic failed and tonics had lost their charm.

But we need not pause to moralize or enlarge. Our humble mission is the simple one of describing

actual experiences, and if these, faithfully told, do not supply the necessary testimony, platitudes become as useless as the physic. So let us imagine a morning scene at any of the hundreds of portable camps, I, with those who have shared it, have assisted at. It is much the same no matter whether you go by skiff, canoe, or small sailing boat on the water, or journey by road on two wheels. Let us suppose it is very early, say 6 a.m. The sun is shining brightly already; tent feels hot; look at watch. "Oh, where did I put the thing?" Feels in all the pockets, he remembers having had stuck about the mediæval garments which possibly he is wearing, as he lies. "Oh, I took it off!" It was placed on the butter-tin, top corner left side of the tent near his head. "Bother it; thought it was later. Ten minutes to six! I'll have a doze." Turns over, gives a long audible breath and falls fast asleep and possibly disturbs the other fellow by a bit of snoring. Other man likes a bit of extra sleep too and big feedings after it. He falls off again also.

"Here's your milk, sir!"

The Boss of the camp wakes up. "Milk! What milk? Oh, yes; I ordered it to be here at 8. Confound the fellow—it's only just gone 6! What time is it?"

"Few minutes to 8, sir."

Up he jumps! His doze was just two hours of real solid, sweet sleep, such sleep as only comes to

some men under such conditions as a camp life supplies or rather enforces.

Both men get up and unfasten the tent and look at the sky. There is a heavy dew on the grass yet.

"Pass out those things, old man." We put all fabric articles out in the sun to air. The Junior collects a few simple tin utensils and a small copper pan, and with a tiny duster-looking sort of rag, but not now so clean as it was or might be, goes slowly towards the pond, brook or river. As yet he is very silent—this one with the dishes, which were pushed outside the tent last night in the dark. He does not perhaps fancy the job over keenly. But it has to be done, and as there are 57 miles to ride in three stages and many things of interest to stop and see, their is no time to lose. The elder slings a towel over his arm, puts a small soap case in his breeches pocket, and goes towards the little river beside which the camp was thoughtfully pitched last night—specially with a view to a dip, as one ought poetically to say: "in its limpid waters." This dip is taken, wet or fine, hot or cold. Now he is thoroughly awake as he comes spluttering and dripping up the bank. He calls to the dish-washer in the distance: "Fine, glorious; a bit fresh though, but spanking all the same."

The writer has no respect for slang. It is used here because of a desire to give a faithful record. Two friends out on a holiday naturally do not address each

other, or describe things, in the language used in Parliament, when Irish business is not on.

Now he hangs up a toy looking-glass to the tent pole, gets out a razor, puts a spoonful of water in one-half of the soap-box. Holds a lighted match beneath it until, in say sixty seconds, the spoonful of water boils. He picks up one of the packing straps, swings his razor on it, paints his face with a soapy mixture, and—shaves. Then he carefully puts in a parting to his hair—should he be wearing any—a parting as exact and trim as though he were still in civilised life. True, against he has had his breakfast it will all have gone owing to the careless way he has with that cycling cap, which he shuffles about too much, always getting the peak over his left eye.

Now the dishes come up sparkling clean. (?) The kitchen man, or cabin boy, now hurries off with a towel. The man whose toilet is finished sets alight the cuisine, puts on a small tin pan, which fits outside the regular cooking-pan. Into it he puts four spoonsful of oatmeal, then some milk, and a little water. Stirs until it boils, at which point it is done. His little copper cuisine (a "Mersey," of course, the best in the world) burns a steady flame with its small supply of spirit. Now on goes the water for the coffee. While it boils, four slices of bacon are laid out on a tin plate. The instant the coffee is made, on goes the bacon. Ah, we begged a few potatoes last night! Chops them up ready. Out comes the

savoury bacon, and on go the potatoes—to be fried a pale-brown hue, and lots of pepper, please.

Now we eat our porridge Scotch-wise : milk in one vessel and porridge in the other. Then we have the fried potatoes, than which tell me what is more tasty? You need not be a Devon-born man to like fried potatoes for breakfast.

Breakfast was cooked in just half-an-hour, and another big half spent in consuming it. But it was a good breakfast, all the more palatable that the fresh air and exercise we were taking gave chastity to the flavour of every dish.

Then we both put on a morning pipe, and take our dishes to the nearest water to clean them up. It is slow work now, because bacon-fat sets hard. It is like its state in active life, a bit obstinate to move. But sand, mud and grass do the work, and the doubtful-looking but really useful dish-cloth finishes the rest, especially the dish-cloth.

While the master of the expedition packs up the utensils, food stuffs, etc., the other man busies himself with the somewhat scanty clothing and bedding. Both art, experience and muscular force are necessary to do this well. Everything has to be folded neatly, and rolled tightly. There is only so much space for each bit, or piece, or part, and on no account can it be exceeded.

The clouds are thickening over Croagh-Patrick. Yes, down quick with the tent. The sun has dried

out the dew, all save the little under-skirting, which, as we spread it out in the air, will be dry too in a few minutes, it is so hot. If we get all packed we shall not mind the rain, as we can clothe ourselves safely from the worst the sky can send us.

"There"! the Boss exclaims, as the last strap is buckled, the tyres blown up, and we are ready to start—ah, but what does he say? "It's a quarter to 10, and we ought to have been on the road by 9."

We feel well and strong. After we have done a quarter-of-a-mile we shake into it a bit, and begin to put the pace on. Neither of us feel the bit of weight we carry—really 10lbs. each.

A real hotel bill for the night would have been 17/- *Our* 'Hotel' bill for the night was more moderate, for one with a scanty purse.

OUR LITTLE BILL.

Milk - - - - - - -	2d.
Tip for two borrowed Blankets, which we did not use - - - -	6d.
Eggs for tea - - - - -	3d.
Bread, Two Eggs and other provisions	10d.
	1s. 9d.
Balance in hand	15s. 3d.

NOON CAMP.

At 1 o'clock we call at a cottage. The potatoes they are cooking for their own dinner will be 10 minutes

"Oh, yes, we can have some with pleasure." We select a place sheltered from the sun, now very hot for the clouds passed over. We spread out a cycle cape on the grass, unpack our "meat," which is a small oval tin labelled "Irish Sausages." We fry them with a slice of bacon, and by the time this is done a little girl comes along with a large plate of steaming potatoes—in their jackets of course. We send for a jug of water. So, details apart, we have a nice lunch. We give the woman 6d. for her share, and the rest costs us, all told, 1/6.

EVENING CAMP.

We have worked our way round a wonderful country, nigh to the Atlantic sea-board, and are now not far from the head of the famous Kylemore Pass. We pitch camp in a little freshly mown paddock, but a few hundred yards from a rather neat little white-washed farmhouse. "Yes, we are welcome to anything they can do." On goes the kettle while we fix up the camp. "Shan't we be cold." "Well no, not unless it is a very chilly night. "But," says the faithful native, "it *will* be. Will you not have a blanket? Here is one, made from wool of our spinning. You are welcome to it if you will have it, sorr." We take it "in case," and a snug night we have.

MORNING!

It is but a few paces to the river. We *must* bathe. We had a stiff wind part of the way.

yesterday, and we feel we need a freshener this morning.

Here again is our bill :—

Milk - - - - - -	2d.
Eggs - - - - - -	4½d.
Loan of a large Blanket - - -	4d.
Other stores - - - - -	6d.
	1s. 4½d.

At our last town we laid in a loaf, costing 3d., and a pound of beautiful bacon, costing 9d.

Now, it may be alleged by this time that the heading of this chapter is a fraud, for it will be pointed out that not a word has been said about the ADVANTAGES of camping! True, I have not covered even one page with platitudes, but I have shown very briefly the "round" of a day with a glance at its details. This, surely, has shown how light a task it is yet how varied, active and interesting in all its movements. It only remains for me to add, so far as that part of the subject is concerned, that in dress, manner, speech and time there was hardly any restraint or oppressive hurry nor yet obligation as to food, dress or the why or wherefore of anything in particular. Thus, I trust, the advantages have been shown rather than expressed or praised. In no earthly thing, perhaps, is the old adage so true as in this affair of camping, viz. : "One man's meat is another

man's poison." There may be people too superfine for the camp or too lazy to make it a success. Possibly, at least, to do it well it requires an apprenticeship in some form—use, indeed, is second nature. All the savage must not have been refined out of a person—just a fragment must remain for the thing to be successful. I assume, indeed, that all of us have more of the rough rascal in us than we believe or would, under persuasion, even admit!

Without aspiring to the task of the essayist, one may point out the natural philosophy lying in this little nutshell, viz., that the exactitude of modern business—professional or any other—is a hedge about us. We are hemmed in by routines; by rapidity of Time's march; by engagements which have to be kept, and a thousand other unordained regulations which brook no shifting. Most men have eleven, or eleven-and-a-half months of it every year, and a good many have twelve without a break. It should be urged then in favor of the camp that its freedom affords more health, and, possibly, a bit more work to the Camping Cyclist than if he went to hotels with a full supply of servants at his beck and call. Yet the utter self-willedness, the *abandon*, the go-as-you-pleaseness, the freedom of the life, its jollity, the independence it gives are incomparably superior to anything that the Hotel can offer. Personally, I have never felt more lost than when pulled up as it were by a hospitable friend at the end of a cruise—taken,

at one step, from the life of a savage into a refined home—drawn back to civilisation! Suddenly the camping things are packed up, and, at the hospitable invitation of some friend, taken into the state-room, breakfasted every morning on the fat of the land, and then! well, had nothing to do except to think how we could fit in some little makeshift task with the lunch hour at 1 o'clock; tea at 5, or with supper at 9. Not a word shall be said to disparage all this. Of course, this is the natural outcome of modern life and is essential to it. But, then, we are mutually considering—the reader and the rider—what is the best way to spend a respite and with most change and novelty? What is most likely to untwist the over-strained brain and to relax the over-wrought nerve, to revive the sluggish liver, to give activity to the abated appetite? What is most effective in driving away the cares that everybody must leave behind when they go for a holiday? Why, emphatically, the camp, whether it be a "fixed" *en famille* near some lake, river, or pretty scene, or the camp of the small yachtsman or boating man or canoeist, and, last but far from least, the CAMP-BY-CYCLE.

All these suggestions, so roughly stated, are, perhaps, written from a veteran's enthusiastic point of view—but they are as real as they are realisable. They are all possible because simple. At the hotel you order a room and sit in the breakfast-room for

half-an-hour waiting for the waiter, who is himself waiting upon the cook, who waits upon her fire.

In the course of any holiday, with even a fag end of a programme it is pleasant, nay, necessary, to start early. Some days it is a luxury to start late ; indeed, it is pleasant to start late now and again. To start early from a hotel is next to an impossibility. How many times, alas ! in Winter has one ordered breakfast which must be ready at a quarter-to-seven. One has entered the big coffee-room with all the windows open, the furniture higgledy-piggledy as though an earthquake had passed, the fire only just lit and a maid, with blackened hands, finally finishing up the hearth ; while another kicks up a dust all round. How many times has that breakfast been ordered, say for 6.55, not made its appearance until 7.10, for the train that departs at 7.24 ?

Whilst these inconveniences lie more in the way of business men than to holiday-hunters, the camper's freedom is undoubted. How much easier in the summer for you to take your meal *al fresco* on the moor, the mountain, on the field or laneside, to flit, say, from one "course" to another at will, intead of waiting ten minutes between each ? To the poor man how pleasant to think that he has had a grand meal that costs him one shilling instead of 3/6, and to think that when it is over if he feels inclined to rest he can put his little cycle-handle satchel under his head and have a quiet hour's rest by

the way as he smokes a morning pipe in veritable peace and surveys the pleasant scene from the spot he has selected for his camp? He hears the birds sing, the leaves twitter and rustle as he ruminates; the sun gets warmer and the fleecy clouds sail on casting their faint shadows on mountain, moor or fen.

Again, sometimes, people go for a holiday and they come back as pale as when they went and occasionally have to go to the doctor soon after their return. The liver, of which they complained, is no better; the sleep is very little improved and they have actually got indigestion! This, of course, may not apply to semi-juvenile scorchers. But the constant gentle jogging about, the fresh air practically night and day, the free, rough life of the camp, the constant change of air from scene to scene as day follows day do a tremendous lot towards eradicating the ills that flesh is heir to.

Some one says, "Oh! I have read all you state. It is all very well if the weather is fine, but it is a nice thing to be in a damp tent with the rain trickling down your neck, and everything damp and wet. No, thank you. No camping for me." These are words we have heard many times. The fright some people have of getting the toe or stocking damp, the horror of a trifle of spray coming upon their garments or even the almost utter despair that fills them at the thought of getting wet, or, as they express it, "drenched"—is, from a non-medical standpoint, not

half as frightful and not half as dangerous as people imagine. Personally, I think no more of a plunge into a lake in my clothes when some emergency has forced it, or to even tumbling in when an accident has brought it about, than I do of walking across my own lawn with the dew on the grass. I never took any harm or caught cold thereby. As for wet feet: in these many watery rambles of 2,600 miles in the four provinces of Ireland, the same kind of perambulations in Scotland and England also, dry feet are the exception rather than the rule, and though a rheumatic subject and susceptible of cold to a nicety, I have suffered no ill in consequence.

These hints are not thrown out to make the young man reckless or to advocate any foolish or unnecessary exposure to conditions of this nature.

But as to damp camping! There is no advantage in damp camping. All the advantages lie in the dry and, indeed, comfort too for that matter. I have always endeavoured and am glad to say have always succeeded in ninety-five cases out of a hundred in keeping everything dry. To reap the advantages of a healthy enjoyable camp these are the leading conditions:—

(1.) The tent must be absolutely dry. A tent that lets in water would destroy health as well as comfort. No inconsistency, I trust, in regard to the upper clauses cited.

(2.) Dry wholesome clothing is essential and it must be kept so.

(3.) The Cycling Tourist must have thorough waterproofs. The mere cape some men hang over their shoulders which drenches their knees, legs and feet in a quarter of a mile riding in a good shower against the wind is a simple, foolish provision, not to say careless and blameable. The legs must be protected as well as the body. With such a dress a man may face, literally, anything.

I have very often, on seeing it settle down into a down-pour or what threatened to be one, taken temporary shelter under a tree or elsewhere and surveyed the heavens and examined the aneroid and have concluded, on its being likely to rain for a day or half-a-day, deliberately pitched camp and got in the dry. Then how quickly passed the time! The gentle patter of the rain on the tent one gets accustomed to. One sees that everything is away from the actual bottom or side-drip of the tent. One bethinks oneself that several letters, notes, post-cards have to be answered, in fact, are a day in arrears! They are written. Perhaps one wants to carefully re-study the maps or the country one is about to ride over so as to become familiar with them, and one studies the Ordnance maps, by preference, as showing every castle, abbey, church, ruin, river and hill in the

district. So we get a mental programme, as it were, rapidly focussed into the mind of what we have to see. Then we go on our journey when the rain has broken. Meanwhile, how quickly passed the time in a pleasant chat with a companion, or a little bit of reading to each other. How welcome is the rest on the little woollen blanket, our head on the tiny pillow, blown out to extra size, to give us a good high, wakeful rest to the head. No; damp camps are to be shunned, and they may be avoided by due care.

CHAPTER II.

IN CAMP AT LOUGH CULLIN.

OUR LITTLE TOUR.

PERSONAGES :

BEAUCHAMP, FRANK, LITTLE BILLIE, AND THE SKIPPER.

ON this remarkable lake shore, or very near to it, we pitched two very substantial tents with fly sheets gleaming white from their ridge-poles. It was a very snug pitch indeed, practically sheltered from every wind save the west.

"Ah!" said Beauchamp, "the prevailing wind, of course, in Ireland."

We are supposed to be favored with a gentle breeze from that quarter during our British Summer, but like the fitful Summer itself, don't we wish we may get it? But we don't! The prevailing wind in Ireland is south-west, which carefully spelt is R-A-I-N. Its gentleness too, as a wind, is questionable!

But more of this another time. We must not digress too much, at least not until we understand each other better, as we hope to do a little later on.

Well behind us and north of us were some very tall hedges, and to us, indeed, very valuable. These kept the wind from disturbing our slumbers by night and our sense of security for the tents by day. We had varying winds from nearly every quarter. In front of

THE CAMP WE LEFT BEHIND US.

our camp lay Lough Cullin Bay and beyond it the romantic mounds, woods and rocks at the mis-named "Pontoon." This lay on to the north of Lough Cullin itself. There is some peculiar, yet charming, scenery at this place—the junction of the two lakes Conn and Cullin. But why is this high rock-bound barrier,

bridge-spanned, called "Pontoon" one can only conjecture! Where the old bridge now stands spanning the two lakes and the changing alternate currents, there may have been a temporary bridge from which this singular name was drawn. It is as pretty a combination of scenic curiosities as ever eye fell on. As a fact the whole parish is called "Pontoon."

Due north of us, beyond these low-dark hills, cones and knolls, with their big "rocking-stones," towers up the Nephin 2,646 feet high, all aglow in the sunlight and looking but two miles away. In this respect of distance, like the task of climbing it, one may be easily deceived. Everyone knows 3,000 feet is no joke, take it as you may, to climb or descend. As a bit of distance, as we found out, it was nine miles to the foot of it from our camp, part of the road being much pitted with loose stones.

Then we must not forget down there behind a little break-water lay our two boats. This break-water was simply the usual thing: bit of man's and much of nature's united efforts. Huge limestone-boulders had been placed there by Madam Nature and lesser ones had been carelessly thrown between them by Mr. Man. The boat with a mast was the powerful, little canoe-yawl, the "Erne," and the other neat craft was the "Alpha"; both craft designed by the Skipper, the latter built in England, the former in Ireland. The lesser craft was a cruising C.B. canoe.

Both these boats had been brought over to sail in, fish from and generally to act as health-giving accessories and time-killers.

As a matter of fact the yawl did all the work. Although the canoe travelled 850 miles it was not sailed four miles.

But I fear I have again digressed as these matters hardly concern a cycle tour. But yet they do. It was the many thousands of miles the writer had boated, and always with a camp, that suggested the idea, so long seemingly impossible, of camping with a bicycle also. We had need then to make our connections good as we go along this fragile literary track together.

This matter of experience is practically everything. Let the would be Cycle Camper, of inexperience, attempt to construct, and to carry when he has so constructed his outfit. Twelve years ago I planned a tent, etc., far lighter than the one now in use.

It would have failed too—it was too fragile. Scores of facts could be enumerated here, showing the impossible notions people have where weight, space and practicability are concerned. Our cycle tent weighed 2½-lbs. It will be fully described and illustrated later on.

The problems to be solved come so thickly, that, nothing but experience gives the power to solve them. The writer then had designed so many equipments all portable and of best quality, and in reports, afterwards

issued, styled "neat," that the task of really getting into shape a Cycle Camping Outfit was as easy as he afterwards found the manner of carrying it on the machine.

We had been on this spot just twenty six hours. It was night. The moon almost revealed Ould Nephin. We had all made a magnificent "tea," and even one of the men who rarely smokes was puffing a cigarette to bear the other two company with their pipes, when the Skipper overheard the word "fishing."

"No, we'll take that Cycle Camp trip to-morrow me'bhoys, eh?"

Frank: "It would be better to stop here and go cycling when we are tired of this, I should say."

The other two where silent, so the old head spoke: "Oh no. Let us go cycling with our camp while the weather is fine. It's sure to break. It always does in August, which is generally a good deal like March. Bad weather here would not matter, but we do need, at least, 'dasent' weather for this other job."

Little Billie: "That sounds sensible."

Beauchamp: "Yes, I should think so."

Little Billie: "But how shall you manage the grubbing part of the business, Skipper?"

Skipper: "Ah, it shows what your mind runs on. You'll see. There is 'pleasure in surprise,' as some poet ought to have said."

Little Billie: "Where do you propose to go?"

Skipper: "*I* propose? Why, I'll go anywhere.

All I am after is to have a good spin in Ould Ireland once more on wheels and to test the camping idea thoroughly."

Little Billie: (14 stone) "What size is this tent Skipper? That roll you showed us looked very small."

We then settled all the details. Rather and more correctly they were all previously settled in the mind of the chief, and with a measure of confidence almost sublime, they said that the Skipper could do what he liked, as he knew best, and so on. That is, he explained his plans, and showed routes on maps, and it was fallen in with quite readily.

We sketched out a far wider round than the one actually taken, but the reason of its curtailment will be manifest as we go on with our narrative.

That day we had had perhaps the nicest sail we ever enjoyed in spite of our many watery expeditions in all parts of these islands. We had been away up the lake to the northern shoulder of Nephin. A lovely day and a nice breeze. Back in the early evening to our tea and camp, after a feast of scenery and sailing. What wonder we slept soundly until a few minutes to 7 next morning.

We had poor bathing here. A sandy bottom truly lovely for the feet, but at most, only twenty inches depth of water. To get out over this submerged sand was too serious a job to take on, and no one had the sense to suggest taking the boat out two

hundred yards or so, which is not saying much for the combined wisdom of four men.

Whilst two men washed up last night's tea-things, two bathed, and whilst the aforesaid two, after kitchen duties, plodged about and splashed in the lake, one of the other two did his elaborate toilet deliberately, and the Skipper cooked breakfast. He was pushing all hands forward because he knew a late start would spoil the day. So he cooked porridge, made coffee, cooked bacon, eggs and fried potatoes all under the half-hour. He is free, he feels, to assert that, no other small cuisine or canteen or stove, as a little portable apparatus, existing will do it in the time and on so small a supply of spirit—probably less than an ounce.

We had had two such fine days. Our camp seemed to suit us well. We were "so near and yet so far" from man and man's chief burden—civilization; but it was without regret that we quitted the snug tents and put all hands to the greasy dishes, etc. But the sun was out. It was a lovely morning and greasy plates are more amiable when the sun persuades! Quickly all was ready for packing away in the big tents which we proposed leaving unguarded and alone. Yet the combined value of those and all they contained was not far short of £100, the boats added another £50 at least. In short, our combined property approached £200. There was no road or path near, and only the four

cabins with their families fifty yards away, behind the big hedges and the little oat patch. True, as we learnt later, the whole lake shore is scoured by gipsies who are reputed to leave behind everything which is too heavy or too useless to carry away.

Then for the cycle outfit which was to be ready for its first essay in speeding along the ever undulating roadways of Ireland.

But the lake; how tempting it looked this morning! The rugged hills of high Windy Gap 1000 feet, across the lough, glowed in the sun or blushed in the passing shadow. It was a morning to delight the sailor man. Even Nephin had cast his white night-cap at last which he usually wore an hour or so as a protest. He looked very near and very clear and low. Yes; why not all get on board the "Erne" and sail over to its flank and ascend it and see "the world" as a local peasant expressed it? How much better than sweating on the dusty highway and carrying camp gear. But no; plans made are plans accomplished with some people.

The big gossamer sheet of mackintosh which covered the four bicycles, half-hidden in the hedge, was removed from the sheltering bushes. The bikes were pulled forth and we proceeded to do the impossible, as sceptics asserted, carry a camp on two wheels.

What road shall we take? Round the junction of the two lakes?

Once over Pontoon and through the short but beautiful pass behind the Hotel, and the road becomes so excellent that it almost equals that well-known highway that takes the London cyclist through Arcadia to his Mecca on the Guildford Road.

Well, we'll take Foxford, the eastern route to Castlebar, and so get down amid the gloomy mountains of Northern Connemara. If the natural features of the country were heightened with a tithe of England's wealth of leafage, how much higher would stand its scenery in the estimation of the average person? But to the man in search of change the impressive weird wildness of these western hills appeals to his imagination with irresistible tenacity. Round about their base once grew extensive forests of oak, birch and larch. The great deer and the wolf roamed around them. Crude man felled and split these trees with stone implements and built his Crannoges in the shallow lakes which became the bogs of to-day, which yields fuel for 4,000,000 people.

CHAPTER III.

EN ROUTE :

"NOW, Little Billie, your bag, please!" sang out the man of authority.

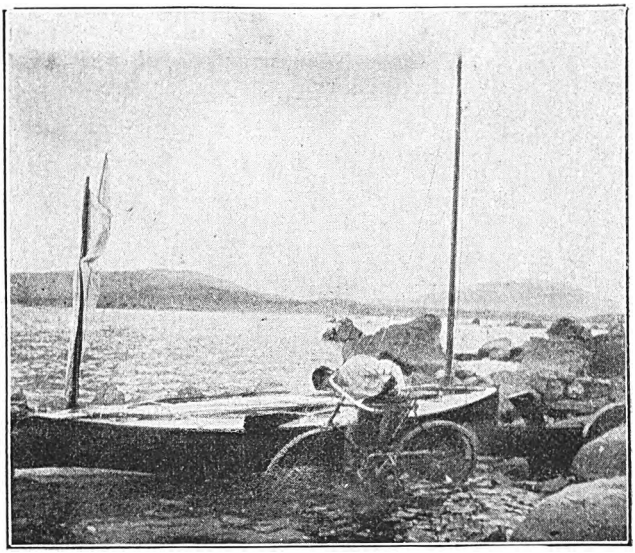
Little Billie: "Ain't got one, Skipper."

That just showed what he was. He was much the biggest man with the smallest machine and no bag.

"Oh, he'll take the waterproofs, Skipper!" interposed Beauchamp, who always stood up for the biggest ever since he was at school. Now four capes and four pairs of overalls made, though a compact, a fairly heavy package of several pounds. Then, to be just, we must not forget his two or three extra stones of—"Welsh mutton"—irreverently interposed one of the party!

Beauchamp had a snug little *multum-in-parvo* of Rucker fame, an admirable thing made to fit the backbone of a Bantam. He picked this up at the impossible price of 1/4 on a book stall. It did very well, not holding much, but carrying what it did hold right well. Frank tackled the angle or frame bag, and poles weighing 1-lb.; and the Skipper his favorite, or touring-bag, which held most and took most weight. One pump, no lamps, one repair outfit and one set of

spanners composed the whole stock of our gear tackle Punctures we did not intend to have, of course, nobody does! and, as a fact, Frank was the only victim, and it was a serious one caused by a strange article. A bit of ginger-beer bottle wire in the streets



of Westport town did the trick smartly, in fact, a double event.

We lifted our cycles over the two stone walls and were then on the Lough shore bestrewn with giant boulders, little ditto with alternate patches of beautiful yellow sand with here and there strips of

grass. Like all other Irish lakes this is lowering, and the old level is rarely reached. It is not owing, however, to the lessening of the water supply; far from it, but to the decrease of the rocky shores, which being limestone is constantly being eaten into by the water. This is common to all Irish lakes.

Up a narrow pathway we trudge, surely, the very roughest bit of ground even in Ireland: stones as big as young donkeys, some oval, some flat, projecting upwards, all shapes: rounds, ovals, flats and sharp edges. To carry a milk-jug full in the dark and a plate of eggs in the other hand along this track became quite an art! Along this we half-pushed, half-cycled our pretty, clean, newly-pumped pneumatics.

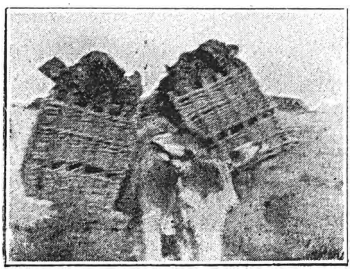
We left word at the houses that we should not be back that night, but would be obliged to them if they would keep an eye on the camp. We did not say more than the one night lest they should decline the responsibility. We had thus early mastered Mayo ways!

We felt sure that the wind would shuffle round to the s.w. and probably blow our camp up, or down, when we had gone away. Yes, and to the s.w. it did go and to the s.w. it did stick the whole time we were absent, and it howled away fast and furious a good part of the time too. When we found the road at the edge of the wood, fringing or rather hiding Lord Aran's demesne,* the road looked charming

* Open to the public on Tuesdays.

leading away through its canopy of branches. But our way was not through the wood to Pontoon again, but over the bog on a surface much bestrewn with loose stones and turf. On each side the track scores of men, women and children were busy loading turf on carts, unloading wicker skips brought up by donkeys from the soft bog where carts could not travel. Long black ridges of peat walled in the way on each side of us and plenty of carts stood clean across the track of course.

Talking of turf-laden donkeys with their fat baskets projecting from their thick sides, they take up as much of the way as an ordinary cart, but in meeting them as we did constantly, we learnt the difference between meeting a cart and these fellows. A cart in Ireland is thoughtfully driven and kept well away from the advancing cyclist or else pulled up until one has passed. In meeting Mr. and Mrs. Donkey this is not so. They go straight on irrespective of you, the width of the road, or the gear they carry. Scores of very narrow shaves have resulted, as the reader can very well imagine. A



OUR KIN.

deepish, damp ditch, a heap of stones, a stone wall, a stream or a vehicle—brother Donkey carrying turf quite disregards these things so far as they affect the passing cyclist. Sheep are far more considerate. If you are too obstinate to get off when the big, fat fellows come close with thier woolly sides right in front of your wheel, at least a dozen hedge you in all round so as to offer you a soft fall as you tumble off. Now this is much better than being tumbled into a boggy ditch or sent barking your shins into a wall or a heap of stones. Still we cannot have our way in all things, and it will never be quite easy to manage donkeys, irrespective of the number of legs they go upon or the loads they carry.

We had but half a mile of this, and having already covered the bog a dozen times, we ought to know how to steer a course, to avoid loose stones, or being knocked down by wicker skips five feet accross, pieces of turf and all the rest of it. On reaching the station, of course the gates were shut, they always were! In crossing this line fifty times the gates were found open to the highway—really open, at least twice. To one of the party this was a bit serious. He (the Skipper) fell with a big load of stuff he was carrying from his boat (the "Erne") the day of arrival. The big stones over which he was laboring were slippery, and as a result he fell on a round plump boulder, his left upper ribs breaking the fall. The pain it gave in all movements was, of course, an hourly annoyance,

and is so still, though it all happened nine weeks ago.

