

Castle Taylor & Environs.

*First visit to Ireland.*

Alexander Goodman More.

[1850.]

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THREE months after he left Rugby, his friend Walter Shawe-Taylor quitted Harrow ; and as both were destined to enter Cambridge in the following October they looked forward with eager anticipation to a renewal of the companionship which had, of course, suffered considerable interruption during the period of school. A visit from Walter to the Mores at Easter was followed by an invitation to Alexander to spend the summer of the year in Ireland : an invitation which was gladly accepted, and may be regarded as having in no small measure determined the course of his subsequent life.

Castle Taylor, the residence of the Shawe-Taylor family, is situated near Ardrahan, in the southern part of county Galway. The rocky limestone formation is very similar to that of the Burren district in Clare ; and it is unnecessary to say that many of its natural history features are strikingly different from those which prevail in the Isle of Wight.

Here he passed four summer months, from the middle of June to the commencement of the Cambridge October Term, recording the doings of each day in a journal which bears ample testimony to the delight he felt in the fresh life and novel surroundings of his friend's Irish home. The two travelled to Ireland together in the highest of spirits : Dublin, where on landing they whiled away a few hours, is spoken of as " a very fair sort of town," while almost startling praise is bestowed on the travelling accommodation of the Ireland of 1850 :—  
" *mem.*, the Irish second-class (carriage) as good as our first."

A three days' journey brought them to Castle Taylor at 8 o'clock on the morning of June 14th ; and here a sleep till noon having dissipated their fatigue, luncheon was followed by a highly characteristic plunge *in medias res* : " took out my gun, shot Sparrow-hawk, took Wood-white butterfly, found *Geranium sanguineum*."

The above-quoted note contains his earliest botanical entry, and it was during his visit to Castle Taylor that he first developed that interest in plants which so strongly coloured his life. It had a very simple origin, for it was from gathering specimens of the Irish wild flowers to send home to his sister, who took pleasure in drying them, that he was led to begin the study of botany this summer in the west.

The day after his arrival he took " a first lesson in equestrianism," pronounced " pretty satisfactory," and " found *Dryas octopetala* and the Bedford blue." Next day (Sunday) in the course of an afternoon stroll, " heard the Corncrake [1] and gathered Butterfly orchis." He had no up-to-date Manual of Botany, and had to rely upon " an old Withering," which at least did not overburden beginners with a plethora of species. But very soon he found himself sighing for thornier nutriment, and on August 16th began his day's record with the entry, " At last I have received Salter's paper on the Brambles. It seems a very carefully written treatise, and I hope will prove useful. They are a most difficult family to discriminate, but I hope a little

careful attention will enable me to master them.” It may be as well confessed that this hope proved “ a little” sanguine.

Indeed, much botany of any sort was for the present out of the question. Fishing, riding, coursing, shooting, cricket-playing, butterfly-hunting so the long days sped away good humour and high spirits lighting up every page of the diary, not excepting that which tells of a certain severe fall “ which brought me home limping, though not too bad to join in an assault on the fruit garden, which was carried on with great vigour until the parties engaged were *hors de combat*.”

A few passages from the MS. will serve to illustrate the tenor of these pleasant days of mixed Natural History and Sport.

“ July 20. Expedition in brake to see Kilmacduagh. Left at about 12½; took about two hours to get there ; admired the beautiful high round tower, which leans a little, but is in capital preservation; also the ruins of the Seven Churches ; led by a boy through the bog to a lake ; saw a brace of Snipe, also many Curlew near the Lake, and some Herons, but these latter too wary. My attention was soon drawn to three large brown birds of slow flight, sinking down with their wings spread at an angle, that I observed approaching. The guide called them Brown Crows, but I thought them too large for that, and I preferred to chase them while Walter went after Snipe. After advancing a good way to where I had marked them down, I put up a fellow within thirty yards and instantly fired into him ; the bird was evidently pricked, for he was obliged to settle down in the reeds not, very far off. Followed him and put No. 2 into him as he rose ; this made him settle again within 70 yards, and nearer the fields. By this time his companions had both made off ; I marked him carefully, and got nicely up within 20 yards, and took a deliberate aim ; this time he got a good dose, for he dropped his legs and flew unsteady to the reeds, from which for a long time I could not raise him again ; this last time I made out distinctly the Hawk’s bill and yellow legs, also the yellowish appearance of the head. Meantime Walter came up, and I twigged our friend on the fly again, but very ‘ queero.’ I fired, and also Walter, but we did not seem to wound him any more (W.’s shot being about 50 yards) ; but he dropped, again, into the rushes ; and though a man sent his dog in, and we fired two barrels into the place, he would not get up, and we supposed him dead. The man said it was a ‘ Kite,’ but it must, of course, have been a Marsh Harrier. After this, went up to the carriage, which was waiting for us in the road ; came home very wet and cold about the pins, having been up to our middle in water all the day ; and my powder I discovered quite wet, and set at the smallest charge, which may account for my not flooring the gentleman at once. However, he, no doubt, fell a victim in the end.”

