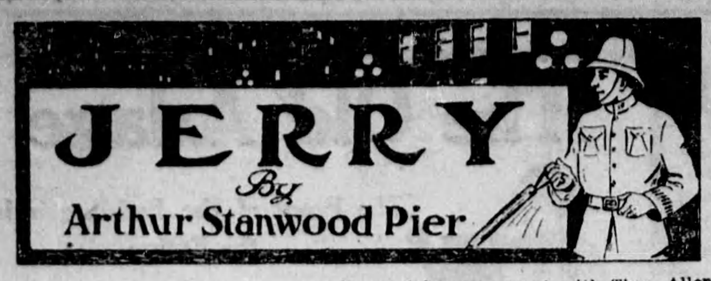

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CHAPTER II.—(Cont'd)

Maxwell, very pale, shrugged his shoulders and achieved a smile.

"Come along, boys," he said. "I had no idea this was a Sunday-school class—and I don't know that I've ever before been insulted by my host.

No other voice was raised; there was a forbidding look on Jerry's face. Less than half the company followed Maxwell from the house; the others lingered.

There was an awkward silence.

"Well, I guess I'll be going," said Dave Scanlan. "Say—I guess you're all right, Jerry. I'm with you."

"So'm I," muttered sheepishly some of the others. Good-night."

When Jerry called at the Driscolls' for his mother, she looked as if she had been crying. She looked at him with mingled appeal and reproach. He merely said, "They've gone, mother."

But out of doors he asked abruptly,—

"What did you think of him? I saw you and Nora leaving the window."

"Oh, Jerry!" She dabbed her handkerchief to her eyes.

"I kicked him out of the house," said Jerry, "when I heard that. I'm sorry, mother."

Then in her joy and contrition that she should ever have doubted her son, she stopped, flung her arms about Jerry, and wept in his breast. A few moments later, ascending the steps of the house she said,—

"And now, Jerry, child, you're done with politics, I hope?"

"Oh, no," he answered. "To-night I've just begun with politics."

She paused on the threshold to look at him. There was a new confidence and knowledge in his eyes, in his smile. Then with poignant sorrow and exultant pride she understood; this night she was present at the passing of the boy, the awakening of the man.

CHAPTER III.

Two nights after the parlor rally, Jerry, according to his custom, was assisting his mother in the drying of the supper dishes. When he had wiped the last saucer, he remarked with an impromptu air,—

"I guess I'll be going up the road a piece. I told Dave Scanlan I'd see him."

"It's a wonder it's Dave and not some other in the family you'd be seeing," replied Mrs. Donohue. "Working with Dave day in, day out, as you are. It's for him you put on your new tie and your best coat, I suppose."

"What'd be the use of teasing me?" said Jerry with a grin. "You don't think Nora would look at me—after her spying upon me with you the other night and seeing the kind of company I keep."

"I'm thinking Dave has set her straight upon that. If he hasn't I will."

"You're a good creature, but you must not always be so possessed to be helping your son along. Hold up your cheek now, till I give it a smack." He held it up himself in his two hands and smacked his loudest kiss in the middle of it.

"Go along then with you, and don't be plaguing the heart out of me," cried his mother.

Then, when he had gone, she sat down in the parlor in her rocking-chair and rocked and lamented to herself aloud. Grown up he was, indeed, when he was for leaving his mother in the evenings to be going to see the girls. Better that, to be sure, than to be hanging about the saloons. And yet if he could but be contented at home after supper always, forever and ever. She looked at the square clean spot on the wall where the memorial dove, now in the taxidermist's hands, had hung, and her eyes filled. If only her man Jim had lived.

A still more cheerful sound reached him presently and thrilled his heart, for it proceeded from the house towards which his steps were directed, a house planted on a knoll above its neighbors and accessible by means of a zigzag flight of steps. To the accompaniment of a piano a girl's voice was singing, 'Kathleen Mavourneen"; at the foot of the steps Jerry stopped and listened. Never, he was sure, had he heard, never would he hear, any one sing more appealingly. His young heart thrilled to the melody, to the vivid picture of the singer with which his imagination presented him—the rich, red cheeks and dark, curling hair and lovely, fluctuant, trilling throat.

He mounted the steps and knocked on the door. It was opened by Nora herself—Nora, with her quick, startled smile. The prettiest girl that Jerry knew, she was also always the best dressed; she wore this evening a white muslin gown with short frilled sleeves, and her hair was banded with a black velvet ribbon. The hand that she gave Jerry was white and soft, the voice with which she greeted him was clear, uncorrupted by the harsh and shrill intonations of the neighborhood. Slender and delicate, she had a round little chin, a sensitive little mouth, a fastidious little nose—all uniting with the flash of her smile and the color in her cheeks to endear her to the young man.