We were in gay spirits when we reached Foxford. The river was running with a roar over the weir, though not very flush, there having been a month of fine weather. There were many double-handed salmon rods circling their long lashes in various directions. Some said sport was bad, some that it had been good, some that they (the anglers) had averaged three salmon a day per rod, which we will say was good. The writer has visited all the fishing centres in Ireland, and has on no single occasion heard any one say they did well! But these same people expect too much. This applies to salmon fisheries in Scotland and Wales too, but from conversation with some of the anglers on this wonderful river, the Moy, they did admit catches :—a salmon yesterday, one the day before, or two on one occasion, and so forth! Still, on all hands, the Moy is voted the best open or free river in the United Kingdom.

Having done much business at the Post Office, and being ready to start in good earnest at 10.30, it was fortunately discovered by Beauchamp that his tyre, like its owner, needed a little fresh air, and he borrowed the Skipper's pump on which he had determined to rely to force in the needful supply. Of course, it would not fit his valves! Everybody spluttered, explained, suggested things and tried to dodge the connections. But they as obstinately

declared they would take no part in any dodgery and so refused to work. His tyres were some special ones. Beauchamp always has special things.

After a long discussion and added waste of time, poor Beauchamp had to admit what was a foregone conclusion all round, that he would have to go back nearly two miles for his own pump. This was only three-quarters-of-an-hour's delay, but that period lost threw us in for an indifferent camp, as it turned out, and prevented us reaching Leenane as we had partly planned. This is said to show the advantage of having in all things a reserve of time. It is well to plan from the beginning to get it. If to dally with the enemy be wise, do it at the first but not at the last end.

He did go. But time did not hang heavily. It was so very lovely a day. Foxford was so very—well there are things you feel a downright strong desire to praise, but don't, because words are such poor things to properly conceal your thoughts with. We went to the Roman Catholic chapel, a nice building enough outside, but within—though a new building—the essence of dreary poverty, stricken too with utter want of interest. "The Spirit and the Bride might say come," but it would be hard on the Bride to keep her there, and almost too bare for the Spirit to dwell in. It was quite a relief to turn into the Convent woollen factory.

But in this respect it is an exception. The old

barn-like Roman Catholic chapels have gradually "gone the way of all flesh" and in their places, during the last twenty years, fine churches have sprung up which far surpass in costliness the edificeses of wealthier England, in our smaller towns at least. *We* use cast-iron pillars: the new Roman Catholic builders in Ireland use granite ones. We have wooden Communion-tables: they marble altars elaborately carved, and not rarely enriched with beautiful Mosaics, the work of Italian artists. Whether the Land League has done good or not in other things, I suspect its influence in suppressing the big white-washed barns and replacing them by fine structures of stone. It is to be hoped there is no political suggestion here. However, it is one good thing the Roman Catholic churches are always open —ugly or beautiful—and to every passer by afford a welcome. But, as a rule, the Protestant churches in Ireland are closed. Whoever saw a Protestant church in the Emerald Isle—apart, of course, from the Cathedrals—open to the stranger for, as the legend used to be in the Regent Street churches, "REST, MEDITATION AND PRAYER"?

But to return to far more modern, more exhilarating, if less good things, our bicycles. Beauchamp declared himself to be ready, and at last we started on the high road leading between Balina and Castlebar, Foxford standing on either side of it at the junction of the cross-roads leading from Swinford to the

wild district of the Nephin and Molina, and the town at the head of Lough Conn called Crossmolina. Here at Foxford Bridge, in 1798, the French were finally conquered in that remarkable venture of their's in landing at Killalla Bay.

There was a fair but not unpleasant breeze (against us, of course) when we at last got away on the good white road. We were as merry as mice at play. The day before, when we had a fair wind, fine scenery, and the music of a million ripples on Lough Conn, we all agreed "now this beats cycling." On the hard good road, feeling fresh and vigorous, spinning along, Beauchamp passing Little Billie, the Skipper passing both, Frank passing the whole three, and *vice versa*, we all felt, "ah, this beats sailing."

A mile from Foxford it was unexpectedly found that as a rule the Bantams were all the time astern. So the valiant Senior fell back urbanely, and in his most dulcet tones asked the Bantams to set the pace, "but not too hot please." Whatever was comfortably possible on those fast little flyers, we on simple road-racing SPARKBROOK and TRIUMPH would try to keep up with as well as we could. Sarcastically they agreed that they "would not, in view of the juvenility of one rider and the vernal age of the other, make the pace too sultry!"

This suggestion was popular, and the little ones began alright to lead, but somehow those on the less advanced simple Safeties, glided by the others

irresistibly—seemingly going slow. I wonder if the construction of a bicycle is a subject one may discuss adversely without metaphorically speaking, getting run in for libel? I am strongly tempted after many days observation of Bantams, to digress—to speak a little piece. May a chronicler be plainly outspoken like other men, when he has strong opinions? But it would be very unfair to say anything *re* Bantam Bicycles, unless one understood the principles, and at least, some of their many peculiarities. But I don't. I have asked many people what they are for, or for one rational simple advantage the machine has over others. I have failed to get a satisfactory reply. Ever since writing this sentence several experienced riders have been consulted, and they say one and all, they don't know. I may be all at sea, of course, but my observation of Bantams leads to this conclusion, which I may express under reserve and the shelter of thirty-one years' constant practice. As an apparatus to prevent riding quite naturally, they are perfect. As a machine to fag a man speedily, to strain his spine, and pull his arms, and cramp his knees, they have many points. If a plain person does not appreciate these points, I can't help it. The road must not be slippery, and the wind must not blow much for Bantams. They are terrible articles to go down a hill fast on. The legs cannot get a stretch, the rider cannot get "over" his work, his hands can never be low enough to pull and he has no room forward for

hill work. He has one grand advantage, however, has the Bantamist: He can walk and ride at the same time. He can so rest his strained frame, a little; and on a few leisurely miles, on a good town road, amid traffic Mr. B. has points—but at that he seems to stop for a while.

I wonder if this is libellous? Better ask my solicitor. But touring is not a Bantam's forte and with this the little subject is dismissed with this explanation. I neither have the power nor inclination to scorch, save a bit of a fly on a nice road, for the fun of the thing, for an occasional ten miles or so. But in riding, say nine miles an hour with three waits of say five minutes every one of these hours, even at that pace, is clear proof that these machines are not going, as we were assured they would, to drive Safeties off the road, just as Safeties had sent the old "Ordinary" to limbo. When these four machines, and, of course, their riders met at Foxford, we were assured by the Bantamists that their pace had only averaged $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles an hour *en route* from Bundoran. Of course, it was taken as a joke, partly intended to aim a blow at the maps, which must have given wrong distances. Also that the road was altogether bad in places, which was possible enough. But on part of the same road afterwards, with our Safeties, two of us, and one a vastly older man, had no difficulty in making a good steady fourteen miles an hour, keeping it up over long stretches. For any kind of "knocking round" home

or to business, the Bantam may be useful enough; but the modern Safety is the finest invention of this age, and to sit and ride on it is practically as comfortable as sitting on a well-cushioned saddle, duly and securely girthed round a well-fed and well-constructed horse. Why these delightful conditions are all violated to do away with the effective—though not perfect—chain must be left for others to explain. In the Bantam, for instance, the foot thrust is *forward* because the driver has to sit far back. He can sit nowhere else. His hand, instead of resting the body, has to pull steadily on the handle to check this *all* the while, a wear of physical force which gives no counteracting advantage.

This little brochure is seriously, very seriously, intended to be a practical book. Hence, this is the place to discharge a simple obligation which I feel incumbent upon me. It is this, to wit:—In a small touring party, with or without camp, do not let those two opposites clash.

When a party of four or more are out for a space on any expedition, of course, no grumbling should be heard. Be it a water cruise by sea, lake or river—perhaps a cycling tour of three or half-a-dozen—a walking or driving tour—may not patience and forbearance stifle every cross feeling? "Oh, but he was so obstinate!"

"Ah, but you have no idea how provokingly foolish the other fellow is sometimes."

May I presume to say that I have had twenty years cruising in the company of many and widely varying men, and each, of course, with his varying mood. This has given every condition possible for criticism and even differences, not to say, sometimes, offence.

To pick and peck at mens ways, words and obstinancies, is foolishness. To "take no notice" is the policy. Instance, we four had a fortnight in company and not a cross word. Probably, we provoked each other and said and did stupid and foolish things. Of course we did. But to act determinedly on the score of being eternally agreeable and good all round, to also act on the principle of not being disagreeable in return to the other fellow who is so at times, is a still higher quality ; and both pay.

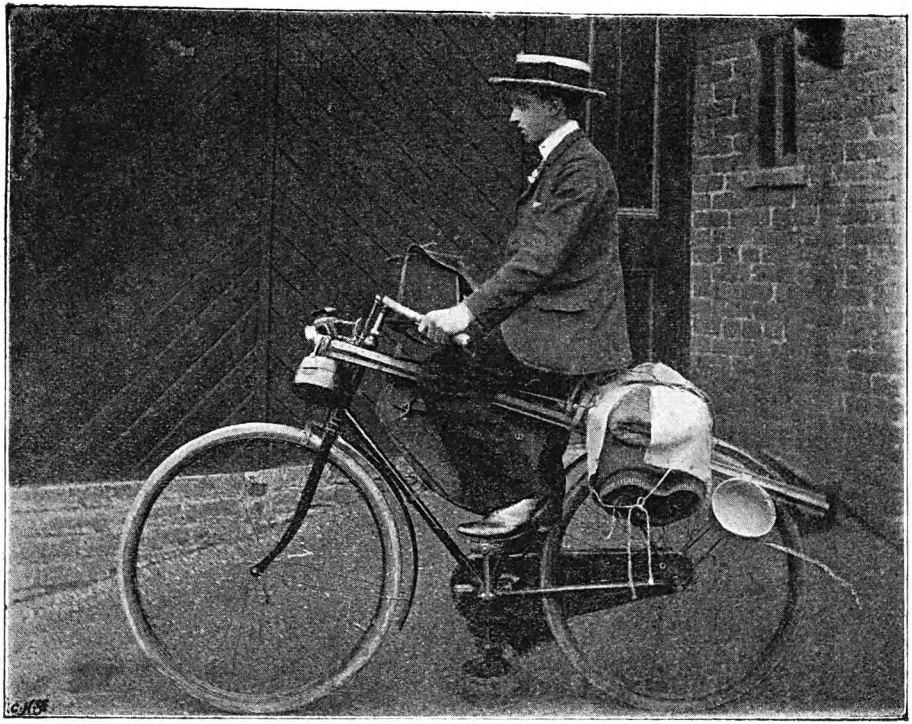
The petty disagreements arising amongst these small parties is, sometimes, the outcome of retaliation on sayings and doings which had no evil intent to start with at all. During one of our waits by the way for the Bantams, I lit a pipe and carelessly dropped the match amongst the dry moss, grass, etc., on top of a steep bank. One blade took fire and I thought it would go out. It did not, but caught on straw after straw, until there was a square yard of flame and the air became thick with smoke. The smoke of misunderstanding has damaged the enjoyment of many, otherwise happy, parties, and the fallen match and the enkindled straw originated it all.

CHAPTER IV.

CASTLEBAR—WESTPORT—HEAD KILLERY PASS.

WE found the road very good so far. We soon passed over the noble Moy river. What a wonderful river it is, in one respect it has no equal, perhaps. It rises in the Ox Mountains, co. Sligo, and falls into the sea after making a course of an open C. It runs, ten miles apart, practically in two opposite directions. It has a vast volume and above all things, plenty of fish. The mills it would turn were it anywhere else outside Ireland with its ceaseless rapids and eternal flow. But they have mills enough already, alas, in Ireland, standing idle, to grind grain enough to feed several million mouths. These mills are, many of them, very big ones. The Irish farmers tell me "they feed England, and America feeds Ireland." The chief trade at all Irish ports apart from passenger* traffic is in grain, chiefly from America and, of course, American flour. Irish hay and corn is cut largely by American mowers, and nearly every cabin is redolent of American Bacon, reesty, fat, and four inches thick. The food stuffs, then, of the people is paid for

* Alas, the passenger traffic is chiefly export!



CYCLE CAMPING—A FICTION.

and the cash goes out of the country by millions, and what does Ireland send in return to the States? A few bales of tweeds and linens, and some native bacon.

We now approach Ballylahon Castle standing on a bare mound a few hundred yards from the left side of the road. We halted for an inspection. It possesses features distinctive from the regular Norman Irish Castle. It has a keep and must have been moted, and though, later than Norman, its architect had studied Norman design. It has a massive keep and in its eastern and western walls are plain but massive arching. I forget the name of the old Irish family in whose possession it once was. It bore, like most others in this country, decided marks of artillery practice and gunpowder blasting, the two alternatives the Cromwellians used against all those who "held out" in those awful days of the Civil war in Ireland.

It was a hot morning though the sun had become practically overcast, and two of our little force were perpetually thirsty and went much in search of buttermilk! Now, fresh buttermilk is a perfectly wholesome and most refreshing drink. New milk has neither virtues, taken neat. To the heated cyclist new milk gone cold after boiling, or new milk half-water, is a possible drink, but he should avoid new milk proper on a "scorching" bout.

Close beside the castle was a small farmhouse. We called to beg or buy a drink of buttermilk if possible.

"Have you any buttermilk?"

"Yes, sorr," was the response. Out came a big jug of new milk, which on being tasted, was hastily declared to be sweet milk by Little Billie and the writer.

"Yes, it is, sorr."

"But we want *buttermilk* if you have it. You told us you had some!"

"Yes, sorr."

Away she goes to get it. On returning the new supply is tasted.

"Why this is sour milk?"

Yes, sorr; yesterday the weather was hot and it has turned."

"But you don't call this *buttermilk?*"

"No, sorr; but I put a sprinkle of sweet milk into it to make it nicer, sorr."

"Indeed, well I can't drink it. Why did you tell me twice you had buttermilk? I see the churn standing there. You make butter; so you must have buttermilk?"

"Yes, to be sure, its plinty we've got."

"Then, why in the name of goodness, don't you let us have some?"

"To be shure, sorr, but I'd not be giving to the loikes of you buttermilk. *We* takes it and gives some to the pigs. Shure the swater milk's nicer."

This little episode would not be set out here but for its almost daily occurrence, whenever the chance was given of its repetitition, and that in all parts of

the four provinces. Probably it is true to say there is not a county in Ireland in which from the years 1875 to 1897 we had not experienced this antipathy to let the thirsty "gintleman" have plain buttermilk. The reason is plain. People brought up amid farming, as the writer was in Shropshire, find good, fresh buttermilk a drink much liked, but it probably requires a cultivated taste, for hardly anyone born in London can tolerate a taste of it as a beverage. They do not understand it and put the liquid on a par with sour milk. As English people never ask for it they think it not good for our "loikes."

As we looked back occasionally we saw the noble Nephin. Now, it was being encircled round with a dull mist, and then again, became clear. The low, dark, broken ridges of "Windy Gap" between us and the mightier hill stood out clear and sharp. The landscape owes much to its ever passing clouds. The baked peaks all aglow weary the sight in their ceaseless gleam, but the passing shadows break up the field, soften the worn rock-cliff as the advancing sunshine from between the clouds darts its searching power down into the dull recess or deep weather-worn crevasse. This is just what we saw.

As we breasted a low hill we caught our first glimpse of the impressive crown of Croagh Patrick 2,513 feet. It looked far mightier than its measurement. The labyrinth of lower mountains which encircle it, crouched like giant whelps in deepest

shadow. Clouds passed, but the king was clearly outlined in a pale-blue vista beyond them.

We were journeying to the s.w. about to emerge on a land of hills and valleys, now in sunshine, now in shadow, wild and weird yet beautiful.

It was a bit foolish of us not to call at Strade Abbey but we passed on hoping to inspect it as we returned, which we did.

The undulations of the roadway were pretty continuous, but no big hills. It is, occasionally, necessary in all Irish touring to ask the way, and it is not seldom that wrong directions are given. For one thing they do not so readily understand the questions because of the accent, change of time in speech, and so forth in our pronounciation. As to distance too, each and every man you meet tells you what he fancies you would like it to be.

"How far to Thomas Town?" you ask.

"It is nine miles, sorr."

You go miles on your way and ask again: "Nine miles," and thus find yourself as far away all the time until you get to the last few miles, say four or five miles, and then it will stick at two miles until you see the Court-house, in the distance, rising out of the place itself. Then, again, the difference in English and Irish miles is an awful upset to local ideas. They always say, "English miles, sorr!" but it's always Irish ones you have to ride. If the way be hard, the wind ahead, clouds threatening

a heavy shower; you are hungry and far from food or a town, ask "How far, etc." The answer will either make you grin, grind your teeth a bit or smile softly to yourself. Anyhow it will break the monotony, that is sure!

But if you say to me: "But what if you don't meet people?" As to that, you always do. The roads are so different in that respect to ours. Houses are everywhere—people everywhere! You must climb a mountain to get away from them. All of them are ready to crack a joke, and say: "Good day, sorr." They trudge beside the turf cart, ride on the shaft of a cart or swing a hay-rake as they chat to you as freely as if they had known you from birth, and, as a rule, in a respectful way too. It is only the hotel Irish waiters and the local jarvies who have grown "too familiar."

On entering the village of Bellavary, the road continues straight on, naturally enough, to Manulla; but for Castlebar it turns round sharply to the right. So far the country has not been particularly interesting from a scenic point of view. The ever distant lines of hills and mountains are not only a redeeming feature but they give dignity to the landscape. Soon after, the local scenery improves and trees shade the road. Ridges of loose stones there are, but, then, there is good surface *between* them, and after a little practice in this furrow steering and stone dodging you can ride along merrily enough. We crossed the

Toormore river, sluggish and lily-grown. It looks strangely suggestive of perch. Near to the bridge on the right is a big, circular mound. Usually these have been erected on the plains or on high ground near the banks of rivers. Indeed, between Foxford and Castlebar some four or five of these erections, known in England as "Danish Mounds," are to be seen. Mostly those about here are big funereal mounds, doubtless, like this one—pre-historic. When I say pre-historic it means almost anything! Some Raths were built in the Stone Age, and probably Egypt—the cradle of architecture, law, art and letters—was not born then. Some were built in the Bronze Age and so on to the beginning of our era.

We now crossed the railway with its pretty neat red station, and there comes in sight a lovely wooded park, with a much widened out and still river. From the broad road we now see, on our right, the Abbey and Round Tower of Turlough* or Charleville.

Beauchamp and Frank had gone forward, evidently without noticing the Abbey and what looked like a perfect tower. The whole place is beautiful and interesting. No matter, we were not to be done. So we rambled up the hill to see what was quite new to Little Billie. So he hove his ample body to see the Tower, really, his very first. It is about 60 feet high

* Turlough is Irish for a small mountain lake.

and possibly like most others, built in the Ninth Century, preceding the church which is wedged close up to it, though they have not cut part of the tower away, as at Clonmacknoish, to make room for a little church, though acres of room!

When we remounted, we soon passed in full view of Charleville House, a truly beautiful and perfectly kept mansion. Its fine lawns rising in terraces one above the other, were as green as everything else always is in Ireland, only here evidently, perfectly kept. Near by it is a ruin, the remains of one of the Fifteenth Century castles; probably it was half castle, half mansion, of which there are so many standing in ruins. All these were inhabited until the Cromwellians blew pieces off them in the overthrow of the Royal cause in Ireland.

On reaching the top of the village, we spied the other two, sitting on a stone-heap. They cried out: "Where have you fellows been?"

"Seeing the Round Tower and Abbey of course."

"Which was mean of you" and so on.

We had our most rapid ride now on a fair road and were constantly passing very pleasant-looking Irish farmhouses, each with a big show of scarlet geraniums. They were all trying to rival their neighbours. We were now upon a ridge high above the Castlebar river. An extensive park on the left for a couple of miles. Half-ruined park gates, grown up drives.

At last Castlebar comes in view, and as seen from

the hill, one would suppose it is a very important place, which, for Ireland, it is—3,000 population. Its main street is wide and level, flanked by fine buildings and big shops, nearly all of which are in the "public" line, us usual. We did not test them very extensively. A box of matches and an attempt to buy a new valve at its only cycle shop, were the chief of our extravagancies. We rode clean through the town proper to the fine green near the church, and there we four held a council of war, on the grass. As this happened in full view of the hotel, our doings were very attractive to the female inhabitants thereof, who scanned us, pleasantly smiling from the upper windows.

We had been much longer on the road than we expected. Our plan was to ride to Westport, either skirting its romantic bay and encircling Croagh Patrick, and working down to the Kylemore Pass, through Leenane to Clifden, and then back through the centre of Connemara to Cong and back to Lough Conn. "If we must see things a bit," as Little Billie put it, "how long would it take?"

Frank: "A week at least."

Skipper: "Four days anyhow."

So we resolved to go s.w., to Leenane from Westport, thence cross back *viâ* Cong up to Foxford. That settled it. Being a quarter to one o'clock, we mounted and soon passed the massive portals of the gaol. The road runs on high ground. The valley on our right besprinkled with a series of lakes, or properly

speaking, expansions of the river we had followed so far. The road was very fine. A gentle breeze met us. The sun came out and everything looked promising for a fine spin. But stay. A crisis is at hand. We are to try our big experiment of lunch: lunch for four hungry men, and all out of our cycle bags! None of the three had been let into any kind of secret as to what we had "on board." But to prevent any mutinous demonstration on the part of the rest, the Skipper announced "we will lunch at the first nice-looking place we come to, if any 'prates' HOT are to be got hold of."

OUR FIRST LUNCH.

On the left side of the road one-and-half-miles from the town stood a white-washed cabin; before the house a roughly-paved forecourt; one of the circular baskets, two feet across, peculiar to this part of Ireland, was placed on a bench in front of the house, on it were about as many smoking potatoes in their jackets as would feed a troop. The experienced eye of the chief took so much in as he dismounted.

Yes; we could have some potatoes.—Buttermilk? Oh, yes!—Spring-water? Ah, well she had a long way to fetch it; no matter, her little girl should fetch some. Then Little Billie and the Skipper fortified with a big jug of spring-water, a ditto with buttermilk, and a piled-up plate of hot-potatoes, filed across the road to a snug little corner in a green clover-

field nicely sheltered from the wind. It was as promising a spot as any camper could desire This we got at by manipulating, gingerly, a gap. There are several millions of gaps in Ireland, and each has a character of its own :—Some are high and some low ; some are of stones and some of thorns. Over some you fall and over others you prick your legs or tear your clothes ; some are clean and you go through and come out decent ; others are nasty with mud on either side the hedge. Some deep ditches on either side. There is a great art in making gaps—dangerous and nasty ; only Irishmen have mastered and made it a fine art. This gap had none of these faults and all possible virtues. We were hungry and on the other side of it was food. We spread a couple of mackintosh capes as a prudent measure against damp and took the bags off the cycles. The "head cook and butler" placed out a large assortment of little tins and things. One of these tins he bowled across the grass to Frank, and then threw the tin-opener after it in a way more painfully hasty than polite.

Tin-openers are either poetic or romantic things. —Just you get to understand them ! Little Billie did not get on very well with ours. He was a long time the previous day in cutting his fingers pretty freely, but he did not succeed in cutting the tin also, for which we were very sorry. We have had tin-openers like that. Splendid articles they are for everything except cutting

tin! They are lively things too; they fly about the camp, jumping and grazing, but they do not cut tin freely. Like a maiden's love they require to be dealt with kindly and with philosophy, because they have tempers and do not know their own mind's long at a time. To fling a tin-opener away because it gashed your left thumb is absurd. You require to know it, to be gentle with it, because tin-openers are sensitive to a degree. Some go slow; others work fast; some, as we said, fly right away and others stick fast and you cannot get them out; some are innocent and others are vicious, spiteful things if crossed. You must not cross a tin-opener. You must coax and persuade it. Swearing has often been tried. It is a fair persuader, but profane, and, therefore, ungentlemanly.

Frank always had a strong way with a tin-opener, a sort of masterly "go or die" kind of action. Only sometimes, he would ejaculate "dash it," as he lifted a damaged finger and gazed at it for a bit, while he rested and took a breath. But he, generally, had the mastery in the end—that is he got the tin open and that was, after all, the chief end and worth suffering for, especially as other fellows were waiting. If tin-openers should ever become simple, effective and useful articles I should regret it, because they would be degraded to only one use:—simply opening tins. Their moral mission would cease and many a doctor would lose a fee.

We have just said that buttermilk should be fresh. So it should, and so taken, nothing, in the shape of liquid food, is more wholesome. When stale, sour and old it has become unfit for human food at any rate. Now, let me say frankly, this allusion to a drink either unknown or not admitted into "polite society" as a rule, is no joke on my part. As a matter of fact, three of us—Little Billie, Beauchamp and the Writer made buttermilk and potatoes their FIRST COURSE at lunch. Potatoes cut or broken into small pieces, and, when it be possible, gently besprinkled with a little of the fat of sweet bacon makes a dish no one need despise. In the counties of Cheshire, Salop and Hereford thousands of the cottagers, and, indeed, many of the smaller farming-class have to rely on this as a huge part of their food—especially the youngsters. Meanwhile we were enjoying ourselves as one remarked "no end." Little Billie with his mouth half-full ejaculated "Washnest, Skipper?"

"Children should not ask questions of that sort. Wait and see what is next!"

When the "Irish course" was over, each man, as he sat, tugged out of Mother Earth a tuft of clean clover and with it cleaned his dish roughly. Then, a fresh tuft made it cleaner, a second ditto, and, finally, each man surveyed his shining metal penny-tin-plate and then planted it in front of the Skipper and waited, sometimes even with a little patience.

So we laid siege to the tin of really fine kidneys—

imported from Brisbane by Beauchamp on purpose for us—and others. They were fine in flavor and excellent in every way, and we were grateful to Frank for opening the tin in readiness. No one grumbled. Frank suggested how much better they would have been had they been cooked. But Frank is great at that. He suggests improvements to everything except the planets. We had the cuisine and a small store of spirit, and could have cooked them, but they did very well with the excellent hot potatoes.

It may be noted here, that, all these little details are thrown in "on purpose," as facts of the actual experiences, as suggestions intended to guide the neophyte in Cycle Camp life.

But to return to our mutton—kidneys I mean. Little Billie, with his mouth very full of mealy potato, again said, "not half bad Skipper; Anythick taffla?"* Which really meant this: the first course was satisfactory, and the second was very nice, but what have you more? Of course, the Skipper cut him short, by saying: "You will see. Besides I just told you, boys must not ask rude questions at meal times, especially on an 'august' occasion like this."

"Who will have some more kidneys?" asked the Master Cook, as he helped himself a second time.

"I will" sang out Beauchamp.

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* The Author translates this to be "Not half bad Skipper; anything to follow?"

And so the tin was cleared.

But then there was dessert and we had not dessert plates. One after the other, again, put the clover into service as a dish washer, and it was found to be splendid for the purpose, and with the help of a tea-cloth, we made our plates shine. This tea-cloth

PEACE AND PLENTY.

had been kept unused and carefully folded up. It was now brought into requisition in a state fit for a suburban villa. Very soon, alas, a change in its color was to be noticed. Before the end of the next fortnight it was not recognisable, by its nearest

relatives, which it got, alas, to resemble very much, indeed.

Again, the plates were "bright and shining" and from one of his little air-tight tins, the Master hauled forth some splendid apricots, which on four plates, he divided evenly, all of which were consumed quickly to the accompaniment of bread, of which there was an ample supply, of course.

Hardly had Little Billie got through his last mouthful when he said:

"Thash fine, Skipper; anything elsh?"

Yes, there was. It came forth. It was but a small packet, in white paper, which he was asked first to smell. He pronounced it all right. It was Gorgonzola, purchased in Bond Street, and now being whittled away in square bits, on the roadside of Western Mayo.

Old hands will agree with me, perhaps, in this. At the close of a makeshift, *al fresco*, noon repast a bit of *good* cheese, is a fine finish. It helps one to extend the meal and make it more substantial. For this reason we always carry two samples in our kit basket, Cheshire or Cheddar, and the strongly flavored Italian order, with a good deal of Z in its name and a strong aroma in itself. It is a thousand pities, anything so good as Gorgonzola cheese should have the unenvied power of making itself smelt by so disagreeable a flavor. It is a grand article, however, if you get it *good*. Of all things, this bountiful earth

has given to man, cheap Gorgonzola, is the nastiest in regard to its smell, at any rate. You cannot get from it, any more than from the diviner aroma of Linberga. It will be long before Frank and the writer forget a sample, purchased for one of our delightful Irish holidays afloat, a year or two back. It came from Bond Street too. The man said, he did not often have really good Gorgonzola under a shilling, but he had, at last, got some at 7d., "real Gorgonzola Sir." We took a cut home to be packed in one of our series of little hampers, we assort our thousand and one articles into. We put it away for a day or so, until the general accumulation was complete, which it never is, of course, for we always go without a lot of things we cannot live without, and which we cannot get in Ireland at all, leastwise, not in "those parts." On going home the next night, I was told that something I had brought home had "gone bad." It smelt so. I knew it was the cheap cheese. We got it across the Channel all right and without any officials questioning us in any way. Having forgotten the article, I remember we were having one of those delightful one o'clock picnic lunches, upon a high green bank, beside the Shannon, one fine hot day. There was a nice fresh breeze. Frank sat well to leeward of the hamper. Hardly were the things placed out than Frank said, "Better place that cheese on the other side of the haystack while we get our lunch." I suppose it was its exposure to the heat,

but it did smell stronger than usual. The next day we were eating a chop each, and I caught Frank looking for something. He seemed to find it at last! First he put a pan over it and then smothered both in a tarpaulin jacket. I felt sorry he should be so annoyed. I was long watching him before I found out the cause. It was the cheese. I was the only one eating it. I resolved in future I would keep it away as much as I could. At the end of a fortnight, we were lunching in the "Erne" as we drifted up the Shannon, on a good tide. There were still about 14 ounces of it left, in fact, it had not gone well. Frank looked grieved at seeing it to-day. We were but ten miles from Limerick. So he said, "I'd throw that cheese overboard, if I were you. I never see you eat any of it. You can get some more in Limerick." It was thrown away and it is highly questionable if even the fish ate it. But, Limerick could not replace it, alas! and we've respected Limerick the more ever since..