(The bird—a Marsh Harrier—was secured about two days later.)

“ Aug. 13. (Expedition to Deer Island, etc.) Up at ¼5. Morning rather dull but promising ; three of us in the tax-cart ; found all the Rooks dispersing over the country at about 5½, and, of course, did not forget to knock over a few ; our route was also varied with an attempt to stalk some Curlew past Kinvarra. Arrived at New Quay at 8½. Here Mr. J—— supplied our hungry necessities with breakfast. After breakfast we embarked in hooker (an open, strong-built cutter of fourteen tons) and sailed for Deer Island, the El Dorado of our hopes, with a nice breeze, foresail set, and one reef down, no jib. Walter got the first shot and knocked down a Kittiwake ; but as to Deer Island, our hopes were doomed to disappointment, for, although we observed Herons, Cormorants, Curlew, Ring Dotterel, and some large Gulls sitting on the rocks, we could not approach sufficiently near to shoot ; and we observed that as soon as a small boat landed to gather sea-weed, all the feathered bipeds gave up their domain to the unfeathered ones. We then made a short stretch across the Bay of Galway, and soon fell in with a flock of ‘ Puffins’ (as all the smaller diving sea-fowl are called here as well

as at Bembridge), and I killed out of them a Foolish Guillemot, the first I had yet examined. As we advanced, we kept meeting with a pretty good number of the birds, and a constant fusilade was kept up ; the best part of the fun was the picking up ; for as we had no small boat and no landing-net, the sides being too high for us to catch hold of the slain with our hands, the only means we had were a gaff, which, however, one of the men wielded very adroitly, and a handled bucket, so that we frequently tacked several times before we could secure the bird, especially if only wounded. Thus the morning passed away in a most delightful manner, and we had leisure to survey the fine view which the clear day afforded of Connemara and the Isles of Aran, as well as of the nearer shore adjoining Black Head, close to which latter we passed, and fired at the Cormorants as they flew between us and the high cliff ; although in our case the birds were too wary to suffer from our shot, which I think was also too small, being No. 6. The solid table-like masses of rock of which Black Head is composed were very striking when viewed from below. In the meantime our bag was fast swelling and our luncheon devoured with great relish (chickens torn asunder in a most cannibal style). The birds that I could make out on the bay were—Greater White Tern, Herring Gull (the Black-backed is said to come at harvest-time), Kittiwake Gull, Foolish Guillemot, Black Guillemot, Razor-bill Auk, no real Puffins ; but we only shot four different sorts. Our shooting, I think, was rather good, as we had not quite heavy enough shot, and yet there were very few misses. Capt. Shawe-Taylor had lent me his Manton, and I found it a most killing piece. .... We only regretted not having got a Cormorant, which species is very numerous here, in so much that the boatman told me a friend of his, by ambushing their line of flight, had killed twenty-five in one single morning. We returned to ——’s house at about 5½, and dined there, got away at about 8, and reached home under three hours.”

“ Aug. 17. Went out into the wood after breakfast to hunt for brambles ; was not very fortunate, as I only got four different sorts :— *Rubus idæus*, *R. nemorosus*, *R. discolor*, and one I take to be *R. saxatilis*. I, however, got an excellent view of a fox, that at the distance at which I first saw him looked just like a reddish dog ; but I very soon made out his brush, and as my gentleman did not seem to be in any hurry, I walked slowly up until we stood about five yards apart, when, after a stare or two at each other, my vulpine acquaintance trotted slowly off, leaving me quite astonished at his assurance. ”

“ Sept. 7. Set out at 5½ for the grouse-shooting. Got to —— at 7, and after breakfast we prepared for a start.