"I heard you from the street, Nora," he said, "and of course I had to come in."

"Oh, that was it, was it? I had hopes you'd strolled up to see me on purpose."

"So I had. Nora, you've a great way of guessing what I'd be at."

"It must be because I give it so little thought. I'd be guessing now you'd be at speaking with father and mother; it was just them I was amusing."

"Keep on with it, keep on with it," said Jerry. "I shan't mind."

He followed Nora into the sitting-room, in the middle of which Michael Scanlan and his wife were occupying an S-shaped "conversation chair." Michael, facing the door, nodded to Jerry in silence; Mrs. Scanlan glanced over her shoulder and remarked, "Oh, it's you, Jerry," in a manner that was distinctly more fretful than welcoming.

But Jerry was not easily dismayed.

"Sure it might be any other creature that was happening to pass along the road. It would be a fine struggle a man would have with himself, not to get drawn in by the sound of Nora's voice. Now has she sung you 'The Widow O'Toole,' Mrs. Scanlan?"

"I don't care for Nora to be singing them vulgar songs," replied Mrs. Scanlan over her shoulder.

"Oh, now, would you be calling it vulgar!" Jerry exclaimed. "Just a bit of cheerfulness, to my way of thinking. Will you let me see what songs are there, Nora?"

While he stood beside her at the piano, he was aware that her parents watched him with lazy hostility. They were North of Ireland people and Protestants, and the Donohues had come from Cork. But Jerry did not feel very much depressed by the parental antipathy. Nora had a mind of her own, and he ventured to think it was favorably disposed toward him. So he continued to chatter in his lively manner: "There's 'Father O'Flynn': the sight of it makes me almost feel I can sing myself. And 'Mulligan's Musketeers'—that's another I can hear inside my heart, but I've got it safe shut up there; don't be scared.—You know, Nora, you look fit to sing in grand opera to-night—isn't it a fact, Mrs. Scanlan?"

"She may be doing that yet," responded Mrs. Scanlan severely. "We expect great things of her."

"We do," agreed Mr. Scanlan, with equal severity.

"Sure," said Jerry. "And don't you be disappointing us, Nora."

"I think there's no great danger," observed Mrs. Scanlan with a malicious pungency that Jerry affected not to notice.

"Well," Jerry said, "let it be anything you please Nora. Just sing."

"I'll have time for only about one song. Maybe not for that. I told Charley I'd be ready at eight and it's that now."

"Where is it you're going?"

"To a dance at McCabe's Hall."

"Who with?"

"Charley Corcoran."

"Oh!" said Jerry. "Well, you're dressed more fit for grand opera than for McCabe's Hall."

"I always like to dress up when I go to a dance."

"I always want Nora to look like a lady wherever she goes," interjected her mother.

"Them that are of a low class will be less likely to get familiar with her," added Mr. Scanlan.

"She won't find many of a high grade at McCabe's Hall," replied Jerry.

"As good maybe as what some young fellows have in their mothers' parlors," said Mrs. Scanlan.

Jerry reached hastily for a sheet of music. "Come on, Nora," he said. "'Kathleen Mavourneen.'"

She had sung only one stanza when her mother interrupted.

"Nora, there's some one at the door."

It proved to be Charley Corcoran. Jerry had always felt antipathy if not animosity towards the light-haired, scorbutic young man who was frequently standing in the doorway of Corcoran's Drug Store. It was more than the mild, generic antagonism that the man in workman's clothes extends towards each member of the class that habitually wears white collars and tries to keep its trousers creased. That stronger feeling, innate and indefinable, was intensified in Jerry while he watched Corcoran's debanair entrance and observed his mannered greetings of Nora and her family. "Dude!" Jerry thought, and in his mind the word was charged with the energy of rancor and contempt. "Dude!" He wanted to cry it aloud when Corcoran addressed him with patronizing suavity: "I hear you had quite a political meeting at your house, Donohue."

"The less it's talked about the better," Jerry replied ungraciously.

"You may well say that," observed Mrs. Scanlan.

"Well, you know, Mrs. Scanlan," said Cororan confidentially, "when you mix into politics you've got to put up with all sorts. Finding that out, eh, Donohue? Your man Maxwell is all right, though; he can have my vote."

"I thought likely." In his extreme aversion Jerry could not permit himself words enough even to make sarcasm effective.

"Oh, sure, he's the fellow.—Well, Nora, all ready to come and trip the light fantastic with me?"

