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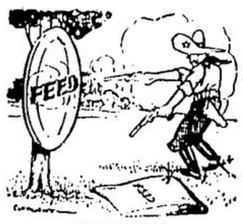

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Poetry.

IRELAND

MY NATIVE LAND

She is a rich and rare land;
O! she's a fresh and fair land;
She is a dear and rare land—
This native land of mine.

No man than here are braver—
Her women's hearts ne'er waver;
I'd freely die to save her
And think my lot divine.

She's not a dull or cold land;
No! she's a warm and bold land!
O! she's a true and old land—
This native land of mine.

Could beauty ever guard her,
And virtue still reward her,
No foe would cross her border
No friend within it pine.

O! she's a fresh and fair land;
O! she's a true and rare land!
Yes, she's a rare and fair land—
This native land of mine.

—Thomas Davis.

BUSINESS MAN'S CREED

Trifles make perfection but perfection is no trifle.—Michael Angelo.

Select Family Reading

A CASE OF "SCATTER-BRAINS"

MARGARET L. KNAPP

"THE trouble with Billy is he's scatter-brained." As Mr. Lemmon said this he filled a dipper at the pump and approached the teakettle. The tin lid was upside down and very hot. He gave it a hasty fillip which landed it in the midst of the apple sauce simmering close by and poured in the water triumphantly.

"Like to get scalded that time," he said, fishing out the teakettle lid. "It won't hurt the sauce, will it?"

"I don't believe it will. The dipper will melt, Nathan, if you leave it on the stove empty."

"That's so." Mr. Lemmon rescued the dipper and made a fresh onslaught on the pump.

"Billy means well if he would only keep his mind on the main thing," he went on. "He's anxious to help. I haven't told you what he did yesterday. I sent him to the tool-box for more nails. There was plenty of 'em there, but he took a notion that it would be a good thing if he was to sort over the whole box, and emptied everything out on the ground. I come to see what he was doing to keep him so long, and there he was swimmin' in tacks. Much as ever I can get things straightened out again."

Mrs. Lemmon laughed. She laughed easily. She was distinctly a person.

"I can't think where he gets it from," added Mr. Lemmon.

"He gets it from his father," unswered Mrs. Lemmon unexpectedly.

"Why, you don't say—" Mr. Lemmon turned around to see what she meant.

"Certain I do. You're filling the kettle too full, Nathan; it's spilling over. Yes, you're both absent-minded. He can't get over it all in a minute. We must guide him some. Now if you'll bring the horse around, I'll be ready to go as soon as the apple sauce is off the stove."

"Dear me, they're as helpless as kittens about some things," she thought affectionately, tying the strings of her Sunday bonnet in a firm, square bow.

She looked out of the window at Billy, a freckled-faced boy of ten, who was tramping up and down beside the old horse. Mrs. Lemmon was Billy's stepmother and he had decided opinions about her.

"She takes my part," Billy said. "She takes pa's part too. I don't know who's side she's on—everybody's, I guess. She's great!"

"Ma, say, can I drive?" he asked as she came out.

"Course I expect you to drive. When a young man takes me to town, he has to do the driving."

Billy clambered into the waggon with an important air. Mrs. Lemmon stood waiting.

"There's another thing a young man's got to do that takes me to ride," she said, after a minute.

"What?"

"Turn the wheel out so I can get in."

"I forgot." Billy turned out sharply.

"Take care—take care. You'll be over on the other side the road," cautioned his father, coming up to the fence anxiously. It was not the general custom to see one's wife off every time she went to the village. Mr. Lemmon did not know why he did it. It was because she brought an element of fun into the business. He felt excited, like Billy.

"No, we're all right. Well, good-by." Mr. Lemmon looked after his wife's erect comely figure. "I guess they'll get where they say they will as long as she's in the waggon," he thought. "He was dreadful pleased to have the reins. She understands boys."

The place looked lonely to Mr. Lemmon as he went back to the chicken-coop he was making. It was a good-sized coop with a door in front for the hens to go in and out. He had laid the floor and nailed on three sides the day before and he regarded it with satisfaction. "She'll say it's a good job," he thought.