As our ground was still four miles off, we thought it best to save our legs as much as possible, and so mounted whatever we could get for the occasion, Walter and I being on our old cart-horse without a saddle, and such a penance as I never endured, shaken on the sharp spine of the brute for more than an hour. When we came to the mountain we separated, Walter and myself going with Mr. —— and his two dogs, one pointer, and ‘ Grouse,’ the same setter he had lent us for ——’s bog ; three guns in one party, two in the other. Walter got the first chance and killed a rabbit ; we then walked on for a long time without doing anything, only observing three Kestrels hovering about, until the setter found us a bird which Mr. fired into. A little further on we came upon a second, and I began my experience in grouse-shooting by taking him down. From that till lunch (for which we lay down on the top of a hill) we saw nothing more ; but as the day wore on we had better luck, and kept stumbling on the birds pretty fast. ... I think on the whole we shot rather well, and were very much complimented by Mr. —— for our style of aim. I might have done better, but I twice lost a shot among a pack, once through being behind, and another time having just been extricated from a bog-hole up to my neck, which was too great a damper to permit my being ready. The second jolt back to the house was very painful, but anything was better than walking after such a long day’s work, and by extensive bolstering up with hay I got on pretty well. We were not sorry to get to bed at about 11 o’clock.”

A fortnight later he enjoyed killing his "first partridge." Another event he mentioned with satisfaction occurred in the course of an afternoon's vigorous "crow-flaking, as Walter persists in calling it" (i.e. rook-shooting).

"Heard a Curlew whistle as if approaching, and crouching down behind a wall awaited his coming. On he came steadily and unconscious of the ambush, until when right over our heads small bore spoke to him: a stumble and sudden change in his flight proclaimed my success; and 'he's hit, he'll not get over it, you needn't fire again,' was the cry; lower and lower he swooped, unable to sustain his flight, and then slowly sank into the grass at the farthest extremity of the field. Then the difficulty was to find him, and at first we thought he had been able to run off: but, at last, I espied him, quite dead, and on examination found that two grains of No. 7 had made their way into his breast, and one leg was broken in two places. So we carried him home—I not a little pleased at having slain my first Curlew."

An entry on July 27th, "Shot my first Missel-Thrush," may seem curious, but this bird was not common enough at Castle Taylor to give him many chances. Nearly six weeks earlier, on June 19th, he had "wounded a Missel-Thrush, but lost him."

Elsewhere is a word on the "Crow-flaking":—

"From the number of Rooks mentioned as killed, it will easily be supposed that they are very numerous and very much more tame than in England. This is, in fact, the case, and the horrid tameness of the creatures struck me very much on my first arrival, as they forcibly reminded me of the stories told of a similar effect produced when any land has been visited by famine, or plague. I am told that during the scarcity the birds died in great numbers, and, no doubt, their starvation taught them to dig up the potatoes and turnips, in which depredations they are now constantly engaged, and for which offence they are proscribed."

A note betraying some raciness of the soil speaks of joining in a rat-hunt, which, however, was no great thing, as we only killed three brace, and one was a mouse. But a few days later came off "a capital rat-hunt, killed 8½ brace of vermin, only Walter and I working them." This was wet weather sport, the heavy rain in August interfering with projects of distant excursions.

Needless to say, his butterfly net was not forgotten. Indeed, we have seen that almost the first notes taken at Castle Taylor recorded the capture of a Wood-white butterfly on the day of his arrival, and of a Bedford blue the day after: and it is curious that even these two captures would, if published at the time, have been new and interesting records, so little had the Lepidoptera of Ireland been yet studied. Four years later, the Rev. J. Greene included both in his list (the first published) of Irish Butterflies; but in both cases he did so upon authority which stood in some need of corroboration. The "very lazy Fritillaries in the woods" at Castle Taylor evidently aroused his admiration, and are several times referred to in the Journal. During this first visit, no lepidoptera except butterflies were studied, but he had already taken in the earlier parts of Westwood's "British Moths."

The evenings at Castle Taylor were devoted chiefly to music; occasionally to reading: but when opportunity offered, conversation on the natural history of the district was always to him an irresistible attraction. Discussions on the extermination of the Eagles, the progress of the potato disease, supposed occurrences of the wild cat, the alleged difference between "dog-badgers" and "pig-badgers," &c., are referred to with a frequency which proves how deep an interest in the country had already been awakened within his mind. For the present, however, Ireland with her sports and wild scenery was but a holiday resort, soon to be exchanged for the routine of under-graduate life. In October he took leave of his kind hosts in

time to repair to Bembridge for a brief space before the opening of Term, and before the end of the month found himself in new quarters at Cambridge.

