

Beale. Now, mother, if you feel sufficiently enlightened—

But Mrs. Dobson did not appear to hear. She had stooped to take in her own warm babyish hand with its precious burden of white blossoms and draw its abashed owner to a place beside her.

"I do not care to go indoors just yet, my dear. Henry, you say, has left for the city, and I enjoy the view so much from the piazza. I will stay and have Arnold entertain me if he may, while you attend to your morning engagements."

"I have none, unless a promise made to myself of a cozy hour with a new novel can be called an engagement."

Mrs. Wrexham answered as she gained the piazza and arranged for her mother's use a great canopy of the solidity and roominess of which invention she took apparently no further notice of what might be considered the idle whim of the older lady, who chose to continue a conversation with a stranger child.

Nevertheless, because it was a whim, Blanche Wrexham was in reality surprised, and more than slightly curious for "whims" and "fads" of any sort were the pet aversions of her mother.

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girl, she had assumed to be commonplace and uninteresting.

Somewhere—somehow—Mrs. Dobson's daughters had learned, or was it that they merely concluded that their mother was of Irish birth. To her relatives they had never heard her allude. In the husband's obituary notices, numerous as befitted the man of millions, much stress was laid on a Scotch Irish descent as accounting in part for his success. But her mother! Was a common birthland the bond so suddenly discovered between the led with his and the woman between whom and her childhood's home stretched the checkered years of striving and achievement?

Mrs. Wrexham felt herself grow positively homesick for a country she had never seen, to which she had never spared a conscious thought, so her tones were querulous when she spoke: "Mother, let Arnold go now; I am sure they have missed him downstairs."

This was indeed true, for before her sentence was finished, the pretty face of Bessie Byrne appeared at the open doorway, a look of surprise replacing its anxious expression as she noticed Arnold's position beside the guest.

Mrs. Dobson spoke with even more than her customary friendliness to her daughter's favorite maid, which was natural, remembering Bessie's recent bereavement; then bending, she whispered something to the boy before he left her side, and that something Mrs. Wrexham made sure was a renewal of the promise to visit his beloved "statue" in the pretty room.

"Have you had enough of scenery for one morning, mother?" questioned the hostess lightly; "if so we shall now go indoors."

"Indeed, daughter, I cannot say that I have been enjoying the scenery at all this time, though I meant to do nothing else when I chose to stay here. But the little boy's chatter brought back other scenes, and it is wonderful daughter, how clearly the mid's eye sees and how far! Your terraces and fountains and flower beds were all blank to me, and in their places I saw green lanes and hedges of hawthorn and lops full of blue violets that I can smell even yet!"

"Poor rich mother!" said the daughter softly, more so than she had ever before addressed her, except perhaps in the hour that made one widow and the other fatherless. "Then what do you see in place of me, 'ma more,' for I was part of the actual landscape?"

She stood now behind the chair with her white arms linked around her mother's shoulders and her peachy cheek resting on the plentiful white hair, from which its owner had removed the modish covering.

"I saw an other girl, my dear," Mrs. Dobson said, caressing the dainty white hands that lay so lightly above her mother-heart; "a girl, not handsome, not well dressed, but a happy girl for all that, and her old-fashioned pinafore was full of gold, the gold of primroses and cowslips and dandelions gathered for her Lady's altar. She was her Lady then, as she is Arnold's Lady to-day. You would not recognize that little girl, my dear, in—"

"My own motherly mother? Yes! I do," interrupted the listener, and I understand ever so many things that were mysteries before. Mother, there is no explanation due to your children, whose welfare you have set before your own; only why not make this morning's dream a reality and see again, if you so desire, the hedges of hawthorn and the green lanes that the little girl loved?"

"Ah, why not? Because—because, Blanche, the woman would miss what she forfeited long ago, the welcome of her Lady—the Lady she denied for the sake of gold and something else more precious, the ambitions of the man she loved."

Back to Blanche Wrexham's mind flashed again the phrasing of her father's will, and with it the full realization of her mother's late remorse; and the tenderness of her Celtic nature overleaping life long habits of convention and so-called culture, thrilled in words that fell on the stricken woman's ear as softly as evening dew on the sod of Kibauon.

"What of the open arms, mother?" she said. "I could not help hearing the little lad's theory, and even to me it rang true. 'It is not with flowers she would have them filled,' he said, 'nor yet with the children who forget her awhile and—and—are fain to return.'"

So with no further word of explanation Blanche Wrexham understood the secret of her mother's young life which was the sorrow of its closing years, and knew that in one morning hour, heedful of the call from the lips of a little child, she had resolved to rise up and seek redemption to the old church, which was indeed to her the house of her fathers. —Margaret M. Halvey in the Good Counsel Magazine.