It was evident this cheese was going all right at the rate of 16-ozs. a day in our camp.

And so in the space of half-an-hour everything was cleared out—bread, fruit, meat, etc. But *one party* (need I name him?) even then, when all was done, and after declaring he had had a splendid feast said, "Are you sure there is not something else in that wonderful, little, brown-bag, Skipper?" We then slid down our waterproofs a few inches lower, reclining

our bodies on the same, each one making some kind of a little rest for his head, and those who smoked had a pleasant pipe, watching the fleecy clouds sail by, and alas! it was with difficulty that one of the members was kept from dozing clean off.

It was only ten minutes past two when we re-mounted the machines, a gentle breeze against us, but the ride was, indeed, very enjoyable. Most of the road between Castlebar and Westport has a fine surface. The scenery is nowhere overpowering, until you climb the last hill, but it is not unpleasant, indeed, its undulations were of such a character that were it fairly wooded it would deserve the character of beautiful. We also did some of our fastest riding along this stretch, and Frank even scaled the Greenhill ridge, 380 feet, which though not very steep was rather long. Now we were on a slight plateau, a vast fork of hills rising to the right and left at all seeming altitudes. Old Patrick too, out in a huge slice of blue sky, spreading like a canopy north and south of it. On the lower hills the same gentle shade cast by passing clouds.

At length we reached the top ridge and looked ahead, and there was a wonderful panorama open to view. Clew Bay with its 360 islands, the rich woods which fringed its shore at this side, Westport unseen from the point, but still indicated by a little blue mist, suggestive of a town, rising upwards; Achill Island with its mountains asserting itself like a

new world away in the distance ; intervening hills rolling in huge waves as it were inland from the northward of the Bay and other dark ridges to the southward. Croagh Patrick did not look its 2,500-ft., but suggested a mountain of 5,000-ft. South again of Croagh * were the two or three ranges that extend one beyond another until Maam Turk Head could be dimly seen among the cloud shades that then loomed up from the south travelling towards us somewhat fast in the direction of the Twelve Pins. More to the west of the heart of Connemara we could not see as the intervening ranges hid the rest from view. It was amongst the wild heights and the deep glens of these mountains that our course lay, and it was somewhat ominous to know when we should leave Westport, the wind which appeared to be greatly rising would be dead in our teeth !

Before proceeding from the crest of the hill on a descent of two-and-a-quarter miles into Westport—all down hill—and no mistake about it ! we propped our machines against a gap, climbed a little knoll and had a few whiffs while we contemplated the marvellous scene. Nothing in England, Scotland, Ireland or any other part can furnish anything nearly like it. Half Clew Bay was in bright sunlight, half hidden, but the shadow passed and the hills that we saw in dim outline were presently shining and then glided into

* Locally pronounced "Crow."

the shadow again. To watch these varying lights and shadows in their wonderful play at hide and seek was worth all the journey. What we saw a minute ago so clear and sparkling dimmed, and then broke forth into a smile of gold.

It was a fine run down hill into Westport; Beauchamp having gone on all by himself, left the three of us to follow. Waterfalls have a deeper interest for him than mountains and seas.

Of course, the first place to look for was a shop in which to get stores, as we knew not what provisions we could get on our way to Leenane. We did not know in the least the kind of country through which we were to pass, as to shops, etc.

"I have got a puncture!" sung out Frank as he pulled up at the door where the Skipper's machine was standing. Sure enough a ginger beer-bottle wire had penetrated the tyre, after which he *retired* to a quiet part of the town to repair, fearing a crowd, which he cannot tolerate except at a cycle race meeting!

CHAPTER V.

WESTPORT TO LEENANE.

"WHAT do you think of Westport?" was the question that we asked each other directly we had time from the divergent affairs that demanded our attention. One was busy buying; another, letter-hunting; another, after the weed, and, alas! another repairing a puncture. So half-an-hour slipped by. It is a steep ascent up through the town to the post-office, and here Beauchamp and the Skipper met.

"Well, what is the programme now?" asked the gentle Beauchamp?

"To the harbour, of course, and the shipping—if there is any!"

"And which is the way?"

"Go down by the river, somewhere, at the bottom of the town, where the other fellows are."

"But I have just come *up* from there!" sang out Beauchamp.

"So have I, old fellow," remarked the Skipper, as he mounted his machine and descended rapidly to the lower part of the town to find the others, expecting

Beauchamp to follow. The puncture was repaired and then we three turned into the Roman Catholic chapel to inspect it as a

SPECIMEN OF A WESTERN ROMAN SANCTUARY.

Seatless, benchless, empty, and decidedly uninteresting and unbeautiful.

Now, to those who want to cycle down to see the oft-mentioned warehouses, sneered at so lavishly by the writers in all the guide-books, there are two ways. One is as beautiful, delightful and unexpected as the other is uninviting. The main-road down past the workhouse is of the following order :—Surface greatly worn in hollows ; heavy traffic having destroyed whatever surface it may have had. On the left-hand, typical suburban Irish architecture : A considerable rise from the town up to the workhouse, and then a descent of three-quarter's of a mile, and there you are at the Quay. The other road is through the demesne of Lord Sligo. How it came that a private park so beautiful should be thrown open to the public in Ireland for pedestrian and vehicular traffic, of the light order however, one may never know, but it *is* open and much appreciated ! Imagine a park perfect in its undulations of mound, hill and dale and with about as rich and varied a wood as it is possible to find even in southern England—larch, elm, beech, oak and lime trees in great abundance and of great size. Beautiful, rich green-sward on which groups of ladies were sitting, at intervals, doing fancy-work or

knitting. A well-kept park drive leading through the gates bending and twisting round point after point. A river running slowly on the left hand of the road, the stream spanned by a substantial and handsome stone-bridge. On a green-knoll to the left of the river and near the lofty-wooded ridge, a very fine, handsome mansion. Beyond the mansion a rising-hill extending from Westport away down to the harbour, beautiful in the variety of its tints of foliage. This is the demesne of Lord Sligo. Then the road takes another twist sharp across the bridge, still lower down, and here is the tidal-harbour, now dry, exposing its dank-weeds—an occasional sailing-boat canted on its port or starboard beam just as the tide left it. Yonder, away down, we can see a Clyde steamer being unloaded. Here and there in the bed of the narrow channel is a derelict hulk of a brigatine lying helplessly on the "hard." On the strand, which has been levelled, acres of timber lying in the sun, and to our left large warehouses which we were always given to understand were empty, but they appear to contain vast stores of flour, salt, grain and what not. "And was it not here" we asked a sailor-man nearby, "where the upsetting took place, five years ago, of an Achill hooker?" At once the man thus accosted was all excitement and interest. Taking hold of the right arm of his interlocutor, he said, "Come here!" and stepping on to some deal balks, he asked if we saw a mooring?

"Yes!" We saw it a few hundred yards away.

"Then you see a cross on the island?"

"Yes!"

"Well, it was a few yards from that cross. It was trying to get out of the way of a steamer, the sail went over, and the boat went over, and the people went over too," he said in his racy, Irish accent, "and there were somewhere between twenty and thirty people drowned."

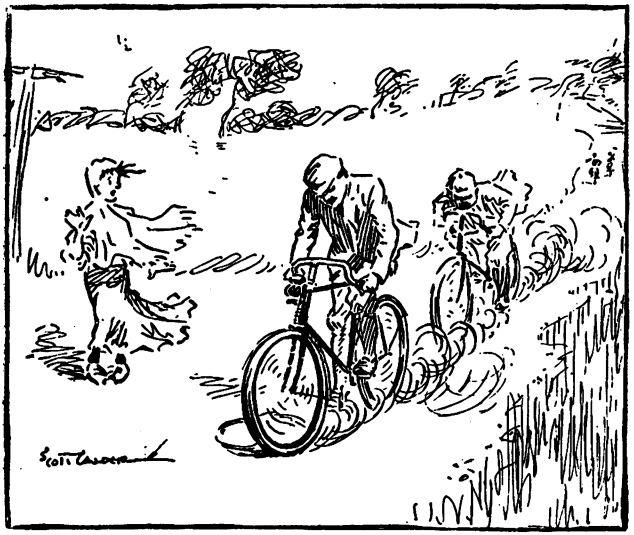
The island of Achill lies on the N.W. side of this wonderful Clew Bay. Achill is twenty miles round and has a population of about 4,000 and there are all kinds of interesting places in it to see. There are some tolerable roads on it besides, and, a novelty in the shape of a new-fangled settlement which was started in the early part of the present century. From the mountains in Achill there are said to be some marvellous views of the coastal indentations of Western Ireland. We can well-imagine that Old Nephin would show his crest even that far, and as for Patrick to the south of Westport with its lofty cone-like head, nothing intervenes but the three hundred islands in the Bay which are low and mound-like.

But to return! Where was Beauchamp? Little Billie determined he would go back and look for him in Westport, and he found him having taken the high road on his own account. Meanwhile, when we had gone a few hundred yards down the demesne, Frank, again, cried "puncture!" and, sure enough, a

second puncture was discovered with a bit of the ginger beer-bottle wire sticking out of it. This was soon repaired, with the loss of a favorite knife which had been left where the operations had proceeded. By the time Frank and the Skipper had examined the harbour Beauchamp and Little Billie were sighted down by one of the great warehouses. Objections were raised against returning along that road. The obvious answer was, "Well, we are going to Leenane and that is the only road there; we have to turn off by the workhouse."

It is a very stiff pull up the hill with a rough surface, so a good part of it was walked. The distancee we hoped to cover that night was only eighteen miles, but, then, when the highest point was reached and we looked ahead we saw a phalanx of peaks to the left, in front, and to the right. The road followed the natural deflections which was itself switch-backy, and, by a very simple course of logical reasoning, we had to worm our way amongst and through these mountains—which meant no little work. But during the last hour the wind had risen; the white, fleecy clouds which had softened the heat and varied the light and tempered the air were replaced by huge, spreading-black maines that rose before us and extended all ways, and were driven up by a strong s.w. half-gale. A gale, did we say? Well, it lifted up the dust from the road and whirled it in our faces and in its spiral peregrinations twisted

fine granite in wild waves and blew them upon us. The bushes and the trees it bent at an angle of 45. On the left of the road, a lakelet, as we left the hill and began in real earnest our journey to Leenane, was licked into little white waves, and the spray thus lifted flew



SCORCHING—THREE MILES AN HOUR !

amongst the rushes. It was against this that two good average riding cyclists and two good average Bantam devotees had to make their way. If a Bantam ought to do anything it should go against the wind, but *these* Bantams would not do it. At

length we had climbed up and had hoped for a run down on a somewhat rough road for a mile-and-a-half. But the fierceness of the wind said "No, you will not scorch down there." The wind had its way. As we descended this long decline there were two things which asserted themselves:—One dominated riding, and the other captivated and held our attention whether we liked it or not. The wind required attention enough and was inexorable—because it was our task-master. It threatened, hissed and roared; it dusted us, killed our pace and did what it would! The other thing was spectacular. It was Croagh. Far down, low-lying and stealing over the western hills was a frightful expanse of unbroken cloud. Beneath this world-like cloud a yellow, watery sun cast out its flickering watery rays from the s.w. Thus one half the mountain was lighted up; the other half was covered in cloud. In dim, self-asserted, outline however, like a pyramid a thousand times bigger than Cheops Pyramid it showed itself weirdly exaggerated. There is not another mountain in Great Britain, not one in Galway, nor one of the Twelve Pins, not one of the Kerry Mountains, nor even McGillicuddy's Reeks or the king of the Mourne Mountains can show such striking outline as old Croagh. Ben Lomond and Snowdon cannot show such a view as may be had from its top when the wind drives away the land mist. When the sun gilds Clew Bay the expansive

Atlantic shows up the broken seashore, the precipitous cliffs, and the hills which extend seventy miles to the southward, and even rivals Achill; where is its equal? I should think that even the Galway Mountains could be seen from the top. This means that practically half the length of Ireland, under proper conditions, may be viewed from the altitude of this mountain pyramid, so unlike every other we have yet seen.

How mighty slow our pace had become! Frank and the Skipper bent down over their handles and rode quietly without forcing the pace and in about a mile left the other two out of sight. Where there was the slightest rise it was a case of dismounting and walking. Very dim and shadowy did Leenane now look as our night destination. True, we left Westport at five o'clock and hoped to be at Leenane at about eight, allowing for all contingencies, but it seems we were only covering about four miles per hour—rather less than more, and working hard! A man who has ridden thirty years and toured off and on in half the counties in Ireland and through two-thirds of those of England, must have encountered Boreas in a bit of a fury sometimes. Yes, that is so; but never such a sweeping air force as this. The clouds of dust were blinding from the top of every ridge. It was a fierce struggle to reach each little crest in the route. It was a case of going sideways and shielding the eyes, when we did get there, for the

air just brushed the top levels clean with his fierce broom.

We soon met the mail-coach that comes from Clifden in Western Connemara to Westport. They

THREE TO ONE—NOT TO MENTION HIM!

are real Irish cars of big-size drawn by two horses. There is always a policeman and a soldier, a man in tweeds and a serious-looking person in a soft-hat and, sometimes a couple of females on these coaches, with

their portmanteaus and trunks. The day can never hardly come when these western mail-coaches can be driven off the road in Ireland! The turbulent heights and the sparese population and the straightened means of the population prevent much travelling—save in the holiday time. All these conditions can never, in my opinion, justify railways in certain portions of the western country. Whilst people live and have to move there must be some regulated and regular vehicular traffic. The mail-car, then, is the inland ship, as much as the camel is the ship of the desert. They are not slow but very wet at times.

We heard that a party of four or five young ladies had gone forward, on machines, several hours before. We could not help wondering as we had to fight and struggle with the heavy wind, that if *our* pace was slow, what must theirs have been, hampered, as they probably were, by skirts of varying amplitude and of liberal length? At any rate, we never overtook or saw them. We did not expect to overtake anything. Therefore, in that respect, we were not seriously disappointed.

At length, we had emerged into a plain, having traversed through a somewhat varying scene of sharp ascents and long sloping descents. A leaping river, passing rocks in its course, through foliage thickly fringing its banks, heather covered hills rising up above suggestive of grouse. We were glad to see the wide, open moorland on the right, hills in front and

hills behind us. The road, seemingly, was leading down a decline. Turning swiftly round a corner the road led us to a bridge crossing the river Owenmore.

In a tiny hay-field, by the bridge and under a bank, beside the river, there was a possible camping ground, whilst ahead, the mountain range of Maumtrasna, amid which we were uncertain as to whether we were likely to find protection for our fragile camp from the gale. Just as we had crossed over the bridge, huge spots of rain came down, making marks the size of sixpences on us. The clouds had become lower, the air was thick and damp. The wind became more gusty than ever. The Skipper sang out "The first available spot we camp." So we rode half a mile along this truly wild moorland road and saw no trace of shelter or anything suggestive of homeliness and comfort, or even a supply of our few simple needs. We therefore turned back and determined, if we got permission, to camp in the little sheltered corner by the bridge.

In the field, above mentioned, an old man, a strong well-built buxom daughter, and a couple of his sons, were busy putting their hay into cock, fearing that a heavy down pour of rain, or possibly, a wet time was coming. Pat has no means of judging the weather beforehand. Such things as weather glasses are unknown to the peasant farmers, of Ireland, and as for the suspended balls of salt, sea-weed, or cattle membrane, that one sees in farmhouses in England,

all these are absent from Ireland. They look at the clouds, but they look at nothing else, and try to read what the coming weather is to be, but can only tell an hour beforehand.

OUR LANDLORD—FORE AND AFT.

"Leave your machines against the bridge," said the Chief, as he jumped off the bridge embankment into the paddock, and went across and spoke to the

old man. He had on a very course and very much worn flannel shirt, that had been once white, unbuttoned from the neck and open down to the waist. He wore also a pair of white course blanket-like trousers, much in rags and, in truth, much ventilated in many places. He looked a little forbidding. The children ceased their hay making and gathered round. They were all attention.

In his most urbane manner, the Skipper opened negotations. "Good evening. Going to have some rain?"

"Gorra, yes, it will rain again, sorr."

Skipper: "I wish you to grant me a small favor."

"Ah bedad, so I will. What is it?"

"We have got a little tent which we would like to put up in the corner of your meadow, there by the bridge, if you will allow us."

He brought the pitchfork prongs downwards, gave the implement a heavy thrust into the ground, and placing his hands on the very top of it—for it was a very long one, a foot at least above his head—and looked at us and then said, "And what will you be after giving me, if I let you?"

Of course, he was assured that if we put up the little tent there, we should let him have something, and on receiving this assurance, he said, "all right, all right." A few drops of rain kept falling, but only isolated big fellows, not the fine driven mountain mist we expected. The machines were then placed against

the wall and dismantled, ready for fixing up camp. "Let us go and help the old man with his hay, for half-an-hour, as it is yet light," I suggested, and everybody fell in with the suggestion. We made an innumerable number of hay-cocks, until, practically, all the crop was gathered together. Then we had to direct our attention to the momentous question of erecting, for the first time in actuality, the cycle camp. Just as we were beginning the operations, the old man sent a message, that, he wanted two men to go and help him to make larger cocks out of the smaller ones. To this we demurred, on the ground that as we had already voluntarily, and as we thought considerately helped him with his hay, and were paying a fair rent for the little bit of ground, we temporarily occupied, by the bridge, WE objected to be "ordered" to do labor, even for him. So, of course, the service he demanded was not rendered. This, indeed, was one of many instances we found in this N.W. part of Ireland, of the disposition that pervades the lower orders to make all they can, and in the shortest possible way—honestly!

CHAPTER VI.

FIRST CAMP—KILLERY-WATER—MAAM.

WE had been so much delayed and felt so anxious about our property and camp at Foxford that we had to consider our wider scheme of practically circumnavigating Connemara, and taking in the wild Kylemore Pass South-West of Leenane. Our progress was slow, and, besides, our real business in Ireland this time was not three weeks a-wheel, but a sailing and fishing holiday, with as much cycling as would prove the reality of the scheme this book is intended to demonstrate. As a fact, it soon became clear our trip would only skirt Northern Galway and take the fringe of the romantic district known to the modern world as Connemara, and the old world as Iar-Connaught. We had better then acknowledge that we saw only as much of the country with the pretty name as may justify its use.

What a wind-moaning we had had all night! How the bushes, lone and low, fringing the river banks sighed through those early hours of the morning, as we lay hoping for the rain to cease that we might bathe before breakfast in comfort. Besides, how were we to dress—four of us—and amongst the party a man of Little Billie's dimensions? All sorts of suggestions were made; we were very good at

that. Making suggestions was our strong fort! Any of us had power enough in that direction to build an ironclad on quite new principles, or to found a new creed, or destroy the Turkish Empire! We thought of this idea :—Two lie still while two undress, avoiding the other fellows' toes as much as we could. Then,

OUR "PAGE."

whilst two were in the river, next two get up and strip. Then someone discovered that it was a bleak, cold, shivery morning, and very likely the two first men would not remain in the water long. In that case the two first would be first in possession of the tent and "alright," whilst the second pair would be

hard put to it to find shelter for their rain-peppered bodies. They could neither get inside, dress outside, or find shelter. As a final solution, only two did bathe, two ducked their heads, and so we saved a mutiny in a tent.

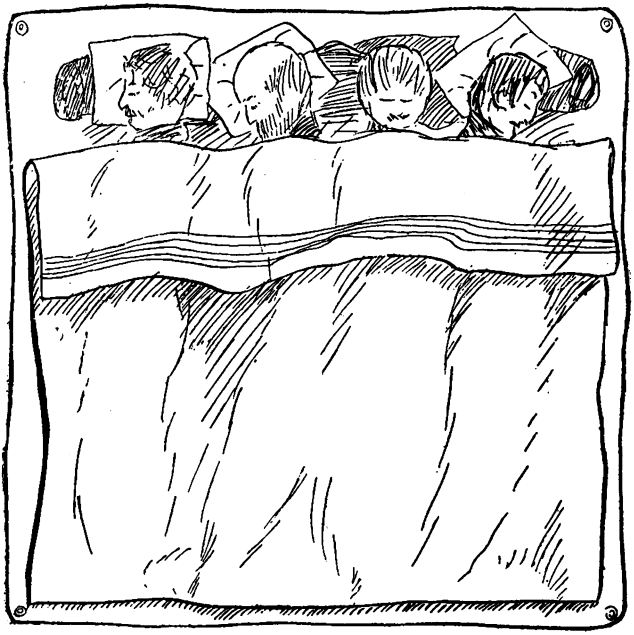
It is no metaphor to say that so small a tent was a bit close for so big a crowd. We might truly say: "It was a day of small things," applying it to everything except ourselves, and never did men so much resemble, in bulk, elephants as we did dressing and undressing on a wet morning—four of us on less than six feet square. We had but one trouble, and one piece of soap.

The river was about four feet deep; cold and colder were the myriads of little drops that fell on our warm shoulders. Of course it rained on! It invariably does one of two things in Ireland. Both things are the same as it were and yet opposite. For a week or so it will be bewitchingly fine every morning up to say 11 a.m. then it comes on dull; at 1.30 it drizzles, and by 2 p.m. sets into a regular down coming "damp blessing" as they call it in the country. It takes on quite another turn—dull or wet in the morning, clearing up gloriously by 11.30 and gives a fine afternoon with much heat and a sky flecked with fleecy seas of cloud.

It rained smartly as the first man poked his dishevelled head outside the opening he made in the tent by unhooking it. "It's a warm'un," he remarked,

meaning, of course, it was very cold. Little Billie is foolish in that respect. He often reverses his meaning in his words.

The wet was a hard, persevering drizzle driven by



LONGWISE—"SLEEP GENTLE BABES."

the wind. This might appear to have no bearing on a bathe. Yet it had. You, reader, try it! Get out of your warm clothes—say a sleeping-bag—and go out in a state of ———— to bathe, the cold peppering

your skin. It is by no means soothing or calculated to re-enkindle a slumberous feeling. No; it rather makes you feel as if you never could go to sleep again. Yet, in truth, these little chastisements give zest to the after glories!

We were ready for breakfast in spite of our trials, at which we laughed. The cooking of this meal was a failure in a sense. None of our regular well-tried cookers were, we thought light enough to carry, so we got from Spong, of Fulham Road, one of the little tin affairs so well-known, and, by adding "improvements" trusted to its doing our work. It failed! The consumption of spirit was excessive and it was slow. So that it was clear we should have to return to the grand, little cooker of Dove's. (See cuts at end of book.)

We then proceeded to cook our breakfast which consisted of coffee, bacon, and a good amount of jam purchased at Westport the day before. Whilst at breakfast the rain ceased, and even a bit of sunshine came out! The wind had gone down considerably, and, by the time we had washed-up, the tent was nearly dry. Of course, we had a huge bill to pay at the cabin:—1s. 6d for rent; 1s. for eggs and boiling water. That night's stay and two meals must have run us into 4s. altogether, *i.e*, as much as 1s. per man! That sum and another 6d. a-head would have paid the tips at an hotel and left us only the beds, food and attendance to put in the account.

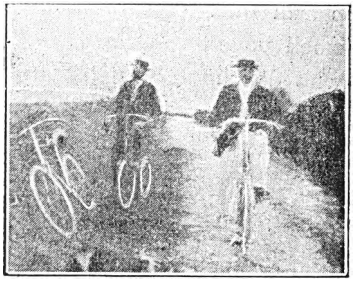
As I entered I found the mistress of the cabin was in the dark shadow of a huge fire-place, seated just as she had been the previous evening. She was of an exaggerated Mayo type for coolness ; she was a bit morose, not voluble and had nothing to interest or charm one. Yet often in cabins so poor that you smell poverty on the doorsill, you meet Irish women who do charm by thier deference, surprise by their cheery talk and make you laugh by their smiles. Like last night, so this morning, we failed to get her into conversation, or to enkindle her curiosity. So I paid and left her rough clay floor which had shared its accommodation with the family, the fowls and the cattle in the past night.

On reaching the camp three men were seen bending over their bicycles, pumping, tying on bundles, oiling and generally foreshadowing a journey. A good big day too—so we thought before we reached a good camping ground between Castlebar and Ballinrobe on the shores of Lough Carra. Yet we only covered some fifty-five miles and spent a delightful two hours seeing the wonders of Cong. But I anticipate.

By a quarter-past-eight we had bathed, cooked and eaten breakfast, packed the camp, packed the bags and put them on the machines. These we lifted up the precipitous embankment and stood them against the parapet whilst we lit cigarettes.

So we started a little before nine. The roads had become heavy with three hours rain and it was lucky

we had a down-hill track beside the river to ride. Beyond the stream—bounding on fast along its rocky bed—for miles rose up in grim outline with grimmer recesses and defiles the big range of which Maumtrasna 2,207-ft. was king and the Devil's Mother 2,131 the queen. Why it was so named we cannot tell, but the utter incongruity of mountain names in Ireland, Wales and Scotland defies the unlearned. The old and the new are blent in a contrast that shocks and defies harmony. Croagh Patrick is old Irish, and the Twelve Pins is muchly English. The Cobbler in Scotland is neighbour to a dozen mountains whose peaks it would be easier to fly than pronounce in good Scotch.



THE TWO "B'S"

What weird grandeur those same mountains showed! and yet how much more beautiful they were past Leenane where the Atlantic fiord winds its way between hill, peak, green slope and wood. We started on the sodden road, the surface of which, however, was by no means bad. For one-and-a-half miles the road led gradually down-hill, the river on our left, and then we crossed it by a bridge, on the right a farmhouse, and a police-barracks on the left

amongst the pine trees. We could have camped more comfortably near the police-barracks in the wood where shelter could have been afforded, but, then, that we did not know, through having lost the map section covering this position. We kept well together this morning, the two bikes going slowly and the two Bantams keeping close up. We asked everybody we met how far it was to Leenane, and as we went on, as usual, the distance did not always decrease. If it was four at one place, after riding some distance it was still four and so on. This, of course, everyone who has toured in Ireland has found out for himself before to-day. Poor Little Billie had an accident to his machine which necessitated pulling up a little later when we came to a blacksmith's shop.

The awful recesses in these precipitous mountains were very gloomy. Cascades were falling here and there down the countless crevasses owing to the morning's rain. The river was beginning to swell too. Whilst we saw broken clouds to the westward, on the left great black masses floated over head. At length we came to Killery Bay, the very head of the fiord where the swift river enters into the tide. This lovely water is nowhere very wide, but it is many miles in length with woods fringing the shore and the lower slopes of the hills. In places, fine houses and castles peep out from their wooded surroundings across the water. Down below Leenane (not marked yet on the ordnance map, of course), but in the

Killeries, is the magnificent palace built by Mitchell Henry, which some three years ago, a big effort was made to dispose of, but which is not yet sold. He has spent in building the house, church, and reclaiming the land something like a quarter of a million.

When we got to Leenane we could hardly imagine we had reached the place. Leenane on many of the maps is spelt with big letters, but it is a very small place.

Little Billie says he knows a man in Wales like that.

"Like what, Little Billie?"

"Why a fellow with five letters before his name and two after it—all capitals. He is no bigger than a dwarf and is as full of conceit as a bog is of moss-batter. He's all name!"

"Well, old fellow, you cannot expect everyone to be bigger than his name can you?" sarcastically exclaimed one member.

It is a coaching centre, and a junction of three roads: one leads over the hills to Maam—that we were going to take—another leads back to Westport along the road we came; another hugs the fiord and goes round to the west coast until it reaches Clifden. It is more as a centre with a few cottages, a shop or two and one hotel, than a town or village, for it can hardly rank as either. Fishing-boats, a fish quay, and fishermen's boats are apparent in the upper harbour or the top end of the fiord. We knew we had a mighty

climb in store and we did not know where we should lunch: so bread, fruit and stores were laid "on board" the machines. We started to push up the hill, the rise extending to a mile-and-a-half.

Just outside the village, on the right, we saw a few white cottages. The inmates too espied us! They had socks for sale—warranted native yarn, hand-knit and guaranteed "to kape the feet waram, sorr." One woman, in particular, tempted the Skipper to trade—pale, very thin and hungry-looking. She had deep, dark eyes, and an abundance of rich, dark hair fast fading. It was her pleading look, her poverty more than her thick, massive socks which led him to wonder where he would put a pair if he purchased them. He might have tied them on the mud-guard or hung them on the lamp-bracket. He could put them nowhere else, for his pockets were as full as his satchel. He eased his conscience by a few coppers and pushed with extra energy up the rise as if hurrying away from something or making for a goal.

A car passed us at a trot. On the car a lady and gentleman: the lady with her bike, her swain with a salmon-rod. When the top of the pass is reached the lady dismounts and gets on her machine. The wind was still stiffly against us, though not quite so strong as the day before. It was a rare hard battle for nine Irish miles along the broad moorland valley with frowning hills rising high on the right and left, an occasional pedestrian, an artist sitting sketching, and

so on. When we came to the lower part of the valley we saw a huge encampment of many big tents, one, indeed, of great size. The Ordnance Survey Department were busy and this was their home while they surveyed the hills, valleys, roads and rivers in the district—so Leenane will now get its chance of notability on the maps.

We were thirsty: there were no public-houses! That did not much matter as we were all teetotalers, but we called at a farmhouse for a drink of buttermilk. A great, burly farmer said he was glad to see us and we could have what we liked. This was very good of him; he did not know us that was why! From the fair hand of his daughter, a girl as handsome as she was tall, we took the buttermilk which was fresh and sweet like herself, and all the sweeter because of the grace of the giver. She asked us to go in and sit down to have something to eat. The softness of the smile and the Irish twinkle in her dark, grey eyes made it hard for the married men to refuse, whilst even Beauchamp lingered on the doorstep, and dare not decline—in words.

