

erior to every opposition, advancing higher and higher, in dignity and power, until, to day, despite all the intrigues of heresy, schism and Mohamedanism, she spreads out her maternal wings and fans the universe with the breath of Christian peace. And could he have directed his prophetic gaze towards the future, he would see, too, that she is destined to go on increasing ad infinitum, and be dissolved but in the mists of eternity.

I shall now endeavor to prove that the Irish have contributed more largely than any others towards making the United States Catholic, and that they have, consequently, a claim to the greatest reward. We must not, of course, forget that many other peoples also did much for the Church in America. Nor must it be understood that "we love others less, if we love the Irish more." To the genius of the Italian we are indebted for the land itself, on whose virgin shores the seeds of Christianity were first sown by the hand of the enterprising Spaniard. The Frenchman, too, with his undying zeal for religion, has irrigated with his life's blood the tender offspring of this Christian fervor, and is entitled to an honored place; while the German, playing no small part on the stage of American Catholicity, must be numbered among its most genial benefactors. In the first place, their language, although a grand mark of patriotic zeal, has a tendency to keep them clustered together in towns and villages and acts as a barrier, which prevents them from associating with the generality of people, thereby, confining to the limits of their own social and political circles all those lofty and sagacious qualities, by which they have been distinguished always and everywhere. But to the zeal of the Spaniard, and the constancy of the German, the enlightenment and the liberality of the Frenchman, the Irishman has added a more penetrative genius, a more ardent faith, a more liberal ability, and a more extended experience. He speaks, too, the language of the people, finds his way immediately into every department of American industry,

BUILDS HER CHURCHES AND HER SCHOOLS, her railroads and her cities, enters the very council chambers of the Republic itself, and there, by his superior ability and the integrity of his character, proves himself a worthy representative of his Gred or Country.

The number of his people also far exceeds that of any other foreign element. To no less authority than the Boston Pilot I am indebted for the following statement: "The total non-English population of the United States at present is, roughly speaking, 50,000,000; of which Irish by birth or descent, at a moderate estimate, are 20,000,000; Germans pretty nearly 10,000,000; French probably 2,000,000." From the same reliable source, we learn also that, "Irishmen either by birth or descent, hold positions in every department of importance in either church or state."

I now deem it safe to say, in conclusion, that when modern culture and a little more time will have removed the veil of bigotry from the fair face of America, when religious prejudice shall cease to exist, and virtue will receive its reward, to Irishmen will be assigned a place among the foremost men of the nation. Then, when the Irish harp, lulling to sleep every wave of discontent that disturbs the tranquil bosom of Columbia shall ravine the spirit of olden times, the world will acknowledge that the anticipations of Ireland's prophetic bard have been realized.

"The lion then shall lose his strength,
And the speckled thistle its power;
But the harp shall sound sweetly,
Between the eight and ninth hour."

Finally, when the Niobe of nations shall call around her all those who have aided her in developing her independence, liberty, and power, to allot to them their places in accordance with their merit, you shall see that monument of perpetual fame adorned with the emblems of many nations. High up towards its summit, and floating to the breeze of heaven, you shall behold the flags of the Frenchman and the German, the Italian and the Pole, but higher yet, above them all, right near the bright folds of the flag of liberty, shall wave the green banner of Ireland.

A contemporary contains an advertisement of a dog for sale. Among the good points of the animal are these: "He will eat anything, and is very fond of children."

[WRITTEN FOR THE TRUE WITNESS.]

BELL'S PLACE.

BY ROBERT B. MAY, AUTHOR OF "THE RPE CASTLE," ETC.

I.