"Queer how she come to say what she did about Bill," he continued. "I've told him I don't know how many times to just put his mind right on it—nail it right in. That's what Billy needs—"

And then for a time there was no sounds about the place but the sharp tap! tap! of the hammer.

It was dark when Mrs. Lemmon and Billy drove into the yard. Mr. Lemmon did not come out to take the horse.

"I's said he might have to leave to go down to the meadow before we got back," said Billy.

"You and I have to unharness, then, Quick, now. I'm going to make you some waffles for supper."

"Can I grate some maple sugar to eat on 'em, ma?"

"Certainly. No, Billy, you don't want to undo all the straps, only just what's necessary."

"I got mixed up, ma."

"Well, get unmixed, then," said his stepmother, good-naturedly.

It was strange that Mr. Lemmon should leave the door wide open if he was going down to the meadow. She shut it and laid her bundles on the table. Just then they heard a peculiar sound: Rat-a-tat! Rat-a-tat!

"What was that?" she exclaimed. She and Billy look at each other, startled.

Rat-a-tat. Rat-a-tat-tat!

Mrs. Lemmon flung open the cellar door. "Nathan, are you there?" she called.

"Ma-a!" came a feeble voice from the distance.

"It's outaldo," said Mrs. Lemmon. "I am afraid he's hurt. Take this candle, Billy, and run on ahead."

Billy loped across the yard. She followed with the lamp. "What's the matter?" she called, alarmed, for Billy was capering up and down beside some whitish object the candle lighting up his round face like a hobgoblin's.

"Ma! Pa's in the chicken coop."

There could be no manner of doubt of it. His hammer resounded on the walls, and his muffled voice called crossly: "Let me out, let me out!"

Billy got on the ground and looked through the door. "I see him," he cried excited.

"Nathan Hale Lemmon, how come you there?" cried his wife.

"I should think you could see for yourself."

She had seen in a flash, and leaning against the partition, she laughed till the tears came.

"You've been—you've been—oh, oh,—you've been and nailed that front on from the inside, and then—you couldn't get out through the door unless you was a chicken, which you're not—oh, my, my, my!"

"He, he," snickered Billy.

"But why didn't you knock in a board and get out?"

"Went the wrong way. Couldn't get any purchase," said the muffled voice.

"O Nathan, I shall give up."

"Well, when you get through laughing, maybe you'll do something. I've been hollering here most all the afternoon."

"You poor man you. Really I feel weak. There, Billy, you stop. Run and bring the hatchet. Don't cut yourself."

It took but a few well-directed blows with the back of the hatchet to loosen a couple of boards. Through the narrow opening Mr. Lemmon squeezed out. He was one of the mildest of men, but when you have been shut up all the afternoon in a hen coop of your own making you may be forgiven for being a little provoked.

It was a grand supper Mrs. Lemmon gave them half an hour later, a supper fit for the minister, and no allusions made to late unpleasant experiences. Right in the midst of it, all three happened to look up at once, and than there was a fresh explosion. Mr. Lemmon helped himself to the last waffle. "Well, 'twas rather funny when you come to think of it," he assented with a laugh.

And that was all; only nowadays when he worries over Billy's scatter-brains his wife says, soothingly:

"Now, pa, remember that chicken coop."

THE ROUND OF LIFE

To lift a thirst the brimming Glass of Life and drain it, dregs and all, with smack of smiling lip and slap of knee;

To bend above the Stream of Trade and wrest from it my gold, clean-handed, zealfully, as one who takes equivalents—not more—for what he gives;

To hear, attent, the silent cry of those who lack, dividing food and fagots and the courageous world;

To look well to my sowing, knowing sure that each small seed, by law immutable, begets its kind—and multiplied at that;

To shrine my woman high and touch her flesh with prayer as well as passion;

To find within the eyes of children that fine light which guided a man to simpler ways again and nestles him within the arms of this old earth's vast motherhood;

To search for peace within the lily-bell or 'neath the verdant mes by forest ways, and searching, find a fuller weed than e'er dreamed or guessed;

To hail my friends with frankness—palm to palm and eye to eye, with merge of heart and hope until we twain are one and gianted for battle;

To think things out in my own way and blast a doctrine when it bars my path with rev'rent ruthlessness.