We sped on our way to Maam, the village of the dark valley. If gloom and grandeur were ever united here they revel. To our right the lofty cliff-like hills are broken and ridged as though they had stood the siege of a thousand years by guns of as many tons. Whence the broken and torn points of gleaming rock? What grand hand had riven each peak into

flakes of white and dug out those crevasses? Where are the wild men who must have lived in their caverns and caves? One day, now far gone, the laboring laws of Nature must have revelled in the havoc of rending the mass and splintering the mountain's face in a passion of revenge. Just now the upper spurs are all aglow, whilst the boggy valley is frowned upon by the shadow of a cloud that comes up from Arran way and will spend itself in a cloud of rain directly. It did so with energy as usual in this storm-swept region. The Skipper sped on, clearing the hamlet, with a view to getting lunch at the most available place beyond it, when one o'clock should arrive the time for getting the necessary "hot potatoes."

Beauchamp and the Skipper had been here before during a cruise up this remarkable Lough Corrib from Galway. Beauchamp had been friendly with a brisk young post-mistress on that occasion, whilst I was on a-head looking for a nice pitch for lunch and for "hot potatoes."

It was nearly an hour before the rearguard of three came up. Two of the party had been waiting for *someone* who had been, I suppose, in search of letters which it was impossible could have reached Maam.* But it was a mystery and thus we leave it.

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* This place is spelt THREE ways, and in two by Murry possibly even we have erred in this respect.

CHAPTER VII.

CONG—MAYTURA—BALLINROBE.

N leaving Maam we got our first glimpse of this western arm of Lough Corrib running up eighteen miles from Cong. On the island in the middle of the Bay is the celebrated Castle called "Castle Kirk," built probably 700 years ago, truly Norman in style. There is a story about this Castle. It was one of the many strongholds which Grace O'Malley had inherited. She took the great McWilliam to husband and so they lived in this Castle. It was agreed that when she should be tired of him as she had tired of others, if she should say at any time: "I have done with thee," he was to go. McWilliam had a following, had land and had castles too. On a certain day as he approached, she said, "I have done with thee!" and poor William had to retire. This Grace O'Malley was rather a remarkable character. She had some five or six castles in this part of Ireland where she reigned practically as a queen though she was plain Grace O'Malley. It was Queen Elizabeth who

offered her a coronet. "No," she said, "why should I have a title?" She was as much a queen in her own land as Queen Elizabeth was in England, and she would have no title from Elizabeth. She was a warrior, a ruler, a woman of great force with a mighty following. She appears to have been as much hated as loved, and loved as hated. Yonder is the Norman Castle on its impregnable island under the steep Maumweelouff Mountain on the one hand and Maam-Cloghofopo on the other. I would give the pronunciation were it safe to do so!

What storms we had seen rage round it when we had been storm-bound at the head of the lake with the "Erne" and its camp a year or two before. We had landed on that island to photograph one day when a blast had come down from the mountainous wall of rock, which nearly swept not alone the feeble men and the bushes that grew upon it, but the very Castle itself off the rock. It was so fierce that we had to stoop and hold on by the scrub to prevent being blown away. Mortar and rock-splinters flew round us like hail. Even the boat lurched as we tried to cross the lake with bare poles, and even to sail with all reefs in was an impossibility or an act rather to tempt death.

But to return. Seeing a lofty hut enclosure on the left of the road, the Skipper climbed to the little cabin perched on a rock—climbed up zig-zag paths over stones and boulders until he was considerably

hot. The door was open and he said: "Can I have some potatoes?"

Oh, the language he thus provoked! I made actions and motions with both hands, but not a thought could I convey to their understanding and not a word of their language could I understand. I pointed to the potato crop opposite. Still it was incomprehensible to them. This was the second time I had attempted to make myself understood when asking for food in this part and had failed. Yet on the Mayo side of these mountains I had not heard a word of Irish spoken unless we asked for it. Here it is the language alone used. In one house of five persons not one could converse in English. Yet how rapidly Anglo-Saxon had displaced the Celtic tongue, practically over five-sixths of Ireland, and with what surpassing fluency and wealth of words they speak our tongue; the educated and uneducated alike surpass us in force of eloquence, though not in terse English. They revel in mystic-like phrases. They like words and use them to waste!

So shaking the dust, or what would have been dust but for the wet from my feet, I trudged reluctantly down the hill and saw another green patch a quarter of a mile further on, on the right of the road. Leaving the machine against a stone-wall I climbed a gap, over into the little meadow and went to the door of a cottage and there saw in a great, round basket on the little round-table in the centre of the

cabin the potatoes "all hot" and smoking. "One o'clock and hot potatoes" are synonymous terms in the West of Ireland. Yes; I could have a plateful.

"Buttermilk?"

"Yes."

"Spring water?"

"Yes."

And they piled up a plate with potatoes—all the fat ones of course. So the Skipper spread the usual ground-sheet in the shape of a mackintosh-cape, got out the provender just as the "Holloa!" of Beauchamp and the rest was heard, and we had a right royal feast.

MENU:

Buttermilk and potatoes	Gorgonzola Cheese
Meat and potatoes	Fruit and bread
Jam and bread	Narcotic cylinders
Bread and butter	Briaroots—made in Germany!

Then the sun came out on the dripping trees and the field which reeked with wet. But we were soon comfortable, lying down having our pipes before packing-up to start on a ride of seventeen miles to Cong. A remarkably grand ride it was too. The road rose rapidly and precipitately up a spur of the mountain with an awful name. On the right a low-pine wood fringes the shore of the lake at the narrows and stretching for a mile or two from Castle Kirk

down to the wooded knoll that dips into the broader bay below which is a demesne belonging to Lord Ardilaun. This is not the Ashford House Estate, but another country place fifteen miles away. The house may be seen from the lake, just the upper windows peeping over the trees. A prettily situated English Church is within the grounds, and the village or hamlet spreads itself over the adjacent knolls. It is in this part, particularly near the lake, that one meets the fuchsia hedges that grow so abundantly in many parts of the West of Ireland. As we neared the crest of the said spur we met a cart bringing a huge piano duly encased in a box from some remote station to this still remoter quarter of a wild world. Then, on passing the village of Cornoma with a deep, dark trout-stream flowing beneath the stone-arch of its bridge, we tap the lake and skirt it for many miles. The sun had now come out as if for a fine afternoon; the wind was behind us and we made a splendid pace on a good road and we forgave the inventor of the B's. Indeed the surface of many parts was beautiful, to us like a cinder-track. The whole of this shore is more or less interesting from a scenic point of view. Its great beauty, of course, lies in the islands scattered over the face of the lake and distant views that lie away to the westward mountains. This northern shore is high, undulating and richly wooded the whole of the course.

When we reached Cong Woods we called at the

lodge intending there to leave our machines and inspect some of the charms not to say wonders of the enchanting grounds that surround Ashford House. It is not a few paragraphs or pages, but, indeed, a book that would be necessary to describe the sylvan, scenic and architectural beauties of this fairy demesne of Lord Ardilaun. Ashford House itself stands on the site of an old mansion. It is a very large, modern, castellated palace as is were with gables, and turrets embattlemented and partly ivy grown. The Corrib River flows beside the house. In front of it a yacht or two lie at anchor. Extensive lawns spread themselves in all directions. There are in this striking demesne seven miles of gravel-roads or walks. The river itself has eight or ten exits after travelling underground from Lough Mask, emerging through chasms or caves in all conceivable directions until it re-unites in front of the house. The walks twist themselves either between avenues, around arched foliage, tall trees or other rich vegetation. A look-out tower near the house gives a view of all Upper Lough Carria and the mountains and islands as well as the grounds themselves. The house and the river are seen at a great advantage from the lake below. There is one spot, a semi-cave that whoever visits these grounds should enquire for. How did we see it? In a perfect light on a perfect afternoon. One of the vastest beech-trees ever seen grows in a little depression or hollow. The ground is bestrewn with

richly-tinted leaves in great abundance, and above all this wonderful tree spreads itself like a giant umbrella, its branches overshadowing and covering the whole hollow, cave and rock. The smaller trees and the drooping branches embower it in on all sides. Beneath the cliff at the far side is thecave. To see the light stealing through the canopy of leaves and interlaced branches, giving tint and tone below, lurid shadow and then the play of light, suggested just such a scene as Holman Hunt must have beheld somewhere and had in his mind when he painted the famous scene of the "Mid-Summer Night's Dream." On a dull day it wouid lack its true charm. It is the most fascinating thing I have seen, and we wondered and wondered, gazed at and admired it longer than we should, instead of hurrying on to cover the good many miles that lay ahead. But we could not dwell longer on these wonders of Cong. We crossed the beautiful bridge lately erected, saw the monks' mill and the monks' fishing house and the ancient abbey that dates from the Seventh Century—saw it late in the afternoon in a beauty of yellow-glory.

But any note touching Cong would be incomplete if it omitted another of its lions—the Pigeon Hole. On the verge of the village is a weird limestone plateau which berore the late Sir Arthur Guinness took it in hand was a waste. There is now a lovely wood, a pine-forest with slopes, hollows and many acres of pine growning thereon. Up here where

we are walking is a path of perfect seclusion and great beauty hemmed in by wood and rock. We get

CONG—THE PIGEON HOLE.

glimpses of a carriage-road away down there amongst the pine-groves, and hear the birds from those low

fir-trees. As we pass along the Skipper suggests we gather from the dry under-grass of last fall, each a good bundle for torches. At the cave of 70-ft. deep we begin the steep descent of well-worn steps. Down in its huge, damp and hollow vault a faint glimpse of light from above reveals the yawning cavern's outline dimly at the very bottom of which flows a bit of the Corrib River, leastways it did so flow when we were last there, but the past six weeks of fair weather had dried it up. We took a deep, deep draught from a trickling pool in a tunnell.

"Yes, the deepest draught I ever had!" said our funny man.

We lit our first torch of dried grass, and then each lit his from the other man. And so we produced enough light to make the cave look darker than before, in short, the result of our grand illumination was to make the darkness visible and to fill the grim vault thirty feet above our heads with a cloud canopy of smoke that filled the stairway speeding outwards to the upper light and air.

It is interesting, is this cavern—but is there on this earth a place with so much that is curious, old and fascinating as Cong? Natural beauty helped by man's skill and cash; blessed too with the monuments of the darkest ages on every hand. The battle of Maytura 1200 years B.C. and the tribal strife of after ages have bestrewn the land for miles with the memorials erected before man recorded history.

Some of the memorials are nigh as old as the youngest pyramid. On Inchgoil Island too is the tombstone of Lugneadon, son of Linnenuch, sister of St. Patrick. We might go, book in hand, over this pre-historic land, from cairn to cave, from mound to pillar, abbey to castle, and church to "Temphul" in wondering veneration and interested curiosity. But we have other things to chronicle, and more modern men to write about, to think of, and, lastly, to feed.

As we went for our letters we piled our machines against the buttresses of the Old Cross of Cong. Not the emblazoned wood and metal relic of history,* but the Village Cross, of course. It was desecrated now as when we last saw it, by the bill of some vandalistic auctioneer. Has not Lord Ardilaun, who has done so much to preserve and restore Cong's many treasures, sufficient influence to end this unsightly outrage? At Earthlingborough, in Northampton, the parish authorities have with iron hands bound huge boards on the top of its graceful shaft, in other words turned its very old and elegant cross into a common village finger post! The evil of the thing lies in this that the cross was in the way of the place where they wanted to plant a finger-post. Besides the early Christians of the Thirteenth Century by planting it there saved the parish, six centuries later, the cost of a post.

* This work of art is in the Museum at Dublin.

When we had got our letters at the post-office we started on our way. Hardly had we left the town than a heavy shower came on and then another and another. The road was dry and nice when we started, but this limestone roadway soon spoiled and made not a little dangerous by the wet that fell. Beauchamp and Little Billie did not ride with much comfort or security on this quickly transformed surface. Besides, we wanted to keep our eyes off the road for the renowned memorials we have alluded to. We looked at these things, however, with widely varying interest. Beauchamp only cared for watetfalls. About here there were none. Little Billie cared for antiquities but had not read up. The Skipper was simply gone on antiquities, and though he professed to like things new if they were beautiful, really seemed to revere nothing unless it was too old for anyone to know anything about it.

"Fair Church that, Skipper, wasn't it?"

"Yes, it's all right, but without interest; Fifteenth Century!" That is how he talked.

Adjacent to the road, however, or just within sight were mounds and stone circulars, probably thousands of years old. It was an error on our part to pass all this by, seeing that our road led us right across the grim Plain of Maytura. A day should be given to the battlefield alone, or as much of it as can be inspected in the time. We should have camped on the plain and gone over it thoroughly. Still now

there is rail to Ballinrobe we may go again. It is but five English miles from the scene, so it may be tramped over with Wilde's book in hand.*

The Valley of the Hurlers lies to the left a mile or two. The big battle was preceded by a Hurlers' match. In Sir W. Wylde *Oscar's Father* we read:—

This warlike pastime ended in the defeat and death of the thrice nine youths of the Dananns, over whom was erected the great carn or stone monument figured in the illustration herewith, and which would appear to be that called in the MS. *Carn-an-chluithe,* or the "monument

of the game;" and the valley of the hurlers, where they were interred, was then denominated *Glen-mo-Aillem.* There it stands to this day, about 50 feet high, and 400 in circumference—an historic memorial as valid as that which commemorates the spot on the shore of Attica, where the Athenians fell beneath the long spears of the Persians on the field of Marathon.

Next day, supposed to be the 11th of June, in the year of

* This work "Lough Corrib," is very able and fascinating. Gill, Dublin.

the world 3303, the battle commenced ; it lasted four days and it is said 100,000 men were engaged in it. Both parties were armed with swords, spears, darts, and shields but no mention is made of either slings or arrows ; so it must have been a hand-to-hand fight.

How long the Scandinavians occupied that situation, or whether they or the Belgic people formed those numerous forts, raths, cairns, and cahers, that cluster on its western extremity in groups resembling cities, or, whether such were constructed prior to the battle, must remain matters of speculation. Certain it is, that in remote ages an immense population must have occupied that plain ; for, notwithstanding the vast lapse of time, the progress of cultivation, and the ruthless hand of the despoiler, almost every field bears evidence of its existence.

King Eochy, with his Firbolg host, descended into the plain of Maytura, and, passing westwards, was met by the heralds and ambassadors of Nuad, on that portion of it subsequently called Conmaicne Cuile Toladh, extending from the present village of Cross to the neck of land that divides Loughs Mask and Corrib. They then, as was not uncommon with nations in kindred states of civilization agreed upon a trial of skill and manly prowess ; and twenty-seven youths from each army engaged in a game of hurling, in a valley denominated in the tale "The Plain of the Hurlers."

There was standing at the junction of the roads at Neale two miles out of Cong one of the celebrated pillar stones, about which Wilde says :—

The only other pillar-stones in the district are, one on the east shore of Holly Island, in Lough Corrib and the *Clogh-Fadha Neal*, or "long stone of The Neale," at the junction of the roads passing northwards from Cross and Cong, where it is said by tradition the king stood at one period of the battle.

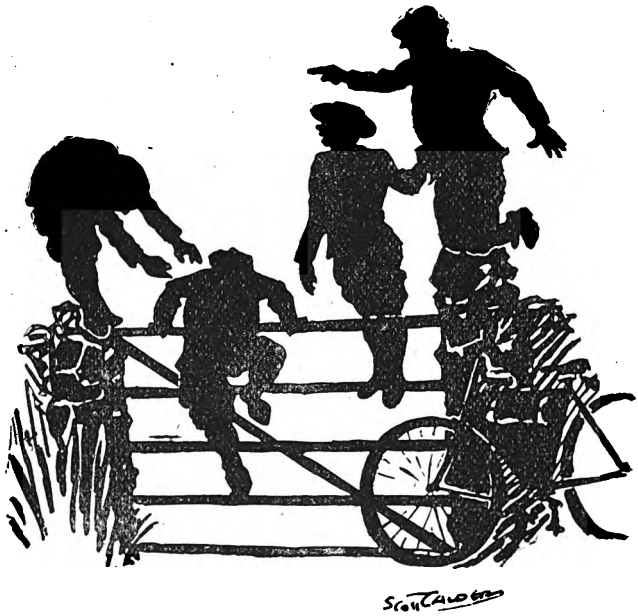
These stones are abundant in Ireland, but they are of course prehistoric, and round many of them have sprung up ecclesiastical foundations, for they were the forerunner of many of the grand crosses that were erected at a later date.

We are now crossing the plain of Maytura on which the second great battle was fought a thousand years B.C. From a scenic aspect it is barren enough. There are still many mounds, stone circles and other historic monuments within sight as we pass. Looking to the left we can see the barren limestone plain on part of which for thousands of years has been and still is, a a burial ground. Still they continue to erect the large stone cairns over the departed "Congers" as it was irreverently put. Through this vale too, of Maytura, there passes that deep rock cutting intended to be the Lough Mask and Lough Corrib Canal. There still lie about vast blocks of beautifully cut stone ready to be placed in the lock piers. A well-worn footpath runs along its bed instead of water, in which water never lay, and they say, never can lie, for it leaks. It was never filled with water because water would not stay in it, and so no boat ever passed through it or ever will or can.

In the grounds of Neale House on the right hand side of the road and in front of the old mansion we see over a high stone wall a very curious monument.

The nearest thing we have seen to it is the tower and the church at the river junction, near Beccles, on

the Norfolk Broads, which is called the "Step" Church. This structure is far more massive. It is somewhat like the Pyramid of Cheops, a series of huge blunt-steps. We climbed on a gate to look at it.



LOOKING AT CHEOPS—IRISH EDITION.

It was about 6.30 when we reached Ballinrobe, where we had to purchase stores for tea and breakfast the next morning. Most of the men were fond of sweet cake, and it was not, as we found, in every Irish

town that this could be got: but we succeeded in securing all that we needed except this luxury. The way from Cong was not very pretty or interesting. Most of the fine houses and extensive parks in Ireland abutt on lakes and rivers or else on hill sides with very fine views to feast on. Those who have taken this course cannot be blamed. The conformation of Ireland lends itself charmingly to landscape beauty. Its scenic poverty in districts, like this and the plain of Mayo, is owing entirely to the scarcity of trees. As I said, it was once chiefly a forest. Ballinrobe is a well-built, smart-looking little place with excellent stores.

As it turned out, our knowledge was not to be greatly enlarged. We had to be very careful in riding from Cong to Ballinrobe owing to the extreme slippery nature of the mortar-like surface after the rain. On entering the town riding was almost impossible. But everyone who has tasted London Macadam has tasted a moderate, half-hearted edition of the Irish road after partial rain, *i.e.*, rain enough to cleanse the mortar all away.

We turned off to the left at the northern end of the village. We did this for two reasons. The road passing between Lough Mask and Lough Carra is the shorter. In the next place I particularly wanted to see if the two lakes were united by a passable water-way. The fact is, boats can be got from one water to the other, should this interest any reader. Then it sounded well did the suggestion the head of one and

the tail of the other of these two waters which are much liked by sailor men, and are about 30 miles long.

Another straighter and far better road leads round into Castlebar, round through Tomstown*, but we chose the left hand road because the lakeside fascinated us. We wanted to see what the head of Lough Mask looked like. We knew that its shores were historically interesting because of the many churches planted round it, and as for Lough Carra we knew nothing of it.

Down a sharp descent over the Robe river, and we soon pass a dismal street of cabins. We then found ourselves on a road that was bad enough to make a saint think naughty words and to excuse a profane person uttering them. But none of us really said anything of this nature, at least they were not overheard. The rain up here had been far heavier than at Cong. The worn holes were full, and all the rest was—well, it had best be passed over. It is not that we don't wish to express our estimate of these roads; we burn to do it, but in this case we can't. We have not the heart, and as to describing the road, it is a pity the "well-known poverty of our existing language" to quote a modern work of small fame, leaves many things inadequately described, and yet there are many persons who prefer that they remain so rather than have the proper language used. I have no doubt the Irish language would meet the case, at any rate it is

* Ireland has more than one place of this name.

very terrible indeed to listen to even when things are pleasant and don't seem to want such strong language. What it must be to describe nasty things as they desire in that language, the Saxon can hardly dare guess. "Batter," "Water puddles," "Skids," "Skilly," "Side-slips," "Four miles an hour." These were the ejaculations the men muttered to themselves. We dare not ride near enough to each other to talk. It was very good of us all. It prevented the truer but harsher remarks being reported to head quarters, *i.e.*, the Skipper, who despises adjectives of all kinds, and was never known to speak loud or use masculine expressions, not even in reproaching others who do.

After crossing a bridge between the two Loughs, the skipper went ahead smartly so as to get a camping ground ready by the time the more cautious should come up with Frank. But there was reason to be slow. If an ordinary road were taken and spread with $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches of very soft mortar or grease it would represent the track which we had to ride on. It required great care to avoid side slipping.

It was near twilight of a dull evening. Should it be necessary to go far it would mean walking, an exercise only two of us were good at, Little Billie and Frank. Four blue ridges of broken stones with a seven-inch wide surface between; itself freely bespattered with sharp-cut cubes of limestone, was too many for darkness and one over much for pneumatics, even in daylight.

A high wall along the right side of the road hedged in a dark belt of pines fringing the lake shore.

The leader decided to stop first chance. His experienced eye scanned every vestige of protecting wood and every snug corner he saw. The wood was walled in, and besides cattle were there, and they are always much too interested in tents, and it does not pay to indulge their taste. For one thing they have defective judgment in such matters whatever they may know about grass and hay and such things. Once they took our flag and ate it clean up. It may have been from feelings of extreme loyalty to the constitution, for it was a Union Jack, so we knew the political party they belonged to. Anyhow one of the great political parties has adopted the Union Jack as its symbol. It was a Jack this cow swallowed. They are fond, too, of odd stockings. At Cong they masticated one of the skippers—his left one. They like to rub their big shins too against our guy ropes, the very last things likely to relieve them of any irritation. In fact cows can't be void of a certain measure of stupidity. I have known a case where there has stood in the field a decent cow-shed, yet they have tried all the night through to get inside the tent. This disturbed us, especially as we could not understand their preference, or their want of idea as to their own size and the littleness of our tent. Ever since I have voted cattle selfish things. They had the shed and the field. We only a few square feet. I once had a tent upon

Hendon Lake shore, and while I went to get stores at the hotel they came along to the corner where it stood and in spite of official rubbing-posts, elsewhere handy for them, they used my tent poles instead. Had I thought of this beforehand they could, of course have been made thicker. They did not stand it well at all. Fortunately they were not mine ; I had borrowed them. Should the person who loaned them to me read this he will know why they were never returned.

The bridge has a fine long series of arches over the shallow-reedy junction of the two lakes. At last the lines of sharp limestone became too fearful for pneumatics, and I decided to stop near the first house if it afforded fair shelter and promised us eggs and likewise milk. Of course, the house came along all right ; it always does in Ireland. On the left of the road, down a longish slope, was the very habitation I had been looking for. Why a house should be placed plump and flat, its face full to all the wash of the farmyard one can never hope to divine. They told us they had a hard job to keep out the water and all that it carried with it when heavy rains fell. It is not the only thing they do in Ireland that needs explaining.

On rapping at the door a fine, handsome, young woman, with a certain natural dignity of manner, answered it. Our Chief is always meeting dames like that.

CHAPTER VIII.

SNUG CAMP ON LOUGH CARRA—CASTLEBAR—SLADE ABBEY—"HOME."

"  OUR of us are on our bicycles travelling with a little tent. Would you allow us to pitch it in the little wood here near your house?" asked the Skipper, in tones so bland.

She would ask.

Along came the headman of the house: "Why, sure, I will. Come, I'll show you a place."

As we walked we learned he had been in England and America. Strange to say he seemed none the worse, considering how easily human nature is contaminated. He took me through the rickyard along the field and said, "Here is a nice place." It was a bit of closely eaten grass in his field, beside the high-stone wall I had just passed on the road and 200-yards from his house. If the wind did not get up again it would do, but it is best to always suppose that it will; it generally does.

"Ah, but it is too open. There is no protection from this wind."

"Well, over the wall and over the road on to the otherside."

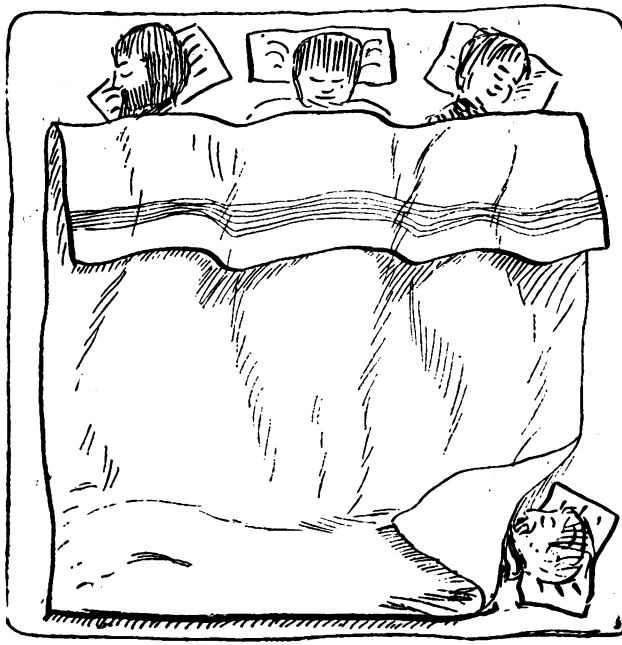
"Oh, but that will be rather an awkward place for our object. Cannot we camp near your house in those tall bushes?"

"With pleasure," said he. And so back we went, and, sure enough, there was a nice little level patch soft and sheltered practically on every side. On it the tent was erected while the water in the kettle boiled and the eggs cooked. They seemed quite pleased to oblige us. By this time it was dark. But what a tea we made! We had travelled many miles and walked a good many at Ashford and Cong. We were hungry, thirsty and ready for sleep too afterwards. The machines were run into the bush and covered as well as possible.*

What yarns we spun that night 'neath the candle-light; how merry went the jokes. Little Billie related his Welsh mountaineering, and Beauchamp grew very tall about his life in the Bush with his "Billy" tins and "humpies," nor did we omit expatiations on the advantages of cycle camping. How we voted the camp itself perfectly portable and successful; how we reckoned up the relative cost between the tour by hotel and the tour by camp, and with what result? Why that we were hardly spending more than at the rate of £2 per week for the

* In view of the ever increasing thefts of cycles, it would in future be our rule to have the machines, even in Ireland, locked up. If farm-buildings fail, there is the house which would generally be available.

four of us, and that two men could comfortably work it, almost luxuriously for 15s. per week for any length of time. But we thought we would try a new way of sleeping. The first night we slept as depicted else-



"SLEEP—THAT BALM OF THE WEARY BRAIN."

where. (See last chapter.) But on this occasion we lay three down the tent and the Skipper crosswise at the feet of the rest.

On the whole this was an advantage. Of course, the

whole thing was an impossibility taken seriously, that is, to stow four full-grown men into a little tent, weighing two pounds, with a floor space of 5-ft. 9-in. by 6-ft. But, really, in making the best of it, it is surprising how snug we were. Anyhow, we slept well, though if we did happen to wake we heard it was raining stoutly. Our frail house, however, never let in a drop, which was, of course, owing to its steep sides and the closeness of the material of which it was made. For those who go canoeing and need really light gear this tent would serve all purposes well. Some of us were intent on bathing. We knew it could not be far to Lough Carra, and we knew too that though we had to cross a trim, little park in full view of a smart house of the Walshes, we would not be hindered, for as we said before, "all grass land is free" to foot passengers in Ireland. It may not be a statute law, but it is made a law unto the people by the people simply going anywhere they wish to. Here was a well-constructed boat-house on the shore, and a fine, big sailing-boat too inside it. Where were the strong hands now that had worked its sailing machinery? Scattered far and wide over the world mostly far away from these snug waters of Mayo, loyally serving their country. We were startled at first to see the lake look like a white bath. Its water was marvellously clear and its bottom a level floor of whitest sand. The temperature was voted "fresh." On returning to camp the water was boiling and the

eggs were cooked; so we tackled breakfast "right-away," as the guard sings out on the District Railway. We "forewent" our regular fry because the cuisine we carried was not a success and was consuming oceans of spirit. So we resolved to fall back on our old "Mersey" in future, full particulars of which will be given before the volume closes. The work of packing was done in about thirty minutes, and then after pumping up we were ready. Of course we had to pump every morning. Why is this? No matter how well a tyre may hold its air, if a machine stands still it empties more quickly than if it is in use. It beats us all. Take this illustration. I pumped up a machine on a Friday night, rode it to the City, thence to St. Pancras station, left the train at Lynn and rode it for hours; put the machine in a conservatory, still seemingly tight on the Saturday night at 9.30. On Monday morning it was empty. The machine was then ridden the next day 120 miles or so, Lynn to Putney Bridge between 10 a.m. and 10 p.m., and never needed pumping up at all.

Perhaps the most atrocious surface that a cyclist ever travelled over in the history of the bicycle we found on the roads that led to within a couple of miles of Castlebar next morning. Slimy, ridgy, stony, in fact in places almost impassable. The Bantams had to go very slowly for safety, certainly not more than five miles an hour. So the two on bikes had to wait some two or three times an hour of

about ten minutes each. There was little to interest us. We passed an old castle on our right, and the stump of a round tower a mile further on, many of whose stones we discovered both in the walls of the cabin near to it and in the walls about the locality.

The scenery is plain, indeed the district is known as the Plains of Mayo. On our left are the hills, continuing northwards along the west bank of Lough Mask. Around them we had made a huge circle. We only had one shower, and that of only ten minutes.

