

hanged for the part he took in the rebellion of eighteen hundred and thirty-seven. In certain circles he had the reputation of being an Atheist—he was in reality as good a Roman Catholic as ever touched holy water—because he was constantly crying out about bad drainage, and taunting people with the hundreds of lives wantonly thrown away, he said, every year, and struck down by preventible diseases. "As if," the people said, piously, "the issues of life and death were in man's hand." So typhus fever went on, and the town was not drained.

The birthday dinners were all alike, with the same guests. The year went on, and we met on the anniversary to drink Celia's health and talk the same talk. Let me take one of these dinners, the last at which this company met together for this purpose.

The Rev. Mr. Broughton took in Mrs. Tyrrell, so that Celia fell to Mr. Pontifex; Mrs. Pontifex, of course, took Mr. Tyrrell's arm. The grace was "pronounced" by Mr. Broughton. He was less meticulous over the petition than poor Augustus Brambler, but he threw considerable feeling into the well-known words, and had a rich melodious voice, a fitting prelude to the banquet. Grace said, the benevolent divine surveyed the guests and the table with the eyes of satisfaction, as if he wished it was always feast time.

There were no *salans* laid on the table in those days, and you did not know what was coming as you do now. But there was the smell of roast meats which, if you remembered what things belonged to the season, was almost as good as a *menu*. And the things were put on the table. There were no *dinners a la Russe*. You saw your food before you. The host carried, too, and very laborious work it was. But it was still reckoned part of a gentleman's education to carve with discretion and skill. I should like to have seen Mr. Broughton's face if he had been compelled to sit in silence during the mungling of a hare. Perhaps, however, he was too much of a martinet, and the exquisite finish with which he distributed a pheasant among half-a-dozen guests, however admirable as a work of art, pointed to an amount of thought in the direction of dinner beyond what is now expected of the clergy. Mr. Pontifex, on the other hand, was a wretched carver. "I am more at ease," he would say, "in the pulpit than in the place of the carver, though, in my youth, when I was at Oxford when, alas, the pleasures of the—ahem—the table, were in my day placed above the pleasures of the soul—I was considered expert in the art of carving. There was one occasion, I remember with sorrow—when a goose was placed upon the board—"

"I wish, Mrs. Tyrrell," interrupted Mr. Broughton—and indeed we had all heard the goose story before: "I wish I could persuade my landlady to give the same thoughtfulness to things as your cook. It is so difficult to make some women understand the vital importance of dinner. I can order the raw materials, but I cannot unfortunately cook them."

Mrs. Pontifex, I saw sat opposite her husband, who took his dinner under her superintendence. I sat next to that divine, and felt pity for him as a warning or prohibition came across the table, and he had to shake his head in sorrowful refusal.

In his rich mellow voice, Mr. Broughton, on receiving his fish, remarked, "The third time this year, and only the 24th of May, that I have partaken of salmon. The Lord is very good."

"No, John Pontifex," said that clergyman's wife loudly, "no salmon for you."

"My dear," he ventured to expostulate feebly because he was particularly fond of salmon.

"Ladislav Pulaski, who is young, may make himself ill with salmon and cucumber if he likes," said Aunt Jane, "but not you, John Pontifex. Remember the last time."

He sighed and I took the portion intended for him.

"The Lord is very good," resumed Mr. Broughton, "to *nearly* all his creatures," as if Pontifex was an exception.

Dr. Roy began to talk of salmon fishing in the Saguenay River, and we were all interested, except poor Mr. Pontifex, whose face was set in so deep a gloom that I thought he would have rebelled.

He picked up a little when an *entree* of pigeons was allowed to stop at his elbow. But the undisguised enjoyment with which he drank his first glass of champagne brought his wife, who was at that moment talking of a new and very powerful tract, down upon him in a moment.

"No more champagne, John Pontifex," she ordered promptly.

"Another glass for me," cried Mr. Broughton, nodding his head. "A glass of wine with you, Mrs. Pontifex. I am a bachelor, you know, and can do as I like."

It was not manners to refuse, and Aunt Jane raised her glass to her lips icily, while Mr. Broughton drained his with an audible smack. In 1858 we had already, in provincial towns, passed out of the custom of taking wine with each other, but it was still observed by elderly people who liked the friendly fashion of their youth.

I thought this assertion of independence rather cruel to Mr. Pontifex, but it was not for me, belonging with Celia, to the class of "young people," to say anything at a party unless previously spoken to or questioned. Then Aunt Jane began a talk with Herr Rämmer, chiefly about the sins of people. As you came to know this German well, you discovered that,

whenever he did talk about people, he had something bad to say of them; also when he spoke of any action, however insignificant, it was to find an unworthy motive for it. Perhaps, however, I am now in that fourth and bad stage mentioned above.