During his first year at Cambridge he purchased Sowerby's "English Botany," Babington's Manual, Parnell's "Grasses," and Harvey's "Algæ," besides taking in the "Botanical Gazette." This shows that he was now beginning to study Botany in earnest. One of his first steps on returning from Castle Taylor to Bembridge in 1850, had been to procure a copy of Hooker and Arnott's "British Flora." The want of such a manual had, of course, been much felt during the summer in Ireland, when his interest in botany had first been awakened by the wild plants at a distance from libraries or books of reference. His zoological library had received a most welcome accession about the same time, Yarrell's "British Birds" having been sent him (during his absence at Castle Taylor) by his old school-fellow "Hodgson major." He now added besides, to his collection, M'Gillivray's "British Birds," Yarrell's "British Fishes," Bell's "Crustacea," and Carpenter's "Physiology," subscribed to the "Insecta Britannica," and began to read Sir Charles Lyell's "Principles of Geology," and other books on the last-named science.

Once more the summer was spent amid the varied fascinations of Castle Taylor. With his parents and sister, he stayed there for four months, from the end of May to the close of September. Botany now occupied much more of his time than during the former visit, and a good part of the material published four years afterwards in his Paper on the "Flora of Castle Taylor" was collected at this time. His most gratifying botanical discovery in 1851, was that of *Viola stagnina*, not only a new plant to the Irish Flora, but one which had not hitherto been satisfactorily made out as a British species. It was first recorded (in the "Phytologist" and "Annals of Natural History") by Professor Babington, as "a new British *Viola*," on the strength of its discovery in Ireland by Mr. More. He found it by a "turlough" near Garryland, on ground where, the summer before, he had picnicked and shot partridge, inspected a silvermine, and caught perch "with a fly," little dreaming how near at hand lay his first real botanical prize.

Yet it is doubtful whether he would not, on the whole, have preferred the loss of this discovery to that of another which almost fell to his lot the same summer in the domain of the entomologist.

Until this year, he had made no attempt to go beyond butterflies in the lepidoptera ; but now, fortified with most of the parts of Westwood, he threw himself eagerly into his first season of moth-collecting, sugaring as well as hunting with the net, and, it may be added, enlisting in both departments the willing assistance of his sister, whom he would never permit to learn *English* names for any of the insects collected.

In the first week of June he took several specimens of a Burnet moth whose markings puzzled him, and which he could not find correctly described in his books. On the wing it most resembled faded specimens of the well-known Six-Spotted Burnet (*Zygæna filipendulæ*), but when captured was seen to differ pointedly from that insect, not only in the semi-transparency of the wings, but likewise in the disposition of its colouring : the green and scarlet seemed to run into each other without a definite boundary, instead of being clearly distinguishable as ground colour and spots, as they are in *Z. filipendulæ*. It was curious, too, that this moth should be found quite plentiful at Castle Taylor—in some localities actually swarming on the stony pastures—a full fortnight earlier than the usual date of the Six-Spotted Burnet's emergence from the pupa condition ; and the pupa-cases of *Zygæna filipendulæ*, which were seen in scores on the grass-stems, were all apparently still unopened. No other species of *Zygæna* on the British list, however, answered to the description any better ; and unluckily, an entomological friend whom he consulted assured him that his moth was merely

a suffused variety of *Z. filipendulæ* ; an answer with which, as his Westwood could not help him, he rested satisfied. A beginner could hardly have done otherwise ; but if at the time he had had access to a good work on European Lepidoptera, he could quickly have identified his insect with *Zygæna minos*—or, as it is now termed, *Z. pilosellæ* var. *nubigena*, a moth up to that time known only as an inhabitant of France, Switzerland, and Germany, but now familiarly spoken of among Irish naturalists as the “ Galway Burnet” : the name, of course, having been bestowed on it with special reference to its localization in that western habitat for which the subject of this memoir so narrowly missed being the first to record it.

Two years later the full discovery of *Zygæna minos* as an Irish insect was made by Henry Milner, of Nunappleton, in Yorkshire, whose capture, in 1843, of about a dozen specimens in the Burren district of Clare was published in the “ Zoologist” of January, 1854, by Mr. Newman. Mr. More and Mr. Milner met shortly afterwards in the haunts of the insect, and their acquaintance, thus formed on an entomological basis, bore fruit in later years in a correspondence on birds.