Jerry wondered how Nora could endure a man who talked to her in that fashion. It seemed to him a hackneyed and objectionable form of smartness. And yet Nora seemed smiling and eager; she would be ready in a moment; she had only to get her wrap; she hadn't been to a dance in weeks and she was awfully excited.

(To be continued.)

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One must be economical in order to be liberal.—Voltaire.

EVERY LITTLE MAKES A MUCKLE.

When you are asked to have a beefless meal each day and cut down your allowance of sugar to one lump for a cup of tea or coffee you scarcely realize what it means. When you are asked to eat fish instead of beef and substitutes for wheat it looks almost like trifling with a big subject. The average man's idea, if you are going to save in a big way, is to cut out everything you don't want him to eat. Canada's Food Controller started out with the idea of educating the people to save, not to do without altogether, and there is vast difference in the principle. You can only judge of the results of saving by waiting for a period and adding up your savings. The wealth of the French nation before the war largely consisted in the savings the people deposited in their banks, which aggregated a huge amount. It was out of these small savings that the huge indemnity after the Frenco-Prussian war was paid.

Calculations on the basis of returns actually received show that the savings in December in the United States were for meats 22,733,000 pounds, and these had increased in January to 24,418,000 pounds. In wheat flour the saving was 9,089,000 pounds which in January had increased to 12,790,000 pounds. The U.S. Food Administration believes that the saving of wheat flour during the month of February amounted to considerably over 15,000,000 pounds. Multiply these figures by twelve and you get a fairly good idea what was saved to be sent to the Allies, and how many soldiers were fed on account of it. And nobody in the United States suffered from it. The same is true of Canada. From returns so far as they have been received show in public eating houses savings from 25 to 60 per cent. The use of fish has increased considerably over 100 per cent. That means that an equivalent in beef and pork was sent overseas. The moral is never mind what your neighbor does, do it yourself. If you have to come to rationing it will be time enough to call your neighbor to account.

Keep Household Accounts.

Since the cost of living has advanced so rapidly in the last few years, much attention has been paid to reducing certain items of expenditure. Such efforts are more or less futile unless we are able to draw deductions to aid us in the future.

I believe every housewife should keep acounts. She should know just what is spent each month for food products. The budget is a practical means of reducing expense.

There is a great advantage in marketing in person, and there is nothing more important than the utilizing of the leftovers in planning the meals for the day. It goes without saying that the selection of foods that give the greatest nutritive value for the least outlay is a step in the direction of economy.

The average housewife will reduce expenditures by keeping accounts each month of amounts spent for various food products. By comparing accounts for several months it will be possible to obtain the average amount spent for groceries.

This tends toward the keeping of budgets, and is the means of regulating family expenditures, as opposed to the haphazard methods of the past. It is possible to find what food products are most expensive and make some definite plan to lessen the expense.

Since meat makes up a large part of the ordinary family diet, any economy in the purchase of it will make a noticeable reduction in the food bill. By using meat substitutes which are less expensive, but as nutritious, the amount paid for meat is greatly reduced.

The use of cheese which is rich in protein as a meat substitute will prove satisfactory. Since cheese is a concentrated food, less is needed to furnish the necessary food requirement. Nut loaf is also an excellent substitute for meat, since it adds variety to the diet and is rich in protein.

I find a great advantage to market in person. The housewife may see the foods before purchasing them. In this way it is possible to get the best that is offered for the price.

I always weigh articles that are sold by weight. In case the grocer gives short weight it should be discovered. Although the difference may be small, in a year's time it counts up, and the housewife has paid a certain per cent. of her allowance without any return.

Turn Food Waste into Eggs.

Should all the worthless cats and dogs now consuming table scraps and more valuable food in several thousand Canadian homes—and farms as well as towns and cities are overrun with such uneconomic canines and felines—be replaced by a half-dozen laying hens for each dog and cat destroyed, there could be added to our food supply millions of dozen of eggs annually, replacing meat needed for overseas. This replacement could be made with little cost, as the expense of dog licenses, collars, chains, kennels, and the like would practically offset the first cost of the hens.

It is only fair to say that there are some dogs and cats that are worth their room and feed; but there are uncounted multitudes of roaming, flea-bitten, starving, bird-eating cats and sheep-chasing, poultry-killing, lawn-destroying dogs that should be supplanted by back-yard flocks of chickens as a war-winning aid.

When the millions of layers that would replace the dogs and cats had completed their year's work, each hen would furnish a nourishing family dinner as her final impetus toward hastening world-wide democracy.

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When other trave'lers hit that town,
They, too, don't want to roam,
For they say, "At that WALKER HOUSE
It's just like staying home."
Where is the ONE TOWN where that
WALKER HOUSE is? Don't you know?
Why, it's that good old burg spelled
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