

'Well, he wasn't quite as respectful towards the last—it was when I told him I was sorry for him—and he said, "I feel, sir, that an honest love is never to be despised as you seem to despise mine; and I feel sorry for you, sir, for your daughter loves me." I'm afraid, Pris, I forgot that I was in my own house, for though I didn't say a word, I pointed to the door.'

'Oh, father!' cried Priscilla, 'you've never failed me yet, don't fail me now.'

The father looked at her in bewilderment to which a terrible suspicion succeeded. 'Why, Pris, you don't mean—why, you don't even know the fellow's name—you—'

'I love Hulme Penfield—oh, dear, don't look at me that way, father dear—I can't help it any more than mother could help loving you.'

For the first time the father turned away from the girl's pleading eyes and walked quickly from the room. Priscilla threw herself on the couch and buried her face in the pillows. 'Was it always so hard to confess one's love? Did every girl have to break her father's heart? Was any man worth this sacrifice?' she thought. And then the face of her lover came before her and her heart responded. 'Oh, yes, Hulme is worth all and everything—but I love them both.'

Was it hours; was it days? The door opened very softly, and before Priscilla could turn her head a strong arm held her, and the voice she knew so well—the one which had always helped her—fell upon her ear, soft and tender—'Poor little girl! no mother, and your father turning from you—can you forgive such a wretch, Pris? Let us talk it over, dear. Your old daddy only wants his little girl's happiness—why, Pris, crying? Why, you can have any man in all the world if you won't cry, dear.'

In the old garden of the old home where Priscilla had spent her childhood, one summer's day the father sat under the elm tree, just as he used to do. But he was not alone. By his side stood his namesake, a sturdy boy full of life and eager questioning; in his arms was a girl, dainty and fair as Priscilla herself, who sat on the piazza sewing.

The grandfather looked from her to the children. 'What fools men be!' he thought. 'I nearly broke my heart to make the sacrifice for Pris, and look, what a reward! I have only the more to love, and who could be more devoted than Pris? And, really, Hulme is a fine fellow. I'm proud of that boy; and he says that I've been such a help to him. Well, I say my prayers with fervor these days—I'm not ungrateful. God bless my Pris and all of us!'—'Rosary.'

IRISH WIT

Every book of Irish reminiscences teems with humorous stories. One chapter of Le Fanu's 'Seventy Years of Irish Life' would give an un-Irish humorist material for a thousand 'good stories.' Katharine Tynan, who, living in London, knows whereof she speaks, says that there will be more laughter over a single Irish dinner table than over a whole district of respectable English folk.

'In Ireland the whole world jokes,' writes Mrs. Hinkson, 'and the responsiveness is delicious. In England you have learned a sober demeanor. As soon as the first velvet breath of Irish air blows on your face you begin to rollick.'

'Lunching at a Dublin restaurant, a friend of ours of an impassively dry demeanor tried a joke on the waiter. When the bill was brought he placed on it a bright new farthing and went on talking to us, apparently unconscious of his mistake. The waiter stood by patiently till there was a pause in the conversation.'

'"I beg your pardon, sir," he said, "'but have you no smaller change?"'

'As we came across from Holyhead the Irish ticket collector on the boat scrutinised our return tickets closely. "They're a fortnight old," said one of us.'

'"Bedad, then, they're wearin' their age well," he replied delightedly.'

'A friend of mine who was very enthusiastic about things Irish, she being an English woman, was driving on an outside car in Dublin. She was praising everything to the carman, and among the rest the famous Dublin stout with which she had just become acquainted.'

'"What an excellent drink it is," she said. "Why, it's meat and drink, too."

'"Thru for you, ma'am," replied the car driver, "an' a night's lodgin', too, if you only drink enough of it." ...

It has been said of the Irish (doubtlessly by one of themselves) that even an Irish 'bull' or blunder has more wit in it than the average un-Celtic bon-mot. Funny enough is the tale of the Irishman who, seeing a donkey ready saddled, and thinking of having a cheap ride, jumped on his back. He had not gone far when the donkey started kicking and jumping about, so much so that he got his hoof hung up in one of the stirrups. 'Sure,' says Pat, 'if you're going to get on, I'm going to get off.'

A Dublin temperance leader who, as he said of himself, had taken 'no pledge against a joke,' told one on himself some time ago. Once he was addressing a crowded meeting and arguing against the assumption that stimulants were necessary to health.

'Look at me, boys,' he said. 'Here I am eighty years old. I've been a total abstainer all my life, and could you see any man of eighty healthier than I am?'

'Yerra, Mr. B.,' said a voice in the crowd; 'if you'd taken your glass like a man 'tis a hundred you'd have been by now.'

Le Fanu tells about the host at the country hotel who, when an angry English guest informed him that he had put his boots outside his bedroom door every night of the week and they had never been touched, replied blandly:

'Sure, that's nothing at all. We're the honestest people in the world in this country. You might lave your goold watch there, an' it'd never be touched, let alone your boots.'

Several anecdotes are narrated of the too-impudent but sufficiently witty Irish beggars. 'May the blessing of God go after you,' says the beggar with outstretched hand, and when you have passed without giving any alms, 'and never overtake you.'

'How's the Danc (Dean) to-day?' asked one beggar of another in Cashel.

'Fine, praise be. I jisht saw him go by, and he stepped out so janty (jaunty) that he only touched ground in the high places!'

The 'jarvey,' or cabman, in Ireland is expected to bandy wit with tourists, who generally offer him less than they mean to give eventually, 'just to see what he'll say.'

'Oy, ye'll not be giving me anything so onlike yourself, sir!' protests the jarvey, half in earnest. 'Sure, I'll not believe it of your honor. Your honor looks like a dacent man!'

To a close-fisted Scotchman who could not be induced to give an extra 'pinny,' the Irish driver said with a sorrowful sigh, giving up 'a bad job' at last. 'Yerra, if ye're satisfied with yerself after that, I'll lave you to him that made you!'

The witty Irish are past masters in the art of polite compliment. One of 'the beautiful Gunning sisters,' three Irish young ladies who married English noblemen, said that the finest compliment, and the most spontaneous, ever paid to her looks was spoken when her carriage was blocked one day, and an Irish coal heaver caught a glimpse of the lovely countess: 'Look at her, look at her!' said he to his fellow-workman. 'I could light my pipe at the fire of her eye!'

'How old do you take me to be?' asked a certain lady of an Irish barrister. 'I cannot guess, madam,' he replied. 'But whatever age you are, you don't look it!'

Which is quite as good as the pat answer put into the mouth of that admirable philosopher, Mr. Martin Dooley, of Archey Road, by the Irishly witty Mr. Finley Dunne.

'How old are ye, anyway?' said Hennessy. 'Old enough—old enough to know better,' answered Mr. Dooley.

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