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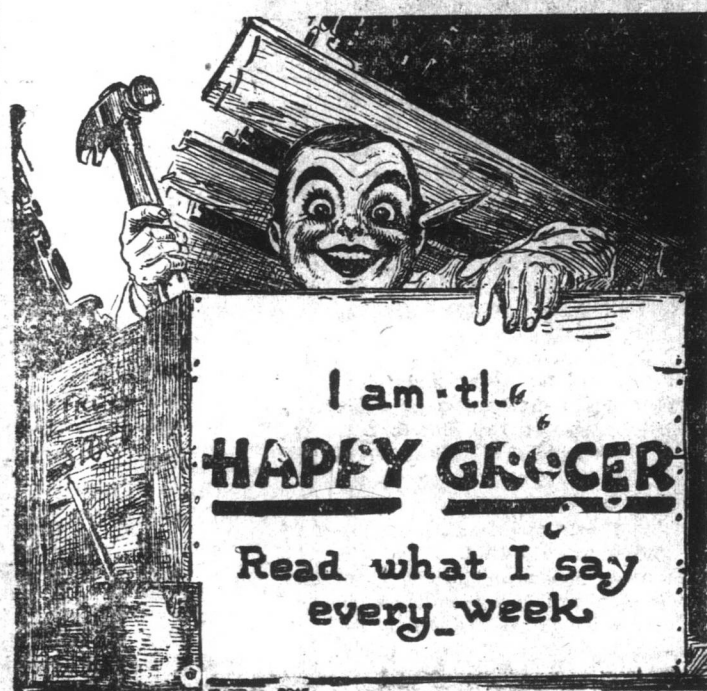
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Thistledown Frae Scotland.

(Contributed.)

HUMOURS OF DRAM-DRINKING.

"Leave me on drink, it gie's us mair than either school or college; it kindles wit, it waukens leal, it pangs us fu' o' knowledge. Bet whisky gill or penny wheep, Or any stronger potion, It never fails, in drinking deep, To kittle up oor notion By night or day."

So sang Scotland's greatest, Scotland's sweetest poet, and whether in his heart of hearts he believed the sentiment which in those lines we find so vigorously expressed, he has undoubtedly reflected therein, for the enlightenment of his countrymen through succeeding ages, the popular notion of the "dram" in Burns' day, and for some time thereafter, happy and whisky were regarded as almost synonymous terms; deep drinking was fashionable, and "the last beside his chair to fa" was verily the hero of the social community. "We're happiest when we're fou," is a well-worn proverb.

"We'll aye sit an' tittle owre a wee drapple o' croons as an old sun-writer, evidently impressed with the conviction that a man could not be better occupied than in consuming malt liquors. "Freedom and whisky gang together—'a' o' your dram!" shouts Burns. Yes, but the same sweet singer has fervently prayed:—

"Oh, wad some power the gille gie us To see oursel's as ither see us."

The old school people had sublime confidence in the "dram" as a revivifying agent, and no mistake about it. Indeed, it was regarded in some quarters as a necessity to existence. And "be carfu' o' the merces" was a stock phrase relating to it. The Highlander, content to pray for "a mountain o' snuff," wanted "oceans o' whisky." It was called in to act as an "eye-opener," and to serve also as a "night-cap." So regularly had a certain Scotch laird used it in the latter capacity, that once in his lifetime—so he said himself, he "got an' awfu' fricht." "We ran short o' the merces," said he, "and I had to gang to my bed sober. I dinna feel ony the waur the day, but, Lodsake, man I got an' awfu' fricht."

A well-known Scotch laird of the old school, Dean Ramsay tells us, expressed himself with great indignation when someone charged hard drinking with having actually killed people. "Na, na," said he, "I never knew onbody that was killed wi' drinking, but I was kenned wi' it. I was in the training." So have we all, laid—a great many, and yet the students have been numerous and persistent. That Highlander who, when the minister shook his reverend head towards him, and said, "Whisky is a bad, bad thing, Donald," replied, "Ay, sir, especially bad whisky," thought, no doubt, that he had made a concession in opinion that would greatly mollify his clerical mentor.

