

DOMINION DAY.

Hail the day of happy sign,—
Canada's own holiday.—
When her peoples, scattered wide,
Celebrate their cause allied,
Cast their jealousies away,
And their loves combine.

Honoured be the statesmen bold,—
Write their names with patriot hands—
Who, lamenting Discord's blight,
Hoped in Union's healing might,
Linked these far-divided lands
Firmly than with gold.

Let each race our country wards
Cast old hatreds to the sea
That 'twixt them and homeland yawns.
Till in this new world there dawns
National pride and sympathy.—
These are Union's guards.

HID IN A TURF-RICK.

AN IRISH EPISODE.

BY T. PRESTON BATTERSBY, LIEUTENANT ROYAL ARTILLERY.

"The Irish are a fine race!"
"That's your opinion, is it?"

The speakers were myself and Ellerslie, Captain in the Royal Engineers, or the "Sappers," as we called them in popular phraseology. Place, the smoking-room of the R.A. mess at Woolwich. Time, anywhere in the small hours. When I say that of the above sentences the first was spoken by me, I shall be in position to plunge at once *in medias res*.

After uttering the above oracular answer, Ellerslie puffed away silently at his long havannah for a while. I did not interrupt him, for I saw a twinkle in his eye, and knew that there was something coming presently. He was one of those men whose thoughts it is not well to hurry, for fear of losing their thread altogether.

At last it came, as I anticipated.

"I don't think I ever told you, did I, of my adventures in that lovely country? In fact, the story is so much against myself, that I thought it just as well to keep it dark. However, if you will swear solemnly to be 'silent as the grave,' I don't mind telling you now. At all events, it is not a bad joke as it turned out, though it might have been a serious one."

Of course I promised inviolable secrecy, however good the story might be, and having fortified himself with a brandy-and-soda, Ellerslie began:

"I daresay you know that in the spring of 187— I was sent to Ireland on special service to see about building new barracks in two or three places where they were needed, especially at Longford, where the Government had at that time an idea of quartering a whole cavalry regiment, though now I believe they have come down to one troop of Scots Greys. I was rather pleased with the commission, for I had never been to the Emerald Isle before, and saw my way to a pleasant little excursion at Government expense. Of course as all my disbursements *en route* were to be paid for me by the liberality of my country, I chose the most convenient way of getting to my destination, and travelled *via* Euston and Holyhead, by the night-mail, the Wild Irishman, I believe they call it.

"We left Euston at 8.25 p. m. I didn't feel much inclined to sleep, and you know I am a great smoker, so I turned into a compartment sacred to the consumption of the soothing weed. There was only one other occupant besides myself, a man of about forty, well dressed, but not to my mind a gentleman. Indeed, at first sight I put him down to be what he was, a well-to-do Irish farmer returning from a business trip to town, and indulging himself in the unwonted luxury of a first-class carriage.

"Whatever other faults the Irish have, they are certainly a most friendly race. By the time we got to Rugby I had told my fellow-traveller all about my projected plans for seeing his native country, and found that he rejoiced in the name of Cormack, and lived in the County Westmeath, not far from the Longford boundary. Before we reached Chester we were sworn friends, and by the time we arrived at Holyhead I had promised to pay him a visit during my stay in his part of the country. This visit it was which gave me such a taste of Irish customs as I could very well have dispensed with.

Not to delay too long, I shall pass over all the incidents of my first fortnight or so in the Emerald Isle, they being no doubt exactly what any one else would have experienced under like circumstances. At length I reached Longford, got through my work there, and determined to call on my new-made friend, for which purpose I took train to a little station called Edgeworthstown, and there obtained an outside car with a lean horse and a very ragged driver, who undertook for the sum of eighteenpence per double mile (Irish) to convey me to my destination. As to the name of the said destination, I dare not venture on it. It began with the usual "Bally," ended, I think, with a "y," and had I fancy about four syllables, of a nature utterly unpronounceable to English lips. Suffice to say that we got there at length, and pulled up at the door of a very respectable slated farmhouse, with thatched outbuildings and a well-kept grass-field, on which two or three colts were feeding, of a slimmness of limb and beauty of make that proclaimed their owner a racing man.