CATHOLICS AND PATRIOTISM. An interesting passage occurs in a paper in the Nineteenth Century and after by Lord Hugh Cecil, in which the writer shows that "while love of country and love of Church may dwell as kindred in the same breast, the ardent Catholic can not feel towards his country as though he had never known anything more august and more inspiring than the altar."

The London Spectator speaks of the argument original, but so far as not see anything original in it. It is only what every Catholic has always felt and known. God and God's church must necessarily be above all secular and national interests in the heart of the Catholic. The Kingdom of God has a claim which takes precedence of everything else. As man's soul is above his body, so is a man's religion above his country. God is above Caesar. These are not new thoughts to Catholics. They should not seem new or strange to members of any Christian denomination. That the Protestant Spectator finds them original is only another proof of how Protestantism, with its narrow, local and national outlook, has darkened the minds of men.—Sacred Heart Review.

WIT THE BIRTHRIGHT OF THE CELTIC RACE.

IN IRELAND EVERYBODY JOKES AND IS RESPONSIVE.

I have often been assured by Irish people who know nothing of England that there is no such thing as humor in England. That, of course is insular prejudice, and they who say it have no knowledge or make little account of the great English humorist, for every man almost who has been prominent in English literature has been a great humorist. It would indeed be a sad literature were which the light of humor did not play.

What is usually true is that humor is the birthright of every Irishman. In England the possession of the gift is far rarer. There are great tracers which it does not illuminate at all; and there will be more laughter over a single Irish dinner table than over a whole district of respectable English folk.

It cannot be explained as a matter of race, it would be easy to say, and it is so if true in a limited sense, that humor only comes with a Celtic strain; but this would not explain at all the cockney wit, for example, which is something quite independent of race; although in the great humorists of literature one suspects always Celtic blood.

One has to be quite an old resident in England before one gets accustomed to one's jokes not being responded to, if one does ever get accustomed. I asked the conductor of an electric train which was bumping us on the way to Hammersmith the other day, and finally lunged us from our seats, if the line was not controlled by a man named Jerks. He only stared and my fellow travelers looked an affronted amazement.

As we came across from Holyhead recently the Irish ticket collector on the boat scrutinized our return tickets closely. "They're a fortnight old," said one of us. "Bedad then they're wearing their age well," he replied delightedly.

When we lunched in the train our supply of salt was of the sparsest. We addressed the English waiter. "The tax is on sugar, not on salt," we said.

We had to repeat the remark several times and afterwards to state plainly that we wanted more salt. Afterward the waiter and several of his fellows looked at us surreptitiously from behind barriers. We were apparently taken for a pair of escaped lunatics.

In Ireland the whole world jokes and the responsiveness is delicious. In England you have learned a sober demeanor. As soon as the first velvet breath of Irish air blows on your face you begin to roll back.

Luncheon at a Dublin restaurant a friend of ours of an impassively dry demeanor tried a joke on the waiter. When the bill was brought he placed on it a bright new farthing and went on talking to us, apparently unconscious of his mistake. The waiter stood by patiently till there was a pause in the conversation.

"I beg your pardon, sir," he said, but have you no smaller change?"

The Irishman's wit is humor as well as wit. Had humor is own sister to wit. No true Irishman is ever guilty of punning, that dreariest of all forms of fun.

The Irish humor is a rich humor. It is found at its best in the Irish American. "Mr. Dooley," Mr. Dooley is at least as great a philosopher as he is a wit, and in both capacities I salute him as one of the immortals.

It is this quality of humor that makes the Irish life so gay, so varied, so bewilderingly pleasant. It is this quality which makes material pleasures count for very little in the ordinary Irish life.

An Irishman will not think of his dinner so long as he is hearing good stories. He may be buttonhole in the street on his way to dinner and forget all about his meal. They live by joyment as well as by food, over there, and an Irishman does not care when he dines.

It is when he is ready, if it is a matter of the public restaurant; when the dinner is ready, if he is at home. I have been asked to dine at a Dublin house, and have arrived at the door with the materials for the dinner; and I have been punctual for lunch at 1.30, according to the card, and have been around in chairs and entertained me, while a maid, looking as though I had come with the milk in the morning, came in to light the fire and informed me that the mistress was lying down with a toothache. The next guest arrived at 2.45, and lunch was on the table at 3.

What matter? One grows accustomed to the want of punctuality in time; and the meal is worth having when it comes, for it is seasoned with gaiety.

They may or may not make big fortunes over there, but life is worth living.

What do they want with books, seeing how delightful is the page of life? They are not restless enough for quiet contemplation of the arts. Every man is his own and his fellows' book and picture. It is the slower, more contemplative races that are, in the right sense of the word, amateurs of the arts.

They will not even write their humor down. If they did, what a library of humor they might make! It is something too instant, too evanescent, too much of the time and the occasion for cold writing down.