To take my God wherever I my find Him—in the meeting house or in the meadow, or where the lisare cleave the crests and fling their foam afar;

To know that Jesus lived for me to show me how to live, and died for me to show me how to die, should they assail my truth as they did His;

To hold that Love is lawful, all of it, or else it be not love but something less.

That Hire, seems good to me and right and fair, and by the grace of each day's sun and verve of starry nights, I'll face my years with glee as one who dies not, but who lives alway.—R. Wightman.

WHAT HE WAS

"Are you the defendant?" asked the Judge.

"No, boss," replied the man. "I ain't done nothin' to be called names like dat. I've got a lawyer here."

"Then who are you?"

"Why, I'se the gen'leman 'at took de chickens.

SHE HADN'T TIME

An interested visitor who was making a call in the tenement district, rising, said:

"Well, my good woman, I must go now. Is there anything I can do for you?"

"No, thank ye, mam," replied the submerged one. "Yo mustn't mind if I don't return the call, will ye? I haven't any time to go slumsin' meself."

A NEGLECTED SOURCE OF HAPPINESS

Is the art of conversation lost forever? Have we forgotten how to sit down with a dear friend in the gloaming and talk of things of the soul? Is there no such thing as the walk to Emmaus in the twentieth century? Must it be only "Hello"; "Yes, I guess so"; "She's getting it made strictly up to date with the narrowest kind of skirt"; "Who's butting into our line?"; "Well, I guess I'll have to ring off and go and give Shuzzles his bath."

No, the art of conversation is not forever lost if you and I will seriously set to work to restore it. But we must remember that mere talking is not conversation. You cannot carry on a conversation with an empty head or an empty heart.

"Talkative—that is, loquacious, garrulous, multiloquous, chattering, declamatory—need not mean 'worth hearing.' The talker may be a chatterbox, a babbler, a ranter, a blatherskite, jay, parrot; his talk may be all talk and no cider," mere east wind.

We were boiling apple butter and the process had extended into the night. Father, an expert at apple butter production, was directing the work and I, a lad, was stirring the bubbling, semiliquid mass in the big kettle—perhaps one of the most stirring things I ever did—while the lights and shadows were playing tag among the rafters of the old "wash house." Our clerical boarder was entertaining a peripatetic book vendor well fitted with a tongue place of much versatility. The parson appeared on the scene of our culinary operations with a solemn face. "Is there a good roof on the house?" was his anxious question. "Why?" "I'm afraid our friend'll talk it off. He has a barrel of wind with the spigot lost."

Conversation means more than wind. It means good listening; it means appreciation of the other fellow, self-effacement, sympathy. There is nothing I have found in literature that pictures real conversation, that ecstatic commingling of sympathetic souls, better than that stanza in "In Memoriam." The poet recalls a heaven'ly hour:

"When each by turns was guide to each,
And fancy light from fancy caught,
And thought leaped out to wed with thought
Ere thought could wed itself with speech."

Deliver me from the man who wants to do all the talking himself; the man who literally buttonholes you, the man who punches you in the chest, the man whose breath is laden with the odor of that insistent garden vegetable, the man whose mind wanders—you think he is greatly interested in what you are saying, and you stare out with fervor to tell him something of great moment and you find presently that he has hens on his mind—the man whose head is hollow and has room but for one idea at a time, which rattles around like the seeds in last year's pumpkins; the man who rides a hobby with its back full of saddle galls.

What did our noble first parents talk about in the blessed garden? What could they talk about? No neighbors, no politics, no clothes, no theatres, no stocks, no cookery, no scandals, no divorces. Ah, there was a chance to really converse, to talk about something worth while, to realize that real and pure happiness which is sure to come when kindred minds commingle, when kindred souls give themselves to considering the really great themes. There were intelligence, perfect sympathy, knowledge waiting on information, the sweet charity that thinketh no evil, believeth all things.

Better go out under a haystack alone than talk nothing in a crowd. Better talk with yourself than with a parrot or brangart.

The Yankee schoolmaster gave two good reasons for his habit of talking to himself. He said that, first, he liked to talk to a sensible man; and, secondly, he liked to hear a sensible man talk.

Francis Bacon said, with his usual quaintness: "A crowd is not company and faces are but a gallery of pictures, and talk but a tinkling cymbal where there is no love."