"The said owner met me at the door with an effusive welcome, and asked me into a well-furnished parlour, the taste of whose ornaments contrasted favourably with what I should have expected in the house of an English farmer of the same rank. Presently the mistress of the house and a pretty fresh-looking daughter entered and shook hands with me with native politeness. I expressed a wish to see the farm, and Cormack readily offered to show it to me, first, however, saying a few words in a low tone to his wife who went out of the room. A moment after I heard wheels driving away outside.

"Only the car, yer honour," said Cormack, in answer to my look of inquiry, "I made free to send it away for ye; it's with us ye'll be stopping now, please God."

"It was true enough. My faithless Jehu having been paid in advance by me had been only too ready to depart, and, unless I chose to walk back to Edgeworthstown, which I did not feel inclined to do, I was to all intents and purposes a fixture. At first I was inclined to be annoyed, but the exquisite naiveness of the whole proceeding amused me, and I was really flattered by the solicitude of my would-be host; so, after a few half remonstrances, I was induced to write a telegram for my baggage, which Cormack confided to a young imp who appeared to be doing odd jobs about the place, bidding him 'run over and give it to Mister Moran himself, and tell him it's immediate.'

"I stayed some little time at the Cormacks' seeing the country in company with my host, and forming my ideas of Irish political economy as it is, and as it should be, which being rather a hobby of mine I won't now trouble you with. There was a gentleman's family living in the neighbourhood, which I soon made the acquaintance of, as in that out-of-the-way locality the arrival of a stranger was as great an event as that of a foreign potentate in London. Several afternoons I spent pleasantly at 'the big house,' playing lawn-tennis with the young ladies of the place, whom I found to be far more proficient in the art than their English sisters, probably from the solitude of their country life having obliged them to concentrate their energies on that particular form of amusement.

"One day that I had been spending in the above manner, and on which I had accepted a kind invitation to dinner *en famille*, I noticed that Mr. M— seemed more absent than usual, and a trifle quick-tempered, as though he had been annoyed by something or somebody. When the ladies had left us, and we were sitting over the usual post-prandial bottle of wine, he took a letter from his pocket and showed it to me.

"That's the kind of thing we have to put up with here, Mr. Ellerslie," said he. "You mustn't go away with your ideas of the country too much *couleur de rose*."

"That was in truth a strange production. It was written, or rather laboriously printed, on a sheet of coarse paper, headed by a rough but spirited drawing of coffins and bell-mouthed blunderbusses. Below was the following composition, of which I made a copy out of curiosity:

"M. M. DONT. GO. TO. MOATE. OR. I. WL. B. YOOR. END. PET. IT. B. RIT. OR. WRONG. PET. PVT. HIGGINS. STAY. AT. OME."

"I looked at my host for an explanation.

"It is a threatening letter," said he, "and not the first either that I have received. The printing is easy enough to read on the phonographic principle, with the caution that most of the A's and L's are upside down. The meaning is, that one of my tenants having against my express orders ploughed up a grass field, I have given him notice to quit, and went into Moate yesterday to consult my attorney as to what compensation I was obliged to pay under the Irish Land Act. I got this the day before. I am not personally much afraid of the fellows, but it is very annoying; and I am always on thorns lest one of those letters should reach my wife; it would almost frighten her to death, I fancy."

"You met with no interruption going into Moate, I suppose?" said I.

"No; but I took my precautions. I got a policeman on my car and drove in by a round-about route. It isn't a pleasant way of doing things, is it?"

"I quite agreed with Mr. M, that that was not, and expressed my surprise that the author of the letter could not be brought to justice.

"You don't know the facts, Mr. Ellerslie; there is not a soul about here who would not swear black was white rather than be the means of convicting a neighbour. You know yourself how completely the police system failed over so daring an offence as the murder of the late Lord Leitrim. With such people as witnesses and jury, what is to be done? For my own part I have no doubt that Mr. Pat Higgins himself wrote that letter, but hunting up any evidence would be hopeless."

"A sudden thought struck me. I had seen that the last few words of the document were lighter in colour, as if they had been blotted. If so, would there not remain an impression on the blotting-paper?"

"I don't know what evil spirit took possession of me at this juncture, unless—I own it with contrition—it were that of inordinate self-conceit. Should I be able to get enough evidence to con-

* Translation: "M— M—, don't go to Moate, or I will be your end. Let it be right or wrong, let Pat Higgins stay at home." The above is an exact copy of a threatening letter in the author's possession.

vict Pat Higgins myself, I should certainly derive much credit for my sagacity, and have an excellent story for my friends in England on my return. With this end in view I said nothing of my happy thought, determined to work it out myself.