It was lunch time when we reached Castlebar, and an hour was lost there in trying to mend a valve which had been damaged at starting. The Skipper was in the act of pumping up the hind wheel; a shower came on as this was being done. The machine was hastily moved with the pump still attached in a moment of stupid forgetfulness. This bent the valve so that it was impossible to pump up, and with a slack tyre he rode the rest of the way to the town above-mentioned. But no new valve could be got. It was mended by a clever smith, who, like everybody else, had been to America, and then the air would not enter it and it had to be taken back and drilled out in the centre. But the valve is still working.

By this time it was 1.30 and Beauchamp and Little Billie said they would go to Foxford, eighteen miles, to our field camp and would await the event of our arrival. They had made a make-shift lunch

in Castlebar, and so felt independent enough to go on their way rejoicing. We felt like taking something more substantial, and so prepare ourselves for a ride of twenty miles. There are two hotels, but as we went to the lower end of the town it was adviseable not to return. So we turned into the one near the bridge. It was indeed a place leaving much to be desired from some points of view. The stairs are outside the building leading to the coffee room. This was very large and carpeted, but it was a crude, rough and untidy place. Windows and doors open in every direction. Tawdry pictures and shabby nick-nacks lying about. A carpet that had not been brushed for————! A willing pert little maiden about fifteen years of age came to ask what we would have.

"Well what could we have?"

"Anything sorr?"

"Have some herrings?" she said after a pause.

Now herring for dinner was a novelty to an Englishman, but we would have herrings.

"And would we not have some potatoes?"

After a long wait potatoes were brought with the herrings: also bread and cheese. With this repast we were fortified for the journey. A gentle wind was behind us. It was a good road on which we had to ride for we had travelled it before and proved its quality. We, Frank and the writer, sped on at a good pace, and though the others had started one and a

quarter hours before us, half way home we sighted them. With a wild "holloa" from Frank they turned to see the hounds. We chaffed them hotly and put it all down to the Bantams. They explained it arose—their seeming slowness—to the fact that Beauchamp had insisted on seeing the Round Tower and Abbey at Charlville. They were worth the trouble. Though ecclesiastical ruins are scarce about this district in general, they are very plentiful more south; indeed from Galway to the head of Lough Carra the district far and wide is thickly set with castles, forts and ruined churches, *i.e.*, early Christian temphuls. Besides the old artificial mound already alluded to, there are several earth circles or little green knolls near the road. It was nearly 3 p.m. when we reached Strade Abbey, which we passed without inspection on our journey south some days earlier. It is not mean in size or age. But it is a mean act for the Progressive Nineteenth Century Christians to put up in front of a noble early Christian Church of pre-Norman age a white-washed barn-like shed and a weighing machine hut. Both these vandalistic erections hide the abbey which otherwise has not a bad situation facing the village-green and what was once a trout stream, or may be yet.

Inside we found, as in all the hundreds of old church ruins we had seen from one end of the country to the other, nettles and tall grass hiding everything from view. Enniskillen even cannot unite to raise as much

as will keep in order the hallowed ground on which St. Malaise erected his first church in the Sixth Century and whose walls still stand amid that grand city of past age monuments. Some very curious things we saw in this venerable ruin, which the Board of Works have put in a semi-state of preservation. The Abbey itself evidently dates from the Ninth Century, but has the usual Early English pointed windows inserted in the old walls. The old tomb-stones bore strange old Celtic decorations of very early and later dates.* The old abbots had been buried beneath the floor of the cell in which they had lived. It stood adjoining the abbey and by stepping hard or jumping on the ground one could feel the floor shake as though hollow beneath, which it was. We had a drink of "milk-and-water" at a little shop in the hamlet kept by a fine specimen of an Irish mother and wife. Polite, and kindly, she has a family of fine children, of whom she had nine, as healthy and strong as they were handsome. The house was clean and tidy as so humble a habitation could well be.

As we rode "home" we met several strings of donkeys carrying in the hay crops tied in tremendous bundles on their backs. How the poor little brutes could see was more than one could well

* In pre-Norman times the Irish were far ahead of the English as artists in stone.

imagine. The hay bundle was extended beyond the eyes and ears, was out behind them and so wide that they filled the road in narrow places. We laughed heartily as we slowed up and hedged close to the bank to avoid the procession.

The afternoon brightened up again after a dull two hours.

The mighty rocks round the low hills near Foxford stood up like churches gleaming in the mellow sunlight.

We spoke to a man with a fishing-rod whom we overtook just over the Moy Bridge.

"Yes, sport was very fair. He had caught a salmon or two the day before: was going to try again."

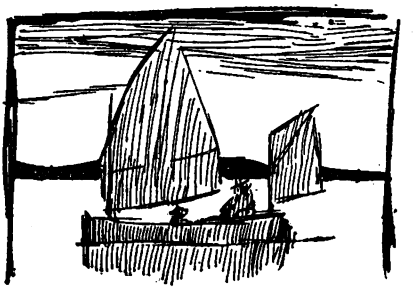
When we reached camp it was seven o'clock at night, and the whole of the hamlet had been up in arms wondering what had become of us. "Had we been 'kilt entoirely' or else what had happened to us? We were to be away two days and one night and we had been away three days and two nights." The tents had not been blown away and we had left all our things in them. "Gipsies were prowling all round the lake and they took everything they could find, etc." Such was their story. But how anxious they were to shake hands with us: glad to see us back and hoped nothing had happened to us. Our tyres had got a few cuts necessarily, but we had only had one puncture to four machines. But the damage to some of those tyres would only be repaired by very

large patches or sections or new ones, and two of us were on racing tyres. For the Irish roads strong ones are necessary, and if a bit heavier all the better. Pending the advent of steam rollers or a great increase in the traffic or more money spent on the roads, except between considerable towns, loose stones are inevitable I fear in Ireland. Of gravel roads there are but few in Ireland, but of acute sharp-pointed macadem there are thousands of tons lying loose on many of the roads here and there.

So we brought our little camp with its fragile poles and our light roadster machines back to the place at which we were about to live for a fortnight. How roomy and large and cosy the larger tents with their bright rugs, blankets and sleeping bags looked. The cameras, guns and fishing-rods we had left in the tent were all there. Everything was safe on the well-sheltered spot in which we had pitched our camp; none of us the worse for the trip we had had. But our machines were beplastered with mud, and what more fitting the next day than that we should march them on to the sandy patch by the lake and wash them with a scrubbing brush made of straw.

How well we slept that night needs no comment. How we discussed over the substantial tea that we made of chops and potatoes, the experiences of our trip, and above all we did not forget to pay a tribute to the handy appliances which had thus been brought to a state of practical usefulness. How

philosophic too we became as we predicted poor men would see new country on two wheels, and of young poorly-paid clerks wandering over possibly new countries, happy and free on their bicycles without wasting their small savings.



THE "ERNE."

If we dreamt at all it was of hoisting sail on the lovely waters over which the "Erne" by this time knew her way.

CHAPTER IX.

UP THE NEPHIN.

WHEN the other three were led down the intricate and stoney pathway from the Foxford road to the lakeside on the day of our arrival, it was a lovely afternoon ; time, half-past four o'clock. A yellow tinge mellowed the high cliffs three miles away, on the other side Lough Cullen. The western shoulder of the Nephin in the N.W. was all aglow. With a powerful glass we could almost have counted the scattered and broken lumps of rock on its higher ridges.

"Doesn't that mountain look grand?" said Little Billie.

"Yes;" replied Frank. "I vote we climb that before we leave."

Mountain climbing is the most delusive pursuit in the world. There is nothing certain about it, nothing restful or soothing either. You cannot climb a high mountain without taking a certain amount out of yourself and off your life. Often life is given away in the attempt. There have been "many martyrs to mountaineering." It is too laborious a process by which to gain health ; there are so many ways easier and simpler. It is hungry, thirsty, fatiguing work at

best, disappointing save on a few rare occasions. I remember well once forcing the pace up Loch Linnhe one fine day and seeing all the time Ben Nevis in a perfect glory as clear and sharp of outline as though it were over in the next field. Of course we were in a hurry to climb it the next day. The sun was shining in the morning. The lower part of the mountain was clear : the upper part was in mist. There was a Scotchman with the party too, and what he did not know was not worth knowing or trying to know. He knew the mist would lift : he knew it would be a better day than yesterday. So we started, and the mountain that we had seen a field or two off kept going further and further away the more we walked, and not until we had covered five miles were we at the foot of it, and then there were 4,406 feet to climb. But that mist was not lifting much. Like Paddi's wife it lifted, "worse." It crept down, it wedged us in, we entered it and the wind got stronger, but it did not blow away the mist and there was no view and we landed at the top hungry, thirsty, drenched and weary after two and a half hours. Ten feet away we could not see the booth where we hoped to get refreshment.

The writer remembers once starting up the Wasash in Western Denver. The top was about 8,000-ft. Of course the top was in clouds. "But it will all disappear." In the valley below the grass was beginning to spring in early March days, and the birds were twittering in the pine trees ; they were so pleased they did

everything but sing, and a knowing American said it would be "all right when you got to the top." But when we got to the top it was twenty degrees below zero, and there were ten feet of snow that was frozen so hard that we could walk on it. No food but flour, and snow to blend with it, and in attempting to bake bread, by the frost's aid, we smashed our only pan. We could not bake bread in a tea-kettle, so we had a hard time.

No, mountaineering is risky work. I know a man who for many years was talking about the glorious day he would have in climbing the Old Man at Coniston. He went up it and went pretty fast. A beautiful clear afternoon it was. No sooner had he reached the top than the clouds came up from the s.w. and buried every hill, shut out all the Morcambe Bay, the rivers and indentations of the western coast and even darkened the distant hills across the next valley. No wonder everybody does not join the Alpine Club. Mountains are frisky things to holiday upon.

But we would go up Nephin, that is, Little Bilie, Frank and the Skipper would. One man carried the macintoshes, another man carried the lunch—on the bicycles. Beauchamp would sit and write letters, perhaps have a paddle round in his canoe and a gossip with the villagers, but he would not climb the mountain. He was older than the majority and wiser in his generation. I have many times

admired Beauchamp's shrewdness. I wonder whether it is to be attributed to his superior education or to his superior gifts.

But when we got up at 7 a.m., we saw the early morning sun making the rocks in the lake glisten in its still surface. The Cone of Nephin clear, the middle hidden in a belt of white cloud, the flanks of each shoulder distinctly enough seen, so we expatiated in our usual wise way :—" Glorious day ! Wind from the North. How fortunate we are. See, that belt of cloud is lifting ! It will be all clear and grand. How fortunate to have a day in which we can 'see the world,' as the local told us. Everything favors us at last." That is the way with childish people, they are always so " soft ! "

How time had flown ! How slow we had been in washing up ! How carefully we tidied up the tent and things we were about to leave. How sorry we were for Beauchamp's being left all alone ! The ride of three-and-a-half-miles to the Pontoon bridge was very satisfying and variable. Here it is nice, smooth and splendid surface excepting a few streaks of lose stones which are sure to be there. Soon we come to parts peppered more thickly. But the scenery is fine. Then there are little ridges to rush and little descents to fly down. We come to the picturesque Pontoon with its rock-walls crowned with heather, birch, tufts and pine-saplings. Then we round the northern rocky point and rush along the beautiful

surface; on the left we pass a rising rock hill, on the right the rocking stone perched up there by the "Druids." Then we pass a bit of virgin forest which has been growing, falling and growing again for ages. We reached the hotel and turned sharp up the pass. What a jem-bit it is, beautiful, very narrow, richly wooded and the woods broken up with intervening masses of rock obtruding themselves between the clusters of fir, birch, oak-scrub trees, etc. We have not seen a prettier bit of mountain pass anywhere. Pity it is only a quarter of a mile in length. There is a deep descent down to the wierd bay in Lough Conn, again on the left more virgin forest of dwarf oak. It appears to have been planted by Nature thousands of years ago. They have grown and fallen. New trees still spring round the roots, all gnarled and twisted. Undoubtedly it is a bit of Nature's untouched handiwork. It remains to-day as it probably was three thousand years ago. But we have come to a piece of splendid road. How the bikes swing along. Little Billie on the Bantam is hedging us closely. Another mile and still the surface is like a racing track. Then we pass the beautiful park they have been lately improving belonging to Wood Park House. This little estate and house with a river frontage and boathouse recently changed hands for £13,000. A trim English-looking lodge has been built at its gate. How smart the people look that keep it. Active little children are skipping about

in bright clothing. When we reached the top of the rise we saw a narrow lane going straight on towards the mountain, a splendid road leading round the park to the right. We take the little track, a mere cart track with small-gravel surface, undulating acutely so. Then we have a sharp dip down a patch so steep that only the Skipper ventured to ride it, and of course there were two or three wild heifers skipping about when he got a hot pace on, flying over the gravel, which their hoofs shot to the right and left.

How unromantic and dismal Nephin looked when we approached its dark side. Serried with the recent fire which had stripped it of its prolific crop of heather when in its highest bloom. Turning down a little lane we went to the first house we came to and asked for hot potatoes.

Certainly, we could have them.

"Buttermilk?"

"You can." *Yes* is unknown in Ireland!

And here with some cooked meat we had taken with us, the "praties," bread and fruit, we made a decent lunch and started for the mountain. It only looked a quarter of a mile away. We were half-an-hour still in reaching it; in fact, we afterwards learnt it was exactly twelve miles to the top of it from whence we started.

THE ASCENT.

One of the charming things about Ireland is if you find yourself at point A and wish to go to point C of

the triangle without going through point B you can just go there "straight on." It was a beautiful little corner whence we started. We enjoyed the peeps at the great spreading claws of the hill as we lunched, and mentally persuaded ourselves that we should soon be at the top because it was so steep from our side, and that we would go the near way straight up Roman-wise. But all our schemes were delusive like every other plan of "mice and men." How lightly we skipped over the green field till we came to a drain that looked so narrow we were about to jump it till we mentally calculated its width. But at length a place was found where it was possible after scaling sundry bog walls to leap it on to a little ledge where some athlete had preceded us. Then we came to a very old track that had been made by the giants of former days.* Indeed it was a made road—a way up to the mountain-foot and terribly rough and rugged. Vast slabs of limestone and boulders had been forced into position, by Cyclopean paving-stones.

It was an idle day with the natives. On sundry rocky mounds or green slopes or ridges were groups of the peasantry, eight on one, two dozen on another, and over yonder we could hear the merry laughter of another group of greater numbers. The whole plain is dotted with houses at short

* These "Giants" have done most of the oldest things—say the peasants' traditions.

intervals, and it seemed that the peasant farmers meet in groups or "sets" as society of a higher strata allocates to itself certain rendezvous for their own assemblies.

The girls sat up, the men lay down, digging their toes into the earth and now and again throwing up their heels. The talk was soft, slow and quiet. Every five minutes there was a peal of laughter in which everybody throughout the party joined. The highest good humor pervaded them all. Everyone acted and looked as though a stroke of grief had never crossed their hearts. Who is to say "nay" to the supposition that in the old days, the early historic or pre-historic tribes of this interesting country have not done the same from the days of the Firbolgs.

In those days they wore coarse matting, partially skins and even dried, soft rushes strung or plaited. Now here were bright colors, silk mufflers of bright red lying round the fair necks, the ends carefully slid beneath a band encircling a dainty waist. Skirts of bright cottons from Manchester. The men wearing felt hats from Denton, or caps from Whitechapel. The girls all bareheaded. The hair is somewhat dark, the eyes dark-grey, not light-grey as in the eastern counties. Black-eyes are a rarity in Ireland. The above details are suggested from a close inspection of two such groups we conversed with.

It was with awful forebodings that we left the track.

That white night-cap it is true had ascended higher and higher and had once disappeared but it had come on again. Without a track and without a guide where might we not go? But we were assured it was not a dangerous mountain, was without cliffs and precipices. To the left hand of our track we should find a wide, steep and deep chasm that we must avoid. But why should we climb that hill at all if we do not get the view we want to see? And yet that is precisely what we were threatened with—hours of violent exertion and no reward.

The climbing of the Nephin was Frank's suggestion. On the threshold he said he would not ascend it, not feeling well; so it was left for the two heavy weights, the 14-stone and the 11-stone 10-lbs. men, the one thirty-two and the other fifty-two years of age to make the ascent. Nearly the whole side of the mountain was practically like going up steps as it were—steps formed by the growing, bog-encompassed roots of heather and fern. A few stray sheep seemed to enjoy the lofty ridges for they had made tracks in all directions, and the higher we went the more sheep. Having been pegging away hard for an hour we thought we could see the top, anyhow we could hear voices. Surely there were men up there and we welcomed the sound. Presently there darted by us at a flying pace a hare, somewhat paler in color than our English ones. Then we heard dogs yelping and barking. All this we thought was happening on

top of the hill. So we went at it for half-an-hour foot over foot, sometimes foot and hand over hand. We looked back to see the valley all around us in a dim, dull shadow, indistinct, undefined and hazy. A claw, as it were, of the spreading mist blew cold and fresh in our heated faces. We thought we were in for a mist for the remainder of the task. But it lifted, passed away and fairly flew up the hill; so we should get a view after all. The ridge we saw above us that we took to be the crest was ultimately reached over the rough stones which now had taken the place of the better ground below. The mist had cleared from this knoll, so we could look out across its crest, but away up to another point which seemed eternally high and distant and impossible. We pegged away at it and reached *that* knoll, the mist still clearing away before us. When we got to the top of this peak we looked up and saw *another* knoll still higher. Little Billie said it was a little deceiving. And so we went from another to another until at length we were buried in the mist and had to be guided by the course of the wind to find the top. But we got through the cloud and, strange to say, looked all round us and saw the mist below. It hugged the hill, clung to it, but not a suggestion of a view could we have any more than the man who was looking for a black cat in a "coal-cellar at twelve o'clock at night." We did reach the top expecting of course neither to hear or see a soul, nor

did we for a time. On the extreme peak there is a stone cairn that has been pretty high, but it has tumbled down and is now only a ruckle of stones. It is supposed to have been placed there at a very remote period. Then the dog we had heard barking came trotting up as we munched a sandwich, followed by his master and assistant and the young farmer who farms the mighty heap. Finally, and more interesting than all, from the equally steep northern hill, a shepherd boy came trooping up as though he were just starting instead of finishing the climb, and behind him a young lady. She was attired in a most fashionable garb. The lad had been guide. She neither appeared to be hot nor tired with the stiff climb of 2,700-ft. nor did she pause a moment, but marched straight past us as though walking along a tow path beside the Thames. She spoke to no one, looked at no one, but marched straight on as though a human stoic. But if stoics could be as interesting and beautiful as she, one's feelings would be much softened to that ilk. Little Billie seemed very disappointed.

The best way to get up the Nephin is to start at its western side, as it is comparatively an easy climb of two and a-half miles, and that is the way shepherds ascend to look after their sheep, making the journey once a week. On the top of the hill vegetation was in full growth. It would be sufficiently smooth with slight trouble at least to be made into a tennis

lawn. Various small flowers—not being a botanist their names cannot be given—were blooming quite freshly. Little forget-me-nots, though a little withered, persisted in their still life at that dangerous weather-beaten height. The grass was a little yellow, but it was evidently sweet, for the sheep had been gnawing it to its very roots.

The views that *may* be had from this mountain would be tremendously expansive.—The Twelve Pins in southern Connemara, certainly the distant Lough Corrib winding its sinuous way from Cong to Galway City. If a very clear day, what could prevent Galway Bay 20 miles wide as it is, being seen, and the rugged mountains that vanish in the cliffs of Moir. Below it that wonderful Clew Bay, Achill Island with its hills and mountains, probably the Isles of Arran away in the Atlantic. To the northward, of course, Killary Harbour and the mountains round Sligo and that abrupt range that dips into the Atlantic below Bundoran. Then Lough Allen's king, Slieve Anierin, whence we trace the head of the Shannon. Near us the Plain of Mayo and the long undulating slopes of Roscommon. Well might the local Irishmen say that we could see "all the world" from it. But we saw nothing. We felt fresh it is true. We felt the cold, cutting air and the damp, clammy atmosphere that seemed to insinuate itself through our clothes. Everybody knows what a wind-driven mist on a mountain is. We sighed for an

overcoat. Away down the valley how warm and humid the air was. We had gone from July to November, and we were about to leave November and go down to July again.

The Skipper strongly suggested going down the way we came because the mist had vastly thickened and we should possibly remember little land marks on parts of the track, such as stones, some tufts, or knolls which would guide us. It was a case of running down ; and a tremendously shaky task it was. The labor of ascending was less trying than that of descending. The feeling of uncertainty in descending a mountain in a mist is anything but pleasant. Little Billie kept calling from the heights above, "Where are we now, Skipper ?"

"All right, come on. I can see 'Jerusalem and Madagascar.'"

Sure enough we did ultimately reach the mountain foot, practically at the same spot we started from, and there fell in with Frank who said he had climbed a good height. The groups we had left two-and-a-half hours before were still there. The men kicking up their heels and the women laughing in their shrill alto, and yonder, lower down, was another group on another hill, and up there in a corner of the field, near a farm was another. Down on a fern-covered knoll, in a bog on the other side the road, were three girls laughing and chaffing at us, also clad in very bright attire making a picturesque little group by

themselves. Not only over this valley but over the next wild valley, over the hills and those in the next valley, and, for that matter, on all mountainous parts of Ireland the same thing goes on on Saints' days and Sundays.

When we reached the house where the bicycles had stayed in the farmyard, underneath some holly-bushes, we were invited in. There were all the family and others—making three and four generations. The enegetic female head of the establishment asked us what we thought of her boys? We said that they were fine lads.

"Ah, shure, but it is the clothes Oi maen, sorr. Was it not with my own hands that I did weave that cloth and spin it too, sorr, and cut and made it likewise. Don't you think I'm clever, sorr? And, faith, I have some of the same cloth now, and I should loike to show it to a gintleman, the loikes of yourself. It's a nice suit it would make for you, and I have jnst got seven yards of it, and you may have it for 3s. 6d. a yard. It's a nice pattern; it was copied from a gintleman's coat that was fishing about these parts." And so on, and so on, and so on. We heard her story throughout; we admired but declined the cloth, paid for the accommodation, mounted our machines, and started back.

We could have taken the gravel-track of two miles across the moor that we had traversed partly riding and partly walking as on the outward journey; but

we thought we would go round the mountain a bit and try and find a better road for the ride back into the main-road that fringes the lake-shore round across to the main highway. Not a cross-road could we find though, we could see all the while the line of the main track, but could not "get at it" until we had gone quite two-thirds of the way up Lough Conn ; that is we had ridden six miles and had reached a point that must have been some nineteen miles from our camp! Still it was a lovely evening and when we got on the main-road from Cross Molina we were on that splendid gravel highway that we had left by the mountain track.

We all three enjoyed that ride and rode fast. On descending a hill, long though not very steep, and going at a great pace, we saw half-way down it a lady seated on the side of a car with the reins in her hand. As we approached she gradually pulled the horse right across the road. This happened when we were only ten yards from her. The act of dismounting at such a pace by the aid of brake and what not was a thing that should not be repeated too often, for both the natural impetus of one's own body and the machine carried us well on to the horse's legs. A collision was avoided, and no worse result than the use of expressive language—but without profanity. The astonishment on the lady's face was most marked. We went on and Little Billie coming behind us saw what had happened and shouted, and

sure enongh, across the road again, not this time the horse's head, but the vehicle was backed! By running on the grass on the side of the road Little Billie got past, he using strong language, which let us hope was in Welsh. But that is an absurd expression. As the Welsh do not swear, their language is fortunately totally unprovided for in that direction.

"COME ON!"

It was a nice ride we had, Frank enjoying it so much that he went right away and left us by ourselves. At length, when twilight overtook us, Little Billie got a trifle nervous after we left the better road and came to the occasional patches of loose gravel,

"Pontoon-wards," and rode slowly. So the Skipper rode on, excusing himself that he would "get the tea ready." Thus Frank arrived at camp a quarter-of-an-hour before the Skipper, and the Skipper a quarter-of-an-hour before Little Billie. It was a "chop and potato" tea we had; we enjoyed it heartily, and discussed, in no complimentary terms, mountaineering as compared with other sports and voted it at best a bit of a failure. We had practically spent the day in climbing the mountain and could not see from its top the width of the little paddock in which our tents were. It was as though we had ascended it in the night.

After tea, one of the three intreped ones began a speech:—"We have thus vindicated our character as Englishmen, the bravest of the brave. Is not that a glorious boast for us?" [Bosh and hisses]. "While men of our stamp still besprinkle this sea-girt island" [Oh! and groans], "the fair name of our nation is in no ——, no ——, dis—s— ——."

"Let him get up now. That teacloth stopped him anyhow. Next time he gets taken that way we'll hunt him round to the next field and tie him in fast until he's better."

CHAPTER X.

OVER THE HILLS AND FAR AWAY:

LOUGH CULLEN TO FOXFORD—SWINFORD—BALLYSADARE—SLIGO AND BOYLE.

ANYONE looking at the map of Ireland may study out this most curious river system of this quarter. It is a system of considerable magnitude—though to an extent local. The extreme western shoulder or Ireland is formed by co. Mayo, and Achill Head is the most westerly part of it, except the Great Blasket Island north of Donegal Bay, a point some twelve miles north of Valentia Island. Sligo County is by nature divided, in part at least, from Mayo by Killala Bay, where the French landed at the end of the last centurv. The river Moy enters the estuary at Ballina after running parallel with Lough Conn and Lough Cullin, due North. In its upper waters it takes up a net work of other big systems too numerous to be mentioned, that run down from the range of hills that divide S.E. Mayo from N.W. Roscommon. Then this strange river takes a loop after running from S. to N., until its main sources are discovered in the Ox Mountains, County

Sligo, and within a comparatively few miles of that ancient city. The intervening country in the loop is, of course, hilly not to say mountainous, and it is the eternal drain of these never drying upland bogs which not only feed the Moy, but which in other localities also render nearly all Irish rivers perennial, and eternal in their flow towards the sea.

A full description of the watersheds, rivers and lakes of Ireland, with illustrations, would make not only a great work, but a valuable one, for there is not such a water-bisected island, perhaps, in the world. There are lakes everywhere, rivers everywhere, and in addition to some thirty fine bays of great magnitude and considerably beauty, there are thirteen noble fiords with good roads running round them, beautiful for cycling. They are splendid for yachting, the inhabitants around which are, as a rule, simple and industrious peasantry with about as much intelligence and Mother Wit as is to be found in more favored countries.

So much for a generalisation of the country through which we are about to take a spin with our cycles and camp, and, in order to make it clear, that the purpose we had in this expedition, we may explain that the Shannon in its upper reaches has two heads, two systems of feeders and two systems of lakes. Lough Allen in the extreme north is fed from the same hills that feed the ever beautiful Enniskillen waters known as Lough Erne in the east. What is known as the

Boyle Water lies due south from Sligo and west of Lough Allen. Here are two lakes—Lough Gara and Lough Key. The "Erne" was on Lough Cullin, but was required on Lough Key in order that we might cruise down the Boyle Water into the Shannon and through the wonderful Lough Ree to Athlone. We desired to get the boat across a distance of about forty miles, but which by rail to Athlone, was not less than eighty. How this was accomplished and how we got over our little ride, of some fifty miles thenceward, shall be shown in this chapter.

Meanwhile we must dispose of Little Billie and Beauchamp. After ten days sojourn on Lough Conn with a cycling trip through the Northern borderland, Connemara and Southern Mayo thrown in, they returned their Bantams to Bondoran *en route* to England and thence through the counties of Warwick, Gloucester and Monmouth. So on the Thursday the cruising canoe "Petrel" was duly packed, put on to its little bicycle, re-packed in straw and deposited in the goods-shed at Foxford. In due course she arrived in the good county of Buckinghamshire with her stem-post damaged and her stern beaten in.

Instead of staying at Lough Conn with half our number gone, Frank and the Skipper determined to have a cruise down the upper waters of the Shannon once more. Many and oft were the occasions that they had sailed up and sailed in storms and calms, in rain and shine on those very waters.

Near Foxford Station, there is one, Thornton, with a horse and a cart who occasionally takes a boat to this famous fishing-lake of Conn and occasionally brings them back. It was he who had taken our boat to the shore and agreed to fetch it back. He agreed to be at a certain time at a beautiful, little sandy bay, opposite the gates of the Earl of Aran's demesne. It was supposed to be nine miles to Swinford, the road lying right over a hill pass and then along the inner Swinford Plain to the station on that great railway system of Western Ireland that unites Derry with Killarney. A better railway with a better plant there is not in the Kingdom, and if its services are somewhat poor in point of quantity it is good in quality.

To strike and pack a set camp, to put everything in such trim that it may be thumped, battered, pushed, shoved, lifted and dropped in and out of a land transported boat, trains, etc., for a transit of some sixty miles was no light task as everything had to be done thoroughly, and put, of course, in the smallest compass. To dismantle a somewhat complicated but "clever" sailing-boat and prepare it likewise for the same and lighten it of every superfluous article was also a difficult, tedious and time-absorbing job. To be on the spot at 12.30 as arranged took, all told, a solid five-and a-half hours steady work; but it was done! A strong breeze was blowing across the lake in our teeth, and what more natural with the huge

packages piled about the well, than that we should hoist sail and take a long board round the island and then down into the little bay. The keel grazed gently on the fine sand for the last time. Looking across the now familiar waters we saw the sunshine cause ten million little waves to sparkle. It lighted up the distant hills and made old Nephin's rocky head gleam as though its swarthy sides were bleached. What wonder that some sad thoughts of a memorable fortnight passed rapidly through the mind as we lifted everything out of the boat and then waited for the cart, horse and men that did *not* come! It was no good using swear-words. We strode about thinking angry things and ejaculating some hasty and emphatic phrases, say, for the space of an hour, whilst Frank philosophically and contentedly sitting on a rock smoked cigarittes. A few interested young fishermen came upon the scene and watched us in a sympathy too deep for their faces to show it. An hour-and-a-quarter passed—it was 1.45. How was that train to be caught ten miles away, that went sometime before 4 p.m. and the boat laden thereon? At the end of an hour a man came along with a thin bag of straw on one arm and a rope slung over the other. He threw the bag and the rope down without saying anything for a few minutes, and then he uttered slowly, "It is time the cart was here." Then we learnt for the first time he had come to assist in loading the boat. It was only a few minutes

to two o'clock when we found that this poor horse had been at a high pace driven since eleven o'clock with a load of glass, marble or some other things eighteen miles, and had now to do another seventeen, dragging a boat and gear weighing about half-a-ton. When the cart arrived there was no appliance, fittings or scaffolding on which the "Erne" could be placed. With the aid of utilising our own packages it was tied in position and started away at last. Hardly three hundred yards, as we walked slowly and mournfully behind, knowing fully well what this delay would cost us, Frank said, "the horse has cast a shoe." Sure enough, it was hanging on by one nail.