I pause to interject that love alone does not make conversation as many a poor man or maiden has found yet in great sorrow after marrying a companion with more love in the heart than knowledge or good sense in the head.

But a little more Bacon, please: "We know diseases of stoppings and suffocations are the most dangerous in the body, and it is not much otherwise in the mind; you may take saxa to open the liver, steel to open the spleen, flour of sulphur for the lungs, castoreum for the brain; but no receipt openeth the heart but a true friend to whom you may impart griefs, joys, fears, hopes, suspicions, counsels, and whatsoever lieth upon the heart to oppress it in a kind of civil shift or confession."

Then there are the ethics of conversation. Save me from cross-firing. Madame Recamier, one of the graceful queens of real conversation, would allow only one person to speak at a time in her salon.

Then there is conversation at table. Let the children talk in a mannerly way. Let the meal hour be the pleasantest of day. Have up some funny things for that time and get them off at the table. Hunger may be the best sauce, but fun comes next.

After all, there is nothing that makes for the exaltation of conversation and for its transcendant success as a producer of happiness like the fellowship of Christ.

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love,
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

And yet we sit together and talk about raising chickens, about good things to eat, about our neighbors, about the fashions, about anything but the high themes that makes such intercourse the sitting together in heavenly places that Paul talks about and that it might be for us.

HIS DREAM REALIZED

"Strange," said the first tramp meditatively, "how few of our youthful dreams ever come true."

"Oh, I dunno," said his companion; "I remember I used to dream about wearing long pants, and now I guess I wear 'em longer than anyone else in the country."

TWENTY YEARS AGO

Gleaned From the Free Press of Thursday, March 14th, 1895

In the absence of Rev. J. E. Howell at Fergus and Elora, on Sunday, Mr. R. R. Wilson, a Victoria College student, formerly of Fergus, preached in the Methodist Church here.

The Baptists feel that in Rev. M. Langford they have secured a superior pastor for their church.

Rev. J. K. Godden, the new minister of St. Alban's Church, preached in St. Alban's, Acton, and St. John's, Rockwood, on Sunday, with much acceptance.

The eleventh annual meeting of the Women's Foreign Missionary Society, of the Guelph Presbytery, was held in Knox Church last week. About 100 delegates present, nearly every auxiliary being represented. Powerful addresses were given by Mrs. Harvie, of Toronto, Foreign Secretary of the W. M. F. S., and Rev. J. Fraser Campbell, Missionary to India. The thoughtful arrangements and delightful hospitality of the ladies of Acton were much appreciated by the visitors.

On the occasion of the removal of Miss Lottie Hanstreet to Gloversville, N. Y., where she has received an appointment as leading soprano in one of the churches. She was visited by the choir of the Methodist Church here in a body on Monday evening. Rev. J. E. Howell, pastor, accompanied, and after a few words of greeting Miss Lottie E. Speight read a farewell address, after which Mr. J. C. Hill handed Miss Hanstreet a well filled purse. The address referred to her long and able service with her voice in the choir and at social gatherings in connection with the church.

Miss Hattie Cookman, daughter of Rev. C. Cookman, of Port Dover, died at the home of her uncle, Mr. James Brown, here, on Sunday. She was 21 years of age, and a devoted Christian.

Mr. Wm. Sharp, a well-known Eramosa farmer, and an expert plowman, died last week, aged 68 years.

Mr. Ezra Adams, for many years a well-known and respected resident of Acton, died at Drayton the last day of February. He was a native of Quebec and came to Ontario when a young man. He was over 80 years of age.

Rev. D. G. Sutherland, a well-known minister, died in Toronto on Tuesday night.

WHY THEY DID NOT GET JACK

Once upon a time there lived a boy who became a Christian and withdrew from his old associates. He began to study his Bible—he loved to study it. His companions were greatly exasperated at his "sanctimony," and many little plans were made for the drawing him back to their circle once more. But every attempt met with failure.

Finally, they picked out the cleverest, keenest lad in the whole community and sent him to "Jack" to try his influence.

"Hello, Jack old boy," cried this "clever" lad cordially, when he met Jack on the street. "Come along and have a drink with me," and he waved his arm suggestively toward a saloon on the corner.