"Next morning, having found out the locality of Higgin's cottage from Cormack, I went to make a call there. The sole occupant of the tenement when I arrived there was a wrinkled old woman sitting on a three-legged stool and smoking a black clay-pipe. She looked at me suspiciously, but her native hospitality forbade her to refuse me a seat. For the first time I felt some qualms of conscience at the character of my errand, but these were speedily dissipated by the sight, in a corner of the large open hearth, of the very thing I was seeking, a piece of dirty blotting-paper crumpled up into a ball. To be sure the floor had not been swept for years, judging from its appearance, and there was no telling how long the paper might have lain there, still I felt a conviction that it was the object of my search.

"The devices to which I resorted to get possession of that mute piece of evidence were worthy of a detective policeman. I manoeuvred my chair closer to it under pretence of feeling a draught, though with the unpleasant consciousness that the old woman did not believe me. Fortune, however, favoured me at last in the shape of a fierce contest between an old sow and a dog just outside the door, which made the crone hobble out briskly to separate the combatants. She was not gone long, but I had plenty of time during her absence to secrete the paper. As soon as I decently could afterwards I took my leave.

"The moment I was out of sight of the door I opened my prize and found it to be what I hope, a fairly good inverted copy of the threatening letter. Of course the last words were the most distinct, but on the whole it was a very pretty piece of *prima facie* evidence against Mr. Pat Higgins. I presented the paper to Mr. M., who praised my sagacity and thanked me warmly for my exertions on his behalf. That same evening I made a deposition before a magistrate who lived near by, and, much to his surprise, Higgins was arrested.

"Now I come to the unlucky portion of my story. How my share in the foregoing proceedings got about I don't know; but a day or two after this I found a great change in Cormack's manner towards me. Hitherto he had been hospitable to myself; now he seemed anxious to get me to leave his house, though he was as studiously polite in hiding his wishes as the most finished gentleman could have been. Of course, however, I could not stay longer with a man who was tired of me, and I signified to him accordingly my intention of leaving him. He appeared to me somewhat relieved by the news.

"I dined at Mr. M.'s the night before my departure, after a farewell game of tennis with the ladies, and did not leave the house till nearly dusk. As I was walking back to Cormack's I noticed footsteps behind me, and, looking round, saw that I was followed by a small body of men all armed with sticks. Not wishing them to come up with me I quickened my pace a little. They did the same, and closed on me somewhat.

"I had time to pass a sharp turn in the road. Just as I neared the hedge, and for the moment lost sight of my followers, I saw a woman on the other side close to me. Leaning forward, she said eagerly, 'run for yer life, sir; it's you they're after.' Before I could reply she had sunk down behind the hedge again as my pursuers came in sight.

"I hope if ever there be any chance of holding my own that I shall not be found ready to run away; but when followed by a dozen men with sticks it is about the only thing that can be done, so I trust I may be pardoned for taking to my heels.

"The men instantly followed at full speed, and for a time the pace was hot. But, having still my tennis-shoes on, and being naturally swift of foot, I soon distanced them, and they were a good half mile behind when I reached Co. Mack's door.

"Cormack himself was standing on the threshold. At one glance he took in the situation, having probably had some previous information as to what was going to happen. With a muttered oath he seized me by the arm and hurried me through the house and into the yard at the back. There was a rick of turf there which had that day been opened, leaving a small aperture in the smooth continuity of its rows.

"Get in there, sir," said Cormack, "and you, Pat" (addressing his son who was working in the yard when we entered) "build up the clamp again while I go and lock the door. An' if ye tell the boys where the gentleman is ye're no son of mine."

The case was not one which admitted of parleying. I got into the rick, and Pat built up the outside turf with marvellous celerity. There was room enough for air and sound to enter through the interstices between the sods, but the dust nearly choked me. However, I was glad enough of even that refuge when I heard the storm of curses that broke from my pursuers, as, having at length burst open the door, they poured into the yard.

"So help me God! I could hear Cormack saying, 'I let him out at the back-door, boys. Was I to let the gentleman be murdered in my own house an' he staying there?'"

