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"HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THEM THAT BRING GLAD TIDINGS OF GOOD THINGS!"

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MORNING STAR AND CATHOLIC MESSENGER.
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AN IRISH PATTERN.

There are many persons in England and the United States, who have no idea of what is meant by an Irish pattern, while every Irishman knows it. It is simply a festival in honor of the Patron Saint of the locality in which it is held; the term *pattern* being a corruption of *patron*. Whoever may perchance read the following incidents of one of those popular Irish gatherings, may feel inclined to think that they were rather a peculiar way of honoring the Saints. In order to prevent any misunderstanding on this point, it should be borne in mind that the festival was divided into two parts, one of which was entirely of a devotional nature, the other set apart for amusement.

On the saint's-day the people repaired at an early hour in the morning to the scene of the festival, where they heard Mass, and occupied themselves till noon in praying over, and strewing with flowers, the graves of their friends. After this they took refreshment in tents erected for the occasion, where they were sure to meet with numbers of their friends and acquaintances, come thither to enjoy themselves as best they could. The amusement was sometimes carried to such an excess that the festivals were discontinued, and eventually suppressed by the clergy. The following is a faithful sketch of what took place on one of these occasions:

"Hurroo!" shouted Dick Stafford, who was laboring under the influence of the excitement which the near prospect of a day's fun and frolic never fails to create in the breast of an Irishman; "hurroo!" said he as he met about a half-dozen rosy cheeked females of his acquaintance; "the pattern iv Saint Anne's 'll come off next week, an' it'll be the greatest one ever known in the country afore. Blind Larry Murphy the fiddler is coming all the way from Balafoogne, and they sez there'll be a tent out a town that Wida Flanagan won't have all the green to herself. Cheer up, girls! we've one day at least out iv the three hundred and sixty-five when we can have a bit iv fun for ourselves."

After this brilliant description of the pleasures that awaited those fortunate enough to be present, Dick put on his most roguish smile, and his eye archly directed towards Biddy Whelan, modestly inquired: "Wont' yiz be there, girls?" Then, deeming it the best way by which the six bashful maidens now before him could be induced to grace the festivities, Dick gave them positive assurance that six young men with whom they were particularly acquainted would be there also.

"I believe," continued Dick, "I'll take Bid Whelan myself. Wont' you come, Bid?"

"Arrah, is it wud you, Dick?" said Bid, apparently displeased at the proposal; "no great fears of me been ketched walken would the likes of you, me shaver. Mucha well done yourself, Dick the Twill."

"Ah, be aisy now, Bid," said Dick, nothing daunted by the refusal of the modest fair one; "there's not a bit a fear iv ye stoppin' at home, me blade—every one o' yiz'll be there afore the fiddler himself."

Dick's prediction was verified. Amongst the foremost of those who presented themselves on the green were the six fair ones, accompanied by their respective admirers; and Bid Whelan, despite her positive declarations to the contrary, was arm-in-arm with Dick.

The only person who appeared not altogether in her natural element was Nancy Murphy, who sauntered about vacantly, staring at everything and everyone. After seeking refuge, however, for some time from the gaze of the multitude in the widow Flanagan's tent, she was most agreeably astonished at the appearance of Bob Foster. "O, Nancy, me darlint," exclaimed Bob, "slip us yer fist here; an' how are you a thousand times over, agta?"

"Right well, thank you, Bob," said Nancy; "an' how's yourself?"

"Yis, you, Nancy, an' no one else," replied Bob.

"O, faix; I won't, Bob," said Nancy, "an' don't you ax me, either; for when I takes the wee'at sup, it all rizes in me head—makes things dizzy when I looks at 'em, an' the ground appears wherlin' around under me feet."

"But shure that's the beauty iv the thing," continued Bob, "an' it's to put sperrit in people it's taken for."