"Ah!" said Thornton, "it will be all right in ten minutes." But we knew it would take an hour. The train would be gone. Anger, hunger, delay, disappointment and all the rest of it might just as well be borne as grumbled against. It was seven hours since we had tasted anything, and it was grievous to know that it would be 31 hours before we could again launch the boat on the waters of the Boyle, instead of launching it as we had planned and as we *might* that very night. Then there was a great sailing regatta on Lough Ree in which possibly one or both of us might take part. How were we going to reach it in time?

We saw the cart go slowly up the hill and across the bog on its way to Foxford, whilst we turned down the rugged cartway to the queer little spot

of four houses, near the scene of our former camp. Here we partook of lunch very much *al fresco.* It was in bright sunshine: how pleasant things looked. The air was warm and dry, almost hot. There were some potatoes thoughtfully provided for us, and with their aid and a few little etceteras we lunched and then packed our cycle bags and waterproofs on a Sparkbrook Grand and a Triumph, paid all our dues at every house, shook hands with those who had been considerate, thoughtful and even friendly to us in the highest degree. We accepted their good wishes, and their God's blessings, and gave them credit for sincerity when they said they would like to see us again, "as, sure enough, we were the nicest gintlemen they had ever seen in those parts before."

There is no getting away from the kindness of the Irish nature or from their tendency to say, whether true or not, the thing that they believe will please. It is vitality with them. If when you ask the distance they believe you want it to be two they would say two, though it were five. If they believed it was your ambition to be rather tall though you were a mere lilliputian they would say you were a nice height, and if they thought you desired the day when it was raining in the morning to be fine later, to assure you it would be. If you were fishing for pike and knew you preferred trout, they would assure you it was a fine day for trout, for "sure had they not been leaping in the lake?"

Then on reaching the boggy road, paid our respects to the station-master and hurried into the Foxford Post Office to post letters, send telegrams, to thank the good-looking postmistress for her courtesy. We had had several times to ring her down at two minutes past eight, and this was the least we could do, for she did not like it as she shut up punctually. On the point of leaving she said, "but here is a parcel for you, sir," and sure enough there was a basket of fruit sent us for which we had written a "begging-letter" days before, and yet we were out of jail! The land of Foxford was not prolific in fruit, the blackberries were not ripe, of plums there were none, of apples we did not see the color; the shops in the village could sell us none, nor had they even good tinned fruit of any kind, and in this sense we had been on starvation point for a long time. But thoughtful friends at Athlone had sent us something. The cart and boat were gone. The bicycles were packed with our camping gear, so we could not carry the hamper. The only thing was to put a few specimens in our pockets, hand the rest to the postmistress, attach a label, duly stamp it and send the basket back to the kindest of owners, and then mount our machines and file out of the now familiar village of Foxford on the road past the Roman Catholic Church. As we gently spun along out of the village we heard the roar of the water at the fall and that was all. The road we found very tolerable, and when we had climbed the

first hill only a mile out of Foxford we saw the oscillating boat right ahead having a hot and shaky cruise overland. Ahead were tall ridges of hills some 800 or 900-ft. high. Nobody had said it was a hilly road or a hard road. Gradually for the space of four miles the road winds gently upward and then from the height all eastern Mayo lies spread out to view, and beyond it the plain of Roscommon, for it is a county in which hills are few and far between and never very high. Overtaking Thornton we said: "How about the train that goes in an hour from now?"

"I'll catch it sorr."

"Ah, no you won't," I said. "We have to make Sligo to-night if possible on the machines, so you please put the boat on the truck, see it is carefully packed, and we will leave a properly addressed label with the station master."

Thornton:—"Whoa! Boko!" He had stopped the horse. Taking a firm clutch hold of the bridle he said, "In that case I think you had better pay me now, for maybe I shall not see you or the boat again."

"Oh!" thought the Skipper, "that is how the wind sits is it?" "What right have you to hint," I continued, "that it is our intention to cheat you?" "Have I not," said I, "kept every engagement with you honorably, and is it not you who have let me in both for delay, expense and vexation. You take the boat to the station, and do as I wish, and of course

you will be paid to the contract price." He looked thoughtfully down at his toes for a minute and said, "all right, sorr." And we rode on and on until from a considerable altitude we looked back to see whether the horse and cart and man were on strike, but they were coming slowly on—very slowly. On reaching the top of the pass what a wonderful view it is, remarkably Irish, of course. Huge slabs of limestone big enough to pave the half of a town stood or lay in huge flakes. They had, in the course of nature, split themselves or been forced from the great masses that crown the height, some lying, some tilted and some standing on edge. It looked as though the "giants in those days," had packed up their implements and left their masonry exercises in an unfinished and incomplete condition. But the giant who had split the rock, had made it, and likewise the laws which break it.

On wheeling suddenly round to the left on the very spur of the hill on its highest point we saw that the road turned in a northerly direction down a deep hill. It was quite evident that the plain of Swinford was at a far higher level than the valley on the other side which we had just left. The Moy, as we crossed its eastern extension was rushing in turbulent majesty down its rocky bed—a great volume owing to the recent rains swelling it to the brim. An occasional angler with his fly rod was bending his steps to the stream. If a "spate" would help fishing they were

likely to have abundant sport. Then at length we caught a glimpse of Swinford. Green trees and high slopes and spires rising above the trees—white and apparently fine buildings on this knoll—a prosperous and picturesque-looking town. All this from a distance. Inside it was about as Irish as every other town. Indeed every market centre in Ireland is like every other. The formation and continuation of its streets, the style and size of its buildings, the character of its shops and stores, the church and the market hall and place, all are of a piece, all comparatively modern, all plain square buildings three stories high and white. Then the town breaks off in its adjacent and suddenly ceasing suburbs into white one-storey cabins with thatched roofs and dirty, ill-paved footways in front of them.

When we reached Swinford Station, having had a most pleasant ride, the question was, how could the boat be got to Boyle that night? It could not, as the last train had been gone for half-an-hour. Could it not go forward by luggage, by the early morning train? If it did it would have to stop at the junction. Could it not be got forward for the night mail to catch it at Sligo or the early morning mail from Sligo? It could only reach Boyle at 6.30 the next night! Here we were at 5.30 to-day. Having thrashed it all out, got a ticket and paid the boat's fare, we sallied forth to find a cup of tea to help us on our way as we hoped to put on twenty miles whatever

time we should be able to get along from Swinford. So instead of the boat being laden soon after three o'clock it was six o'clock (and after) when the final touches were given to it and the well covered in and securely tied outside. There was a matter of some £40 worth of stuff inside it—cameras, guns, clothes and what not.

At a very clean and tidy restaurant in the High Street, uninviting from the outside, but withal serviceable inside, we went for a cup of tea, some boiled eggs and some splendid sweet bread and butter. The two cycles stood outside. A crowd of the younger portion of the inhabitants crowded round the door and then insinuated themselves inside until it was hardly possible for a customer to come in. A heavy shower came down and made the roads rather disagreeable. That shower lasted till 7.20 when we started on our long ride to Sligo if we could reach it. Asking how much, the woman said, one shilling. It was certainly the cheapest tea we ever had, for everything was excellent. What a grand spin we had. How we rattled on. Talk about the camp being an impediment we never felt it at either hill or dale and never left our machines until we had covered eighteen and a-half miles over which we had been one hour and twenty minutes. The surface of the road was simply splendid: loose patches here and there which had to be avoided. We met great numbers of cattle being brought home

to be milked. A good many vehicles, some few cyclists, and especially a few curate-looking clerics with daintily-dressed ladies. But it was a splendid ride, and when we had reached the eighteenth milestone, (and on this road for the first time perhaps in our experience of Irish roads, there were milestones), we began to consider about camping. A very tidy and charming looking little farmhouse at the junction of three roads suggested the very spot we desired. A majestic thick hedge 20-ft. high stood round two sides of a meadow in front of the house on the other side of the road suggested a snug corner in which to camp. Whilst we were making enquiries it suddenly went dark. Yes, we could camp anywhere we liked.

"Eggs?"

"Yes, any number. What else could they get? Did we want bread? Did we want blankets?"

"No, we wanted nothing but some eggs, and if they would let us have some milk and hot water in the kettle we would be obliged." Whilst all these preparations were going forward we took the bags off the bicycles, which we securely locked in one of the farm buildings, and carried our traps down to the corner of the field, There was a coldish wind now blowing, and though it had been a fine day we expected a cold night. So we pitched our camp. How trim and comfortable the tent was with only two of us in it. How bare of luxuries it seemed compared

"FIVE O'CLOCK TEA."

with our boating camp with its bigger cuisine, our cameras, guns, fishing rods, blankets etc.

Now I have pointed out in this little work the necessity of hiring blankets if the night is likely to be cold. I strongly recommend that blankets should be hired or borrowed for every night camp unless the weather be extremely hot as we sometimes have it in August when the nights are close. They are so comfortable to lie on and lie under, and if not used would help to add to the comfort generally, and whilst most cottagers and small farmers will accept sixpence or so for their loan they would afford an amount of snugness that is truly delightful and well worth the outlay were it twice as much.

They were very nice people at the house and we are sorry we did not get their names: they deserve to be mentioned. A tall man of sixty-five as straight as an arrow and in form a perfect athlete without a superfluous ounce of flesh, and somewhat handsome in face. He was a man of great intelligence and wide reading. He had a brother, one of the chief constables in a suburb of London, and other brothers and sisters scattered about the world, in America, Africa, etc. Their one desire was to know what they could do for the strangers. But we made a mistake in saying we needed nothing and in refusing the blankets, for though we had a very comfortable chat and smoke before we turned in after tea it was cold towards the small hours.

We did not know at the time, but behind the great hedge was a footpath that led down to a nest of cottages. In their rich brogue we heard remarks delivered. Several pairs walked down behind this hedge about 10 p.m. and, seeing the light of our camp, were mystified. We had some rare laughs at their expressive remarks. The first man said: "What the de'il is this?" And the reply was from the other fellow, "Oh, that is a large beehive of a new pattern och!" A quarter of an hour later more couples went by and they asked the same question, but this time the solution took a far more formidable form for the reply was that it was a new-fangled whisket making machine. Our night would have been more comfortable had we accepted the proferred blankets. We resorted to a dodge that we may recommend to other disciples should they be so placed, viz., to button up the mackintosh capes and thrust our feet inside them. By this means we did fairly well and managed to keep our "trilbys" warm.

It was 6.30 when the Skipper turned out. The morning was fairly bright but a bitterly cold south-east wind was blowing. He went to the little brook at the corner of the paddock and had a wash. How bitterly cold it was. Then an excellent breakfast of eggs, bread and butter, cake, etc. before we started on our ride to Sligo. It was a fine morning, an undulating road with a splendid surface, and only a little wind, which was behind us. We passed

several parks and tributaries of the river Moy, until at length we climbed the highest altitude of the land level and fell in with another pretty system of waters of which the Arranmore is the central stream. It enters Sligo Bay some distance below the town. There is some remarkable scenery on the Overnboy river, notably at Collooney, where it comes tumbling over rocks at a great height, feeding some mighty mills, some making woollen goods and some flour. Its vastest fall is at Ballasadare, where it has a sheer drop of possibly thirty or forty feet, and here the tide has its limits and the river practically ends.

On approaching Sligo, finding the road had grown a little lumpy we followed the bad example of the local inhabitants who cycle on the footpath. There is always a gutter in one or both sides and the difficulty is in meeting ladies and children how to negotiate the passage. It generally ends in the perambulator and the lady getting off the path and leaving the cycles in possession. It is a cruel custom, but having seen a tricycle driven on the pavement in the town of Coleraine we did not feel it to be such an awful sin to cycle along a footpath on a country road, "just this once, you know." It is a stupid and unfair custom, and the sooner it is stopped in Ireland the better. "Do not do as I do, but do as I say." It is a beautiful and simple moral, but it is not sound in theory or in practice. Again take

the matter of lamps. The Irish cyclist hates lamps, and it was only by a freak, somebody has told us, that the Legislature in London did not pass the regulation enforcing the use of lights in Ireland last year. It will be a fine thing for the lamp trade when the regulation does come in as it ought to become a National law. If there is any place in the world where cycling is dependent upon a good light after dark it is in Ireland, for whether the road be good bad or indifferent they are always liable to come on loose stones, easily avoided in daylight, and a good, surface is always to be found round them. But nevertheless in these days of pneumatic tyres it is wisdom to avoid sharp, hard limestone points of which the Irish stones have a great number. So use a lamp.

On top of a ridge some four miles from Sligo the most striking panorama of hill, plain and water that I have ever yet seen opened to view. Away back to the right hand were the Curlew Hills broken in ridges and peaks. Darkly ahead of us was that other range Kings' Mountains, under 2000-ft. in height, which divide Sligo Bay from Bundoran Bay, and beyond which range the great county of Donegal lies. Their broken ridges, their great height, their varied color under the passing clouds and shadows here and there at play, the beautiful and rich-looking fields and pleasant farms, here and there groups of trees surrounding great houses, and, away in the distance,

the spires, minaret-like of Sligo itself. All these made a magnificent and beautiful picture of which I had often heard and will ever remember for having seen it under conditions so favorable.

Sligo Abbey is worth seeing, so is charming Lough Gill. The whole region is full of memorials of a far past, such as crannoges, mounds, cairns, tumili, forts and raths. It is a busy and faily clean city, with excellent hotels and shops.

IRISH PRONUNCIATION:

QUITE two-thirds of Irish names of places are mispronounced in England. There appears to be no rule in Ireland for accentuating emphasis; for shortening or extending a syllable. E is generally long at the end of a word, and A is always "AH!"

Such names as most frequently occur in this book I append as spelt and as locally pronounced. It is always respectful and generally correct to accept local pronunciation, as Cirencester—"Sissiter"; Shewsbury—"Sozberry"; Youghal—"Yalle," &c.

IRISH PRONUNCIATION OF PROPER NAMES:

Spelt:	*Pronounced:*
Ballina	Bally-nagh
Galway	Goll-way
Lough	Lock
Nephin (Mountain)	Nafin
Mayo	May-o
Croagh Patrick (Mountain) ...	Crow Patrick
Leenane...	Lee-nann
Maame	Mawme.

CHAPTER XI.

PRACTICAL HINTS AND HOW TO APPLY THEM.

IN the closing chapters of this book will be found the drawings, dimensions, weights and even the names of materials, makers, etc., of all the parts of the portable sleeping-gear, cooking utensils, etc., carried on this tour in the West of Ireland. Perhaps, however, it would be as well in this place to describe a pitched camp and to give some suggestions as to the site to be looked for. Many people, not even excluding boating men, have about as much idea in judging of the points of a camp site as they have of commanding a fleet. Take the following:—On a cold exposed mound on the banks of the Thames one blustering stormy Easter we saw a tent pitched. Two half-starved men had to spend their time in keeping that tent from being blown away, and when inside it flapped to such an extent that rest was impossible night or day. But one hundred yards higher up and three hundred yards lower down were nice, snug

camping-sites with sheltering hedges in the one case and a sheltering wood or scrub in the other ; either pitch would have made an admirable camping-ground. In fact, I was encamped on one of them. On the banks of the Shannon, one dreary, stormy, August morning, we saw up on the high shore of the river-bank a very rude—not to say crude—camp fixed up. The two young men were the pictures of misery ; four hundred yards below, shelter might have been had in almost every direction and even better ground to camp on.

Again, on a little island just large enough to perch a tent upon, four men camped through one of the most stormy three days it was possible to weather or likely to expect—towards Midsummer. Round a bend in the river below was a beautiful, green, strand with perfect protection from all winds except one, and free camping.

It could not have been entire ignorance, nor, perhaps, altogether carelessness, but it was either want of judgment or want of the necessary knowledge to select the proper site. Enjoyment depends on comfort, and comfort depends on conditions, the conditions being so simple they need not be enumerated, beyond asking what can be more uncomfortable than a tent that flaps all night? Or again, having a steep slope behind the camp so that when the wet comes you can HEAR the water run down underneath the ground-sheet all night. Fifty other ills that might be

mentioned have been known to make camping un comfortable to scores of men, but we will leave to common sense—which is only another word for sound judgment—and to experience which gives mastery, the selection of a proper camping site. We will give in passing, however, some suggestions which strike us as essential in looking round for a cycle camp site. The river, the canal and the lake generally lead to or fix the camping quarters to an extent. The following then are the things to aim for to make a Cycling Camp comfortable, possible and enjoyable. Sink these conditions, disregard their consequences and the thing will fail as completely as it will succeed if proper attention is given to what is advocated :—

NOTE THE WIND.

(1.) Secure complete protection from the prevailing wind. If the wind be strong be very particular about this. If the wind be weak, be also particular in a lesser degree in view of this fact also, that when protected it is much more comfortable because warmer in the night

GROUND SURFACE.

(2.) Have a good surface with a gentle slope to the feet. Meadows that are flooded in Winter are always uneven. Grass fields are good. The surface near woods or hedges are usually best. A slope helps, by the way, one's sleep

and a tent is found by long experience to be much pleasanter if you get six inches slope downwards from head to foot.

NEAR A HOUSE.

(3.) The cycle camp must be near a house. In case the question is asked "Why?" I would say because milk must be purchased at night for tea, and a sufficient extra quantity to do for breakfeast the next morning also: the reason, of course, for this being we shall be astir and making our porridge or coffee considerably before the milkmaid is astir. Another reason is for the purchase of eggs which are always welcome to the weary wayfarer. What will go down better at night after an afternoon's exertion than some new laid eggs aud sweet bread and butter with tea?

COUPLE OF BLANKETS.

(4.) Heavy blankets and sleeping bags cannot be carried on the cycle and no camp to be taken about on a machine can be, or need be, hampered by excessive weight of gear of this nature, but if the weather be broken and liable to be chilly, as it sometimes is even in July or August, the advantage of being near a house is that a couple of blankets can be borrowed, or to put it more correctly hired

for the occasion. That is our prevailing custom.

A RIVER, CANAL OR POND.

(5.) Camp near a river, canal or pond, providing that all the foregoing conditions are there likewise. Why? For the best of all reasons that a swim is desirable where possible, that fresh, clean water is a luxury. There are other reasons which need not be mentioned. It is always a relief, for instance to *look* at the water and to be near it. Lastly, there is more likelihood of protection and a nice surface in such proxmity.

A PRIVATE PLACE.

(6.) Get, if possible, a private place; never be quite near to the road unless it be quite inevitable. Never camp in the full view of a house or high way if avoidable. If possible get a spot which is not frequented, and, above all things, away from a footpath. The why and the wherefore will be apparent to everyone. Whilst dwelling on this matter it might be pointed out that a turn down a bye-lane or even lifting the machine over a style or a gate may be found occasionally to pay.

I now propose to describe the pitching of our first camp somewhat in detail, because a story with a

LITTLE BILLIE.

practical end in view once told need not be repeated, but only alluded to.

"Beauchamp," sang out the Skipper, "unbuckle that little bag off your Bantam."

"I want your mackintoshes off your Bantam, Little Billie, too please."

Frank: "Shall I take my angle bag out?"

"Yes, lift it clean away."

All this was said while the Skipper unbuckled the bag which contained the main part of the camp from the handles of his machine. The contents of practically three bags were duly placed outside. A couple of armfuls of the finest hay were spread out in the most sheltered spot immediately that is under the wall of the bridge and a tall embankment which had been erected to wall in the river flood. This hay was carefully levelled and on top of it the ground sheet was placed, at first carelessly, in order to show the position in which the tent was to be erected. The tent poles were then jointed together, the six sections being made into two poles. The closed end of the tent was put up to the windward: a clove hitch, which every boating man can explain (being a loop under and a loop *over*) is then formed and the top of the after end of the pole run through it. Whilst one holds this another takes the front end guy and sticks it through a similar hitch and holds it up, whilst the man from behind, having forced in his peg, comes to carry out the fore line and peg it in also. The two end corner pegs are then put into the earth, the forward ones ditto, and the tent poles now

stand bolt upright. Then the two *bottom hooks* are fastened—made to hook the reverse way so as to prevent them getting unhooked. Then these two front corner pegs are put in their position. Inside and outside the tent, twenty inches from the ground, are two strings. The front end of the tent is looped together and tied up by these precisely as curtains on a window are held back by a cord or chain. This permits free ingress and egress for the business that has to follow.

I have gone through the motions of this proceeding many hundreds of times. One may get to enjoy it!

DIVIDE THE LABOR.

The ridge poles and their guys, pegs, and corner pins are all provided for. Two pegs go in the after end of the tent and one or two go in the side. These side pegs must be put outwards as far as possible unless a ridge pole is used—impossible with a cycle tent. Whilst one man is putting in these outside, the other is possibly on his knees inside, an exercise it is to be hoped he often indulges in. But what is he doing? He is smoothing out the ground sheet, pegging it out at its four corners to its utmost limit, and putting underneath it the draught curtain. This operation done there is the

THIN WOOLLEN BLANKET

which has to go on top of the ground sheet. Why is it used? To prevent a variety of consequences

which may be either possible or probably certain were it not for the provision now about to be described. The ground is cold. Hay is not always available: wherever it is use it. A slight woollen garment or rug or other thing to act as a carpet makes it much warmer to sleep on, pleasanter to touch, and lastly, and in the main, saves the ground sheet from being soiled, torn or damaged. The ground sheet I have said, is pegged down at the corners. There is a loop or eye at the top of the peg into which a string is inserted that keeps the ground upper sheet "taut" from every point. Anything that is loose with walking, sitting, lying on, etc., will be ruffled up unless it is thus provided against. Now everything is ready and the whole gear placed inside the tent for protection to be out of the wet and for our use. Whoever is cook or chief of the interior of the tent arrangements sits in a certain corner and every man knows that all that belongs to his part of the task must be placed adjacent to his position. There is the cuisine. There are the little tins containing butter, jam, sugar, fruit, salt, pepper, and the small parcel containing the bacon, chops, etc. These things make a formidable list thus written out, but in reality everything is on a condensed scale. The cuisine is 6-in. by $3\frac{1}{2}$-in. and weighs $2\frac{1}{2}$-lbs., and of course, having tried many wonderful and weighty inventions from many quarters of the globe, I have settled down for the past thirteen years to Dove's

wonderful little apparatus, the "Mersey cuisine," and with this apparatus of a larger size I have succeeded in boiling coffee, making porridge, frying bacon and frying potatoes in the space of twenty-five minutes and that for four men. The apparatus is only a little larger than the one above enumerated which is intended for two men merely.

The machines were practically all placed out of sight under some ferns and thorn bushes, and strongly lashed together with a stout line, not that we were afraid of them running away, but in case in the "still watches of the night" when we innocent wights were asleep, some misguided hand might wish to lift one he would at least have created such a disturbance as would have awakened one of the four. Over them, where the wet was liable to fall most, a cycling cape was tied to keep off as much rain as it was possible by such means to do.

But I have anticipated. While all this was going forward in the camp one of our number had journeyed to the cabin at the top of the paddock. It stood broadside to the road. It appeared to be of one compartment. The living compartment for the humanity was the living compartment also for the cattle. There were the ropes by which they were tied and the trench behind them. A peat fire was burning on a low hearth at the other end, and the woman of the house of about forty-five sat crooning on a stool by the side of the fire in a state of lethargic

unintelligent coldness. The vivacity, the desire to please, the readiness to put herself about for the intruder—so common a thing, almost, indeed, universal in Ireland—was here almost completely wanting.

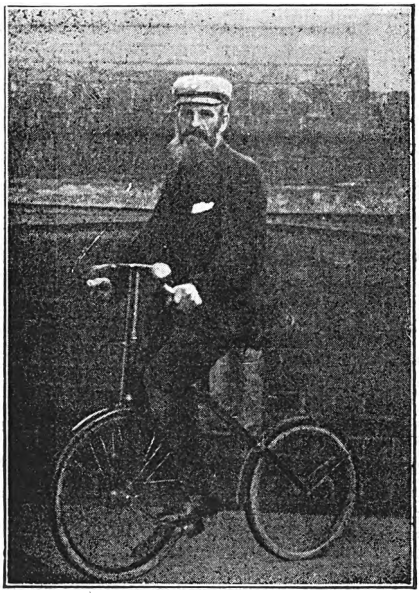
Spring water? Yes, but it was all she had, and it was a long way to the well.

"I will fetch some more," said the boy as he half filled the kettle which hung above the peat fire. A few additional turfs were placed round, and the crude tackle lowered so that the water might boil more quickly. Into the kettle we put eight *washed* eggs. While they boiled, the lad fetched the pail of spring water from the well, hidden somewhere amongst the heather across the moor. I tried to talk to the old woman. All I got for my pains was that she was poor—everybody was poor; the times were bad, the summer had been wet; they thought they had saved the hay, and that their market town was Westport. That is all.

As we sat thus chatting and, of course, watching the kettle, which in this case really did boil, as watched kettles are said never to do, the lid began to dance slightly with a little musical trill, so the skipper lifted it off. But there was a difficulty in getting the eggs out, but out they were got, if somewhat broken. They were carried down on a plate, the lad handled the kettle. The tea was made on the grass by the camp door—three were two brewings.

Each man manfully battled with his two eggs and his slices of bread and butter, nay, so much bread and butter did the four consume that it was a bad look-out for breakfast. Tea over, one said, "but we will get bread at a cottage half-a-mile down the road." So after tea a pilgrimage was made. No, they had no bread. They were baking some at 9.30 that night for supper and breakfast, but they had got just one little bit they could spare about the size of a man's hand. Our host's cabin was then tried. No they had no bread their either. So things looked rather queer for the morning. Whilst we were getting tea we became aware of a lamentable fact that would militate vastly against their enjoyment and possibly our slumber throughout the night. It was the incessant flapping of the tent. The bridge was little protection, nay it caused a back-current of air which drove round perpetually and struck the tent every few minutes. A little group of trees that grew in the potatoe patch at the back of the cabin we could hear roar and rustle as the wind drove past when the darkness came on. It was certainly an awful night. After the tea things were cleared away we made up with any spare things we had—a few little pillows—stretched our limbs, reclined our heads, put on our weeds—those of us who smoked—and told little yarns and had many a jolly laugh, and ultimately finished by lapsing into a serious discussion. It had as its key-note the abuses of modern trade unionism, it foreshadowed the

engineers' strike; we proposed methods for the amelioration of Ireland, the relief of its poverty, the development of its agriculture, the enrichment of the country at large and a better footing for its



BEAUCHAMP.

political institutions and for the training of its peoples, to wit, in higher, cleaner and more orderly method of business and domestic and political economy. Not bad for four men who had not mastered any of these

things. It is always easy and often quite safe to talk about things you don't understand. Not that we were greatly singular in this respect. Thousands of people seem to have learnt the art of talking about things fluently which they do not in the least understand. I have known this in omnibuses and even in a first-class railway carriage. On at least some occasions this has been manifest in pulpits, and it is questionable if the House of Commons is exempt even—on Irish affairs.

It must have been eleven at night when we heard the deliberate tread of a policeman along the road.* They stopped to overhaul our party and saw a strange sight, a tiny encampment with a light shewing itself through a thin canvas covering that hid from view four men who were ready for the slumber that they hoped awaited them. But before that slumber came there was something to be done. The tent must go through the process of being "roped in" to prevent it flapping. We would have moved but there was no better protection near. To have re-pitched the tent would have been a small matter, but without a friendly hedge it would have been no good, so we had to face it. The process of tying the tent is somewhat serious and it needs a line of considerable length besides substantial pegs and stones. I carry in the

* In Ireland *one* policeman is never observable. He is always a pair. "Where Gabriel goeth his angel followeth."

"Erne" one of fifty yards, and on bad nights "reeve" it well round and tie it to stones.

It was not that there was any danger of the tent being blown over—far from that—but it was the noise. No new tent sits so well as one that has been pitched pretty often, strange to say, and let the wind blow ever so hard if a good, close, lofty hedge is near, it is perfectly still and that means sleep at night. But as to this process of tying. First get the line, which all should carry for the purpose. Hitch it round a heavy stone. From the stone give it a turn round the front of the tent pole, carry it over the side round to the back and tighten it so that the tent has a little strain beneath it. Give it a turn round the after pole if there is an opening. If not carry it down to a big stone in the rear of the tent. Then round the otherside to the front and so forth. In the course of time with the strain it will get slack. Put the stones out a little further and place another on top if necessary. This will prevent the evils I have complained of as they prevented it this night to a considerable extent, but there was a difficulty in the way. We had not the line on this occasion which we should have in future, and which, by the way, we had in the boat at Lough Conn. Little Billie carried string in all his pockets. Everyone had a bit of string, so we fished up the entire rope-store of the expedition and tied piece to piece until we effected our

end. Then we turned in, slept crosswise of the tent which was 6-ft. and rather more when pegged out. If we were a little close we had room, and it cannot be said that on the first night for reasons above stated, the howling of the wind, etc., that we slept over well, but we all slept fairly and most snored a bit. By

HOW THIS BOOK WASN'T WRITTEN.

common consent we woke at 6.30 a.m. to find, alas! that it was raining, as it had been for hours past.

Some of the few hints and narrative facts in this chapter appear in various others. Only, however, such things are re-named as seemed to call for their connection with the formal plot of the chapter.

