

## LOVE MAKING IN IRELAND.

A song called "The Sprig of Shillelagh," which has been very popular with the Irish peasantry since it was written, close on a century ago, says: Love is the soul of a neat Irishman, He loves all that's lovely and loves all he can.

And yet, though there seems to exist widespread impression that strong, passionate, masterful love is a characteristic of the Irish temperament, love-making in Ireland is really a very calm and placid business, and, the old song I have quoted notwithstanding, the average Irish peasant takes unto himself a mate with as clear a head, as placid a heart, and as steady a nerve as if he were buying a cow at Ballinasloe Fair, says a writer in Macmillan's Magazine.

Love by no means decides all the marriages that are made in Ireland. The match is often arranged in a ludicrously cool, businesslike and mercenary fashion between the parents of the "boy" and the "girl," the young people themselves not being allowed, and, indeed, not expecting any voice in the matter. But if there is little romance in the origin of most of the matrimonial contracts made in rural Ireland, they are, as a rule, entirely successful. The marriages thus prosaically arranged are as happy as happy can be. Pat and Mary fall fondly in love with each other after they are made husband and wife; children quickly spring up around their hearth, and the older they grow the more passionately do they cling to each other. Their domestic felicity is rarely, if ever, disturbed by jealousy, for Pat makes the faithfullest of husbands and Mary the fondest and truest of wives, and as there is little or no illicit passion, the crimes which spring from that source and make desolate so many homes in other countries are almost unknown in Ireland.

The great marrying season in Ireland is Shrovetide. During the forty days of Lent the Irish peasantry, in obedience to the ordinance of the Church, abstain from matrimony as well as from eggs, butter and milk. Some time before the approach of that holy season a farmer with a marriageable son or daughter whom he desires to see settled tells his friends and neighbors of the fact. He usually conveys the intelligence in an indirect, offhand manner. He meets a friend at the fair or market, and says, with a laugh, "Whisper here, Jim. I'm training up my little Maggie for your Johnny." "Ah, now, Jim," the other says, "you do me a grate favor entirely. But mind you, my little Johnny is very particular. The boy do be saying what a grate fortin he'll want with his wife." The subject having thus been broached, the parents discuss it whenever they meet, and it often happens that a long time elapses and many a discussion and wrangle take place before the terms are finally settled. The farm generally goes with the male, and the great difficulty in the arranging of matches is the fixing of the girl's dowry, consisting partly of money and partly of furniture and culinary utensils as a set-off against the land.

A favorite proverb of the peasantry in regard to matrimony is: "Either marry very young or become a monk very young." Early marriages are the rule in Ireland, and the poorest marry the earliest.

And yet many of the Irish poor enter into matrimony as a sort of provident investment for old age. A very intelligent Irish peasant once said to me: "A poor man ought to marry young, that his children may be able to assist him when he grows old." When Pat and Biddy begin housekeeping their little cabin is soon filled with children, and the more their flock increases the more they say: "Shure, the childer will be a grate support to us in our old age." And happily this investment for old age never fails them. In no country in the world is the affection between children and parents so strong; in no country in the world is the duty of children to provide for their aged parents held so sacred as in Ireland. Four generations may be seen in many of the poorest cabins in the West—the children, the young father and mother, the old grandparents, and an ancient great-grandmother or great-grandfather. The large sums of money which have been annually sent by children in the colonies and in America to parents in Ireland during the past half century are another striking demonstration of this intense filial affection.

But happily many of the marriages in rural Ireland have their spice of romance. The match is made by the boy and girl themselves. An Irish peasant maid in the heyday of her youth, with her pretty figure, her abundant black hair, her large blue eyes, with their indescribable half-arch, half-shy expression, is quite irresistible; and the boy has too often an impressionable heart and a "deludering tongue" to render it always necessary that the parents should "make the bargain." The youthful couples meet at dances or on Sundays after mass—even a wake is turned to account for a little courting—and they are in hearty accord with the boy who said, "It is a grate pleasure entirely to be alone, especially whin yer sweet-

heart is wid ye." "Do you drame of me, Mike?" said the girl to her lover as they walked arm in arm down the lonely glen. "Drame of you, is it, Kate? Shure, 'tis the way wid me that I can't sleep dramin' of you, me darlin'?" Yes, they have the flattering tongue, those Irish boys. "Och, I wish I was in jail for stealin' ye," was the compliment one of them paid to a pretty colleen. Even when they get a refusal they have a "soft word" to say. Eileen was engaged to another boy, and so she had to say no to him when he asked her, "Wisha, thin," said Tim with a sigh, "I wish you'd been born twins, so that I cud have half of yez."