Nancy's opposition soon gave way before the entreaties of her lover, being, no doubt, only attributable to that modest reserve which some are inclined to consider indispensable to true politeness. Two glasses of Mrs. Flanagan's best were called for.

"Will you take it hot or cowlid?" inquired Bob.

"I'd—'d purfer," answered Nancy, evidently feeling a delicacy, "a little sup o' hot, I believe—just a wee drop to keep out the cowlid."

"Hot," demanded Bob, turning to the waiter, and immediately conducted his partner to a seat in the lower end of the tent. "Here, now," resumed Bob, handing Nancy her share, "here's that you may be Mrs. Foster afore the next pattern iv St. Anne's."

Nancy, though evidently flattered by the near prospect of becoming Bob's beloved partner until death do them part, appeared shocked at the bare mention of such a thing, and by way of confirmation of her horror, retreated a step or two, bidding him at the same time to "go out of that."

At this time there was a considerable number assembled on the green. Mrs. Flanagan was driving a brisk trade, and her tent crowded to excess. Blind Larry Murphy, the fiddler, was led into the tent, when a slight scuffle ensued among his admirers as to who should have the honor of giving him the first treat. This honor eventually fell to the lot of Jem Dooly.

We may here remark that a glass or two of the native on such occasions is as indispensable to good fiddling as the resin of the bow.

Merriment and good-humor prevailed, and everything promised a happy evening, when Larry, after a few preliminary scrapes upon his fiddle, began that fine old tune of "St. Patrick's Day." In an instant half a score of boys and girls were upon the floor, dancing in their best style.

in' to be flung after 'im, an' he makes out wud 'imself like lightning. An' after all, look where Nancy Murphy is!"

"O, the dickens a fear iv her doin' any good wud that fella," replied Dick; "he's too 'cute an' ould cadger for that."

The restraint which the presence of Mr. Cassidy had upon the festivities of the evening becoming more marked as the day progressed, an effort was now made by those within the tent to get rid of that functionary.

Paddy Byrne had the moral energy to approach him, and what was more daring still, to ask him: "Would he have the condescension to take a glass of sperrit?"

Only for the humanising effect which a liberal education has upon those fortunate enough to have received one, and the melancholy pity with which it enables the learned to look down upon the more illiterate portion of mankind, we believe there is no doubt the answer given to this impertinent question would have been a blow. Mr. Cassidy, however, merely smiled contemptuously, and declined the invitation.

The dance now ceased, and for a while Mr. Cassidy was the chief object of attraction. Seeing he was proof against all their allurements, the mob resolved to have a recourse to other means to effect his banishment. The neck of an old bottle was directed with such fatal precision from his rear as to knock Mr. Cassidy's hat on one side of his head. Before that most important article of dress could recover its equilibrium, the remainder of the aforesaid bottle struck him on the hand, and while the great man was darting looks of indignant defiance at his persecutors, the cork of a whisky-jar knocked the spectacles clean off his nose.

There is nothing more calculated to wound a man's dignity, or to make him an object of ridicule to his fellow-beings, than to knock off his hat or spectacles. The individual so treated loses a certain amount of respect in the eyes of the multitude. This is particularly the case when he happens to be either a schoolmaster or a policeman. The duty of both being to command, it is exceedingly painful to them to find their most exalted symbols of respect and professional dignity cast in the mud.

The scholar may occasionally approach with caution and reserve the person of the schoolmaster, and may sometimes go so far as to venture a joke at his expense, or even to bend his cane—the magic wand of his authority; the policeman, too, will not unfrequently relax his dignity to such an extent as to suffer the simplest child to examine with dread the formidable weapon that dangles by his side; but let either the pupil or the child tamper with the hat of his respective superior, whether it be on a peg or on the head of its owner, and it is difficult to say what will not follow.

