

didn't expect me, but I wint in an' had me supper all the same."

"Tell me about it, Jimmy," I said, preparing myself to enjoy a yarn.

"Wid all the pleasure in loife, sor. It's a good story, but they won't tell it in camp, becoss it's to the honour an' glory av Jimmy O'Dowd. Well, sor, sharp on eight o'clock I finds myself at Helder's Farm. You know how bright the moon was last night, an' afore I got there I saw some figgers I thought I knew. None av thim walked very stiddy, an' I guessed they were up to a lark. They were hidin' behind the wall whin I wint through the courtyard; an' I let on not to see thim, though they was waitin' for the fun wot didn't come off. I wint up to the door as bould as brass, sor, an' knocked, an' I heard thim laughin' fit to bust themselves behind the wall. Whin she comes to the door, the purty colleen, an' sees a British soldier there she goes all whoite an' trimblin' loike; but whin she recognises O'Dowd, she breaks into the swatest smile. But I saw I wasn't expected, and I didn't give myself away. I jes says wid me best how an' me Sunday smiole, I've come to wish yez all a merry Christmas' Wid that she opens the door wide an' bids me come in, an' I goes in and stops there, yer honner, till the back av ten o'clock."

"Good Jimmy, carrying the war into the enemy's camp. Well, what then?"

Jimmy dusted the table vigorously with his coat sleeve, and then turned to me with a perplexed look on his face.

"Yer honner, this is a crooil war. I niver thought av it till last night. We're the same mother's sons; y we shouldn't be tearin' at each other's throats."

"Have you come back a pro-Boer, Jimmy?" I asked, experimentally.

"I don't know what that is, sor; but I'm agin this war," he said, steadily. "What for should we fight decent folk an' turn thim out av their own land?"

I perceived that there had been some discussion at the burgher's farm, and that the women of the Helder household had talked to Jimmy to some purpose. But he was an individual of such limited intelligence that it was not worth my while to carry on the discussion with him.

"It's natural you should feel as you do in the circumstances, Jimmy. I suppose this won't be your last visit to Helder's Farm?"

"It's a grand country this, yer honner; it laughs when you touch it, an' there's a livin' in it decent for man and baste. I'd loike to be done wid solderin' after the war's through, an' settle down in it."

"You might do worse, Jimmy. Did you tell Miss Helder this?"

"No, yer honner, I didn't dare," he answered. Then there came upon his face that indiscribable pathos which could disarm even a just anger against this wayward son of Erin.

"They've been blackballin' me to her, yer honner; y some av the bhoys that's eaten up wid jealousy an' spite. Have I served yez faithfu', an' will ye do something for O'Dowd that he won't forget till his dyin' day?"

"What is it, Jimmy?"

"Could yez take a walk quite nateral like to Helder's Farm an' see the colleen, an' spake a good word for Jimmy O'Dowd? He may have been a baste in the past, but he'll be a baste no longer. For to win a smile from the colleen or a kiss from her lips a man wad give up everything in the wuruld."

With that Jimmy began to empty his pockets on the little table, and the contents were a sorry sight. A few bits of silver, a

handful of coppers, some exploded bullets, an old knife, a few bits of string—such was Jimmy's stock in trade. But presently from an old pigskin purse in his inner pocket he took two gold coins, and laid them above the silver he had placed in a little heap.

"If yer honner woud take care av me bit av money an' keep it out av harm's way. It's savin' av ivery penny I'll be now; yer honner knows what for."

I felt my heart go out in an odd way to this rough Irishman, upon whom love had laid its divine, uplifting touch. Strange gropings after a better life were wrestling in his soul, and there was a look of dumb entreaty, a prayer for help, in his eloquent eyes which no man could resist.

"An' I'll take the pledge if you please, sor, after breakfast this very day. An' could yer honner spake a good word for me at the farm? It would go a long way wid the colleen an' her mother, for its moighty quare notions they 'ave of the British soldier in thim parts. They spake av 'im as if he was a woid baste an' nothin' less."