Mr. Tyrrell was silent during the dinner, perhaps because he had to carve industriously and dexterously; he drank wine freely; but he said nothing. Celia noticed her father's taciturnity, and I saw her watching him with anxiety. No one else observed it, and when the first stiffness of ceremony wore off, there began the genial flow of conversation which ought to rejoice the heart of a hostess, because it shows every one is feeding in content. Mr. Tyrrell, a florid, high-coloured man, who usually talked fast and rather noisily, was looking pale; the nerves of his cheek twitched, and his hand trembled.

When the cloth was removed—I am not certain that the old fashion of wine and dessert on the polished dark mahogany was not better than the present—we all drank Celia's health.

"In bumpers," cried Mr. Broughton filling up Mrs. Tyrrell's glass and his own to the brim with port. "In bumpers all. And I wish I was a young man again to toast Celia Tyrrell as she should be toasted. Don't you, brother Pontifex? Here is to your *beau jour*, my dear. Some day I will preach a sermon on thankfulness for beauty."

"God bless you, Celia, my child," said her father, with a little emotion in his voice. "Many happy returns of the day, and every one better than the last."

"The best thing," continued Mr. Broughton, "for young girls is a young husband—eh, Mrs. Tyrrell? What do you think?"

"Vanity," said Aunt Jane. "Let them wait and look round them. I was thirty-five when I married my first."

"When I was at Oxford," Mr. Pontifex began glancing anxiously at his wife. "When I was at Brasenose, Oxford (where I was known I am ashamed to say, as—as—as Co-rin-thian Pontifex, on account of the extraordinary levity, even in that assemblage of reckless youths, of my disposition), there were some among us commonly designated as—as—as Three—Bottle—Men!!!" He said this with an air of astonishment, as if it was difficult to credit, and a thing which ought, if printed, to be followed by several notes of admiration. "Three—Bottle—Men! The rule among us was—I regret to say—No—ahem—no Heeltaps."

"John Pontifex" interposed his wife, severely. "Recollect yourself. No Heeltaps, indeed!"

"My dear, I was about to conclude this short Reminiscence by remarking that it was a Truly Shocking State of Things."

He spoke in capitals, so to speak, and with impressive slowness.

"When young people are present," said Aunt Jane, "it is well to consider the religious tendency of anecdotes before they are related."

Mr. Pontifex said no more.

"I will tell you by-and-by, Pontifex," said the jolly old parson, whose face was a good deal redder than at the commencement of dinner. "I will tell you, when the ladies have left us, some of our experiences in Common Room. Don't be afraid, Mrs. Pontifex, we shall not emulate the deeds of those giants."

"In my house," said Aunt Jane to her niece, reproachfully, "it is one of our Christian privileges not to sit over wine after dinner; we all rise together."

"From a lady's point of view," observed Herr Rämmer, "doubtless an admirable practice."

"Not at all admissible," cried the Captain, who had been quiet during dinner. "Why shouldn't we have half-an-hour to ourselves to talk politics and tell yarns, while the ladies talk dress?"

"In my house," said Aunt Jane, "the ladies do not talk dress. We exchange our experiences. It is a Christian privilege."

Dr. Roy uttered a hollow groan, doubtless from sympathy with Mr. Pontifex.

Just then Mrs. Tyrrell sat bolt upright, which was her signal, and the ladies left us.

"Aha!" cried Mr. Broughton, "confess, Brother Pontifex, that you do not appreciate all the Christian privileges of your house."

He shook his head solemnly, but he did not smile.

"Three bottle men, were you?" said Dr. Roy. "God, sir, I remember at old Trinity, in Dublin, some of us were six bottle men. Not I, though. Nature intended me for a one pint man."

"It is only a German student," said Herr Rämmer, "who can hold an indefinite quantity."

"I sincerely hope," said Mr. Pontifex, as he finished his glass, "that things have greatly changed since that time. I remember that the door was generally locked; the key was frequently thrown out of the window, and the—the—Orgy, commenced. As I said before, the word was, 'No Heeltaps.' It is awful to reflect upon—Thank you, Dr. Roy, I will take another glass of Port.—There were times, too, when, in the wantonness of youth, we permitted ourselves the most reckless language over our feasts. On one occasion I did so, myself. The most reckless language. I positively swore. My thoughtless companions, I regret to say, only laughed. They actually laughed. The cause of this—iniquity arose over a Goose. It is a truly Dreadful Event to look back upon."

