

'The Yellow Briar'

"Here's to the worn-out hearts of those who saw a nation built, and to the proud, fun-loving young hearts that have it in their keeping."

Thus endeth one of the most delightfully interesting stories of pioneer days in Ontario, the author, John Mitchell of Port Credit, writing under the nom de plume of Patrick Slater, one of the old Irish stock straight from the land of the shamrock.

Every pioneer of the good old days in Ontario may see pictured in that story the struggles for existence, the fellowship one with another, the ups and downs of a period out of which our mighty land has grown. The refreshing candor and commonplaces setting make "The Yellow Briar" a novel which is read, not once but many times. In true pioneer language the naive love story is tenderly related. Every phase of life is handled smoothly and with a fair-minded attitude in general. The rigors of nearly a century ago, with immigrants flocking into Upper Canada by the thousands are depicted in a fascinating manner, intriguing the imagination to realms perhaps now dusty and shelf-worn, or creating visions anew in the minds of the younger generations which have heard of-times in childhood strange stories of days that used to be.

Everyone who has ever lived on a farm will enjoy the lively novel with its good measure of wit and virility. Those who have never had the joy of romping over the green fields after the cattle or wending their way at the hour of twilight to the creek where the speckled trout jump at play will immediately wish they had.

The language used is plain, homely talk with no furbelows of caste distinction in evidence. The youth of to-day will learn where the favorite old-time expressions which they have heard since childhood originated from. In no possible way is the story stilted but is the very essence of naturalness, so much so that one has almost to pinch himself to realize that they are not present at the scene at hand.

The characters might easily be your great grand folks or mine. The plot might have been a replica of days which happened in the lives of our own kith and kin. The location might so readily have been the community which harbored 'the old homestead'. So real is it all that wherever the memory takes you, there might the story have had its birth.

But in reality the couple around whom the story rotates is Paddy Slater himself and the only daughter (a spirited sprite of a child) of the man who fathered the little orphan lad. They meet through the most human and interesting circumstances, on a farm near Mono Mills—a farm which to this day is a living memorial to the sturdy and God-fearing people who owned it for many years. It was there that the story gets its name. To-day still blowing in the breeze, stands the yellow briar bush planted many decades ago by loving hands.

The novel tells too, of days at old Ft. York and Toronto—"the meeting place"—when cattle roamed the scenes, where now tall buildings stand. There is evidence to-day too, of the necessity to keep those wanderers from molesting the forbidden properties. The grounds at Osgoode Hall were fenced with a specially imported iron fencing, which had a peculiar type of gate to insure no further trouble from the beasts, most of which were owned by John Trueman, keeper of the Tyrone Inn. This hostelry located at 125 Queen Street west, one of the few landmarks of yesteryear, is being demolished to make way for buildings of a more modern nature. But the old Inn has a history all its own. It was there that King Solomon's Lodge found its birth and subsequently many gatherings of the Masonic Order were held at this place, one of the most respectable in the town for John Trueman had strict ideas about respectability.

One reads too of the plague which carried off literally thousands during the spring and summer of 1847. It was then that Paddy was left adrift to shift for himself but kind Fortune guided him to the Tyrone Inn to the only two pals he knew, little Billy Trueman and his dog, Rover. But you must read for your-

self how he fared in the years that followed.

Public hangings were occasions for celebrating, when the toil of the day could wait. A hanging did not happen every day and it meant seeing folks one hadn't seen for many a day. Then too there was the thrill of wondering what farewell message the convicted man would give before he went on that long journey from which he would never return. From far and near the people came in the exact same attitude as they through the prisons to-day when some unfortunate man or woman has lost his or her balance and committed some grave crime. The mob of to-day is little different from the mob of centuries ago if the question is minutely analyzed.

In these days of depression and politics one can be reminded by "The Yellow Briar" that the nineteenth century too held sweeping evidences of both. Parties shall rise and wane as always. The hand of prosperity rests but periodically, interspersing the breaches with spans of leaner years. Be it ever so, else the world would become too over-bearing and conceited.

The story holds courage of a nature capable of leaving the glowing fireside and the heaped-up bins, for the highway of adventure, all for the sake of a pride and a conscience which were not asleep. Down to the sea in ships it took the hero and here the lure of service in the Union army during the Civil War caused him to become a foreign mercenary which job netted him a fat profit. Later after the war was ended Paddy was most grateful to Canadian soil. Working in the harbor at Toronto he joyfully came across Rev. Alexander Lewis and learned that he was to hurry to the home of his benefactor, who was very ill on the farm at Mono Mills.

Mr. Lewis was the first settler of Mono township back in 1820 and had kept the post office and later preached the Presbyterian doctrine for many years. This revered gentleman was the great grandfather of Dr. L. G. Campbell of Markdale.

Recently the author of this thrilling tale returned to the scene of his boyhood and spoke on the days of pioneering at Mono. He was warmly acclaimed with one accord, and as he related the incidents of by-gone days the mantle of time seemed to drop and those times return again with vivid colorings before eyes which gleamed with radiance of youth once more.

—Wilma J. March

WILLIAMSFORD

(Intended for last week.)

The Williamsford Women's Institute held their monthly meeting on Wednesday, July 3rd, at the home of Mrs. Geo. Davidson with an attendance of 20 members and 9 visitors. The meeting was opened in the usual manner. After the business session the report of the convention was given and some community singing enjoyed. The meeting was closed by singing God save the King. The next meeting is to be held at the home of Mrs. R. L. Aitchenson.

