

'your stories are all so good they ought to be true.'

"Well, it seems," said Miss Pearce, "that when Limerick was incorporated as a city, the twelve city councillors who were elected had to elect a mayor from their number. But each man of the twelve wanted to be mayor, so there was a hitch, as no man would yield his claim to another. Now you might suppose that they would settle the difficulty by a general fight, and let the best man be mayor. But no. When the dilemma had reached its most acute stage one of the twelve arose and proposed a resolution. He proposed that the whole council go out into the street in a body, and seize on the first man they would meet and make him mayor. This unique plan pleased them all, and they all adopted it. Perhaps you have heard of the Peddler's Bridge in Limerick?"

"No," said Mr. Winstall, "but I can imagine it. Please go on."

"Well, the Peddler's Bridge is there," said Miss Pearce, "I have crossed it often. You must remember that this is a true story. Now the room where the councillors met was close by this bridge, and as they crossed the bridge they met a peddler. He was a small man, of rather mean appearance. He was coming into town to replenish his pack with the various articles he needed for peddling through the country. He had a considerable sum of money with him, which for greater security his faithful spouse Rosie, had sewed safely into his waistcoat.

"So this was to be the new mayor. As the councillors drew near and began to surround him with a view to his capture, Patrick drew his stick in self defence, supposing them to be highwaymen, and thinking of the treasure sewed in his waistcoat. As they passed closer he slashed his stick about him with great vigor, inflicting several wounds on the august faces of the councillors. When they explained that their mission was a peaceful one, and that they wanted him to be mayor of the city, he changed his mind about them, and imagined them to be a lot of escaped lunatics. All the more strenuously, therefore, did he defend himself; but as they were twelve to one they soon overpowered him, and removed him bodily to the council room, he wriggling, kicking and screaming all the way."

This description immensely amused Miss Pearce's small audience, especially little Alfred, who roared, with delight. When quiet was restored Miss Pearce went on.

"When Patrick was safely lodged in the council room," she said, "one of the councillors went out and speedily procured a razor and a bowl of soap and water. Then, while the others held Patrick closely down, he was given a clean shave. Then they stripped him, put him into a large tub, lathered him well, and gave him a washing from head to heels. Then one of the councillors brought in a suit of fine clothes in which Patrick was quickly arrayed. When they put him into a large chair on a high platform, he began to realize something of the dignity of his new office.

"What troubled Patrick most was the loss of his money. He cast covetous glances at the heap of his old clothes lying in a corner of the room, and seriously meditated by what scheme he might recover his property. By and by, as the business proceeded, he announced that he wanted a smoke; and going over to his old clothes, he took his small black pipe from his waistcoat pocket. He lingered long enough over this operation to cut the waistcoat open, and slyly transfer the money to his pocket. Now he returned to the chair, lighted his short pipe, and was

soon enveloped in clouds of smoke. The councillors decided with great satisfaction that the new mayor was adjusting himself to the situation.

"The third day after was fixed for Patrick's inauguration. It was a great day for Limerick. Such a procession, they say, was never seen before. I will give you some idea of what it was like; but first we must give some attention to Patrick's wife Rosie.

"You may well suppose that Rosie was anxious when Patrick did not return home. But sometimes he had to stay over for a night to finish his business; so Rosie hoped to see him home next day. But when night fell on the second day Rosie determined to go herself to the city early on the following morning to discover what had befallen Patrick. She arrived in the forenoon, and it was the day of Patrick's inauguration. She saw in the distance an immense crowd, and noted an air of unusual excitement in the citizens, many of whom were hurrying towards the crowd. Soon the press of people was so great that she was carried along, whether she would or no. She found herself in the line of the procession, and a little way in advance of it.

"First came a trumpeter, to clear the way. He was dressed entirely in white, except that he wore a brass helmet. He carried a large trumpet on which now and again he gave a blast of such a terrific quality that people instinctively fell back out of his way.

"Then followed two men, dressed entirely in scarlet, each of them carrying a gold wand with a wonderful air of importance, and walking with serene and awful dignity.