CHAPTER XII.

FOOD AND COOKING.

IF the simile may not be taken as too vulgar, one might say that the essential, food, is to the human body in active operation, what water and coal are to the boiler of the locomotive. Protracted exertion in the fresh air which does not increase the appetite and a demand for food, is exercise that is not good to the individual and cannot have a healthy effect on any person. It may be amusing to record that when the writer consulted a proprietor of an hotel in the North, in 1879, as to his taking the appointment to the CYCLISTS' TOURING CLUB, he declined, saying, that "he had had them fellows in his house before." He even complained that three of "the young fellows" had polished off a leg of mutton at one meal, or made it so dejected looking that he dare not put it in the "commercial-room" again, for there was only a bone to pick. He described a party of thirteen cyclists who had "let him in" for a shilling tea, and, he calculated, besides finding house room, he was a loser—money out of pocket. He declined the appointment.

May one suggest, without arrogance or assumption, that many cyclists make slight mistakes as to food and drink—drink especially! Things that are evil to take on the road hardly need be named, because real tourists have from experience found out themselves the results of their little errors. A few may be enumerated and classified under the heading of what one may term

PROVED ERRORS.

New milk, drunk in considerable quantities when one is hot, is to a sedentary man a snare—the after consequences are never good, and often, indeed, very ill. A too heavy meal of meat in the middle of the day in the hot summer weather is also a nuisance. Take, again, the drinking too frequently, and, above all things, the imbibing of spirits and water, or water and spirits, during exercise of this nature. Again, the too free use of the beer-jug is not very refined nor is it profitable for riding. These are only suggestions. It is a subject which may be treated exhaustively and and scientifically, but I have neither the space to exhaust it nor the knowledge to treat it scientifically. But I have the knowledge of treating it practically in, at least, so far as it touches hard riding on the road.

SIMPLE CAMP COOKERY.

The hints already given are only hints. I should like to put in concise form a few, simple rules to be

observed garding cooking. Complications and fads I shall endeavour to avoid to the utmost. In dealing with small yachts, sailing-boats and cruising-canoes one has a vaster latitude both for variety of stores and treatment of them than can be possible in dealing with camp-cookery for the cycle, and it is that which we have specially in view just now.

I will take an imaginary day—nay, not imaginary but will describe an actual one which, perhaps, will serve our purpose best. It is but one of hundreds of such days that I have gone through. Though the menu may not be magnificent it is, at least, utilitarian, and lastly inexpensive.

SIMPLE AND WHOLESOME.

The first thought that enters the mind of the camper when he gets up, as he turns outside the tent and looks round its corner, is, "what shall be done with these tins and utensils?" These were put out in the darkness last night to await the resurrection of the morning sunshine and the re-instatement of a cleanly surface:—(1) They must be well-cleaned; (2) somebody has to clean them; (3) it has to be done quickly; (4) it is no good looking at them; (5) we want them for breakfast soon. There are two ways of arranging all this. My own method is particularly convenient, at least, to myself as senior; whilst with soap and towel I hie away to the river, lake, canal or pool for a swim if possible, or a good wetting—whatever

Nature affords us, the other man if I can only get him up in time, hies away with a suspicious looking cloth in one hand and a handful of shining dishes in the other. He swills, washes and scrubs as he whistles or hums a tune (if he slept well), during the time my ebullitions are in progress. By the time the bather is dressed the pans are dry.

Either near the tent-door outside, or for convenience sake inside, the cuisine is started.* I generally get a clean plate or a bit of wood, or two or three large leaves of the dock, rhubarb, cabbage, or any other thing and put these down on the ground blanket, and on this stand the cuisine. This is in case the slightest grease or other matter should escape to do damage, or in case the heat gets a little excessive. This is very crude, but I will dignify it by the name of the "table," asking permission to use this fiction. In using the "Mersey" do not overcharge it with spirit. Its action if overcharged is unpleasant, extravagant and slow. The heat is so great and the gas given out is so excessive that the whole thing becomes hot and the upper combustion becomes so imperfect, that the whole of the interior of the network develops into a blue heat and draws up the spirit from below. Without having done its work of cooking, it chokes, in fact, goes out. If under-

* A bit of thin millboard eight inches by six inches may be carried to place cuisine on inside tent.

charged no harm is done; should it go out it can easily be re-charged. But, by the way, in using it the flame must not be allowed to die down by all the spirit being exhausted or you will spoil the wick. A well-regulated wick will go on for a month if allowed merely to burn spirit instead of itself, for in this particular cuisine there is an inner wick and an outer wick. The one gives heat that creates the gas generated at the top of the inner tube, and it is the gas escaping from the small holes that gives the greatest heat and force.

In the course of ten minutes the water is boiled. If for two men, put in two tea-spoonfuls of coffee or thereabouts. There is no additional pleasure in rank or excessively strong coffee, and there is little pleasure in drinking coffee made from tinned concoctions that one buys in various outlandish places all over the United Kingdom, in Ireland especially. If the pure thing cannot be procured at hand, I have before now, many times in fact, sent both to England and Dublin to get it.

COFFEE SHOULD BE BOILED.

Directly the two tea-spoonfuls are put in the boiling-water it should be cleared. This is a pure conventional term for "mixing." It will soon be found that all the flotation, or nearly all, disappears, and when the coffee has been boiled for the space of a minute, lift it off —add milk and sugar and it is ready for use.

While the water was boiling, or getting ready to boil, to be strictly accurate, the porridge-pot was got ready. This vessel has been described. It need not be more than two-and-a-half inches in depth and should have a side-slot in which the same handle that fits the lid of the main vessel can also be inserted. It must slide on outside the canteen itself to save space. It may also be used concurrently on, say, a wood-fire outside to stew fish or boil vegetables, etc.

MAKING PORRIDGE.

Put in, say, a tea-cupful of oatmeal and a tea-cupful of water. Mix this up into a thick paste. They *must* be mixed. Then add a tea-cupful of milk or a little more water if necessary until it becomes quite thin. Put it over the flame, which being very fierce necessitates the porridge being perpetually stirred. Not twenty seconds must it be left without stirring. Presently it begins to bubble; stir faster. The bubbles increase, keep stirring faster still. If you have not already done so, add a good pinch of salt. Now it begins to thicken and soon becomes perfectly thick. It is cooked; take it off. Let the other man be eating his portion while you proceed with cooking the next dish, which is, of course, bacon, the *piece de resistance* of the first meal of the day. The cuisine in the cycle camp is small. So put the bacon two slices thick, for you cannot *spread* it all. Directly it has been on a moment it must be shuffled or "winnowed"

about, as it were, or else it sticks *i.e.* burns. When the metal has become fairly greasy with the exuding fat it will take no harm and go on apace. Take one of the plates and invert it on top of the bacon ; it keeps in the heat and helps both slices to cook more rapidly. Now remove the lid and turn the lower slices which have contracted and will permit you to get another slice on the surface they having shrunk a bit. When two slices are cooked put them on a warm plate and pass them to the next man who having done his porridge is ready for the next course, and looking daggers till he gets it ! While the last two slices are finishing take two eggs—knock them round in the centre with a fork or knife, and then by opening one side drop in cleanly the egg and be as quick as lightning. Put a knife underneath it so that the fat may run *beneath* the egg or else it will stick and burn on the dish. Having once freed it it will not stick. Serve the next egg the same. When the first egg is done ask your chum for his plate and pass it to him with some of the liquor, if he prefers it, and with as much politeness as if you were at the *Grosvenor.* Do not burn the eggs ; avoid breaking the yoke ; ladle them out with the large spoon ; put a plate over the bacon and egg while you yourself eat your

PORRIDGE AND MILK.

The most enjoyable way to eat porridge of course is to have a slight sprinkling of sugar "on top." It

then becomes pudding, a Scot would say. Have the milk cold and in a separate jug. Take half a spoonful of porridge in a dessert-spoon and dip it in the milk and absorb the cold milk with the porridge at the same time. Those people who say they do not like porridge and cannot eat it, never consumed it in that way—the grand old Scotch method, which alone, in my opinion, makes porridge palatable, is a splendid foundation for a good, British breakfast.

Now a word about another old-fashioned but useful course for the camp breakfast table—fried potatoes. It takes a bit of thought and scheming to be regular with the supply in England. In Ireland it is so simple to always have a few laid by and ready when the hour is come.

It is best to see to this over night. Every cottage can furnish you with a few in their jackets, ready cooked, as they must be. These are peeled and cut up in small pieces and fried when the eggs and bacon are done. They require a good amount of salt and pepper please. There is nothing in the world, to most men, more acceptable than fried potatoes for breakfast, and why Devonshire should have any patent rights in so cheap and tasty a dish I am utterly unable to see. One would gladly welcome the day when it should be added on the breakfast table of England at large as it is in the west country in all well-regulated houses and many hotels of the better sort.

Breakfast is over and I will be bound the two degenerate cyclists will not have too much respect for the morning to stop their putting on a pipe or cigarette; and when is a smoke sweeter than after breakfast? The answer, alas, could be given by ten thousand "at no time."

But, bother it all, there is the washing up to do, and the plates are terribly greasy with bacon fat this morning. In discussing with a lady and gentleman camper who were about to try cycling and camping, I described in cool terms the best kind of apparatus and mode of proceeding with the breakfast preparations and incidentally mentioned the most important faction—*bacon*!

"Bacon," cried the lady, "Oh, horror. There will be no bacon—just eggs. I can rough it as well as any lady and as well as some men, but I *will* draw the line at greasy bacon dishes."

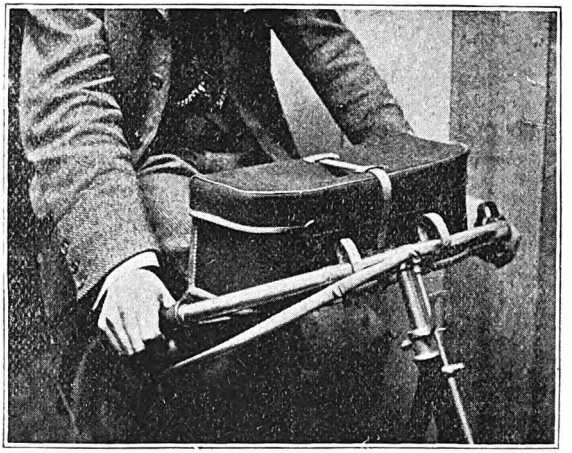
I shall always respect her prejudice. I would forego many pleasures to avoid those bacon dishes. Indeed, I would make a sacrifice of almost anything to save the bother of them, yes, anything except the bacon itself, and at denying myself that—"I draw the line," too.

Abashed, diminished I was. On a cold, frosty morning (and scores of such we have had), one has to go to the ditch to break the ice for water. The handfuls of sand, scrubbing grass and weeds, frost-whitened, it is a hard job truly—but bacon

all the same. A young sailor was once asked, "What is the best light to steer by?" and he passed his examination by saying "Daylight." A young soldier was once asked by the quartermaster of the Commissariat Stores what would be his idea as to the best means of cleaning the dishes when in camp. He said, "sand, sir," and he was not far wrong. For the rest it is a question of time. With hot water the operation would be simple, but then one has to consume spirit to boil water in which to cleanse dishes, while nature has already spread around us on every hand everything that is necessary. Mud, sand, gravel, grass, weeds, ferns and what not. Keep at it and use plenty of the above-mentioned and all the grease will have vanished. Then it is a question of washing and drying and they are ready to be packed. Besides what is the use of camping if you have no roughing?

There must be method in packing and the first point in the method is economy of space: packing everything solid, compact and close, and then stowing things in a systematic way. This is an art that only one in a thousand understands. Shall I claim to be the one? Anyhow, I despair of ever teaching another to pack things in quite as small a compass and in as "fitting" a way as I do myself. Small as is the cycle tent, two of us, for instance, unite our forces to roll it into a little oblong parcel. Then everything should be as snugly folded and as securely

tied to keep the compass small. Every little thing carried on the cycle should be so placed that it does not rattle. There are always things that can go between others and prevent a noise, such as a hard



HOLDING'S HANDLE TOURING BAG.

thing against a soft one, and a duster between tins and so forth.

LUNCH.

This is a meal to which we all look. Breakfasting at 7.15, lunching at one, and piles of exertion in between necessitates that a very fair meal should be provided, its consumption is a matter of course. Dainties are not advisable. A huge quantity of food

is not advisable, because, however hungry a person is a little food will stay it and start the inner machinery. Yet in addition to that, of course, sustenance is demanded. The lunch I have preferred on all occasions is the one to which I have alluded and which I will now describe. We have procured a dish of potatoes from a farmhouse, or cottage perhaps. But if we happen to have a couple of potatoes stowed in the corner of our bag, if they cannot be procured near, we can manage. Two little chops also we purchased this morning at the last town we passed through. We put on the cuisine and duly fry these chops. As the process of frying goes on the potatoes are cut in halves and placed on top with a plate over the whole, so that they speedily become cooked. With the mutton-gravy they are very luscious, not to say delicious.

But as to cooking the chop. The cuisine is so small that all extraneous parts should be cut off and thrown away that are not going to be eaten, such as gristle and superfluous fat. Place the chops close together. As they contract in cooking, more space will be made. The chops should not be turned over often—only once: the same applies to a steak. The sign of effective cooking is this: directly the blood or red gravy begins to be seen the chop is ready to be turned over. When so turned watch it until at length the blood or red gravy begins again to show on the cooked side likewise. By that

time the chop is completely cooked: all toughness has disappeared and the meat is not made dry by overheating. If ever a chop tastes sweet it is a chop so cooked and eaten in the fresh air, as in the soft shadows on a sunny day, sometimes under a tree when it is raining. Next to the chop the potatoes, and, of course, a supply of bread which we laid in at the last shop by purchasing a loaf and dividing it in two and carrying it in the angle bag in the frame. We then come to the fruit which may be plums, pears, peaches, etc. Of apricots we never tire. These we eat with a little bread, and after that a little cheese. Usually we carry two sorts, a little Gorgonzola and Cheshire; half-a-pound at a time or even a quarter.

With a gentle rest lying on our backs, the cycle capes being spread for the purpose and something to raise the head, we lie down to have our pipe. What a pleasant half-hour that is, nor, indeed, is it wasted; for the rest is refreshing. We go on for the rest of the afternoon to inspect some ruins, to stroll round a town, to look at its lions or to make a detour to some riverside; go to see a curious old bridge or climb some prehistoric mound or ancient tower or sit on the banks of a lake or by the sea and watch the little flying flakes of gold or silver on its surface, leaping and chasing each other. We sit a bit sometimes and look at the mountain with the shadows passing round it as the light follows the

shadow. Perhaps an interesting native comes along who gets into conversation and we chat with him and enjoy the droll, quaint talk, to us as fresh as though we were in a foreign land. Ireland is full of human lights and shadows.

NIGHT CAMP.

"What a lovely little corner by that big hedge and under those trees," says the Skipper. "Just the right distance from the house, too. And I'm blowed if there is not a river at the bottom of the field. Good mind to camp there."

"It looks all right," sings out the other one.

"I wonder if it belongs to that nice little farmhouse there?"

"Sure to," says the youngster.

"Good evening. We have a little tent on our bicycle we should like to put up in your field if you will allow us."

"What there, sorr! Why not?"

"Thank you. Have you any eggs?"

"Yes plenty, sorr."

"I should like half-a-dozen."

"Certainly. Anything else?"

"You have a fire I see."

"Yes, but we can make a better fire than that quick."

"Would you mind putting on a quarter of a

kettleful of water to boil? And would you wash four of those eggs and put them in the kettle?"

"What boil the eggs in the water for the tea?"

"Certainly."

"Oh, but that would not be right. I will put them in the saucepan."

"Oh, as you like about that. By the way, I saw as I turned in at the doorstep,"—pretending to have thought of something I had forgotten before—"that you have a cart-house near by with a door—may we put our machines in there till to-morrow morning?"

"Why not, sorr? They will be all safe there, sure they will."

And having taken off the bags, in the machines went, the key was turned, and we felt they were secure. Across the road, passing through the gate is a little cluster of trees with a tall hedge that would shelter us from the prevailing breeze, and also shelter us from all the breezes that are likely to come at this time of the year, viz., s.w.

"Unpack the bags, Frank," says the Skipper, as he climbs over a gap, trots down the field to see the river. It is not very big or deep. He takes with him the collapsible bucket and brings up some water in case some is needed for any purpose. He spots a place in which a shallow header may be taken, and not the least interested was he in hearing a good number of trout rise in the twilight higher up.

When he returns the tent is all out and Frank is proceeding to fix the clove hitch on to the rear pole and in five minutes the house is erected. Then the ground sheet is spread and the blanket ditto. The pillows are inflated. The little drinking horns are got ready and the cuisine taken out, and into the cuisine he drops a spoonful of tea—not more—and sallies forth to fetch the tea : takes a little clean dish-cloth in which to tie up the eggs. When he reaches the house tea is already made, for the dame has put in *her* tea, and, alas! has made it black. Back he comes with a jug full of milk in one hand, a teapot in the other full of tea, a jug of hot water in reserve and the eggs. But he has to send the junior to fetch part of this load. Then we sit down snugly. How rapidly it has gone dark!

"Shall I light up?" asks the companion.

"Certainly; it always makes tea much jollier, doesn't it?"

Two candles are put in the little candelabra suspended from the ridge of the tent and we eat and chat until we have had a splendid meal which consisted of bread and butter, eggs and jam we had in reserve. The milk, of which we have a pint left for porridge and coffee in the morning is put outside in a tuft of grass, a large green leaf is put on the top of the jug for a lid and on this something is placed to keep it from blowing off; a tiny hole for ventilation purposes is made in the leaf and we know the milk

will be sweet thus kept from encroaching creatures during the chilly hours of the night.

"Think it's a bit cold!" says the Skipper.

"It seems more so than last night," says the youngest.

"Well, I will go to the house and see if I can get some blankets."

"Yes, we can have some; four if we like." But two are sufficient. I take them down. We roll up our waterproofs and leggings, placing our boots with the soles uppermost and the heels *from* us, the toes towards us, we put our leggings on top and on the top of these our little inflated pillows of silk. We tie pieces of string to the corners of the largest blanket and tie it "at the four corners." This prevents the foot of it being kicked off and thus getting the toes cold in the night. We previously spread a lower blanket beneath us.

"Why, Frank, how goes the time?"

"Ah, - - - eh; - - -!

"I repeat, do you know what time it is, old boy?"

"No."

"Well, then, it is seven o'clock."

"That's all right."

"It is not all right. We should have been up half-an-hour before. Come, turn-out and wash-up whilst I have a plunge."

The tent is quite hot now. The sun has already crept over the hedge, for it is early in August, and

its warm rays are drying up the dew that has settled on our canvas cover. How the freshly-mown fields sparkle as the myraid little pearls stand on each stem. Presently they will be sucked up and the dry, crisp grass will give its music to the footfall as we tramp across it. We shall be busy for one-and-a-half-hours, for we have two washings up, a bathe, shave, breakfast, cycles to load, etc. A thousand to one it is five minutes to nine before we are under way. We should like to reach Sligo by twelve o'clock or soon after, as we want to leave by the afternoon mail at at three o'clock, and a few hours must be spent in the famous city for we have never seen it.

The above is not a fancy sketch, as we hinted, but is mainly the reality. How widely any other two following in our footsteps or taking this humble sketch as a hand-book would differ from us as to time, place, circumstances and manner of doing things I can well imagine. Such as the hints are I recommend them to be well-studied before a departure is materially made from them. Inclemency of the weather with bad judgment in packing the camp, getting in uncongenial society, falling amongst inhospitable people, rebuffs, hardships, all these have to be encountered, and it is only those who pursue a life like this in a spirit of determination to get the best they can out of it who will make it a success.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE APPLIANCES.

HE appliances are far more simple than they at first sight appear. Elaborations are unnecessary for this mode of life, but effectiveness and efficiency are highly necessary. Without them comfort cannot be relied upon or health secured.

I look upon the tent itself as the very first essential. This tent (made as the model we carried) would, pitched in a sheltered position, afford splendid shelter from a small deluge, from the cold air on an otherwise inaccessible Alpine height, on the field of battle, during a walking excursion, on a canoe scrimmage down a river, or even would enable a party of two to remain to sketch, fish, to photograph or to kill time in isolated spots far from the madding crowd.

The characteristics of the tent are of such a nature that it can be slung in a strap, like a mackintosh or a field-glass, over the shoulder for walking. The pillows can be carried in the hat or pocket, the tent poles like the legs of a camera or walking-stick, they being no heavier than an ashen plant, and,

certainly half the weight of a blackthorn cudgel, so often trundled about for long distances and yielding less return for the labor.

In this article I wish, in closing, to run over the entire paraphernalia of fittings and to give some particulars for their construction at home or purchase abroad *i.e.* from makers.

SIZE OF TENT.

The drawings given are for a tent 5-ft. 9-in. wide, 5-ft. 9-in. long, and 5 ft. 9-in. high. (*See* photo., p. 160). There is no reason why these figures may not be varied, but twenty years experience with small, portable tents over 6,000 miles of water cruising in the three Kingdoms, has shown that the length of the human form will do, and that twice the width of the reclining figure with half as much again will do for two to sleep in. But, possibly, some one may want an extra small tent for just one, in which case I would still suggest but slight modification. Length 5-ft. 6-in.; width of floor 5-ft., and height 5-ft. 6-in. Thus it is seen I only take 9-ins. off the width. What difference would that make? It does not save more than an ounce-and-a-half in weight of material of the tent itself, and, possibly, it saves a couple of ounces in the Gossamer ground sheet, but then it limits the comfort of the tent if a "passenger comes your way."

If this argument is sound, as I believe it is, stick to the first dimensions of 5-ft. 9-in. for everything and in

all ways. I will add, in re-stating this, an additional advantage. The tent poles divided by three fit the average after-frame, and if made shorter there is no advantage ; if made longer they are in the way when on the machine.

MATERIALS.

There are many materials suitable. I have selected for my own use "Lawn," and it had better be distinctly understood it is such material as the best class of tailors use. If anyone seeks to procure it from any member of that business they would only get it in firms of the highest class. It is, in short, a kind of closely woven cotton Cambric, technically known as "Lawn." An extremely fine linen would do as well and better, but there is difficulty in getting a dark non-dirt-showing color of sufficient lightness, but it exists in brown linen and is to be got by a little trouble.*

The relative initial weights for linen over cotton would be about twenty to thirty per cent. Thus a $2\frac{1}{4}$-lbs. Lawn tent, as my own, would run to three and-quarter, in linen, or thereabouts. But there are again considerations, and I desire to be intensely practical though not exhaustive in these details. The practical idea must be dominant in a thing for use.

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* Both these stuffs are, possibly, procurable of J. PLATT & Co., St. Martin's Lane, W.C. It might facilitate matters to the would-be purchaser if the author's name were quoted.

What I was about to say was this :—Cotton absorbs more water and dries less quickly. Linen is a little stronger than cotton and would wear longer. Even if dressed with any kind of preparation it would wear out two cottons; but folding space, would be slightly increased by any proof dressing in either stuff.

"IS YOUR TENT WATERPROOF?"

At every demonstration I have given in London, some person has put this question first, and in every case I have had to answer "yes; no." The non-practical people have smiled at the reply, but the practical camper will understand what I will now explain. Willesden or any other dressing of any fabric tends materially to weighten it and to render it less portable: in other words it causes it to take up more space because it becomes stiffer. Whilst it does not affect the material so greatly in all its plain parts it vastly affects it at any join or part attached to part by sewing to another wire.

How then do you guarantee yourself dry? The "A" tent of above dimensions has an acute angle, like a Saxon roof and all the wet that comes upon it runs off; runs off so completely that in three nights, wet two-thirds of the whole time, not a spot, so far as any of us could see, came through it. But whilst it was partly owing to the roof being steep it also was owing to the even pitch of the tent, which is simple enough to secure when you get into the way of it.

Personally, I like a tent that opens both ends, but that may be a personal fad. This tent as now designed, is closed at one end and with a ventilator high up in the flat end. There must be a 6-in. curtain of some very fine fabric all round the bottom which comes underneath the ground sheet This prevents the draught coming underneath, and to a great extent keeps off all sorts of "creeping things," which, by the way, one need not fear. Save a few inoffensive ground beetles, or the much maligned and harmless earwig, the only two things I have found inside, there is nothing to fear. In some districts at certain seasons, moths and flies get in, and they only honored us with their company when attracted by the light. But they cannot get in, and, indeed, do not enter unless the door is left open, as of course it is during meal times and the after chat on still, warm nights. When the wind blows rough and cold, the flies are somewhat scarce. Thus Nature, in this respect, compensates the camper.

In the selection of lines, loops, hooks, fittings, indeed everything, take good care to have things small and light whilst GOOD and STRONG. Have linen cord for the end guys because it wears longer and stretches less. The dimensions given for each item and the measurement for the poles and every other thing are actual, and if you put them in hand to be made, the maker will double almost every article in width and weight unless he is closely watched and he is

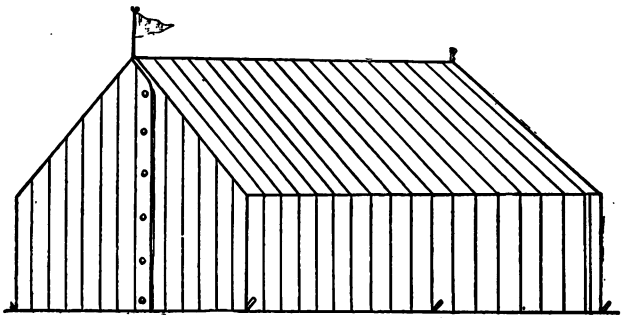
distinctly told that dimensions *must* be followed. In getting the end "slides," the tent poles and tent pegs, I drew everything to full and size and lengths, and everything came up right. Maker's ideas and user's ideas are widely at variance. Hence the man who built the tents cut them out, and without consulting the designer, stitched on a strip of brown calico, for the bottom curtains a foot wide. Of course it was removed from both tents and at a considerable amount of labor was re-placed by a 6-inch curtain of the same material as the tent itself. Would it be believed that this stuff thus added doubled the size of the tent in folding nearly doubled the weight of it too. When paying the account and complaining of this "improvement" (?) I received the superfluous material for the curtain back from the maker, who abused me heartily for the complaint and added the remark that it was "impossible to do anything right for some people."

THE POLES.

The tent poles are important. I selected the "fly-rod" style and got a celebrated fly-rod man to make them * in sections, to fit into each other as a fly-rod precisely. Each of these jointed pieces fit into a canvas pocket of its own, the canvas to fold up and

* Mr. Ogden, of Winchcombe Street, Cheltenham. He made them neatly and cheaply.

tie. This is easily strapped to the after fork on the off side so as to leave the step free. The ferrules must fit, brass into brass, or else they will stick with the wet and take four men to separate them ; which drastic operation sometimes slits the stick or forces the ferrule itself off, a thing to be avoided—rather. There need be no point to the brass butt or the bottom section. Cut it square off to stand on the ground. For about 3-in. down from the upper point



COTTAGE-SHAPED TENT.

of the top section there should be a few shallow cuts with a file—an ordinary three-corner file will do it. They must not be deep because of weakening the poles. The object is to prevent the clove hitch from slipping down as it will do even when "taut," providing the surface be not slightly roughed thus.

I thought at first it would be necessary to have

a ridge pole, but I found it sat perfect without. In fixing up his first tent, let the tyro in the days of his beginning take a hint. Slope the end pole slightly back from an upright angle ; then on pulling the front guy line quite "taut," it will strengthen up the after end pole. After pegging poles in upright position, peg down the four corners. Then take the two middle pegs at the sides and peg them out about six inches from the straight line. This causes a slight strain on the centre of the ridge cord. This makes the whole tent set out on a slight strain and renders the ridge pole unnecessary. This discovery has created a difficulty with my own outfit as to ground sheet. The ground sheet should be curved outwards not less than six inches from a straight line at the sides. Then it lies well out to the bottom of the curtain, and when the few little etceteras that one carries are placed on the sides they keep the sheet well down on the curtain. This prevents the visitors of the night from entering, only they never do enter really.

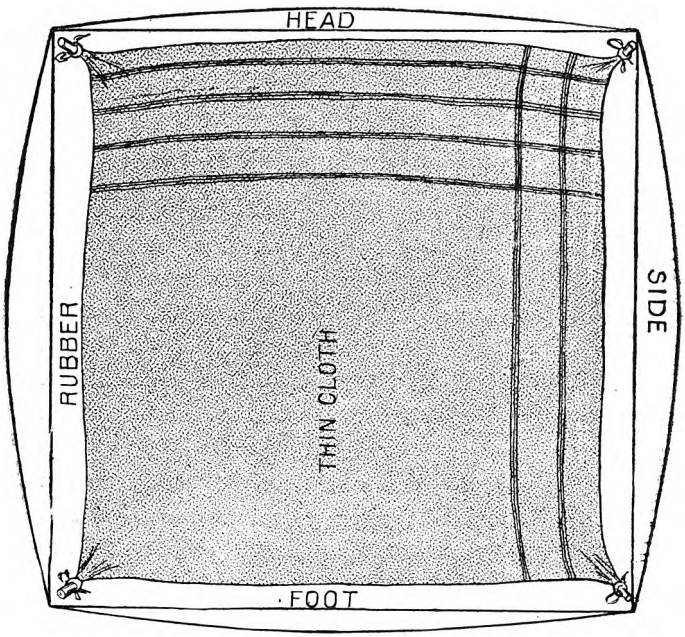
Talking of visitors of the night reminds one of the question many times put, "how do you get on with the things that creep in?" The time that the writer has spent under canvas is two years at various times and in various countries and places, and never on one occasion did I find any obnoxious thing give annoyance. As I stated, earwigs are harmless ; beetles are likewise harmless,

wasps are a little terrifying but likewise harmless if let alone and allowed to share your honey-pot. Beyond these, no visitors have ever come to molest the camp. We were once disturbed in the night on Inchboffin in Lough Ree, when a tenant farmeress came and demanded that the tent should be taken down and the camp moved. As two of her sons were inside the camp at the time, smoking my cigarettes, and as they themselves had placed us on the spot, we refused to budge. It was a stormy, wild, dark night, and we were a mile and a-half from the shore in any direction. So we slept in peace.