Not far unlike the history of *Zygæna minos* was that of another moth, which he took this year in abundance on the “ rock” at Castle Taylor. This was a small “ minor,” which, being unable to identify it, he sent to Mr. Stainton, by whom it was named *Miana fasciuncula*. It really, as afterwards transpired, was the form then known to Continental naturalists as *Miana captiuncula*, but not at that date recognized as occurring in the British Islands. Nothing more was heard of it, however, till, in July, 1854, it was discovered in plenty near Darlington, and forwarded by its captors there, to Mr. Doubleday, who took it for a new species, and named it *Miana expolita*. After this, in 1857, Mr. Birchall took it, in the Co. Galway, and in a Paper read in December of the same year added it, as *Miana expolita*, to the Irish List. A few years later still, the discovery of its identity with the continental species necessitated the dropping of the name of *expolita* in favour of that of *Miana captiuncula* ; but as eventually it was thought right to transfer it to another genus, it has once more been re-christened, this time as *Phothedes captiuncula*. The moth itself (the “ Least Minor”) is a very unpretentious little species. It is described by Mr. Stainton (“ Entomologist’s Annual,” 1855), as an insect “ readily known, being much smaller and darker than *fasciuncula* and extremely glossy.” But the celebrated entomologist, when he wrote those words, was not yet aware that specimens of the same moth had been named *fasciuncula* by himself. Thus, a curious fate prevented two new species from being added to the British Lepidoptera, on the strength of the captures made at Castle Taylor in 1851.

Eleven species were, however, added to the *Irish* list, as appears from Mr. Birchall’s Paper, “ On Additions to the Irish Lepidoptera,” read in Dublin, [2] in 1857. The author there expresses his obligations “ to Mr. Alexander G. More, of Bembridge, for a very complete record of his captures during a residence of several months at Ardrahan, which has enabled me to add no less than 11 species to our list.” The eleven species referred to had all been taken at Castle Taylor in 1851. They were—

1. *Calligenia miniata* (“ Rosy Footman” or “ Red Arches”).
2. *Nonagria despecta* (“ Small Rufous”).
3. *Agrotis corticea* (“ Heart and Club”).
4. *Noctua umbrosa* (“ Six-striped Rustic”).
5. *Amphipyra pyramidea* (“ Copper Underwing”).
6. *Epunda lutulenta* (“ Deep-brown Dart”).
7. *Hadena dentina* (“ Grey Shears”).
8. *Acidalia bisetata* (“ Small Fan-footed Wave”).
9. *Bapta temeraria* (“ Clouded Silver”).
10. *Aspilates gilvaria* (“ Straw Belle”).

## 11. *Polypogon tarsicrinalis*.

Perhaps the most interesting of the above was that which stands 6th in the list. Its identification had certainly afforded the greatest difficulty. It came in abundance to the sugar, especially during the first week of September, and being unable to identify it himself, he submitted it to all his entomological friends at Cambridge, only to find that none of them had met with the species. In the end it was sent to and named by Mr. Doubleday. Like the "Least Minor," it has undergone many metamorphoses of name. Doubleday called it *Charæas lutulenta*; in Stainton's Manual it is *Hadena lutulenta*; in Newman's British Moths it is *Epunda lutulenta*; and in Mr. W. F. Kirby's "European Butterflies and Moths," *Aporophylla lutulenta*.

The pretty "Rosy Footman" is still, so far as is known, confined in Ireland to the county Galway, and the "Copper Underwing" (*Pyramidea*) seems to be very local in Ireland, but so abounded at Castle Taylor as to be quite a pest at the sugar.

It was in the June of this year that, while staying a few days with friends in the county Mayo, he first visited Lough Carra. It was the nesting season of the Terns, and among them he found a few Arctic Terns, a species whose nesting by fresh water had not been previously noticed in Britain. Indeed, the pages of volume iii. of Thompson's "Natural History of Ireland," in which it is described as seeming to select marine stations only, were at that time passing through the press. The fact of the birds breeding by Lough Carra was communicated by Mr. More to the "Zoologist" nine years later (vol. xviii., p. 6891). From a paper contributed by Mr. R. Warren to the "Irish Naturalist" for June, 1896, it appears that Arctic Terns still nest beside Lough Carra. Their only other nesting-ground hitherto discovered inland in Ireland seems to be an island in Lough Mask.

An expedition into the Connemara mountains in the company of his father and Mr. Walter Shawe-Taylor was made in August. Here, amid the delights of grouse-shooting, he enjoyed also gathering the St. Dabeoc's heath (white as well as purple), and notes having once seen three Eagles (*Haliaeetus albicilla*) over the lake at Kylemore. The Hen Harrier, "common on all the hills," was "often seen quartering the ground, flying swiftly along quite close to it," in marked contrast to the Raven, also "not uncommon; flight heavy; fond of sailing round observing the ground below." One night, on the road between Galway and Oughterard, he saw something shining which he took for a glow-worm, "the only one I have seen in Ireland." As the same mistake has been often made, and no real Irish glow-worm has ever been found, it may be well to add that there is in the margin of this page of his journal a subsequent pencilled annotation: "some other luminous insect."