"We used at Oriel," said Mr. Broughton, again interrupting the Goose story without com-

punction, "to drink about a bottle and a half ahead; and we used to talk about Scholarship, Literature and Art. And some of the men talked well. I wish I could drink a bottle and a half every night now; and I wish I had the Common Room to drink it in. It is a beautiful time for me to look back upon."

It was as if he tried in everything to be a contrast to his brother in Orders.

"The rising generation," said Dr. Roy, "who work harder, ride less, smoke more tobacco, and live faster, will have to give up Port and take Claret. After all, it was the favorite Irish wine for a couple of hundred years."

"Ugh!" from Mr. Broughton.

"The longer the Englishman drinks Port," said Herr Rämmer, "Port and Beer, the longer he will continue to be—what he is."

As this was said very smoothly and sweetly, with the rasp peculiar to the voice, giving an unpleasant point at the end, I concluded at once that the German meant more than was immediately apparent.

"Thank you, Herr Rämmer," said Mr. Broughton, sharply; "I hope we shall continue to remain what we are. The appreciation of your countrymen is always generous. As for Port, I look on that wine as the most perfect of all Heaven's gifts to us poor creatures. This is very fine, Tyrrell. From Pontifex's cellar? Brother Pontifex, you don't ask me to dinner half often enough. Forty-seven? I thought so. Agreeable."—he held the glass up to the candles. We had wax candles for the dining room—"with little body, but quite enough. Rather dry," he tasted it again. "How superb it will be in twenty years, when some of us will not be alive to drink it. The taste for Port comes to us by Nature—it is not acquired like that for Claret and Rhine wines—pass me the olives, Roy, my dear fellow. It is born with some of us, and is a sacred gift. It brightens youth, adorns manhood, and comforts age. May those of us who are blessed by Providence with a palate use it aright, and may we never drink a worse glass of wine than the present. I remember," he went on sentimentally wagging his head, which was by this time nearly purple all over. "I remember the very first glass of Port I ever tasted. My grandfather, the Bishop of Sheffield, gave it to me when I was three years old. Learn to like it, boy," said his lordship, who had the most cultivated palate in the diocese. I did like it from that hour, though, unless my memory fails me, the Bishop's butler had brought up too fruity a wine."

The more Port Mr. Broughton consumed the more purple the jolly fat face and bald head became. But no quantity affected his tongue or clouded his brain, so that when we joined the ladies he was as perfectly sober, although coloured like his favourite wine, as Mrs. Pontifex herself who was making tea.

Mrs. Tyrrell was asleep when we came up stairs, but roused herself to talk with Dr. Roy, who had certainly taken more than the pint for which, as he said, Nature intended his capacity.

Celia was playing, and I joined her and we played a duet. When we finished I went to ask for a cup of tea.

By the table was standing Mr. Pontifex, a cup in his hand and a look of almost ghastly discomposure on his face, while his wife was forcing an immense slice of mullin upon his unwilling hands.

"Mullin, John Pontifex," she said. "My dear," he remonstrated with more firmness than one might have expected; "My dear, I do not wish for any mullin—ahem."

"It is helped, John Pontifex," said his wife, and leaving the unhappy man to eat it, she turned to me, thanked me sweetly for the duet, and gave me a cup of tea.

Mr. Pontifex retreated behind his wife's chair. As no one was looking I stole a plate from the table, and with great swiftness transferred the mullin from his plate to mine. He looked boundless gratitude, but was afraid to speak, and after a due interval returned the empty plate to the table, even descending so far in deception as to brush away imaginary crumbs from his coat. His wife looked suspiciously at him, but the mullin was gone, and it was impossible to identify that particular piece with one left in another plate. In the course of the evening he seized the opportunity of being near me, and stopped to whisper sorrowfully.

"I do not like mullin, Johnny. I loathe mullin."

The party broke up at eleven, and by a quarter past we were all gone. As I put my hat on in the hall I heard the voice of Herr Rämmer in Mr. Tyrrell's office.

"This is the day, Tyrrell. After she was eighteen, remember."

"Have pity on me, Rämmer; I cannot do it, give me another year."

"Pity? Rubbish. Not another week. I am not going to kill the girl. Is the man mad? Is he a fool?"

I hastened away, unwilling to overhear things not intended for me, but the words struck a chill to my heart.

