

IRISH FOLK LORE

JOHN OF THE TWO SHEEP.

By DR. DOUGLAS HYDE.

IN the olden time there were little wizard men and Leprechauns to be found in Ireland, but the cunning foreigners banished them, and the country's luck went with them.

At that time there was a young man named John O'Sullivan living in Turlochmor, near Castlebar, in the county Mayo. He was brought up in his grandmother's house, for his father and mother died when he was a year old.

It was well, and it was not ill. When John was fifteen years old his grandmother died and left him two sheep, a ewe and a wether. They were only six months old, and there was not a nice grassy field within a mile John would not bring his two sheep, and that he would not put them on pasture in it.

One day John was driving a lazy ass, and when it would not walk quickly for him he began beating it with a big stick he had. It chanced that there was a priest going the way, and he said, 'It's a great sin for you, John, to beat the poor ass so sorely. The ass is a blessed beast. Don't you see the sign of the cross on its back, and it's on an ass your saviour went riding going into Jerusalem.'

'Upon my word,' said John, 'if it was on this lazy thief He was riding the cross-rod! He'd ever have seen of Jerusalem!'

'May God help you, you senseless lad,' says the priest. 'Our Saviour is able to do everything, and if we seek anything from Him He will do it for us.'

'I don't believe a word of what you say,' says John. 'The people say you are a holy man, but I'll put my two sheep now against twenty-thirteen that if you go riding on this lazy thief you won't be at the cross roads before sunset this evening without striking a stroke on him, and it's only a short mile to the cross roads.'

The priest was a pleasant man, and he said: 'I'll make the bet with you, John, and he went riding on the ass, and he faced the ass for the cross roads. He was stroking the ass's neck and coaxing him to hasten him, but the ass was hardly putting one foot before the other; a snail would go as quickly as it.

The people were coming out of the houses on each side of the road, laughing at the priest and John. John was out before the priest, clapping his hands as hard as he was able. There was a tuft of blisters on the side of the road, and the ass began eating it, and he would not stir till he had eaten enough, and then, instead of walking, it lay down, and nearly broke the priest's foot under him.

'If you don't make haste,' says John, 'I have gained the wager. You are two hours on the road, and you are not half way yet.'

'There he's luck on a fool,' says the priest, 'and here is your bet for you. There is more sense in your head than I thought. Get out of my sight, yourself and your ass, and don't come near me any more.'

never be empty, but if you tell your secret to any person alive yourself and myself and the wether will be lost for ever.'

'Love of my heart, you are,' says John. 'I'll do everything as you tell me, but was it not long till you spoke to me, and we alone since my grandmother died—the blessing of God with her soul? He was not able to say more, for the ewe spoke—'

'Cease speaking, it's your grandmother that's talking to you, and it's your grandfather who is the wether that is stretched dead at the gable of the house. There is wonder on you to see us in the form of two sheep, but you won't wonder when you hear the story. When your mother was dying she left it a charge on us to take care of you, whether we were alive or dead, till you would be twenty-one years old, and we promised her that. When we went into the presence of the Great Judge we were sent back in this form to fulfil our promise.'

'I'm thankful to you,' says John, 'and I'll do everything as you say, and as for the secret you'll see I'll keep it, though people think I am a fool.'

John went to the town, bought the skin, and came home; he gave lots of hay to the ewe, and when the darkness of night came he put the skin about himself, and stretched himself beside the gable of the house.

'You'll be perished with the cold before the wolf comes,' says the ewe, 'sit inside by the fire till you hear a mass, mas, from me.'

He went in, put down a fire, and sat down himself, thinking over everything that happened to him. Sleep was coming on him when he heard 'Mas, mas, mas' from the ewe, and out with him.

'Make haste,' says she, 'he is coming.' John threw the skin over himself, and lay beside the gable of the house. It was not long till the wolf came but when he thought to get a grip of the ewe John gave him a thrust, so that he sent the knife through his heart, and he fell dead. He opened his stomach then, and took out the heart, and rubbed it on the wether's tongue, and the wether rose up as well as ever he was.

Then the wether and the ewe were kissing each other. John searched and found the purse of gold. That purse was more valuable than the whole of the county Mayo, for it would never be empty.

There was a long conversation between John and the two sheep. The ewe told him she would have two lambs every year, and there would not be a single lamb in the fair half as good as them. 'If anyone inquires of you what father they had, say you do not know. Go to your bed now, and to-morrow morning you can tell the neighbours that you killed the wolf that came spying on your two sheep, and that was making a great slaughter on the sheep of the country. You will get great praise, especially from the priest, for he killed many lambs on him. I will not have any other conversation with you till you want my advice.'