FOUR COURTS LIBRARY. Everywhere men congregate in Ireland in the centre of wit and humor. It includes the learned professions and those whose age might have staled to laughter. The Four Courts Library in Dublin is one of the places whence the good stories emanate. The wits of Dublin, within my memory, have been Baron Dowse, a judge; Lord Morris of Spidalia, also a judge; Father Healy, a priest; Dr. Nedley, a surgeon.

All these are gone. Most happily, Richard Adams, County Court judge,

yet remains. And, to be sure, the vacant places have been filled. Even politics has no tax on laughter.

When you set out to tell good stories from Ireland they juggle each other so in your memory that you hardly know which to select. I will put down a few haphazard.

A friend of mine who was very enthusiastic about things Irish, herself being an Englishwoman, was driving on an outside car in Dublin. She was praising everything to the carman, and among the rest the famous Dublin stout with which she had just become acquainted.

"What an excellent drink it is," she said, "why, it's meat and drink, too."

"Thru for you, ma'am," replied the car driver, "an' a night's lodgin' too, if you only drink enough of it."

Another story was told me by a leading Dublin tea-trader who had taken no pledge against a joke. A well known Dublin citizen, also prominent on the temperance platform in Dublin, was addressing a crowded meeting and arguing against the assumption that stimulants were necessary to health.

"Look at me, boys," he said. "Here I am eighty years old. I've been a total abstainer all my life, and could you see any man of eighty healthier than I am?"

"Yorra, Mr. B.," said a voice in the crowd. "If you'd taken your glass like a man 'tis a hundred you'd have been by now."

BEGGARS' WIT. The beggars are chartered wit in Ireland—and occasionally the wits, unless one has the sense of humor to laugh with it. "May the blessing of God go after you," says the beggar with outstretched hand, and when you have passed without giving any alms, and never overtake you.

Again the Dublin carman when he has received an insufficient fare, looking at the coin in the palm of his hand, as is the way of his brethren elsewhere. "Ah, well, sir," more in sorrow than in anger, "I leave you to Him that made you."

Another on a similar occasion said heartily: "Yorra, bad luck to the Land League!"

"But why?" asked the astonished passenger. "Yorra, sure it killed out all the gentry."

In another case a friend of mine, a small man who was walking with his little sister, was imperturbed by a beggar, but gave nothing. The beggar mistook the relationship and got home neatly on the two by remarking, sotto voce: "Ah, well, then, may God help the poor little creature that couldn't say no to you."

"There goes high art," remarked a Wexford beggar as a very tall friend of mine with sketching apparatus passed down the street.

The beggar's wit is not always vituperative. One asked another of an elderly person who passed by with a crucifix. "What's come to the old gentleman at all at all?"

"Sure, didn't you hear? He was married last week."

"I thought there was something when I seen him goin' along like that, just touchin' the ground in an odd place."

In another case my sister was imperturbed by a female tinker, i. e., a friend with three children. Further on the met the lady's mate with three more.

"Our mother's dead, Miss, an' we're orphans," whined the children; "give a penny to the poor orphans."

My sister, young and dogmatic, fixed an accusing glance on the "orphans." "I don't believe you are orphans," she said. "I met your mother farther down the road."

Come away, childer, come away," said the father, sorrowfully. "She's an unbeliever." This, however, belongs more to pure roguery than to wit, and there's a deal of sly roguery in Ireland.

Sometimes the wit is in the form of a compliment. One remembers the famous compliment paid to one of the Genuinings by a Dublin coalporter. "Look at her, look at her! I could light my pipe at the fire of her eye. Only an Irishman could have said to the woman: 'Well I don't know your age, but sure whatever age you are, you don't look it.'"

There is the conscious humor in Ireland, but there is also the unconscious, or at least the subconscious, which is as much a part of Ireland as her greenness and her clouds. One remembers the host at the country hotel, who when an angry English guest informed him that he had put his boots outside the bedroom door every night of the week and they had never been touched, replied blandly: "Sure that's nothing at all. We're the honestest people in the world in this country. You might have your gold watch there and it'd never be touched, let alone your boots."

Again there is the answer a Dublin car driver made to a friend of mine who asked how many the car was supposed to hold. "Well, four if you sit cross legs and six if you sit familiar."

Humor, conscious or unconscious, is a thing that meets you everywhere in Ireland. The sly and innocent, appealing roguery is a thing that meets you on all sides; the topsy-turveness, the quaintness, the odd, unexpected way of looking at things, are the very essence of gaiety in the country.

It is in the face and the speech of every peasant; it is in the eye of you from the eyes of the town-folk. It makes a broad anywhere a thing of life and gaiety, electric with laughter, responsive to everything but dullness. That must have been the snake which St. Patrick scotched for it is not to be found from end to end of at least Irish Ireland.

BLUNDER WITHILY. In a land where they are all raconteurs, the wonder is that there are any listeners. It must only be by a general system of reciprocity. Even when they blunder they blunder wittily, and that makes the difference between an

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