Brothers; William and Harry Bell. The first an ironwork moulder, the other a turner in an earthenware factory. The town near which they worked was called Seggerton, forming a part of that district celebrated throughout England, in fact the world over, and known as the Staffordshire Potteries. William was a married man; Harry, the younger by some years and single, lived with him. About three miles from town, on the Trentham road, stood their cottage, pushed away in one corner by a lane, which, after burrowing across country from the nearest village, suddenly burst into the highway at this spot. The little dwelling was quite hidden by thick hedges and ancient trees which, in summer time, spread their leaves and built an arch, making natural sun-dials as the shadowy boughs drooped above the modest roof. Garden ground in front, evidently well looked after; and, in the rear, a large number of home made contrivances for the keeping of pigs and hens, and other domestic live stock, gave a good idea of the tastes and habits of the owner. Almost at the gate stood a finger-post giving the distance, thus: Normacott, three miles (up the lane); Trentham, five miles, (down the road); Seggerton, three miles, (up the road.) Bell's place, as folks called it, was known far and near, and for many just and unjust reasons. "The Potteries," at the time I refer to, bore no very great reputation for the thrift or enlightenment of its working population. On the contrary, many sad reports of their deep debasement and total lack of anything like self-help, either mental or physical, were on record. Good wages were earned and spent in the most degrading form of sport and cruelty. The home was but a stopping place for loutish fellows between the beer-house and their work, and men were "masters" of their wives in a far more brutal sense than local application of the term meant ever to convey. Boredom on the "Black Country," it almost seemed as though the lurid glare of blast furnaces, reflected on the dark horizon of the night, had struck into their hearts and withered up the source of human kindness and good will. And yet the country all around so fair. Thus, then, the Bell family were marked characters. Many chose to wonder how the men could live so far away from work, tramping morn and night that distance. And others thought that Madam was a bit too proud. Some said the children were stuck up little brats; and as for flowers and such like they gave to teacher at the school—"my gracious, anybody could do that, anyway—if they had 'em." But still no finger could they place upon a fault, but then, you know, one could be made to fit as easily as a glove upon the hand. A word dropped here and there in jealous spite, though but the outcome of untutored brain, must surely leave a train of mischief in its wake. Not all, however, quite so dense. A few there were who proudly hailed them brethren. These two were often called the Black and White Bells, a stupid word-play on the gentle flower, and the truly comical contrast presented when they walked together on their way from work. William, tall and brawny, a perfect Hercules in build, but so grimed with iron dust and sweat, his face so cut and slashed with molten metal, that even when he spoke or smiled his features seemed to crack the joints of a black and shining mask. And Harry, small and pale, in overalls without a waist and buttoned close around his neck, whitened from head to foot with potter's clay and looking something like a circus clown who had broken bounds and left behind his rouge pot and his grin. But brotherly affection is a pleasant sight; and as they spanked along the high street, bound for their country home, many a woman turned to look and, very likely, lectured on the subject to her 'man' that night.

II.

It was the first of May; a wonderfully bright and pleasant morning and a holiday as well. A double celebration in regard to the town, and a triple one for the Bell people. As thus, it was May Day. It was the opening of the new Town Hall at Seggerton and it was 'mother's'

birthday. Consequently, although it was early, and the sun had but just made up its mind to stay out for the day, the cottage door was wide open and much confusion and excitement going on inside. It is as well to mention this before the whole family, both old and young, appear. Some people cannot bear a noise. Nailed upon the finger-post was a placard giving the numerous attractions. Speeches and Dinner at the new Town Hall. Trip to Trentham Park, by kind permission of the Duke of Sutherland. Old English Maypole dance and games on Normacott Green. Fireworks, and many other minor affairs. About seven o'clock Harry drove up with an empty hay-cart and turned the horse's head direct towards Normacott, thus pointing out the direction of our party. "Here's Uncle," with a curdling yell, and down the garden came a fine procession of garlands, ribbons, bows and hawthorn branches, glistening with the morning dew, and tinkling bells and spangles threaded here and there. And paper flowers and flags and children mixed up somewhere in the moving mass, compared to which, it appears to me, Macbeth's Birnam Wood must have been a very poor show indeed. All this intended for the decoration of the horse and cart.

"Now, mother, come along, bring baby. Gerty, tell Charley to lift Bobby off his chair, he's got his feet stuck into the rungs—no, bring him, chair and all. Where's William Rufus; bless me, I do believe the lad's gone back to shave again. Now, Mary, papa's pet, jump; there we are, next the driver. Smack, (kiss) kiss, (smack.) Hold fast, here they come. Mother, baby, Gerty, Charley, Bobby, Tommy. Rufus! drop that, you scamp, and help your uncle. Two hampers, three baskets, ten bottles, one kettle and chairs for the lot. Hand 'em out, Harry."

At length the mother of this happy crew appeared, fair and plump and laughing and a goodly sight to see. And Gerty, the eldest girl, pretty and demure seventeen; and the others, pell mell, following.

Meantime, vehicles of every description had been crowding down the road; many drove straight past towards Trentham, but the majority pulled up and turned sharp around, bound for Normacott. And every inch of room was taken up in the angle of the road, and the finger post was well night cut in twain by butting wheels. And Mrs. Bell cried out in fear for the garden hedge, and doubled up her fist and smote at equine noses snivelling at the top. And the laughter and the chaffing. And the way the young men found that Gerty Bell had got too much to do, and cast the reins aside and ran for help.