'I have a couple of words to say to him,' says the wether. 'The wolf was Paddy Foinin (i.e. Paddy, son of Ned); you remember that he was hung seven years ago for killing Enliah MacGrive, and for stealing his shur, of sheep. When he went into the presence of the Great Judge he was put back on this world in the form of a wolf for seven years, and now he is found in the middle of Lough Derg in form of a monster and he will be in it till the end of the world.'

'I remember him well,' says John: 'it's little, but he took the ear off me one day when I went to look for a nest on his ground.' 'Go to sleep now, I have no other word to say,' says the wether.

On the morrow, early, John put the two sheep into a field of green grass and then went to the priest's house and told him that he had killed the wolf the night before. The priest did not believe him, and said: 'Go home you rascal; I got enough of humbug from yourself and your ass a short time ago.'

And to get a big price for the lambs every year and he bought a little farm every year; and he had plenty of land when he was twenty years old, and there was not a young girl within twenty miles of him who was not in love with him. But a great change came on John. The evening before he was 21 years of age the ewe said to him: 'You will be 21 years to-morrow, and the care of you won't be on me or on your grandfather any longer; the promise we gave is fulfilled, and we will go to eternal rest. To-morrow morning you will find us dead at the gable of the house, make a deep hole, and cover us in it.'

There was great grief on John, and he said: 'I would like to go with you, my heart will break with grief and loneliness.'

'You cannot go with us,' says the ewe, 'your worldly time is not spent; there are long years before you yet.'

That evening John took the two sheep home with him, and put them under the shelter of the gable of the house, but he did not sleep a wink. In the morning early he went out, and found the two sheep dead. He made a big deep hole and covered them in it.

'Now,' says he himself, 'I am twenty-one years of age to-day, and I'll have a drink of whiskey on that account, and to banish my grief.'

He went to the town, and he bought a flask of whiskey, and came home. He began drinking, and it was not long till he was blind drunk. A neighbor came to him, and began talking to him, and he let out the secret of the two sheep. The story went from mouth to mouth till everyone in the parish had it.

In the morning the purse of gold was gone from him, and he did not stop the drink till he spent every penny he had and after that he used to be going from village like a half fool, seeking something to eat.

'Now, was it a wise man or a fool that he was?'

\* NOTE.—A man who has brought 1000 sheep into the fair of Ballymasloe is a 'ruddie cooran' or 'knight of sheep.'

A CANVASSER'S EXPERIENCE Suffered From Kidney Trouble and Rheumatism—Was Becoming Despondent When Aid Reached Him.

From the Journal St. Catharines. One of the most recent witnesses about Fontville and vicinity regarding the virtues of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills is John F. Price, who is widely known in the Niagara District as he has been on the road as an advertiser and canvasser for six years, and has thousands of acquaintances. His complete cure has added lustre to the reputation of this great medicine. Hearing of Mr. Price's sufferings and restoration, a history of his case was requested. His story is: 'I am 26 years of age and have been afflicted with rheumatism for seven years. At times I have been unable to get my clothes on or off without assistance, and have often been compelled to have my food put for me at table. In the winter of 1897 I was attacked with a grippe, which settled in my kidneys. I then became so ill that I was compelled to abandon all employment. At that time my liver and kidneys combined in what seemed to me their last attack. I used several medicines and doctored in Buffalo and St. Catharines without getting any relief, so my confidence in medicine was about gone. I was getting no rest day or night and was becoming despondent. Finally, I was persuaded to try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. I did so and have used in all eight boxes, and am now able to state that I feel better than in the past ten years. These pills are the nearest to a specific of anything I ever used, and they are the cheapest and best medicine I ever tested, and having thoroughly reached my case and effected a cure, I feel so gratified for the relief I have obtained that I think it my duty to publicly make this statement. If all who are suffering will give Dr. Williams' Pink Pills an honest trial, I am sure they will be as enthusiastic in their praise as I am.'

BOURKE COCKRAN ON THE WAR. Speaking at the golden jubilee celebration of Villanova College, Philadelphia, the Hon. Bourke Cockran made this incidental allusion to the war: 'He who would have prophesied that in 1898 a great power would risk the lives of citizens not for selfish purposes, but to redeem an oppressed people, he would not only be considered extravagant, but insane. Yet as I speak men are hurrying over the seas, crowded in transports, suffering under a tropic sun, the very flower of American youth, the millionaire beside the laborer, maintaining this struggle not for gain, but in the name of humanity. The American people are reluctant to draw the sword against a Christian power, but they will never sheathe it until the principles of Christian civilization shall be vindicated. The situation reveals a measure of human progress no philosopher could expect and of which the poet never dreamt. I made this digression, which is perhaps not suitable on this occasion, because I find in the literature of the age and in certain of the orations of to-day a distrust, an idea that our Government is in danger of decay, if not retreating to its ruin. This is not a sordid but a generous age. It is not true that this is not an age of chivalry. It is not the portion of the few but the common heritage of the whole people. In the so-called ages of chivalry I should imagine most of the buildings were of frame structure, yet I never heard of belted knights rescuing people from fires, yet at every fire in our large cities are developed greater deeds of heroism than those of Anjou, Cressy, or Agincourt. This is not a sordid or indifferent age, but a chivalrous and generous age.'