Mr. Cassidy being thrown somewhat off his centre by the rudeness with which he had been treated by the crowd, and either apprehending its recurrence, or anxious to appease them by his condescension at this juncture, complied with the renewed request of Paddy Byrne, and quaffed, amid the cheers of the whole tent, a glass of whisky-punch. By a well-directed wink tipped by Paddy to the blushing little waitress dealing out the liquor, a double quantity of the mixture was introduced into Mr. Cassidy's glass, and whether it was that he became excited by the sudden turn of public feeling in his favor, or elated by the overcharged contents of the pewter, he allowed himself to be helped to another. This done, he became exceedingly funny and amusing. He shook hands most cordially with those around him. His face was fast adopting a rosy hue, occasioned from the alcoholic nature of the fluid in which he was indulging, and the heated atmosphere of the tent.

Mr. Cassidy was now in such a good humor that he undertook, for the edification as well as delight of the multitude, to sing. His memory, however, failing him, a faculty that not unfrequently proves treacherous to public men in critical moments of their career, Mr. Cassidy took another glass by way of refreshing his recollection. This caused him to abandon the original programme of his performance altogether; so, actuated by the philanthropy which ever characterises the conduct of great men, he set about making a speech.

The announcement that Mr. Cassidy was about to make a speech created the utmost excitement throughout the tent. The chairs and tables were mounted; even the tent-posts were climbed by those anxious to see and hear that great orator. After the bustle and excitement which usually inaugurate such proceedings, he rose, or to speak more correctly, was assisted to rise, amid the cheers of the whole assembly. It would be a libel upon his physiognomy were we to deny that by this time it was at least three times as rosy as a harvest-moon; while the sun, owing probably to some astronomical phenomenon, during his progress through the heavens, had, through a hole in the tent, encircled his head in a blaze of glory, similar to the lambent flame which ancient writers tell us played about the countenance of Demosthenes during the delivery of his orations.

Mr. Cassidy faced the audience, and the audience faced Mr. Cassidy. The excitement of the moment cannot be well described. Death-like silence prevailed. Mr. Cassidy then leaned backwards as if overpowered by the greatness of the occasion; and then Mr. Cassidy came forward, as if to remove any impression of cowardice produced on the minds of his audience by the previous inclination of his person. A moment's awful pause ensued, when, to the utter bewilderment of the orator, the glass fell from one of the eyes of his spectators, which simple little incident occasioned a simultaneous yell of laughter from the whole assembly; and Mr. Cassidy sank upon the floor.

We have already said that Mr. Cassidy was sent to watch the proceedings in the absence of the priest. Both himself and his wife were cordially hated by the young bloods of the parish, on account of their being considered spies and news-carriers; still, the people manifested a common desire to prevent the intelligence of his present condition from reaching the ears of Father O'Rafferty. With this view a large brown shawl was thrown over him, to screen him from the public gaze.

As Mr. Cassidy lay upon the ground with his martial cloak around him, at once an example of the greatness, and weakness of human nature,

"Dear me," said Jem Dooly, "ain't he very much the shape iv a fiddle?"

"Very," answered Pat McGragh; "very much the shape iv our ould Irish fiddles iv Brian Boru's time."

"Get up!" cried Dick Stafford, at the same time applying the point of his shillelagh to Mr. Cassidy's person; "get up, sir, I say."

"Listen," said Paddy Byrne, as that gentleman was about to give Mr. Cassidy the benefit of a smart tip of a pin's point; "listen, till I make him squeal."

This proposition was, however, overruled, and exertions were made to carry the unfortunate schoolmaster as quietly as possible to his house, on the shoulders of two or three men. When his wife Molly saw the condition of her husband—never dreaming, of course, that he had fallen a victim to intoxication, and thinking that he had been ill-used by the crowd—she ran off breathless to the priest's house, and told Father O'Rafferty that her husband "was just kilt by the mob."

The good father, with that zeal for the welfare of his flock which ever characterizes the Irish priesthood, made all possible haste to attend the last moments of the dying man. He found Mr. Cassidy stretched on the floor, surrounded by those who had conveyed him home, and also by Molly, who had arrived a few minutes before the priest, quite time enough to make her sensible of the great mistake she had made.