Many of your tipplers possessed a rough and ready wit, and from that fact no little humour has sprung. A Perthshire blacksmith, was once remonstrated with by the Free Church minister who lived nearby amidst his frequent and excessive indulgences. "Was ye ever drunk, sir?" inquired the smith.

"No, Donald," said the minister, "I am glad to say I never was."

"I thought as muckle," said the smith, "for, man if ye was once richt drunk, ye wad never like to be sober a' your days again."

"It's an awfu' thing that drink," exclaimed a clergyman, when the barber, who was visibly affected, had drawn blood from his face for the third time.

"Ay," replied the tonsorial artist, with a wicked leer in his eye, "it mak's the skin tender."

"You are reeling, Janet," remarked a country parson, meeting one of his parishioners carrying more salt than ballast, as a preliminary to lecturing her on the evils of her conduct.

"Troth, an' I came aye be spinin', sir," returned she, casting anchor in the middle of the road, and, tearing

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blantly, up into the face of her interrogator.

"You do not seem to catch my meaning clearly, Janet," continued the divine. "Do you know where drunkards go?"

"Indeed they generally gang whaur they get the whisky cheapest and best, sir."

"Yes, Janet, but there is another place where they go. They go where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth."

"Humph," sneered the case-hardened old sinner. "they can gnash teeth that have teeth to gnash. I hain't had but a'e stump this forty year."

And yet there are instances to show that some of those old tipplers repented somewhat of their folly. The celebrated teetotaler, the Rev. Dr. Ritchie, of Potterrow, Edinburgh, once went to form a teetotal society at Peebles, and a man and wife who heard the speeches were conscience-stricken, and after they went home the wife said:—

"Oh, John, I think we'll have to set doon our names to that thing yet."

"We'll gang to anither o' the meetin's yet afore we decide," said the husband.

Next meeting showed the picture of a young man ruined by drink and the two went forward at the close to set their names down.

"But are we never to taste it 'ava' they asked simultaneously.

"Never," quoth the minister, "unless for a medicine."

Nothing daunted by this the old couple took the pledge, and went home taking a bottle of whisky with them, the which Janet stowed away in the hen-house press to wait on cases of emergency. More than a fortnight elapsed before drink was again mentioned by one to the other, when one night John complained of an "awfu' pain in his stomach," and suggested that it might not be safe to go to bed without taking just half a glass or so "O, man, John, it's a pity ye have been sae lang o' speaking," said Janet. "for 'odsake, I've had sae many o' these twa's mysel' this aught 'ays thae there's no a drap o' you to the fore."

An old woman, who was a rigid total abstainer, was very ill. The doctor told the nurse that she must give her a little toddy the last thing at night, so when night came the nurse said to her patient:—

"The doctor says ye maun ta' some toddy."

"Oh, no, no!" whined the poor old body. "It's against my principle."

"But, remonstrated the nurse, "the doctor says ye maun tak' it."

"Aweel," replied the old woman, resignedly, "I suppose we maun use the means, but mak' it strong, and gar me tak' it—gar me tak' it."

It is remarkable how strongly the practice of dram-drinking had established itself in the social life of Scotland. It is the sore spot in it's national character—a distinct characteristic (happily in the wane)—and the inducements to participation have been often novel and therefore humorous. "Well-to-do individuals long ago frequently gave instructions to their relatives likely to survive them to be sure and have plenty of whisky at their funerals. A Montrose tradesman, feeling the near approach of his dissolution, signalled his wife to his bedside and very gravely said, "Ye'll get in a bottle o' whisky, Mary, for there's to be a sad cheenge here this night."

A West Country farmer on a certain moonlight night, setting out towards home from the market town, where he had sat too long and drunk too deep, had reached the burn, near to his own house, attempted to cross which by the stepping-stones he missed his footing and came down with a splash into the burn. Unable to raise himself beyond his hands and knees, he looked down into the clear water, in which the moon was vividly reflected. In this position and with the water streaming from his forehead and beard he began to shout to his wife, "Marget, Marget." The good woman heard and distinguished the well-known voice of her husband, and rushed out crying, "Ho, John! My John! Is that you, John?" "Whaur are you, John?"