The girls in Ireland can afford just as well, if, indeed, not better, than the girls of any other country to take up an independent position in regard to matrimony, for the proportion they bear to the males is not so large in Ireland as in other lands.

The boys, therefore, have often a great deal of difficulty in inducing the girls to agree to "getting the words said," as the marriage ceremony is colloquially described. In one case I have heard of, a farm servant was told by the girl to whom he proposed that she was too much attached to her mother and her mother to her to think of getting married. "Arrah, sure, no husband could equal my mother in kindness," said she. "Oh, thin!" exclaimed, the boy, "be me wife and shure we can all live together, and see that I don't bate your mother." He could not have meant that he would ill use the mother—that was only his Irish way of putting things—for his declaration induced the girl to yield to his wishes. A bashful youth, a rather rare person in Ireland, he it said, who was in love with a girl, intrusted his proposal for her hand to his sister. One day the maid visited his father's cabin, while he, with anxious heart hid behind the door, awaiting the result. The girl, who did not care to be wooed at second hand, replied with a saucy toss of her head, "Indeed now, if I'm good enough to be married, I'm good enough to be axed." The boy then stuck his head into the room and exclaimed, with a sob in his voice, "Mary, allanah, will ye do what Maggie axed ye?"

When the day has been named, whether by arrangement between the boy and girl themselves or through the intermediary of their parents, preparations are made, on the most extensive scale, for a grand wedding. It is considered essential in the humblest circles that, for the honor of the family, the guests at the wedding, which include sometimes the whole countryside, should have lots of eating and drinking—"lashin's and lavins of iverything." Closeness on such an occasion is the unforgivable social sin. "Arrah, if I wor gettin' married, I have heard a woman exclaim when she saw poor display at a wedding, 'I'd sell every stitch to my back and go naked in order to get married decently!'"

A pretty Irish servant maid, who had got married, called to see her mistress. "I hear you are going to Australia with your husband, Kitty," said the lady. "Are you not afraid of such a long voyage?" "Well, ma'am, that's his outlook," said Kitty. "I belong to him now, an' if anything happens to me, shure it'll be his loss, not mine." But there is not always that complete loss of the wife's identity in the husband which the above anecdote suggests. It is the wife that rules the household in rural Ireland. The husband surrenders to her all his earnings, to the uttermost farthing; an excellent arrangement for Pat, who, feeling the money burning in his pocket, as he says himself, is disposed to get rid of it rapidly; and a still more excellent arrangement for the sake of the children. Bridget is, indeed, Pat's guardian angel. On many a Saturday, when a boy in Limerick, have I seen the long line of country cars returning homeward from market in the dusk of the summer evenings, the wives driving and the husbands, with a "drop taken," perhaps, quietly in the straw behind.

There is a story told of a young lady from Cork, who was presented at the Viceregal Court, Dublin, shortly after her marriage. The Viceroys has the pleasant duty of kissing the cheek the ladies presented him at a drawing room; but when his Excellency was about to give this young lady the regulation salute she cried, "Oh, no, that privilege is exclusively reserved for Mr. O'Mahony."

Of course there are exceptions to the general serenity of the domestic hearth, and the fond attachment between husband and wife. I knew at least of one Irishman in Limerick whose life was made miserable by a drunken wife. She had sold everything in the home for drink, and as a last resource she threatened to commit suicide if money to procure liquor were not forthcoming. Next morning before proceeding to work, the husband, driven to desperation by his wife's conduct, left his two new razors lying on the table, telling her to "select the best one ov them." At night when Pat came home, trembling with apprehension, he found his wife buddled up in a corner, not dead—but dead drunk. By her side was a pawn-ticket, and on it was written, "Two razors, 1s. 6d."

There is another story of the exception which proves the rule. Some years ago, as the mailboat from Ireland was entering Holyhead Harbor, a lady fell into the water. One of the sailors, an Irishman, jumped overboard and rescued her from death by drowning. When she was safe on deck again the husband, who was a calm spectator of the accident, handed the sailor a shilling. The spectators did not hesitate to express their indignation at the man's meanness, when the sailor, with native shrewdness, threw a new light on the matter by saying: "Arrah, don't blame the gentleman; he knows best; maybe if I hadn't saved her he'd have given me half a crown." I am disposed to think that the husband in this case was not an Irishman. History, certainly, does not indicate his nationality.