Towards the end of September the long visit came to an end, and sugaring and botany for the season were over.

The severe illness from which he suffered in November has been mentioned, and the year closed under somewhat depressing auspices. In December, however, he received, through Mr. Babington's influence, the distinction, on which he set a high value, of being elected a member of the Ray Club. His "First Ray Anniversary Dinner" is mentioned among the leading events in his journal for 1852.

Scientific naturalists are often suspected of some want of susceptibility to the charms of living nature; but the suspicion is sometimes far wide of the fact. From Mr. More's published writings little could be guessed of the intense delight with which he was accustomed to hail the sight of a rare or beautiful bird, the hearing of an unexpected note, the confirmation by experience of a reputed habit or a doubtful fact. For minute items of field-lore he was as con-

stantly on the look-out as for rare specimens. One day towards the end of March, “ hearing an unusual note from a hawthorn-bush,” he stole up and “ discovered a Redwing to be the author of it, conspicuous by the white streak over the eye.” Having never before been treated to the strains of the “ Norway Nightingale,” he stood for some time an attentive listener. “ It continued its rather monotonous but loudish song for some five minutes. This appeared to consist of two notes, sometimes carried on to four or six in rapid succession, or else the two with a little break—‘ cley-eet’ ; very different, however, from the inward soft song of the Fieldfare, which I heard the following day, and in quite a clear Thrush-like manner.” It was another new experience in woodland sounds when (on May 9th), “ Being out late in the evening, I heard the cry of the Eared Owl—‘ kri, kree, kree’ “; the familiar “ Cat Owl” of Irish woods being very rare in the Isle of Wight. But it was with even greater pleasure that, on the next day, along with the “ crake, crake,” of the Landrail, he heard for the first time “ the Quail’s ‘ wet, wet, wet,’ in the young corn.” It was now many years since that note had ceased to be, as described by Gilbert White, one of the sounds characteristic of a summer’s evening [3] in Hampshire. But Quails were still common in many parts of Ireland, and in his walks about Loughgall during the remainder of his stay he frequently heard their notes, and many times endeavoured, though without success, to catch sight of the bird. On June 3rd there is a disconsolate entry in his journal : “ I spent the morning at Tartaraghan looking for a Quail, but could not succeed in meeting with a single bird. And so I am fated to leave Loughgall after hearing them on every side, and yet having never seen them.”

THE next move (June 12) was to Castle Taylor. Here he had not been since the summer of 1851, when he took the moth which had subsequently turned out to be *Zygæna minos*. On arriving, “ I lost no time,” he says, “ in hunting up the moth on the rock, and took a good many in the rain on the 13th.” It was a few days after this that he “ had the pleasure of making acquaintance with Mr. H. Milner who had taken *Zygæna minos* the year before on Burren ; and he was very glad to be shown the insect so abundant quite close to him, as he had intended making an excursion all the way to his old locality.”

During this visit to Castle Taylor (where his parents also arrived before the end of June) he finished collecting materials for his Paper on the local Flora. But, perhaps, the most enjoyable part of the summer was a four days’ tour in Clare (July 24th-27th), the account of which may be given almost *in extenso* from his Journal.

“ Monday, July 24. Our party, composed of Captain and Mrs. Taylor, Fay, Father, and self left Castle Taylor at a quarter after 9 o’clock, with the most beautiful weather, and glass rising ; the dust having been also completely laid by the late constant rain, we could not have been more comfortable.

“ After passing Kilmacduagh the same loose limestone prevails, only becoming still more exclusively rock and less capable of cultivation ; in fact, all through what is called ‘ Rock Forest’ the surface is very similar to the most barren tracts of the Burren, and inhabited by much the same plants. We looked out in vain for *Potentilla fruticosa* ; and the only plant not growing near Castle Taylor was *Carduus tenuiflorus*, close to the boundary of the two counties. Several small lakes seen close to the road had generally one end thickly overgrown with reeds and sedges ; *Cladium mariscus* we particularly noticed. No birds were seen on the water.

“ We soon entered the well-wooded demesne of Mr. Blood, and drove through trees for about half-an-hour, quite a novelty in this part of the country. Further on more rock, and a good and rather near view of some of the Burren—a very perfect old ruin of a castle—the exterior wall with its corner tower still remaining. At Corofin, a large village, we first found *Senebiera didyma*. . . . Starting hence we noticed the great change produced by the strata.