HOW TO GET RICH. We refer to the richness of the blood. If you are pale and thin, you are poor in strength and nerve power. Scott's Emulsion drives away thinness and palor and brings rich blood and nerve power.

THE SUMMER SCHOOL.

By Henry Austin Adams, M.A., in Donaghoe's for July.

And now the Summer School. I hear that the outlook for both Cliff Haven and Madison is brighter than ever. I know of many priests and laymen who intend to go to a Catholic summer school this summer for the first time. I also know of many more who do not intend to do any such thing.

It is my private opinion that an immense amount of advertising, explaining and arousing, which ought to be done, is not done, or, at best, half done. Many have no idea what these schools are; many more have a wrong idea; others make no bones at all about pooh-poohing the whole movement as a fad—especially appealing to single ladies of devout habits and numerous summers, and to clergymen apt to be scrupulous in the nice points of finger-nails and wrist-bands.

Those who know what they are talking about and who are capable of really large ideas of any sort, are unanimous in their advocacy of the movement. Sad, indeed, is the spectacle of a Catholic possessing the measureless opportunity, which any Catholic in this country possesses, for becoming a member of the mighty invading army of the people of God—invaluing the promised land of ever higher civilization and deeper culture—missing the signs of the times and actually retarding by his indifference the glorious (and inevitable) consummation.

Nothing is easier than criticism. Any lazy man can point out flaws in the best laid plans of the brave and noble who are doing anything. People, stupid and shallow, find it easier to refrain from helping a great intellectual work by objecting to its means operandi than by openly confessing that they themselves are clams and jellyfish who have read absolutely nothing since they left college, except the newspapers, and are now mentally so lethargic that anything like thought is utterly beyond their powers. Depend on it! The man who objects to features and details in the summer school movement may be put down unhesitatingly as an intellectual oyster.

'THE STAR SPANGLED BANNER' AND 'AMERICA.' The Bookman rejoices because 'The Star Spangled Banner,' which, by the way, was written by a Catholic, is accepted as the national anthem by patriotic Americans, who rise when it is being sung. 'We are still more glad,' says our contemporary, 'that the hybrid fad known as "America" is distinctly not accepted as national, many of the listeners remaining seated, as they ought to do.' There is no reason on earth for stealing the English anthem, 'God save the Queen,' and calling it our own just because a certain Mr. Smith once wrote some mushy ballad-dash to its own music and called the composition 'America.' There was at least one man who admired 'America,' and he was its author, Rev. Mr. Smith. He once sent a manuscript copy of it to the Vatican Library, with a note in which he expressed the hope that 'America' would teach the Pope and his pre-riden people 'the meaning and value of liberty.' We deprecate attempts to improve Mr. Smith's hymn. It ought to be improved out of existence. —Ave Maria.

Who does not know women and young girls who are continually in tears? Who always see the dark side? Who have frequent fits of melancholy without any apparent cause? The intelligent physician will know that it is some derangement of the complicated and delicate feminine organs. The young girl suffers, bodily and mentally, in silence. There is undue weariness, unexpected pain, unreasonable tears and fits of temper. Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription exerts a wonderful power over woman's delicate organism. It is an invigorating tonic and is specific for the peculiar weaknesses, irregularities and pain of derangements of women. Careless, easy-going doctors frequently treat their women patients for biliousness, nervousness, dyspepsia, liver or kidney troubles, when the real sickness is in the organs distinctly feminine, and no help can come till they are made perfectly strong by the use of Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription. Send 3 cents in one-cent stamps to World's Dispensary Medical Association, Buffalo, N.Y., and receive Dr. Pierce's 1008 page COMMON SENSE MEDICAL ADVISER, illustrated.

The following interesting statement appears in 'Orestes A. Brownson's Early Life,' by Henry F. Brownson: 'About this time (1833) Brownson, returning from a round of lecturing, related that while in Washington he was one day discussing with Calhoun and Buchanan the necessity of the Catholic Church for salvation, when Daniel Webster joined them, and Buchanan said to Webster: 'We were talking about the Catholic Church, and I, for one, am pretty well convinced that it is necessary to become a Catholic to get to Heaven.' 'Have you just found that out?' asked Webster. 'Way, I have known that for years.'

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