Marital relations in Ireland are as a rule of the most harmonious character,

and if a husband and wife do fall out occasionally and even resort to blows they think nothing the worse of each other in the end. Pill Lane is a classic locality in Dublin, which might with some truth be described as the Billingsgate of the Irish metropolis. "That's a fine black eye you've got, Missis," said a man to a woman, sitting over her basket of fish in Pill Lane, "Fightin', I suppose, agin'." "No, I wasn't fightin'," replied the fishwoman. "Himself, her husband, it was that gave me that," and facing fiercely round on her questioner, she added, "and I'd like to know who had a better right."

A laborer out of employment, applied for outdoor relief for himself and his wife at the North Dublin Union. "Well, my good fellow, we must have evidence that you are legally married," said the Chairman of the Relief Committee. "Begor, sir, I've the best proof in the wurld," said the applicant, and bending his head he displayed a scar on his skull. "Does yer Honor think," he added, "I'd be after takin' that abuse from any wan but a wife?"

Having such happy homes and faithful wives, is it any wonder that Irishmen are loath to leave them behind? An Irish car driver was wrapping himself up carefully before starting on a journey on a cold winter's day. "You seem to be taking very good care of yourself," said the impatient fare. "To be shure I am, sur," replied the driver. "What's all the wurld to a man when his wife's a widow?"

## THE GULF STREAM.

Abandonment of the Old Idea That It Reaches Europe as a Distinct Current.

The best school geographies nowadays do not say that the climate of northwest Europe is rendered mild by the Gulf Stream as such. They admit the Gulf Stream as one of the most powerful influences contributing to the mild winter climate of that region, but the great current has ceased to figure alone as the element which makes England and Scotland fertile, while Labrador, in the same latitude, is bleak and very cold.

The best maps also no longer show the Gulf Stream as extending clear across the ocean. They show the current as flowing north as far as the neighborhood of Newfoundland, and beyond this region they depict a movement toward Europe of oceanic waters to which they have applied the same Gulf Stream Drift.

The fact is now well understood that as a distinct current the Gulf Stream disappears south of Newfoundland. The enormous river in the ocean far greater than all other ocean currents rushes northward from the Straits of Florida, with a depth of 2,000 feet, a width of forty miles and a velocity of from three to over five miles an hour. But it gradually spreads out and thins until, in the region of the Grand Banks, it becomes dissipated like a stream in a swamp and is no longer recognizable as a distinct current.

There is, however, a constant set of warm surface waters, toward the European coast. The prevailing west winds carry them toward Europe, and their total influence is to modify the winter climate of that region, and this warmer water comes not only from the Gulf Stream, but also from the great current that flows north outside the Bahamas.

Many sailors do not realize the strength of the Gulf Stream current. Mr. John E. Pillsbury, who spent much time several years ago investigating the Gulf Stream for our Government wrote that one day his vessel was anchored in the stream, observing the current, when a sailing vessel was sighted ahead, drifting to the northward. The wind was very light, but as she came nearer and nearer, it became evident that there would be a collision unless steps were taken to prevent it. The crew of the sailing vessel trimmed their sails to the gentle air, but it was useless, for onward she went, carried by the irresistible force of the current directly toward the bow of the steamer. As the vessels approached one another, by a skillful use of the rudder on board the steamer she was moved to one side and the sailing vessel drifted past a few feet distant. The Captain of the latter was as astonished as he was thankful that his vessel was not lost. All that he could cry out in broken English, as he flashed by, was: "I could not help it, the water bring me here."

## BITTER WITH THE SWEET.

Anxious Mother at a ball—My dear, you look tired.  
Sweet Girl—I'm 'most dead. Every bone in my body aches. I've danced every dance so far, and I'm engaged for ten more.  
Anxious Mother—No doubt the gentleman will let you off.  
Sweet Girl—I don't want to be let off.

Anxious Mother—You say you are tired dancing.  
Sweet Girl—I am not tired being hugged.

## AN ANTE-NUPTIAL UNDERSTANDING.

There is one question I want to ask you, dearest, said the beautiful girl as she toyed with the diamond ring on her third finger. When we are married will you expect me to bake my own bread?