I promised Jimmy heartily enough, and the thought of a visit to Helder's Farm pleased me not a little. I knew it would add to the odd bits of experience I had picked up in the wake of the war. But the visit did not come off, nor have I to this day spoken face to face with the sweet Dutch maiden who had won Jimmy's honest heart. I rose shivering from my bed that day with a burning fever in my veins, and when the doctor saw me I was peremptorily bidden go back to it, and stay there until he gave me leave to get up. A sharp attack of fever laid me low for a week, and when we got our marching orders again I was just able to walk and no more. During my illness no woman could have been more tender or more sympathetic than Jimmy O'Dowd. His love affair progressed, it seemed to me, with surprising rapidity, and when the parting day came Anna Helder had promised to wait for him and keep true till the dawn of brighter and more peaceful days. What ending Jimmy's romance may have I know not, but this I know, that even in its early stages it made a better man of him; it caused him to be ashamed of his past record, and awakened in him an eager longing after things honest and lovely and of good report. And so whether it bring to him ultimate happiness or not, it has not been without its message of inspiration and grace for the soul of Jimmy O'Dowd.

In The Orchard.

When the fiery maples blaze through a smoke of golden haze,
And the early frosts begin,
Then the children have such fun, brisk and busy every one,
Gathering the apples in.

It was such a pretty sight when the orchard blossomed bright,
May-day wreaths on every bough,
While the petals fell below in a drift of rosy snow;
But we think it prettier now.

For we love the apples red, blushing, burning overhead,
All a-tiptoe for a fall;
Up the mossy trunk we spring, to the gnarly branch we cling,
Till at last we pluck them all.

On a windy winter's night, when the fire is flaming bright,
We will bring them from the bin,
And with peals of laughter glad we will tell what fun we had
Gathering the apples in.

—Ex.

Two Bits of Fun.

'Manda was perched up on the stone wall, a piece of johnny cake in one hand and a raw turnip in the other.

The yellow leaves of the big elm came fluttering down around her. There was a sweet smell of ripened grapes from the wild vine near her. The air was warm and mellow and full of September haze. It was very still, only now and then one heard ripples of laughter and the sharp click of balls and mallets.

"Do you see 'em?" said 'Manda's twin sister, 'Melia, reaching up so that her freckled forehead was on a level with the stone wall. Poor 'Melia couldn't climb up because she had a stone bruise on her foot, and it hurt her to put her toe in the crevices of the wall.

"Yes," replied 'Manda, peering through the yellow leaves. "'Lizabeth Edwards has got a croquet-party. More'n a dozen there! The girls have got on white dresses, and the boys have velvet jackets and ruffles on their shirt-waists."

"I don't see why she didn't invite us!" said 'Melia, pettishly.

"'Cause we're poor and our mother takes in washing and our best dresses are only gingham," soberly.

"We can play croquet real well, though! My, don't I wish we had a set?"

'Manda took another bite of her turnip, crunched it between her even white teeth, and then said, earnestly, as she scrambled down from the wall:

"I say, 'Melia! Let's make one!"

"How?"

"Oh, you'll see!"

And pretty soon slower-witted 'Melia "saw."

Stout, yellow willow stems, with leaves stripped off, were bent hoop-like for the arches; for mallets 'Manda begged two large spoons from mother, and long sticks made handles for them. Two sticks with strips of red, green, blue, black, orange, purple, and white wound around them served nicely for stakes; while as for balls, what was better than the little hard apples, the windfalls scattered on the orchard grass? 'Manda took a red Spitzenburg and 'Melia a bright Rhode Island greening. And whenever the "balls" were smashed by lusty blows, it was easy enough to get more.

Such a jolly game as they had! It was so funny that the girls never quarrelled a bit—and I'm afraid I can't say that of the young folks over in Judge Edwards' yard.

"I tell you what, mother," said 'Manda, as she went into the house for a new spool, "home-made games are the nicest, after all. One has two bits of fun with them! The first is the making them and the second is playing them!" —Mary E. Q. Brush, in Youth's Companion.

A clergyman, taking occasional duty for a friend in one of the moorland churches of a remote part of England, was greatly scandalized on observing the old verger, who had been collecting the offertory, quietly abstract a half-crown before presenting the plate at the altar rails. After service he called the old man into the vestry and told him, with emotion, that his crime had been discovered. The verger looked puzzled. Then a sudden light dawned on him. "Why, sir, you doan't mean that ould half-crown of mine! Why, Oi've 'led off' with he this last fifteen years!" —Denver Times.

What makes life dreary is want of motive.
—George Eliot.]