"The next was the mayor himself. And he was robed in such a way that there could be no mistake as to his august personality. He wore a tall red hat, surmounted by a white cockade. He was enveloped in a loose yellow cloak that fell nearly to his heels. His waistcoat was blue, with gold braid and buttons. His stockings were red, and he had patent leather shoes with immense silver buckles. In his right hand he carried a drawn glittering sword, with which at intervals he made certain vigorous passes, as though he were annihilating a foe, and Patrick held his head stiff and high looking straight before him, and maintaining a dignity entirely in keeping with his high position."

"And who came after the mayor?" asked Alfred, whose mind was evidently intent on this wonderful procession.

"Oh, there was a squad of police to protect the mayor," said Miss Pearce. "Then followed the councillors, all dressed in black, each with a red and green sash. After them were four brass bands, all trying which could make the worst noise. Then followed the crowds of people. But I want to go back and tell you about Rosie."

"Oh, yes," said Grace, "tell us about Rosie. Did she find Patrick, and did she know him in his new dress?"

"Well, as we said," Miss Pearce resumed, "Rosie was in a good place to see Patrick as he passed. The moment she saw him a strange thrill went through her. Was not that really Patrick? But how could that be? It could not be he; yet surely there was something that convinced her almost that it must be he. She would try it at any rate. So, just as he passed her she shouted in wild excitement—

"Patrick! Patrick!"

"But Patrick never broke his step, not a muscle of his face moved; not a word he spoke. But there was something else that convinced Rosie she had made no mistake. You must know that Patrick had a certain

twinkle of his eye which he could not suppress when he was excited or amused. So when Rosie exclaimed 'Patrick' his eyes almost twinkled. It did not twinkle fully; he was too dignified and self-possessed for that; but there was an impossible-to-be-suppressed half-twinkle which was just as convincing to Rosie as though Patrick had stopped and shaken hands with her. But Patrick had now passed her. She therefore made a dash through the crowd, got a little in advance again, and awaited Patrick's approach. Just as he came opposite to her his car was assailed by Rosie's vehement—salutation—

"Patrick! Patrick! Acushla, don't you know your own Rosie?"

But Patrick had pulled himself up for the occasion. Not the slightest halt did he make in his step; he made not the least inclination of his head; not even the half-twinkle appeared in his eye. Continuing steadfastly on his way—without abating a particle of his dignity or self-control, he simply replied—

"Oh, the sorry bit of ye I knowed at all at all; and I don't know meself either."

Mr. Winstall wriggled in his chair with merriment.

"Now," said he, when he had recovered a little, "you must really tell that story when we have Mr. and Mrs. Hart here. Even Mrs. Hart must laugh."

Then in the highest good humour Mr. Winstall took his leave for the day.

To be Continued.

#### A Hint to Housewives

In the north of Scotland on a very hot June day a farm servant's wife sat gazing into a clear red peat fire. She was pretty stout, and the perspiration was running from her brow.

"That's an awfu' guid fire," she remarked. I assented.

"I have a bittie liver in the hoose; I widna care but fry it!" she said.

She rose from the easy chair, and with some difficulty and gasps she secured the frying-pan.

"Oh my! I had clean forgotten I wis roastin' herrin' in't. What wull I dae?"

"Clean it," I suggested.

She did not seem to appreciate the idea, but she went to the water pail. It was empty.

"Oh my! And siccan a het day, and the well so far awa." I had nothing to say.

"Oh, weel, they should be hung that can na fa' on some plan."

I wondered what she would do, for how she could manage without water was more than I could imagine. She took a paper and set fire to it, then she threw it into the greasy pan, which burned completely dry on the hearth. She put the liver in the pan and hung it over the fire.

"Noo," she said in a satisfied tone, "that's ae wey o'cleanin' a pan."—A. Findlay.

Room for Doubt.—They were newly married, and were spending their honeymoon at Little Metis. At the expiration of a week they sent a letter to the old home; in which it was written that "the weather was lovely, and that they often indulged in a short row in the mornings." Next day, on returning to lunch after an hour's boating they found a telegram awaiting them, which said—"You say you have had a short row. How do you pronounce last word?—Your anxious father."