On Monday evening Rev. H. L. Stephens, noted speaker and evangelist from New York, conducted a service in the Gospel Workers' Church. Rev. Armstrong of Meaford conducted the song service and the Misses Javens of Owen Sound sang a duet. Mr. Stephens, who is a convincing speaker, made a strong appeal and a number manifested their desire for a closer walk with God. There were people present from Shelburne, Meaford, Markdale, Faversham, Owen Sound and other parts of the country.

Rev. and Mrs. Grew of Quebec are visiting with Mr. and Mrs. Henry Nuhn.

Mr. and Mrs. H. Ross spent Sunday with the latter's brother, Mr. Fatum, at Clifford.

Mrs. Warling of Dakota is visiting with her sister-in-law, Mrs. C. Miller.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Weppler of Stoney Creek spent a short time on Monday with Mr. and Mrs. H. Ross, while on their way to Keady.

Mr. and Mrs. A. McAllen and daughter, Marjorie, of London spent the week-end with Mrs. McAllen's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Boldt. Mr. and Mrs. Euph. Boldt of Hanover

New England Ladies' Aid

The New England Ladies' Aid met at the home of the President, Mrs. John Morrison, on Thursday afternoon, June 13th. There was a very good attendance and 10 members answered the roll call with a verse of Scripture bearing the word Father, there were also five visitors present. The devotional part of the meeting opened by singing the hymn, "Work for the night is coming"; the President read first 10 verses of the 15th chapter of St. John. This was followed by all repeating the Lord's prayer. The minutes of the May meeting opened the were adopted. The making of a quilt business part of the meeting which out of pieces sent by T. Eaton & Co., suitable for same, was thoroughly discussed and Mrs. Gordon Wiley was appointed to see about getting a pattern and send it on to Miss Caroline Clark and Mrs. Nelson Wilcox, who were appointed to cut blocks out and pass on to members. Miss Emily Lawson, one of our valued members, who was then sick in Markdale Hospital and unable to be present sent in a few beautiful verses which were read by Mrs. Stanley Clugston. Miss Elsie Wiley read "Beyond the Blue" and Mrs. Eric Clark sang a much appreciated solo. Miss Caroline Clark gave a reading "The Part we Play". Mrs. R. H. Wiley gave us from memory, "Speak Gently". Mrs. Wiley, whose eyesight is very dim and who is unable to enjoy many things she might, was able to bring these choice verses to us from memory and were greatly appreciated. Hazel Morrison contributed a fruit basket which proved to be very good. Rev. McAuslan spoke a few words and after singing a verse of "Blest be the Tie that binds", closed the meeting with prayer. Mrs. Willard Wiley and Miss Caroline Clark assisted the hostess to serve a dainty lunch. The next meeting will be held at the home of Mrs. Matt. Devitt on Thursday, July 15th. Word for roll call Youth.

CHERRY GROVE W. I.

The July meeting and picnic of Cherry Grove Women's Institute was held at the home of Mrs. Jas. L. Irving, Thursday the 4th, with a good attendance of members and visitors.

The president, Mrs. Dickie, took charge of the meeting in her usual efficient manner. The Ode was sung and the Lord's prayer repeated in unison. The minutes of the last meeting were read and adopted. After the business part of the meeting was disposed of an interesting report of the District meeting of Centre Grey W.I., held at Williamsford, was given by Mrs. Wm. Dickie. The meeting was then adjourned for the picnic.

The grounds, day and weather were ideal for the picnic and a nice attendance of member's families and friends were present and all enjoyed themselves in various ways. There was a good game of baseball; races for everyone and swings for the children. The first race was for elderly men, Mr. J. Matthews winning the prize; young men's race, Wm. Irving; little girl's, Nina Teeter; little boy's, Oscar Irving; elderly women's, Mrs. Jas. Pendleton; young women's, Jane Dickie; three-legged race, Mr. and Mrs. Merton Pendleton; shoe race, Jane Dickie. All enjoyed their prizes of candy. After the sports Grace was sung and the ladies served in good old picnic style a splendid lunch. Thanks are due Mr. and Mrs. Irving for their generous hospitality. The next meeting will be held at the home of Mrs. W. J. Ward on August 1st. Topic, Agriculture. Visitors welcome.

were visitors also over Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Jack Meller of Kitchener spent Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Heinbecker, jr.

Mr. Ivan Hunt of Toronto spent the week-end with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. Hunt.

Mr. Melville Elliott of Kirkland Lake is holidaying with his parents.

Mrs. Gordon Noble of Toronto is spending a few weeks with her father, Mr. Wm. McMitchell, who is under the doctor's care.

Mr. and Mrs. Brewster and family of Hespeler spent the week-end with Mrs. Brewster's mother, Mrs. Warner.

BEAVERDALE

Mr. Geo. Merrifield visited his parental home on Sunday.

A large number from this vicinity celebrated the glorious twelfth in Thornbury. All report a good time.

Masters Stewart and Harold Merrifield visited on Sunday with Mr. Albert Fothergill.

Sunday visitors with Mr. and Mrs. Ed. Fothergill and Mr. and Mrs. G. Fothergill were Mrs. Morris, son, Harvey, Mr. V. Butler, Mr. and Mrs. Merel McCauley, Mr. Harry Johnston, Mr. and Mrs. Walter McCullough and daughter of Collingwood. Messrs. Tom and Jas. Merrifield

visited on Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. Earl Ormsby and Donald at Meaford.

Mr. and Mrs. Carman Caswell and family visited on Sunday with friends in Walters Falls.

The annual Field Day which was held at Beaverville was a decided success both in the afternoon and evening. The ball games were very interesting in the afternoon, the prizes being taken by Cherry Grove, 1st and Walters Falls 2nd. The proceeds of the day amounted to a little over \$124.

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