You can do as you like about it, darling, he replied, but I certainly shall insist upon your not baking mine.

## CONTINGENT CIRCUMSTANCES.

Has Mr. Bilden a good memory?  
Well, replied the discreet friend: I must say it depends somewhat on whether he's owing or collecting.

## About the House.

### SHE CAN'T COOK.

My wife cannot cook, though she studies a book Of recipes day after day; But what do I care? She is charming and fair,

And as sweet as the blossoms of May. She tries all her might, but her bread isn't light,

For she never can get it to rise; But then you should see, as she breakfasts with me,

The light that illumines her eyes! No skill can she boast in preparing a roast,

And in pies her successes are few, And ill she fares when soup she prepares,

For she is sure to get into a stew.

But no fault do I find, for she's loving and kind;

And when bachelorship I forsook 'Twas to wed a sweet wife, a companion for life—

It wasn't to marry a cook.

### FLORAL DECORATIONS.

There is no more artistic decoration than flowers; they give the note of refinement even to a room that seems otherwise impossible, and they cheer and brighten as no other dumb things can. Somebody has called them "heaven's messengers." And yet there is one melancholy thing about them says an exchange—their transiency. Preachers have a way of noticing it and pointing a moral, and the average woman sighs—because brief staying charms make flowers an expensive luxury.

Flowers treated properly can last and look well even after six weeks, thus taking from them their only reproach, and rendering their possible pleasure for the poorest. Every night take them out of the vases and thoroughly rinse the stalks under the tap, removing with the fingers any decomposed matter. Then place them to bed for the night in a basin of strong soapsuds.

Be careful not to allow any water to touch the blossoms, as this only fades them. The soapsuds supply a certain amount of nourishment.

In the morning rinse the stalks under water again, and as each blossom is arranged for the day in the vase of fresh water snip off the tiniest possible portion of the stalk with a pair of scissors. Always carefully trim away any faded portion. Food for the day is supplied by sulphate of ammonia, a small quantity of which can be bought from the chemist for a few pence.

If he knows his business he will be able to tell you that sulphate of ammonia contains all the properties of good manure for keeping the blossoms alive. A few drops in each vase is quite sufficient; indeed, if you use the soapsuds at night, as well as the sulphate of ammonia in the day, some intervals must be spent by the flowers in nothing but clear, cold water. It is possible to kill with kindness, remember.

Put the flowers at night into some dark, cool place, say a scullery or pantry, as it is not good either for the flowers or the household that they should remain altogether in the living rooms.

To revive flowers put them into warm salt water, to which has been added a few drops of sulphate of ammonia.

To keep a spray of arranged flowers, place on damp cotton wool under a basin. This keeps the air away and preserves the blossoms. The fragile, delicate maidenhair fern is best treated in this way.

### HELPFUL HINTS.

We have discovered a rather odd addition to breakfast dishes, that may be liked by others who have corn in plenty, but live where "breakfast foods" are expensive, says a writer. It is the old-fashioned cornmeal gruel, such as my grandmother used to make for me when I was a little girl and had a bad cold. It is a very accommodating dish as it may be made to suit the taste, but we like it best to take about three pints of boiling water, sift slowly into it, stirring steadily, a pint of meal; when it has boiled a few minutes add a pint of milk, more or less, as it may be plenty or scarce, boil up again and set back on the range while you get the rest of your breakfast.

Salt to taste, and if you like thicker, use more meal or less water. Sometimes we have it thin enough to drink from cups and sometimes thick enough to eat with cream and sugar.

I might add, too, that while a member of our family was recovering from a severe attack of inflammation of the bowels it agreed with him better than anything else, and he did not tire of it so quickly as of rice, oatmeal or anything else we could give him.

I have recently learned that average fresh pork steak is much improved by covering with water after it is seasoned in the frying pan and letting the water boil away before frying it brown.

I have found, too, that I need much less soda if I sift it with the flour the same as baking powder and add it the last thing, getting the article into the oven as quickly as possible than I do if I mix with the milk or water. Of course, the less we use the better for our health.

A good plain cake, easily made and

nice for the children, to carry to school is made as follows: Two cups sour cream, two cups sugar, one egg, a teaspoonful of salt, a scant teaspoonful soda, flour to make a stiff batter. Put all the ingredients together, sifting the soda in with the flour, stir and get into the pans as quickly as possible. If preferred, bake in drop cakes, gem-tins or paty pans. If you dislike to use soda, take sweet cream with baking powder.