"Well, John, what's the matter?" inquired the priest.

Some advice quietly tendered to her by Bob Foster served to keep down Mrs. Cassidy's anger.

"Drunk!" muttered the priest, as he proceeded to apply his shillelagh with some dexterity to the person of Mr. Cassidy.

"O, O!" exclaimed that great man, at the same time rubbing his hand over that part which had come most frequently into collision with his reverence's stick, as he rose up and stared vacantly round. "O, Molly, Molly, where am I?" he exclaimed; "eh, what's the matter? Am I dead, Molly? I tell me, O, I'm surely dead."

These ejaculations so disgusted the good priest that he walked out of the house, assuring Molly that he would deal with her unfortunate husband at the proper time and in the proper manner. As he walked through the pattern on his way home, he advised all he met "to enjoy themselves as best they could, but to do so legitimately, and not drink or fight."

The dancing was still kept up in the tent, and joy beamed upon every countenance. Mr. Cassidy being removed from the scene, and the priest wishing every happiness, there was nothing to mar the festivities of the evening. An enemy, however, turned up in an unexpected quarter. The announcement that a whisky tent, out of town, had set up in the lower end of the green, and that a large number of citizens were ready to defend it against any attacks, created unusual excitement. A council of war was held in Mrs. Flanagan's camp as to what course should be adopted with regard to the enemy. Bob Foster said, "It made no matter if there wor five hundred tents, for not a decent body from the country would have recourse to any other body's tent to drink but Wida Flanagan's. (Cheers.) Besides, it's better not to seem to notice 'em; and when they'd see that there wor no call for 'em, they'd very soon go home, and never be seen in the place again." (Applause and dissent.)

Dick Stafford, a little excited by love and whisky, here rose to speak, despite of all the efforts of Bid Whelan to pull him down. "Mrs. Flanagan, ladies and gentlemen," said he, "I propose that every man iv us go down to the tent, an' widout as much as givin' 'em a moment's notice iv our intention—much less of warnin' 'em as to what we are about to do—" (A voice, "Sure the last two things you said are the same.") "I repute—a widout havin' recourse to violence, or unruly conduct on our part, quietly knock 'em down, and carry what liquor they have into this tent." (Loud cries of "We will, we will!") "An' the worst of all is to go an' sell liquor in opposition to such a decent lone woman as the Wida Flanagan." (A voice, "Three cheers for Wida Flanagan!") "This is an evil I cannot too strongly condemn and appreciate." (Loud cries of "Bravo," and "John Cassidy the second!") "But we'll tache these spalpeens. We'll go down to where they are, and if they say a word we'll—"

"O, la!" exclaimed Bid Whelan, "if you say that again I'll go an' tell Father O'Rafferty."

Several persons remonstrated with Bid as to the impropriety of taking this step, but she had not the slightest intention of putting her threat into execution.

Mrs. Flanagan, deeming her cause well pleaded, and perceiving the enthusiasm awakened by Dick's powerful appeal, sustained it by "standing a glass" to each of those who had generously volunteered on her behalf. They withdrew from the tent and soon appeared before the rival camp. About a score of blackthorn sticks, with a recommendation for their immediate use, were supplied by Jem Dooly. As the young men from town were quietly and unoffensively amusing themselves, no opportunity, with any appearance of justice, for some time presented itself to Mrs. Flanagan's volunteers for commencing hostilities. This difficulty, however, was got rid of. Pat McGragh went into the tent and called for a glass of ale. When in the act of raising the pewter to his head, his arm accidentally struck against one of the young men's from town, who happened to be passing close to him. Pat asked him "What did he do that for, or did he do it a purpose?" and before an answer could be given, Pat's blackthorn stick fell rather heavily on the town-boy's pate, which act

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