

Home Journal

A DEPARTMENT FOR THE FAMILY

People and Things the World Over

A Fair Picture

Annie M'Entire, a bent old woman from Faughanvale, was one of the applicants for a pension who came before the Limatady committee on Tuesday, and her naive belief in a fairy tale concerning her birth roused the compassion of her listeners. Questioned as to her age, she said she did not remember the years, but she had a distinct recollection of having been born Halloween Night in 1839, and of having been stolen by the fairies.

"You are quite sure of that?" asked the chairman.

"I am as certain of it as that I live," emphatically replied the lady. "Fortunately my brother was returning from Carndonagh and he heard the noise of their revels, their singing, and their dancing, and he had a book with him which he threw into the wood at Carrowkeel. The fairies then abandoned me, and my brother lifted me in his arms and brought me back to my mother."

The committee decided to grant the pension.

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The Yonge Street arcade, Toronto, was barred on a recent Sunday and placarded "Closed to the public." This was the annual legal formality taken to maintain the proprietary rights of the owners. As the bars on one side were about six feet above the ground, the public was not seriously inconvenienced.

The annual assertion of land ownership in property usually open for traffic to the public is also made on a short stretch on the lake front at Kew Beach.

According to the law of usage, negligence to proclaim private ownership for a full year would inure it to the public.

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A pretty idea for the production of poetry is successfully realized in "Under a Fool's Cap," a book by Daniel Henry, jr., published in 1884, but apparently consisting of only one existing copy, that copy being in the possession of Norman Roe, who writes an article about it in the August Cornhill Magazine. "The author," says Mr. Roe, "has taken twenty-four old, familiar nursery rhymes, turned them, and amplified them to his own ends, whilst always maintaining the metre of the original. Although far from being parodies they might well have been written by an older, maturer J. H. S. There is the same lightness of touch, the same wistfulness, the same underlying melancholy. As Edmund Gosse once said of 'Cranford,' there is a smile — with a sob in it."

For instance, the old twice-put question, with the old cryptic answer:
How does my lady's garden grow?
How does my lady's garden grow?
With silver bells, and cockle-shells,
And pretty girls all in a row.

is continued thus:

They spread their faint green wings abroad,
Their wings and clinging robes abroad,
And upward through the pathless blue
They soar, like incense smoke, to God.

Who gives them crystal dreams to hold,
And snow-white hopes and thoughts to hold,
And laughter spun of beams of sun,
And tears that shine like molten gold.

And when their hands can hold no more,
Their chalice hands can hold no more,
And when their bells, and cockle-shells,
With holy gifts are brimming o'er,

With swift glad wings they cleave the deep
As shafts of starlight cleave the deep,
Through Space and Night they take their flight
To where my Lady lies asleep.

It has seemed as if the people with a wail against Canada found it more necessary to rush into print when they got back Home, than those who had sense enough not to expect to find everything in a new country that they had in an older one. It is refreshing to find a writer in the *London Queen* who has used her eyes for something more than seeing our unlovely phases of life. Her observations are to the point and only occasionally does she fall into the error of generalizing particular instances.

"Personal service," she says, "is (in Canada) always costly and not always obtainable. This is shown in a number of ways, small and great. For instance, the meals are not nearly so elaborate as with us, because of the difficulty of getting cooks, and late dinner is by no means universal, and even if there is late dinner it is not so late, because the cook likes her evenings. Uncooked fruit, again, figures largely on Colonial tables. The fruit is excellent. Probably we have got into the habit of cooking our fruit because, when we had to depend on our home supply, it was not good enough to eat raw. Whatever the cause, the consequence is that we make work by cooking it. Nothing gives so little trouble as raw fruit. Washing, again, is very dear, and the laundries are extremely independent. The visitor may easily have to fetch and carry his or her bundles of clean or of soiled linen, and if time is short it may not be possible to get the things done anyhow. The practical deduction is that a wise woman does not go travelling in Canada with elaborate or with numerous washing garments. It is hot, but it is by no means so frightfully hot as is often imagined, and, even if it were as hot as the tropics, thin silk or dark colors is better for dresses and blouses and underskirts than transparent muslin. The sun is hot, but there is generally a breeze. The vast expanses of water cool the air, and the nights are seldom or never sultry. What travellers do suffer from is the dust, especially in railway travelling. Some suffer also in consequence of the small amount of luggage that it is possible to carry within reach of a Pullman car — less, indeed, than one can carry by ship; so that it is necessary to have everything that will pack as tight and small as possible."