Instead of dry, short pasture appeared heavy clay lands, producing in the valleys luxuriant crops of hay, and even along the hill-sides a most deplorable crop of rushes, docks, &c. The country now became undulating, with streams running along the hollows, bogs in some places, and the conspicuous foxglove reminding one somewhat of Connemara. The rank vegetation of coarse weeds was to my eye anything but a pleasant contrast with the neat and bright flowers of the mountain limestone, and certainly offered far less variety to the botanist. The water, too, besides accumulating on a less pervious soil, has not the drainage afforded by 'swallows' and caverns, but works its way in the usual manner towards the sea. The flat slates or flags were very remarkable at Inistymon, where the road crosses the river, which occupies an enormous breadth of bottom and is very shallow, disappearing in the distance in a dark sluggish stream below some trees.

"We soon reached Lahinch, and got an excellent view of Hag's Head, and the hill that slopes down from the Cliffs of Moher. Here a most surprising multitude of people had collected as if the whole population had migrated to the seaside, crowding every available wall and seat, as thick as crows, all inhaling the sea-breeze. It is wonderful how anxious the people here are for a trip to the sea; they appear to consider it quite indispensable. A great number of lodges of every sort, all well white-washed, give one the idea of a very important watering-place. Skirting along the bay to the left, we proceeded through bog and under hill-sides till a second collection of white houses proved to be Miltown-Malbay, and we took up our quarters at the Atlantic Hotel, very comfortably, but not in view of the sunset.

"There is a good bit of strand below the sandhills, but only for a short distance, since the coast is a low cliff with ledges of the slaty limestone rock, running far and irregularly into the sea, abounding in rockpools and inlets, in which wherever the water remains at low water, there the Purple Urchin quite paves the bottom and is a most curious and interesting sight; each one burrowing a lodgment for itself, and then adhering with its numberless suckers so firmly that it is a matter of difficulty to detach them; the suckers frequently break off sooner than let go their hold. The animal has also a way of moving its spines which, no doubt, assists progression; though they do not move much from their holes. A few, however, were seen scrambling over the backs of their comrades. Their size varies from a hazel-nut to an orange, and their colours are quite beautiful, contrasting well with sea-anemones of various hues.

"25th. In the afternoon we went across the sandhills. .... We saw *Viola lutea* (? *curtisii*, Bab.) growing in immense profusion, and a pink-flowered variety of the scarlet pimpernel (var. *carnea*) similar in colour to *Anagallis tenella* (bog pimpernel). Along a small cliff of rock, just below the mill, I found *Osmunda* growing in plenty *in the stone* along with several other common ferns.

"July 26th. We left the hotel for the Cliffs, passing Lahinch with its sandhills and bay (*Viola* ? *curtisii* seen here; *Althæa officinalis* near Miltown) . . . and made our way to the stables, built, as well as a tower for the accommodation of visitors, close under the best part of the Cliff. *Viola* still growing in the grass (not sandy). On reaching the edge, we betook ourselves to one of the little safe crows' nests built expressly, and gazed down this awful height some 700 feet. The descent is quite abrupt, and in some places the cliff overhangs the bottom; the horizontal strata so well marked in most parts as to make it look almost like a built wall. There are two detached pieces, one a long narrow ridge, and the other an isolated pyramidal needle; and there is no better way of realizing the stupendous height than to look first at one of these, and after calculating the distance, to carry your eye again to the water. At first I think the very magnitude makes the eye deceive itself, and underrate the height.

"Scores of Gulls were wheeling round in clamorous indignation, while the cliffsmen were following their avocation not far from the tower, and ever and anon a little Puffin or Guille-

mot would shoot out and describe a circle, only to return to the cliff their quick, straight-forward progress very different from the Gulls. The birds seen were Herring Gull (a few), Kittiwake (thousands), Puffin (a few), Guillemot (plenty), Razorbill (plenty), Chough and Jackdaw (a few), Kestrel (several), Peregrine (one), Cormorant (a few). Many Eagles are said to breed near Hag's Head, in a place quite inaccessible from the cliffs, retreating as it descends : one is seen rarely at Moher. The Rockdove is said to inhabit the caves.