"Curiously enough, as I thought, the angry men admitted the plea, but all now turned upon Pat, to know which way I had gone. He gave them most minute directions as to the route I

had taken, and, after a hurried search of the house and yard, they started off in pursuit.

"When they were out of sight Pat unpacked me. By this time I was almost fainting from the suffocating dust and smell of the turf, and I was glad to sit down in the kitchen and have a draught of buttermilk. Meanwhile Cormack had saddled one of his horses and brought it round to the door.

"Get up on that horse, sir," said he, "and ride as hard as ye can to the police-station at Bally—; it's the only place ye'll be safe in after this. I'll send on yer luggage there for ye. I've saved ye this day because ye were stopping in me own house, but only for that I wouldn't have put out a finger to help ye for an English informer as ye are. So there's no thanks due to me."

"I attempted a few words of explanation and gratitude, but I confess to feeling decidedly 'small' as I rode away, and inwardly took a vow never to interfere with other people's business again.

"I sent my late host a cheque afterwards for what I considered a fair sum for my fortnight's board and lodgings, with a letter expressing my sense of obligation to him and my wish to have made him a present to remember me by did I not fear to offend him. The cheque was returned without a word.

"I was obliged to attend at the trial of Pat Higgins, who, rather to my satisfaction, was triumphantly acquitted by a jury of his compatriots, so that all my trouble and danger had been incurred for nothing. After that you won't wonder that I am not very proud of the story, and don't want it to go beyond you."

"Who was the woman who warned you?" asked I; "did you ever find out?"

"She was Cormack's daughter, and was engaged to Pat Higgins as I found out afterwards," answered Ellerslie. "After that I think you will agree with me that the Irish are a peculiar race."

"Shall I tell you what I think was the most characteristic thing in the whole story?" said I.

"Well?"

"Sending back your cheque!"

BRELOQUES POUR DAMES.

THE Boston youth who was accused of not knowing a pretty girl when he saw her wanted to be introduced.

THE Latin taught in the schools of New York is so interspersed with tight-lacing, banged hair and love ballads that it cannot be said to be of any value to pupils.

GRACE: "I am going to see Clara to-day. Have you any message?" Charlotte: "I wonder how you can visit that dreadful girl. Give her my love."

A NEW YORK paper thus hits it: A Broadway engraver recently made this mistake: "Mr. and Mrs. — respectfully request your presents at the marriage of their daughter."

THE young Englishman just over read to his wife the heading of a medicine advertisement: "Gained eight pounds in ten days, and remarked: "Hexcellent wages, that, Mary."

A CALIFORNIA Diana is Mrs. Ari Hopper of Ventura, who, while hunting with her husband a few days ago, came upon a large grizzly bear, and performed the rare feat of killing him at the first shot. She also last summer killed a large buck, which was used in a Fourth of July barbecue.

THE members of a young ladies' debating society in Troy have decided in favour of long courtship. Level-headed girls. Observation has taught them that there is wonderful falling off of confections, balls, carriage-rides and opera when courtship ends and the stern realities of married life begin.

THE Rev. W. A. Gross is a Marion (Ohio) clergyman who consented to go into a circus ring at the conclusion of the performance, but while the audience was still present, and perform a marriage ceremony for a couple who were connected with the show. The clown gave away the bride, and kissed her, in his most elaborately comical manner.

A HOPEFUL CASE—Patient: "Then, according to you, doctor, in order to live at all I must give up all that makes life worth living?" Doctor: "I'm afraid so—at least for a few years." Patient: "Perhaps you'd recommend me to marry?" Doctor (a confirmed bachelor): "Come, my dear fellow, it's not quite so bad as that, you know."

MRS. VALERIA G. STONE, in presenting \$100,000 to Wellesley (Mass.) College, says that she has "often and sadly observed the pitiable worthlessness, both to themselves and others, of the lives of women when given up to selfish frivolity or wasted in the pursuit of mere personal enjoyment," and she desires to aid in "training women of learning too generous for sceptical conceit, and refinement too thorough for fastidious selfishness."

FEELS YOUNG AGAIN.

"My mother was afflicted a long time with neuralgia and a dull, heavy, inactive condition of the whole system; headache, nervous prostration, and was almost helpless. No physicians or medicines did her any good. Three months ago she began to use Hop Bitters, with such good effect that she seems and feels young again, although over 70 years old. We think there is no other medicine fit to use in the family."—A lady, in Providence, R. I.