"No," said Jack, "I can't go in there any more."

"Why not?"

"Because my Bible says, 'Look not upon the wine when it is red.'"

"Yes, I know it says that—I used to go to Sunday School myself. But come along and have one glass just for old times' sake. One glass won't do any harm."

"No. I can't do it."

"Why not?"

"Why my Bible says, 'At last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder.'"

"Yes, I remember that verse. But come along in with me anyhow, Jack. Come, be sociable, can't you?"

"No," said Jack, "I can't come. My Bible says, 'When sinners entice thee, consent thou not.'"

Then Jack was left alone, and the clever boy went back to his companions.

"You may as well give up," he said to them. "You can never do anything with Jack. He'll never come back to us any more. I could not do a thing with him."

"Why, what was the matter?" they demanded.

"Because," explained the clever fellow, "Jack is just chock full of the Bible. You can't make any headway against a fellow like that."

The Bible can meet and overcome every temptation for us. But many of us are not familiar enough with it to allow it to serve us.

THE SERVICE YOU DEMAND

You will get from your memory just the sort of service you insist on. If you are satisfied with half remembering, with careless, intellectual work, that is the sort you will get. Any memory can be made accurate and reliable. Any memory will be inaccurate and unreliable if the owner is willing that it should be so. When a girl says, "I never can remember dates," or a boy proclaims his inability to remember names, both are acknowledging intellectual laziness. Dates may be harder for you to remember than music or the stories you read or the names of flowers, but difficulty is not synonymous with impossibility. Your memory will do just what you demand of it and no more.

Simple and Sure.—Dr. Thomas' Eclectric Oil is so simple in application that a child can understand the instructions. Used as a liniment the only direction is to rub, and when used as a dressing to apply. The directions are so plain and unmistakable that they are readily understood by young or old.

Clean Stomach, Clear Mind.—The stomach is the workshop of the vital functions and when it gets out of order the whole system clogs in sympathy. The spirit flags, the mind droops and work becomes impossible. The first care should be to restore healthful action of the stomach and the best preparation for that purpose is Parmelee's Vegetable Pills. General use for years has won them a leading place in medicine. A trial will attest their value.

THE SEED YOU SOW

You may not hold the limber of a gun,
But you can hold the handles of a plow,
And glory in the victory when it's won
So sow your wheat and plenty of it now!

Grim war is but sowing dragon's teeth
The Kaiser's busy sowing seeds of woe;
So draw your trusty plowshare from its sheath,
But—be careful of the seeds you sow!

In Belgium they have never bound a sheaf,
In France the trampled harvest fields are red,
And the widow and the orphan in their grief
Are pleading sorely for a loaf of bread.

So harness up your horses to the plow,
And whistle in the furrow as you go;
Row your wheat—and plenty of it—now,
And be careful of the seed you sow!

So smoothly let the rolling furrows swell,
And plow an extra field for golden wheat,
For soon our allies, yes, our foes as well,
Will be crying for a bite to eat.

And we will freely give the foe our bread,
As we have done throughout the long ago,
So tuck the seed wheat snugly in its bed,
But be ye careful of the seed you sow!

Let the pastor and the women and the old
Tarry in the barn to winnow seed,
For the altar gold and silver will be sold
And you can't afford to grow a single weed!

Winnow out the ragweed and the tares,
Winnow out the thistles dreaded so,
Ah! they may creep amongst you unaware,
Oh! be ye careful of the seed you sow!

Far away they're busy sowing hate,
'Twill grow among the cobbles in the street;
But here, at home, we have a happier fate,
In Canada, we're busy sowing wheat!

Afar a hand is sowing dragon's teeth,
The Kaiser's busy sowing weeds of woe,
Oh, draw your trusty plowshare from it's sheath,
But be ye careful of the seed you sow!

(Written for the Evening Telegram last autumn by R. Kernigan.)

THE FEBRUARY EXAMINATIONS

Standing Taken by Pupils of Acton High and Public Schools

AS RESULT OF THE MONTH'S WORK

The following are the reports of Acton Schools for February:

HIGH SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

—MIDDLE SCHOOL.—

JUNIOR CLASS

CLASS I—J. O'Brien, M. Henderson, N. Anderson, C. Henderson, I. McPherson.