“ The cliffsmen form a company of fourteen, with a captain of long experience from his youth up, and still said to be the best climber. They are seated in a loop at the end, and take the young birds in nooses at the extremity of a rod of some 12 feet. A man brings up four score, sometimes more, at a haul. All I saw were young Kittiwakes. The birds are boiled down for oil, and the flesh eaten afterwards by the men. They consider forty birds a-piece an average day's work, and these will produce one bottle of oil, worth two shillings. The season lasts about two months, and their earnings average one shilling per day. The oil is said to be good for bruises, etc. ; the feathers are also picked for sale. The names the birds go by are worth notice :—

The Puffin is called ‘ Parrot.’  
“ Razorbill “ ‘ Puffin.’  
“ Guillemot “ ‘ Cliff bird.’

The Puffins are said to resort to the green grassy ledges where they burrow in the turf, while the others lay their eggs on the bare rock.

“ *Sedum rhodiola* (rose root) grows on the cliffs, and *Silene maritima* (sea campion), with a dichotomous panicle of three or more flowers. The weather was too thick to see much, but a little further on we saw all three Isles of Aran, the largest furthest off.

“ After spending some three hours here, we continued our journey, and this prevented my attempting a descent on the rope, to which I had just made up my mind : the danger being only apparent, [4] not real.

“ Passing through some extent of similar ground to what we had seen before, boggy, hilly, and varied with streams, we presently regained the stony region of the mountain limestone, and the change was most remarkably apparent in the vegetation, the bright and neat plants of the calcareous soil forming a most pleasing contrast with the land of bog and low rich meadow-ground, through which we had passed. *Geranium sanguineum*, *Dryas*, *Sesleria*, *Antennaria* seemed to *smile* upon us as old friends, and the first especially in many places quite coloured the ground. Near a glen bounded by some masses of rock, we saw a most perfect square castle placed in a commanding position, accessible only on one side, the out-works built in with the rock, so as almost to be incorporated with it, forming thus a place of immense strength. We also noticed, what is very unusual, a round castle.

“ The road presently brought us quite close to the sea, and we enjoyed the pleasant breeze off the water, curling so blue under a gentle wind ; and, winding along beneath the first point, we alighted at a spot of great botanical interest. Some green tufts caught the eye, and these turned out to be Samphire ; close by, *Statice dodartii*, [5] quite recently added to the Irish flora, and new to me; under foot the pretty *Arenaria verna* spread its lovely little stars in hundreds, and in great tufts large enough to fill my hat ; and in the fissures of the rock *Asplenium marinum*, rather stunted ; but we gathered it very fine further on, at Black Head. Hence the road kept close under the Burren, rounding Black Head, and giving us quite a grand view of the mountain-side, very stony, to be sure, but in some places patched with green. This was, perhaps, the most enjoyable part of our whole trip, the water often within a

few yards, and on the other side the mountain rising quite suddenly. We found *Saxifraga hypnoides*, like a little *hirta*, and the *Cystopteris*.”

[“ But, alas (he adds later) we missed the great prize ; for, under our feet, and only across the road where we alighted to gather *asplenium*, a little nearer the water, was probably growing that lovely fern, the maidenhair. Had I seen Newman before this trip, we had not passed without a good search, at least.”]

“ 27th. Continued our way, seeing many old castles, and with an indistinct view of Connemara in the distance. At a part of the road, half way up one of the Burren hills, we had an excellent prospect, reaching to Galway (and, I believe, Castle Taylor, too). At the road-side, F. spied out *Nepeta cataria* of gigantic dimensions, *Orobanche rubra*, a thyme, and *Festuca rubra*. After visiting the 6 Holy Well/ where the water is wonderfully cold, we followed a foot-path, some three miles over the spur of the mountain, to Corcanroe Abbey, a ruin of some interest ; we were especially struck with the angular ornaments of the chancel roof, and the capitals of several of the pillars were well carved. They showed the tomb of King——, reported to have been represented as a true Irishman, with a pipe ! in his hand, of which the traces are still pointed out. At Kinvarra we saw *Coronopus didyma* plentifully, also *Carduus tenuiflorus*, and reached Castle Taylor about 6 o'clock in the evening.”

[1] In the Isle of Wight, and particularly near Bembridge and Ryde, the Corncrake is a very rare bird, except in autumn, when its “ season of song” is over.

[2] Nat. Hist. Review, vol. V., pp. 53, 54.

[3] See “ A Naturalist’s Evening Walk,” in *Selborne* :—

“ Then be the time to steal adown the vale,  
To hear the clamorous Curlew call his mate,  
Or the soft Quail his tender pain relate.”

It is sad to reflect how greatly *both* the birds here intended (the Quail and the *Edicnemus*) have since decreased.

[4] An opinion which the other members of the party did not endorse,

[5] Afterwards corrected to *S. occidentalis*, being a peculiar variety.

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