In referring to the subject of dress, this writer says: "Dress is more thought of, and on the whole smarter, in Canadian cities than in English, in Canadian society than in English, of the same standing. Toronto is the last place it would be desirable to wear out old clothes, or clothes of a bygone fashion. Up country, on a farm or ranch, and even in many of the less fashionable summer resorts, one might venture, but not in Toronto, nor in Winnipeg. The Canadian women spend time and money on dress, and certainly will not take it as a compliment if their English guests fail to put their best foot foremost. Dress is more thought of relatively. Perhaps it is not that dress is thought of more, but that other things are thought of less. Indeed, they are not there to think of. The thousand and one calls upon an English income, and even upon an English dress allowance, are unheard of on the other side of the water. Nor are there so many different modes of life as at home — different modes of life that call, each one of them, for a separate outfit. There are fewer games played. There are no Old Country house parties. Probably one secret is that in Canada not so much is spent on homes, and, therefore, more margin is left to adorn the owners of the homes."

In conclusion, she observes:

"It may easily happen that a Canadian hostess, whose afternoon and evening toilettes put those of her guest to shame, will have done most of her own work before arraying herself so splendidly. And the guest, who thinks she cannot afford to dress really well, will yet have afforded, as a matter of course, all her life long to pay so many ser-

vants to wait upon her that she is at a loss to know how to do the little bit of household work that in any transatlantic household may fall to her share. She will have nobody to unpack for her, no one to set her bedroom tidy if she leaves it otherwise. She is not expected to ring her bell and ask for help in dressing; it is, indeed, possible that there may be no bell to ring. If she does not make her own bed of a morning — and she may find it advisable to do that, at any rate in the West — she must set everything to rights, washstand included, so that the maid has no more to do than just to make the bed and carry away the slop water. She will sometimes find a duster put ready — a broad hint, surely, that it is meant to be used! No housemaid will come into her room of a morning to wake the guest and bring her tea and set everything ready. One gets oneself up in the colonies, and one is expected to be "on time." Not but that Colonial hostesses are extremely kind and considerate, even expecting, when they embark on an English visit, to be put to a good deal of trouble that to them seems highly superfluous. But, at the same time, they will naturally gauge the whole nation by the specimens they chance to light upon. And travelling in a new country, it is really more interesting, as well as better manners, to fall into its ways. If one wants to have everything exactly as it is in England, the sensible way, and indeed the only way, would be to stay there. Whatever else one finds in Canada, it will not be just like England, nor will it be what one expects."

An Unhappy Time Recalled

A monument to commemorate one of the most pitiable tragedies in the history of mankind has just been erected in Canada. The victims were from Ireland — that land whose plain people have been used so hardly and who yet are so brave and gay of heart.

It happened in 1847. For two years the potato crop, Ireland's staff of life, had failed. Landlords could get no rent and were having to support their tenants to prevent their actual starvation. Even sixty years ago the idea existed that Canada was a good place to send those who couldn't do for themselves at home. Sixty years ago Canada was not as well able to take in and do for thousands as she is to-day. Then, too, she wasn't consulted in the matter, and no adequate warning was given of the throng that was on its way.

Men, women and children, half-starved already, were crammed into rotten wooden ships that took two or three months to cross the Atlantic. There was scarcely enough water to drink; none for sanitary purposes. There was no light and no air, and the food was scarce, dirty and ill-cooked. Typhus fever was the inevitable consequence and it broke out almost before the ships were out of sight of Ireland. Over five thousand died at sea and when the ships reached Grosse Isle in the St Lawrence, Canadians were panic stricken at the pestilence. Frantic efforts were made to keep it from spreading, but heroic unselfishness was displayed by hundreds who went to the relief of the dying strangers, and nuns and nurses, doctors and clergy labored even unto death to lend aid. In spite of all efforts eight thousand more died at Grosse Isle and Quebec and seven thousand in and around Montreal. Over a third of the unhappy ones who came from Ireland either never saw the shores of Canada or died within a few weeks of landing. Those who survived, and their children after them, have done their share in the building up of this country, and it seems fitting to commemorate those whose opportunity of health and happiness in a new land never came. The inscription on the monument reads: "Sacred to the memory of thousands of Irish emigrants, who, to preserve their faith, suffered hunger and exile in 1847-48, and, stricken with fever, ended here their sorrowful pilgrimage."