"Now, Bell, your waggon stops the way," cried Mr. Dover, a Seggerton druggist, who drove a double seated buggy, "you know we've got to make the most of this," and he glanced at his party of three ladies. "That's what we all have to do," shouted back Mrs. Bell, "but look at you, a man with only three grown sisters and nothing else to care for." "You're wrong, sir; I've looked up my responsibility in the shop; but the key is in my pocket all the same." "Dover's afraid to miss a customer." "Not while you're here, my boy. My prune jar is safe at any rate, Mr. Gaston." "Mrs. Bell! Mrs. Bell! is that little Mary in the cart? Is she better? So glad. Oh, and, do please let Gerty ride with us." This came from a pony carriage wedged right in the middle of the throng. Mrs. Bell had, by this time, got things pretty well settled. She stood upon a chair at the foot of the cart, with her skirts discreetly tucked in, ready to ascend, and gazed serenely across. "Speech, speech." "Good morning, my dears; boys, you keep quiet. Yes, she's very much better. Wait until some of us get away, and you can take her up. She's in the house, waiting for Rufus to close the door." "Bother Rufus, drive on without him," came from every side.

Then, one by one, with merry jingling of bells and waving flags they fled away. Last of all, the little carriage stopping at the gate for Gerty. Very soon the scene was lonely once again. In the far, far distance the fast receding party looked like a gaudy ribbon, edged with green, pinned against the sky. A few moments afterwards, the young man, Rufus, the eldest son, came out of the house and looked the door. The key he placed upon a little ledge underneath the top step. Passing through the garden, he turned into the road, and shading his eyes, looked expectantly towards

town. Not seeing anything in sight, he walked slowly away. Almost directly, however, in a whirling cloud of dust, a large and noisy party drove up. They were about to draw rein, when seeing his figure in the distance, off they dashed again and speedily overtook him.

"Keep a chap waiting all day, why don't yer. Blest if I aint all cramped up. Yer do it mighty fine all of yer. Mr. Bell and his waggon stops the way, does it. I'll stop yer way. And you red-headed son, doing the grand so independent like. And where's the differ' 'twixt thee and mine. There aint no better moulder in the town than me. And look at us. A musty, fusty room or two, and the Missis—and the kid a lying sick. Where's Normacott Green for thee, my laas."

From beneath a heap of straw and an overturned cart near at hand, crept the speaker, a tall and in many respects a fine looking man, evidently primed with liquor. "Yes, Will, you and I can cry quits now. Easier job than I thought, thanks to red head. Where's the paper. Here it is; looks like a cheque of some kind. And what's this? Molly's physic, I do declare. Lor that's too bad; forgot all about it. Too late now, must get on to fair ground after the little business here. Jim, my son, take a drink. Accepting his own invitation from a flask he took from his pocket, the man who had called himself Jim peered cautiously around. He then boldly entered the garden, took the door key from where he had seen it put, and let himself into the house. Not a sound to be heard. Not a solitary footstep upon the road.

III.

It would be a most grateful task to describe in detail the really unique sight upon Normacott Green, but matters of incident claim attention rather than a more lengthy introduction of them. A gigantic Maypole erected in the exact centre of the field was the chief point of attraction, from whence radiated the various games and competitions. Many a hero proudly walked the sword that day, victors in the strife of speed and strength. Even in this mimic war there were clans and followers, and shouts and cheers and counter cheers marked the progress of each well contested sport. Towards the north end, and where there was a long stretch of perfectly level ground, a great crowd had gathered. This was the racing track. About four o'clock a bell rang for the first event. This was a two mile race open to moulders of any foundry. Excitement ran high. Not only was the track fringed on either side with spectators, but carriages crowded with the chief residents of Seggerton formed an animated background. Two open broughams were drawn up close to the starting place, in which were seated the judges; in the other the ladies of the Gartside family accompanied by Mr. James, the junior member of the firm. Miss Emily Gartside had consented to present the various prizes. After the usual routine of solemn preparation the runners gathered for the start, our friend William Bell included, and apparently first favorite. Many were in regular racing costume and seemed to attach a vast importance to a certain lacing and unlacing of boots, drawing in the belts, scraping of feet, as if they were on a door mat, and other contortions—all due, no doubt, to the disturbing eyes of beauty looking down upon them. Bell, however, simply doffed his coat and threw it to a person near the ropes. "Here, Jim, hold that," said he, and then stood ready with the rest.

Off with the pistol-shot and away they go. Once round the track, again and again, one lap more; and the dash for home. The finest race this many a day, my lads, and Bell the winner by a yard. With a mighty rush they reach the goal, a dozen arms to catch them as they cross the line. Yes, that's true; Bell is the first. He staggers on, a distance past, and then falls plump into someone's grasp. This happens to be the Seggerton Police Inspector. But what is strange, he doesn't seem to let him go again.

(To be continued)

The English Language.—Caller, inquiring of hotel clerk at 9 a.m.: Is Mr. Jones up? Clerk: Yes sir. Caller: Is he down? Clerk: Yes, sir. Caller: Ah, thanks. I'll step into the breakfast room and see him.