### DOMESTIC USE OF BEEF.

The retail butcher in cutting up meat as ordered generally weighs it before trimming, making the customer pay full price for portions which go into the scrap and are sold at a small price for soap-making. The marketman thus gets paid for, this not inconsiderable part of his wares twice over, the first time usually getting a high valuation therefor. The economical housewife will insist upon getting all that she pays for, and makes the trimmings valuable for soup stock.

Meat when delivered by the butcher should be at once removed from the paper and put in a cool place until needed. Care should be taken that it does not come into direct contact with the ice. If the refrigerator is large enough, it is better to hang the piece up so that the cool air surrounds it.

No good housewife will order meat unless selecting it herself. The dealer is almost sure to take advantage of her in some way or other if only in sending a cut not quite so choice as is desired. Misunderstandings as to weight might be obviated if the purchaser saw her order on the scales, and then noted the quantity of bone and fat trimmed off and thrown into the scrap pile.

Roast Beef with Yorkshire Pudding.

—Put the meat upon a rack (or trivet) and roast as before directed. Make a batter of one pint milk, 1-2 pint sifted flour, four eggs well beaten and one-half teaspoonful of salt. Mix thoroughly and pour into the pan under the meat about one hour before it is done. Cut in squares and serve with the roast. This dish is of English origin as its name indicates, and is a favorite with the people of that nation.

Beef a La Mode.—Take a large piece of round steak and lard with strips of salt fat pork, i. e., with a sharp instrument punch holes in the steak, the way of the grain, and then run the strips of pork through them with both ends projecting. Then put the meat into a bowl with a teaspoonful of whole cloves, one of peppercorns, a bay leaf, half cup each of sliced carrots, turnips and onions, and cover with vinegar and water, half-and-half. Do not use any salt. Let it stand at least three hours, better a day or two. When tender, remove from the pickle and fry it brown in a pot of hot dripping. Then put in two tablespoonfuls of flour, turning the meat over and over. When brown cover with hot water, cook slowly, allowing half an hour to each pound of meat. Salt to taste when done.

Beef Brown Stew.—Three pounds beef, one onion, two cloves, one teaspoon chopped parsley, one teaspoon celery salt, one tablespoonful olive oil, one tablespoon butter, one tablespoon lemon juice, one tablespoon browned flour. Slice and brown the onion in the butter; add the beef, brown a little in the hot butter, then add the remainder of the ingredients except the flour. Cook in the oven three hours. Remove the meat and make a gravy of the browned flour and dripping, adding a little hot water. Strain gravy and serve in a bowl.

Plain Stew.—Have two pounds of meat cut into small pieces, simmer two or three hours until quite tender, using enough water to cover the meat. Add potatoes, and, if desired, onions, allowing half an hour for them to cook. Season with salt and pepper about ten minutes before serving. The liquor may be thickened for gravy or served as soup.

Beef Loaf for Slicing Cold.—Chop three pounds of raw beef, half pound of suet, half pound of bread crumbs, and two eggs, four tablespoonfuls of cream, one teaspoon of butter, two teaspoonfuls of summer savory, one teaspoon of salt, half teaspoon of pepper. Mix and work into a loaf, using flour to bind the ingredients together. Bake in a pan for two hours, basting frequently with melted butter and hot water.

Steaks Broiled.—This is by far the best way of cooking steak, and many will not touch it otherwise. Charcoal makes the best fire for this purpose, and several patented gridirons are on the market to hold the coals so that any stove may be used. Have a bright fire of live coals. Heat and grease the bars of the gridiron. Lay the steak on the gridiron, cover, and turn as soon as the first side is seared. Turn again and again until sufficiently cooked, then put on a hot platter, season with butter, pepper and salt, and garnish with parsley and slices of lemon. Serve at once. A porterhouse or sirloin is best for broiling. Trim off superfluous fat and the tough end of the porterhouse, which may be used for soup. Another way to prepare meat for broiling is to cut out the bone, and about two hours before cooking rub with a mixture made of one tablespoonful of salt, and half a teaspoonful of pepper. Broil and garnish as above.

The simplest public railroad now operated is thought to be one between Atami and Ogawara, in Japan. It is a narrow gauge road, and is run by man power. Each car has seats for four passengers, who sit back to back. A train consists of two or three cars, and is drawn up hill by half a dozen coolies.