CLASS III—A. O'Brien, D. Harvey, C. Brown.

Highest in Physics—J. O'Brien; in History—C. Henderson, M. Henderson and N. Anderson.

JUNIOR CLASS

CLASS III—M. Smith, G. McLeod.

Highest in Physics—G. McLeod; in History—M. Smith.

—LOWER SCHOOL.—

JUNIOR CLASS

CLASS II—J. Wilson, H. Mount, M. Wilson, N. Kenney, H Rath, V. Harvey.

CLASS III—P. Ault, C. McLeod, L. Britton, M. McLean, V. Masales, L. Kennedy, B. Plank, W. Johnstone, R. Plank, B. Mount, J. Hurd.

Highest in Geography—J. Wilson; in Art—N. Kenney; in Arithmetic—M. McLean; in Composition—J. Wilson, L. Kennedy and J. Hurd.

JUNIOR CLASS

CLASS I—G. Anderson.

CLASS II—H. Reed, O. Mount, R. Brown, W. Ross, M. Clarridge.

CLASS III—M. Stewart, G. Agnew, A. Snyder, M. Stalker, W. McDonald, M. Locker, M. Early, A. Lindsay.

Highest in Geography—G. Anderson; in Arithmetic—R. Brown.

W. H. STEWART, Principal.
PEARL Z. BAKER, Assistant.

FOURTH DEPARTMENT

JR. IV—Kenneth Henderson 177, Dall Wilson 173, Neil Gibbons 166, Jessie Mowat 163, Isabel Elliott 163, Hugh Williams 168. Total 250.

SR. IV—Harold Kennedy 174, Bellone Gibbons 173, Melvin Williams 172, Jack Kennedy 163, Pearl Frank 162, Stella McLam 150. Total 250.

No. on roll 41. M. Z. BENNETT, Teacher.

THIRD DEPARTMENT

SR. III—Margaret Malcolm 273, Elmer Henderson 255, Florence Cook 243, Willie Stewart 239, Clara Cutting 233, Max Bell 233.

JR. III—Salina Nelson 213, May Carnochan 230, Violet Davis 223, David Henderson 223, Elma Cutting 204, Elsie Lappin 198. Total 300. No. on roll 50.

I. WHITE, Teacher.

SECOND DEPARTMENT

SR. II—Angus Kennedy, Jordan Lawson, James Matthews, Eddie Huffman, Martha Orr, Johnny Robertson.

JR. II—Minnie Blair, Ruby Joyce, Margaret Morgason, Willie Cook, Leslie Martin, Laird Dancey. No. enrolled 47.

ENA A. PEARSON, Teacher.

FIRST DEPARTMENT

SR. I—Nellie Facer, Jean Barber, Jim Ewing, Marguerite Ryder, Nellie Hall, Robert Stewart, Findlay Wilson, Calvin Wilson.

JR. I—Miriam Clifford, Ivy Precious, Tommy Cutting, Doris Sparrow, Willie Huffman, Russell Ross.

R. I. MACNIVEN, Teacher.

SENIOR PRIMER

CLASS A and B—Mina Saxe, Albert Wildgust, Lynd Smith, Mina Gorosky, Arlington White, Dora Lambert, Myrtle Ryder, Maggie Ryder, Agnes Murphy, Ralph Henderson, Harry Sindlo, Madeline Masales.

CLASS C—Charlie Joyce, Wallace Lasby, Doris Cutting. M. A. BLACK, Teacher.

JUNIOR PRIMARY

CLASS A—Willrose Reid, Clara Savage, Charles Draper, Evelyn Howarth, Willie Clark, Stanley Facer.

CLASS B—Charles Bell, Emma Little, Morris Starkman, Edna Morgason, Elsie Lasby, Charles Prevost.

CLASS C—Matthew Tylor, Jean Mackenzie, Jessie Morton, Joe Hurst, Thelma Gamble, Campbell Currie.

F. G. BRICKNELL, Teacher

HIS TEXT

A young clergyman, small of stature, preaching as a candidate in a certain place, one Sabbath, peering over the pulpit Bible, announced as his text: "It is I. Be not afraid."