Who was "she"? Could it be Celia. "After she was eighteen"—and this Celia's eighteenth birthday. It was disquieting, and Mr. Tyrrell asking that white-haired man with the perpetual sneer and the rasp in his voice for pity. Little as I knew of the world, it was clear to me that there would be small chance for pity in that quarter. Herr Rämmer and Celia? Why he was sixty years of age, and more; older than Mr. Tyrrell, who was a good deal under fifty. What could he want with a girl of eighteen? It was with a sad heart that I got home that night,

and I was sorely tempted to take counsel of the Captain. But I forebore. I would wait and see. I met Mr. Pontifex next morning. He was going with a basket to execute a few small commissions at the greengrocer's. He acted, indeed, as footman or errand boy, saving the house large sums in wages.

He stopped and shook hands without speaking, as if the memory of the mullin was too much for him. Then he looked as if he had a thing to say which ought to be said, but which he was afraid to say. Finally, he glanced hurriedly up and down the street to see if there was any one within earshot. As there was no one, he laid two fingers on my shoulder, and said in agitated tones, and with more than his usual impressiveness—

"I am particularly partial to salmon, which is, I suppose, the reason why I was allowed none last night. When I married, however, I totally—ahem—surrendered—I regret to say—my independence. Oh! Johnny, Johnny!"

(To be continued.)

AMERICAN CREDIT IN PARIS.—Any American who has done much shopping in Paris will bear testimony that the credit and confidence accorded have been well nigh unbounded. We have ourselves—editor *Paris Register*—been cognizant of instances where such precious wares as diamonds, fine laces and Indian shawls have been pressed upon our country-people, the bill to be paid whenever it suited the purchaser. In another instance, remittances having failed to reach an American traveller, the head of a large establishment offered, nay, almost forced upon his hitherto unknown customer the loan of a large sum of money; and when gently reproached by the recipient of his kindness for his great confidence in the integrity of a stranger, he made answer, "Monsieur, for twenty years I have been dealing with Americans, and have never yet lost one *son* by any of them."

A COWARD.—The most ludicrous figure on the battle-field of Plevna was General Powzanoff, who commanded the Thirteenth Division until the firing began, and then skedaddled, as the Americans would say. Mr. Forbes is so charitable as to intimate that it was not cowardice which prompted the General's abrupt withdrawal from the scene of action. The correspondent writes that the old soldier must have lost his head rather than his heart. The story goes that the Grand Duke sent him away with a fine mixture of arbitrary assumption of profound medical knowledge and of genuine kindly feeling for a soldier in misfortune. "I observe that you are very ill, and that there is no chance of your recovering your health without returning to Russia." "But, your Imperial Highness I am not ill at all. I never was better in my life!" "Allow me, please, to know better. I can see you are ailing seriously, and I must recommend you to recover your health in the bosom of your family."

HUMOROUS.

A BASHFUL young clergyman recently rising to preach for the first time, announced his text in this wise: "And immediately the cock wept, and Peter went out and crew bitterly."

"THE British Empire, sir," exclaimed John Bull to Jonathan, "is one on which the sun never sets."—"Nor," replied Jonathan, "in which the tax-gatherer never goes to bed."

A YANKEE pedlar with his cart overtaking another of his clan on the roads, was addressed, "Hallo, what do you carry?"—"Drugs," was the reply.—"Good," returned the other: "you may go forward. I carry gravestones."

THE philosophers tell us that the rain which falls from the clouds makes a component part of what ever grows upon the earth. Thus, in a passing shower, we may be unconsciously pelted with the component parts of bulls, sheep, peets, patriots and editors.

"YOUNG men," said an old college president to a coterie of dissipated students, "all these excesses of your youth are drafts upon your age, beginning to mature about thirty years after date, and continuing to press and draw heavily on your bodily resources all the residue of your lives."

A LITTLE six year old came to her grandfather the other day, with a trouble weighing on her mind. "Aunt says the moon is made of green cheese and I don't believe it."—"Don't you believe it! Why not?"—"Because I've been looking in the Bible, and found out that the moon is not made of green cheese, for the moon was made before the cows!" Wasn't that cute?

A LADY at a concert heard a noted vocalist sing the once popular ballad of "Rory O'Moore," the first two lines of which are:—

"Rory O'Moore courted Kathleen Bawn, He was bold as a hawk, she soft as the dawn,"

and taking a fancy to it, sang it from memory, but for a long time sang the second line. "He polished a heart and she swallowed it down," before she found out her mistake.

A GOOD story is told of a Yankee who went for the first time to a bowling alley, and kept firing away at the pins to the imminent peril of the boy, who, so far from leaving anything to do in "setting up" the pins, was actively at work in an endeavour to avoid the ball of the player, which rattled on all sides of the pins without touching them. At length the fellow, seeing the predicament the boy was in, yelled out, as he let drive another ball, "Stand in amongst the pins, boy, if you don't want to get hurt!"

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