"Whaur am I?" rejoined the voice from the burn, "guddeness kens whaur I am, Marget, but I see I'm far abune the mune."

An old "wife" who had the weakness for whisky, had been prevailed

upon to take the pledge. Shortly afterwards she called upon a rather "dronthle neebor," who was not aware of his visitor's reformation. The bottle was at once, as usual produced, and the recent convert to total abstinence was sorely tempted. She made, however, a gallant effort to remain true to principle, and, holding up deprecating hands, she said:—

"Na, thank ye, Mr. Mitchell. 'Twa ta'en the pledge. I have made a solemn vow not to pit han' or lip to glass again."

But then, seeing Mr. Mitchell was about to remove the spirits, she hesitatingly said, "I daur say if you wad put a wee droppie in a tea-cup I could maybe tak' it."

Trinity College of Music.

SENIOR—Ellen Mews, St. Edward's Convent, Bell Island.

THEORY EXAMINATION.

(In order of merit.)
Licentiate—Associate—Evelyn Rabbitts, Convent, Brigus.

ADVANCED INTERMEDIATE.

Hons.—Mary Collins, Convent Placentia; Madeline Mansfield, Convent, Placentia.
Pass—Beaule O'Neill Prim, Mercy Convent Academy, Military Road; Mary A. Burke, Convent of Mercy, Brigus; Agnes Armstrong, Mercy Convent Academy, Military Road; Anna Gaultois, Convent St. George's; Mabel W. Chafe, Mercy Convent Academy, Military Road; Marie Norris, Mercy Convent Academy, Military Road; Josephine Kennedy, Mercy Convent Academy, Military Road.

JUNIOR.

Hons.—Mary Organ, Mercy Convent, Military Road; Margaret C. Smith, Florence B. Smith, Convent of Mercy, St. George's; Annie Adams, Convent of Mercy, Brigus; Genevieve O'Brien, St. Bride's Coll., Littledale; Mabel Pynn, Convent of Mercy, St. George's; Mary K. Murray, Margaret M. Casey, St. Bride's Coll., Littledale; Dick McGrath, Mercy Convent Academy, Military Road.

Pass—Mary Casey, Mercy Convent Academy, Military Road; Aileen Fowler, Maisee Shea, Convent of Mercy, Brigus; Madge M. Hodge, St. Bride's Coll., Littledale; Ulan Kennedy, Convent of Mercy, Brigus.

PREPARATORY.

Hons.—Eleanor Badcock, Convent, Carbonear; Ethel LeShane, Mercy Convent, Military Road; Eileen Fitzpatrick, St. Bride's Coll., Littledale.

Pass—Ruth Jernigan, Convent, Brigus; Alice A. Chick, St. Bride's Coll., Littledale; Francis Gaultois, Convent, St. George's.

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Just Folks

By EDGAR A. GUEST.

WHEN OCTOBER COMES.

When old October comes along And sees the work all done, The children gathered in a throng, The old folks in the sun. Just resting up a little while And dozing in their chairs, The mother with a patient smile To that with red and gold. And grateful to the God above That she has lived them through, Perhaps he sees a little Of the tasks we've had to do.

He never knows the April snows And rains that battered down, He never sees the garden rose Or tulips in the town. He never sees the pansies bloom Or hear the robin sing. For old October spells the doom Of every growing thing.

He finds the trees complete for him To that with red and gold. But never feels the struggles grim That comes with growing old.

And yet perhaps he understands How patiently we've wrought, And sees our worn and wrinkled hands And knows how hard they've fought.

He never sees us in the fields Beneath the autumn sun. When brush and paint October wields The work has all been done; And yet, as every maple glows With wondrous beauty rare, I think perhaps October knows How much we've had to bear.

When comes October's angel down To summon us away, To robe us in his fairest gown And rest our weary clay, Although he has not seen us here In times of grief and woe, Struggling and toiling, year by year, I think perhaps he will know He'll find us with our labors done. And with his red and gold Will hint the trials, one by one, That come with growing old.

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