THE GROUND SHEET.

This is best explained by the drawings which accompany the description. Makers will put a cord round the edge if you don't stop them. This it must not have on any account. Holes must be put at the corners, but some four inches in from the exact angle. There are practical reasons which show this to be necessary. A slight curve is added on beyond square at the ends as well as sides. This is also necessary, as somehow or other in pegging out the tent, all parts, except the corners, have a way of extending, and every tent yet made has a way of stretching slightly and getting bigger. So have your ground sheet, to start with, sufficiently large. For cycling nothing but the lighest gossamer must be used, because rubber is comparatively heavy

stuff, and I find that a thin sheet is as effective in keeping out the damp as a heavy one. But, of course, as I have already hinted, lay a cycling cape or your leggings under that part of the sheet where the



PLAN OF GROUND SHEET SHOWING CURVED SHAPE.

body will actually lie. Precaution is better than valour in this case, and perhaps my long years of exposure to camping-life has left me as free of

rheumatism as anyone living. I never but once contracted any ailment whilst camping, and that was through sleeping on some wet hay with a defective ground sheet for two nights when storm-bound on the west coast of Scotland. Lumbago had laid siege to the spine with the usual unpleasant results. For the time it lasts it will add thirty years to the age of any man.

THE GROUND BLANKET.

It is essential some woollen material should cover the ground sheet. As I said, it not only protects it, but gives warmth to the body. The four strings attached to its corners run through four corner pegs stuck into the holes of the sheet. These keep it down effectively. It is always "taut" as the sailors say. The upper or cover blanket, of course, must be considerably larger than the ground sheet in every direction, and also have four strings to keep it in its place. It is surprising what warmth a covering, of any fabric, that goes completely over two persons, will give, keeping the cold air out and the warm in. On hot nights this cover is all that one can endure, but on all doubtful evenings do not forget the hint about the blankets—beg or borrow them. They are no impediment in the tent, and they may secure a splendid night's rest which is essential for a quiet touring ride or for a long scorch next day. My blankets are made of thin stuff known

as Tropical Cashmere, *i.e.*, ladies' dress stuff, *i.e.* as made for ladies' tailors' use. It can be got nowhere else I fear. Its width is fifty-eight inches.

THE PILLOWS.

These should be made, as there is nothing on sale right for the purpose. They should be five inches diameter and the same shape as a brick, and should be made of rubber goods inflatable with the breath. The round rolling ones are a trouble. There should be two-internal strings, from top to bottom, to keep the middle slightly depressed. This adds to the rigidity.

THE CUISINE.

This is an unpoetic subject, but it is a mighty factor in the comfort and health of a camp. Think of it. Water twenty minutes in boiling and then not boiled. As an Oxford undergraduate once said with plaintive pathos as he was trying to get a cup of tea in his sailing dinghy on the banks of the Avon, "it is a beastly thing, I can get no heat out of it." During my Connemara cruise I tried one of the French stoves, so-called, though made in England. It consumed as much spirit in ten minutes as with the cuisine I am about to describe I could have cooked two entire meals with and was infinitely slower. I have seen and tried almost everything of the kind for canoeing, and the light,

flying camp business, and I am free to say there is no implement yet invented comparable to what is known as the "Mersey Cuisine," now made by Dove, of York. The next Chapter contains illustrations of one that has had thirteen years' use, and is as sound as when first made. At a rough estimate it has cooked four hundred meals, many weeks cruising at a time, Easters, Whitsuntides, and picnics no end. It is always reliable, rapid, durable and most economical in the consumption of spirit. With the aid of an outer case as a second pan, into which the cuisine itself goes and which does not add much to the weight, and nothing to the size practically, one may cook several dishes even on a cycle camp. I use a small vessel of that kind in addition to the cuisine, and find it invaluable, at least in the matter of cooking porridge or stewing fruit. Thus it gives one a coffee pot and kettle in one and a porridge tin in another, and the lid is a frying pan. My invariable custom is to first put on the coffee, and whilst the water is boiling to shave. By the time shaving is done the water boils. The coffee is then boiled a minute or two as coffee should be. It is then placed aside with a paper over the top to keep it warm. Then the porridge is put on which takes about six minutes to do, providing cooked oatmeal is used, such as "A.B.C." or Quaker Oats, but "A.B.C." is the best. Particulars

for carrying out camp cooking have been given. When the porridge is cooked it will keep hot while the bacon is frying, ditto a couple of eggs. When these are removed some potatoes chopped small are also fried. Dainty indeed must be the man who cannot make a good breakfast of such food if it be sweet and good. The cooking may be rough, but I guarantee it does not affect the flavour. A more enjoyable breakfast I have never had either in the Grosvenor or Bailie's, or any other hotel at which I might have stayed.

The material of which my old cuisine is made is copper, duly tinned. A weak, cheap and ineffective apparatus would be a perpetual weakness and annoyance. It is something to feel happy in a cycle cruise or camp, and that which conduces to the happiness undoubtedly is that which produces our food in a satisfactory manner with reliance and efficiency. All that I have said for breakfast, will do, of course, for lunch. A few compact and inexpensive ingredients will make a splendid soup at lunch-time, or a couple of chops (which may, of course, be carried in the bag) can be very quickly fried, and if a few potatoes be fried with the chops they will be relished, and yet what could be simpler in the process? The cuisine will do all this without burning it, because, owing to the water chamber being outside the spirit chamber, it may be slowed and cooled down to the gentlest pitch, or in the

absence of water may be made furiously hot, almost like a blast.

THE UTENSILS.

Do not let the reader smile. The plates we carry are those little semi-dish plates at a half-penny or penny each, usually purchasable at Italian warehouses. They fit one into the other, so they occupy comparatively little space. Loose knives and forks I do not recommend, but there are beautiful handy things, which, if kept clean—which they never are—are very effective, take up less space, and give fewer parts to lift and to see to. A combined knife, fork and spoon in one is the best thing, and this may be had from several firms. Another important series of utensils are those in which to carry salt, pepper, coffee, sugar, butter, fruit and jam. This makes a formidable array, and if any imaginative person supposes that all these things are from half to one pound each in weight he is mistaken. The best butter tin, in fact, the best style of tin for the whole of these is the air-tight tin with a top to lever up; not in plain tin please, but let it be duly enamelled before you start.

They look better, do not rust, and are perfect for use. Cocoa tins will not do: tobacco tins will answer splendidly, indeed I use them. For convenience sake I should say get them in various sizes, even if it costs a little to get them made, which,

by the way, you will have difficulty in doing. The Kings Cross Tin Company have positively refused to make mine, so I had to beg, borrow, or steal as best I could.* It is useless to have less than half-a-pound of butter. That usually lasts two days and may be carried easily. The same kind of tin, but on a smaller scale, will take the contents of an ordinary 7d. jam jar, because when you have emptied the jar you will find there is more jar than jam. Take the contents of one of these little jars or pots and look at it apart from the vessel in which it was packed and see how limited indeed is the supply. Take again salt and pepper. These must not be carried in little bits of paper. Some tiny tin vessel will hold the salt and another still smaller the pepper. I shall have these made in a special size before I start the next tour, by the Company named.

As to carrying cooked fruit. If a tin of peaches say, was opened for lunch one day and two men had tapped it honestly there would be about half left. Supposing we purchased this half-an-hour before lunch in the last town and carried it for a mile or two and after lunch then emptied the remaining contents into one of the small air-tight tobacco tins above mentioned, it will do again the next day, for it weighs barely a pound and can be carried in the

* Since writing, the Aluminium Company intimate that they are prepared to make the whole cooking appliances.

angle bag between the legs or on the handle-bar, or in any other bag you like to have. As to bread. Have a very thin gossamer bag provided for it.

[N.B.—I have carried bread in a bag of this nature in all my boats for many years, and I find it prevents the crumbs from flying about or the bread getting dry; it keeps it in fact in its normal condition. "Of course a loaf of bread is an awkward thing to put in a cycle bag." Not at all if it be split in half as it should be. It will lie flat on the top of the other things or go in the frame or angle bag.]

I have now gone over the whole list of things necessary. It only remains to get and dispose of stores. Should there be any difficulty in which the author—though a busy man—can help a brother wheelman he will promise to do what he can. If letters are not answered promptly by return or very lengthy ones should receive short replies this explanation must be taken as the reason.

CHAPTER XIV.

ACTUALITIES—INDISPENSABLE DETAILS.

NEW LANGUAGE is quite easy they say, when once you have learnt it. The inventors of so profound a remark deserve immortality. These bothering looking pages which bring this book to a close—though Greek at a glance—will be very easy when once "learnt!" It is half a battle won when once you can knock the theories out of a man's head at the start. To begin, to say nothing of continuing, to teach the human anachronism who is choked to the brim with his own previous theories, is to lose oneself and lose the effort too.

Will the reader, whom I have not yet dubbed "gentle," kindly step inside for the nonce, and Dutchwise leave on the mat his fat, dumpy slippers, as it were—his theories, and come with his cap lifted to an old hand to learn! He will? Very good. "Now to business," as Barnato would have put it!

The would-be camper has but one idea—a tent. Yet it is only the bark covering the shell, and about the simplest article to get or make of the whole. On

a succeeding page the actual cycle tent is shown. Here is the same tent of heavier material as used for canoeing, with a light fly-sheet overhead. This means six extra pegs and six light lines and six little slides. Many happy hours has the writer spent under it in no fewer than fifty-seven counties in the United Kingdom. Take away the paddle, *i.e.*, *pro tem* ridge pole, the aforesaid lines and fly, then we have the cycle tent.

NO. I.

THE FATHER OF THE CYCLE TENT.

This and most of the following illustrations were drawn from my appliances, and published to illustrate

articles written for the *Boys' Own Paper*. To the Editor of the above mentioned journal I acknowledge the loan of these illustrations.

The reader will note that on the following page is the tent lying flat out ready for folding. In this position we can go into details a bit :—A.A. are two breadths of the stuff, say forty-one inches wide. B. represents the seam joining them together. C.C. is a piece of strong twilled tape *inside* to stay the top or ridge. The circular pieces are simple patches of thin linen sewn on to strengthen it. The disks C are the same. These are punched and a brass eyelet inserted. Through the eyelet-hole comes a strong loop sewn with strong thread inside. The loop is for the pegs of course. The four edges at ends have hooks and eyes for outside—overlap by four inches. Add linen tape strings inside so that the ends have double fastenings, but let tapes tie between the hook and *vice versa*. The four angle pieces are simply the ends which join by hooking from the letter A hence this shape is called an "A" tent as against the cottage shape, tent. (*See* p. 206.)

The extension beyond peg holes C is the curtain to come under ground-sheet to keep snakes and live things out! It will keep draughts out, though not all kinds. A strip of tape must be sewn on from top to bottom to hold hooks and eyes, both on the edges and four inches in—all inside. Put all tapes on slack. Be sure and dip them in water and dry before putting

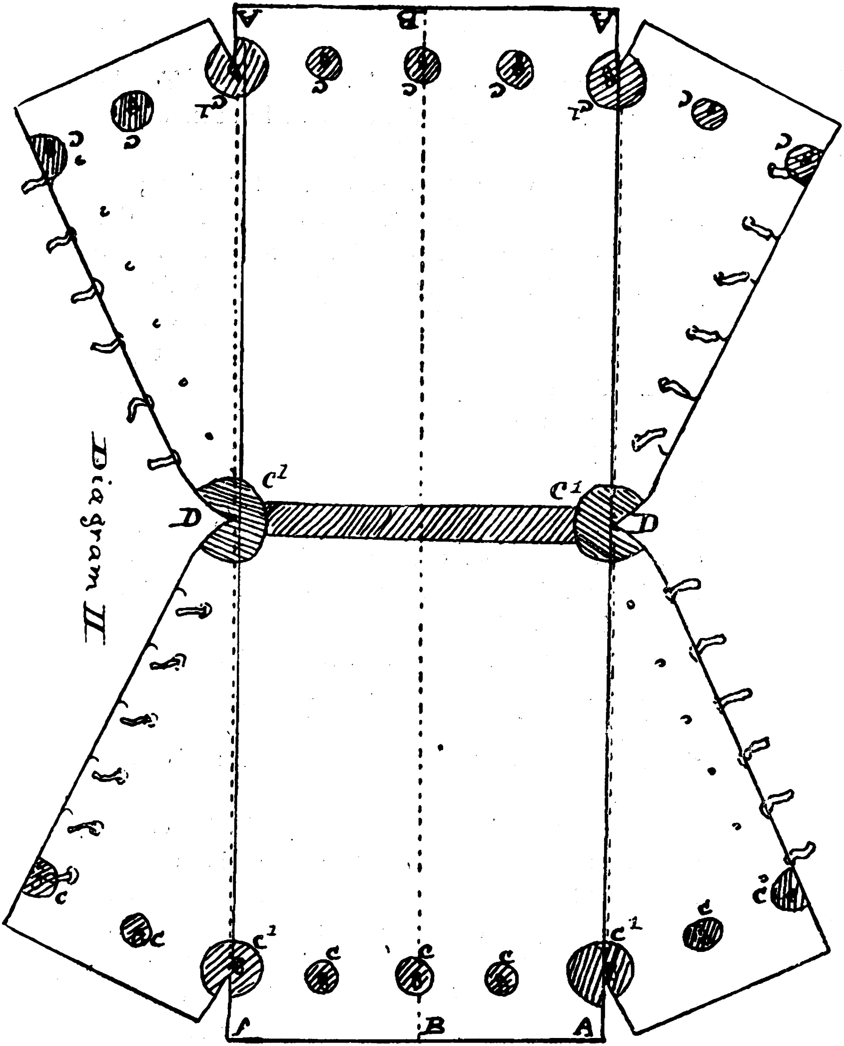
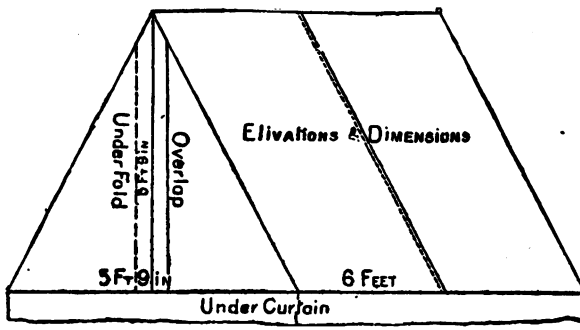


Diagram II

them on; like dividends tapes shrink. D.D. has two loops very strong, please; they must be sewn strongly on two-and-half inches in from the edge or end. The guys simply loop into them and should be left on, but yet be removable at will.

This tent may be made in any home by anyone who can work a machine or direct its operations.



WORKING PLAN CYCLE TENT.

Use as little sewing-cotton and as much linen as possible. Twist and wax double thread for loops and strong parts, etc.

The accompanying sketch will best indicate the the plan of the cycle tent.

It is made an even 5-ft. 9-ins. long, 5-ft. 9-ins. high and 5-ft. 9-ins. across foot, the angle, of course, finds itself. The measurements are taken from the firm line, the under curtain being a suspension as it were below it. The pole may either stand outside the tent

or may be set so close in at the forward end that the *under fold* and *overlap* may go over it outside. This, indeed, is our invariable custom.

The four angle seams of the tent do not need any particular stay. All tents were formerly heavily stayed in this part, but experience teaches that the seam gives sufficient strength as there is no vast strain at that particular part, and the tape, cords and other strengthening means were in the habit of shrinking with wet and puckering the tent when a flat field is needful for dryness.

CUTTING OUT THE TENTS.

First draw the precise plan in the following way :— Draw the base line ; draw the uprights at an even square ; fix the elevation 5-ft. 9-ins. ; measure out half-width of base 2-ft. 10½-ins. ; from this draw angle line up to the peak of roof.

CUTTING OUT.

Do not trust to the cross-thread of the material but draw square angle lines from the selvage-edge and mark it carefully. Measure out the entire quantity to the other end and do the same ; this and another breadth like it make the top. The ends should be marked out in the same way. Leave on to the ends of top breadth 6-ft. 9-ins. for curtain, and do not forget that there must be 4½-ins. *overlap* on each end piece, one going under and the other going over ; the outer edge to hook and the inner one to tie.

Do not have the seams sewn tightly. Tight tension puckers up the seams, whereas they should be dead fair, and all tapes and added pieces must go on slack as well as being first shrunk.

The cutting out of the main lengths needs no ex-

Diagram V

planation. This sketch may be useful in planning out the end sections anyhow.

The disk is of linen to take brass eyelet for pegging. They may be dispensed with by running a strip of linen inside the whole length.

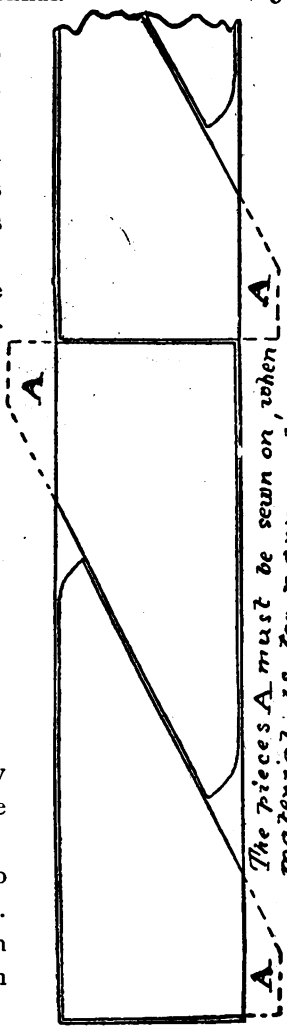


Diagram IV

The clove hitch is a very effective mode of hitching up lines and keeping tent "taut." This cut shows how to tie it :—

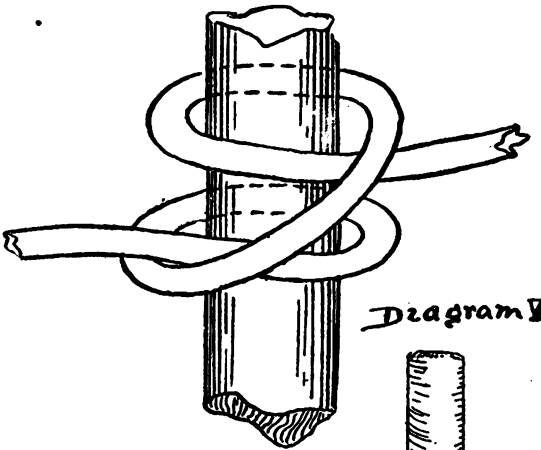


Diagram VI.

When tied, this cut shows how it is self fastening by mere strain. B is end of tent ; A close hitched knot ; C guy line to the ground.

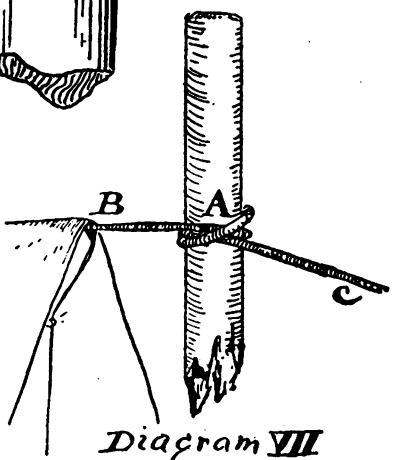
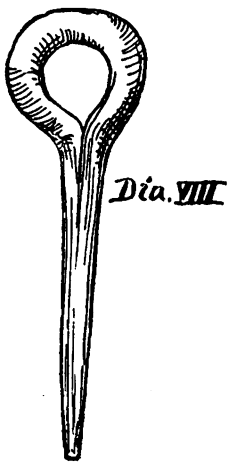


Diagram VII.

The end guys, Sketch IX., must have small slides as shown. Do not make these for the cycle tent

more than $\frac{3}{8}$-in. thick; $\frac{3}{4}$-in. wide will do; 2-ins. long or even $1\frac{3}{4}$-ins. will do. The wood should be elm because it does not split easily. The end pegs are permanently in place as shown. The end guy

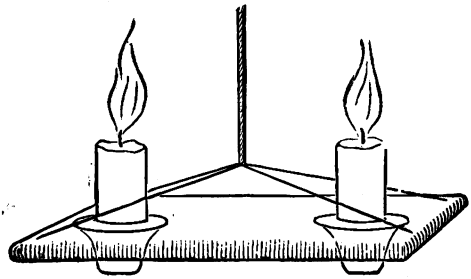


lines, when folding up the tent are best disposed of so:—Roll one up inside the roll itself. The loose one is to be tightly hauled round the dumpling-like bundle, which *must* be first carefully smoothed out

layer on layer, then rolled so close that when trussed it could be used for playing "duck-stone" with.

The Pegs (VIII.) are to be made of ¼-in. iron-wire, head bent over, *not* forged (as Sketch VIII.) and to be 5½-ins. long the point flattened, not round-shaped. The *flat* to go always towards the tent. It increases its holding power. This kind of peg is light, twelve making 1-lb. and they take up little room to themselves. They are also easily thurst into the ground with the foot, and if the ground is too hard do not drive them in, it is liable to bend and blunt and thus spoil them. Have a piece of strong thin cord "growing" to one of them, say, a foot long. Thread *all* pegs on to this and tie or lash sailor-wise the bundle for carrying purposes.

For lighting purposes, candles must be used—not



4½-INS. LONG BY 3-INS. WIDE.

oil. The reason, possibly, is too obvious to need enforcement. It is simply cleanliness and one's

objections to grease in any form. The ground-sheet particularly objects to it, hence when grease touches rubber "it's done for."

The plan of chandelier I advise and have used for close on twenty years is depicted on the preceding page. It is really made of an oblong piece of plate-glass, drilled, and the metal sockets put in. The angle suspenders are of copper-wire, and for a foot or so on upper piece from the same good-humored stuff, takes the heat of the candles and a piece of string —really whip-cord—hitches it to the roof of the tent. I forgot to point out that I have a quarter-inch tape running along the ridge, *i.e.* a second tape put flat on and sewn crosswise here and there at intervals of three inches to tie up the light to—at any place we may fancy and to any height we need.

CUISINE.

Next to the tent, this is, of course, the camping man's best friend. The tent is father; this the mother. One provides shelter: the other gives us food, and so life.

The cuisine or canteen is of *copper* or *aluminium*. For prices I refer the reader to Dover, of York, and the Company using the new metal.

Need I again repeat that I have one of these for boating purposes which has cooked four hundred meals and is as good as the day it was purchased? It was "made in England!" It is 7-ins. by $3\frac{1}{2}$-ins. deep

and serves four men well. I use for the cycle camp a junior ditto 6-ins. by 3-ins. deep, 2¾-lbs. The new metal is just over half its weight, but I have no experience of the latter.

It is as simple to work as a "Bush Billy." * These directions may seem necessary :—

Do not put much spirit in ; do not empty out any left in, but screw on the top directly the wick is taken out and remove this instantly the cuisine is done with. If it begins to flare up too much insert water at G. This water falls round the inner spirit compartment and cools down the spirit. Do not let the wick burn spiritless ; when flame gets weak re-charge ; about three table-spoonfuls will boil sufficient water for two and so on. Do not go without extra internal and external wicks, yet one will go a month carefully managed. If wick fails you, a bit of rag tied on the burner will suffice.

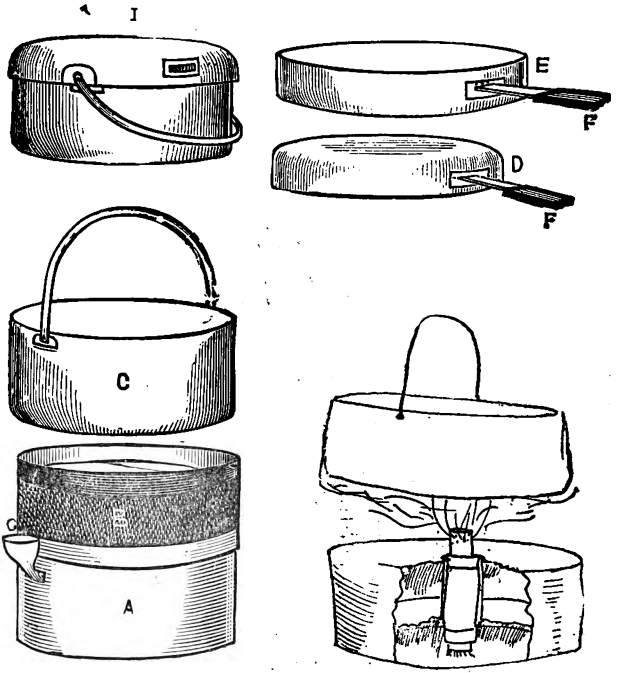
No. 1, top to the left, is the whole thing in a lump packed. A is the little furnace ; B the gauze shield protecting flame and shielding the fire ; C is the pan ; E is lid of ditto, as a frying-pan, and D is the same as a lid ; F is a detachable handle.

The burner is illustrated on p. 230.

That it may be more fully understood here is a

* Empty meat-tin or a strong course tin vessel carried about in Australia and used over any fire at will.

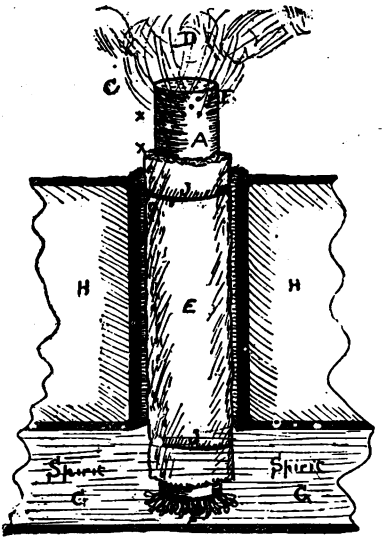
section of the canteen and its burner *i.e.* the wick and internal parts of it shown below.



A is a cylinder of tin or copper. The top is brazed on with a perforated cap. It has two rows of small holes—as large as a pin-point, say, run round the top. The part marked x to x is vacant. The reason will appear presently.

B C and D represent the flame merely which runs completely all over the bottom of the pan.

F is the protruding *inner* wick which fills, slackly, the tube up to A only.



E is an outer *tubular* wick pulled outside the metal tube and tied top and bottom.

J J is the said fine cord tying this on to it.

G G is the bottom of the furnace holding the methylated spirit which is drawn up by the inner and centre wick ; the outer one burns in a small circular flame round A. This heats the tube at A greatly and

causes the spirit to generate a gas which burns as it escapes through the little holes B D C.

A is the little generating chamber.

H H is part of the furnace specially cased off for water, but this is rarely used, save for long, slow stewing or boiling fish, vegetables or fruit. Have the funnel in place *always* and use it to cool down when necessary.

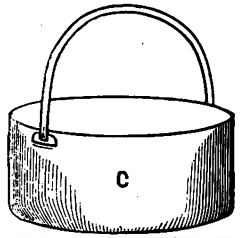
FUEL.

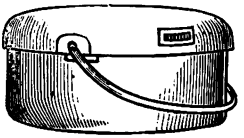
Methylated Spirit is splendid fuel for the camper to use. What smell it has is soon dispersed from anything it comes in contact with—save food, and it must be carefully kept apart from anything of that nature. Its price is 5d. per pint. On a cycle camping tour a pint would probably last four days. But, of course, I recommend a half-pint tin which would probably last two days, and which may be filled at, well, any ordinary town in England—though not in Ireland. There it is possible to get, however, "finish," anywhere, that is methylated spirit purposely adulterated with shalack because the natives buy it to drink, if procurable in its natural state. Before disposing of this, however, I should like to re-affirm the necessity of rather undercharging than over-charging the lamp. Not only is an overdose extravagant in itself but it really puts the cuisine into a rage as it were which, sometimes makes it put out its own flame; so avoid over-charging.

Another Hint:—In "re-wicking" the tube or

burner see that the cotton protudes below at foot and that it is not too tightly wedged in. Also select the looser sort of wick—a kind of towel fabric.

A TAIL PIECE.





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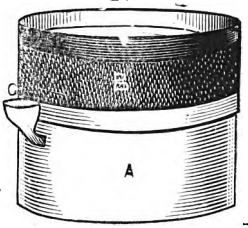

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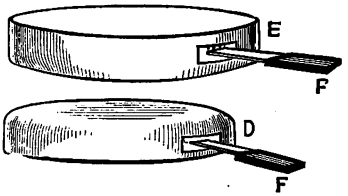

MERSEY CUISINE.

THE above will supply a want long felt by **Canoemen** and all those connected with **Yachting, Boating and other Excursions,** having numerous advantages over those already in use, not the least of which is its perfect safety, capability of being used in any weather, intense heat, which may be regulated by the sliding collar, economy in the consumption of spirits, and extreme portability.

It is the recent invention of an experienced Member of THE MERSEY CANOE CLUB, and has been tried in all weathers by members of that Club, and found far to exceed all those previously used. The apparatus consists of a copper lamp, six inches in diameter, fitted with Argand burner, having a cap, to prevent waist of spirit. The upper portion of the lamp is a chamber for cold water, as it is found that the lamp gives the greatest result with the spirit at a low temperature. The lamp is surrounded with a copper frame covered with copper gauze, which entirely prevents the strongest wind having any effect upon the flame.

The boiler or cooking pot is seven inches in diameter, three-and-a-half inches deep, and contains two quarts. It is made of strong copper, tinned inside, with brass fall-down handle, fitted with brass wing nuts. The lid can be used as a frying-pan, having a long side handle. The whole apparatus packs within the pan, and is substantially made and well finished.

Mersey Club Size - 40/-. If with Omelette Pan in addition - **45/-**
Smaller Size - - - - - - - 5½-inches diameter **25/-**

MANUFACTURED BY **W. DOVE & SONS, YORK.**