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When Myles Maguire Melted

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By Seumas MacManus

By SEUMAS MACMANUS

III.
When Mr. Maguire informed Mr. O'Rourke that on second consideration he had decided the men on the Victor building should have a half holiday, Mr. O'Rourke was only slightly surprised, but when he got down to 271 Broadway and there notified the patient and faithful Johnnie Gavigan that he should have a half holiday Johnnie was startled.

"Gavigan, what time does that parade start and where from?"
"It starts," said the bewildered, elated Johnnie, "at 2:30 from Madison square."

"Hum! Well, good morning, Gavigan, and a pleasant day to you."

Johnnie went off in a half dazed way. "There's something either wrong with me or with Mr. Maguire," Johnnie said to himself, "and I'm half afraid it's with Mr. Maguire."

And when, three hours after, Johnnie, in one of the few lucid intervals he had on horseback (for the honor of riding a horse once a year far exceeded the pleasure in poor Johnnie's case) noticed on the fringe of the procession Myles Maguire decorated with a great green sash, Johnnie only just escaped losing altogether his normally elusive seat.

Yes, Myles Maguire, contractor and builder, for the first time in his thirty-seven years' sojourn in America, had come to join in this procession of "out of works, lazy divils and tomfools." He had tried to drop casually into the ranks at the first convenient opportunity, but a mounted marshal ordered him "back to the divil out of that an' join yer own section." When Myles Maguire looked at the marshal, he discovered in him the hunchbacked old fellow, his own workman, who had that morning generously forgiven him for a mean trick of which he had not been guilty.

Myles melted away backward. He tried to impose himself upon several succeeding sections, but with equal ill luck each time. At the tail of the parade only he found welcome among a band of irreverent.

The welcoming shouts and cheers that greeted them along the route, the handkerchiefs and the flags waved to them from window and housetop, every man in the long procession took personally to himself and waxed proud over and strutted. Before he had covered a score of blocks Myles Maguire was the vainest man and had the most imposing strut of all that vast procession, and to the awkward limbed, lengthy fellow who "processioned" on his left he proudly imparted the intelligence that this was "a big day for our divil." The big fellow's reply, rather a remark to himself, "I wish to the Lord they could see us in Meentecor," discovered to Myles that he walked with one from his own parish. Both, to their delight, soon found that they were old comrades and schoolfellows.

"Myles Maguire," said Long Johnnie Haraghey, "I've got in me pocket here a pint of poteen that was brewed on the back side of Knockaugh. When we get to the picnic grounds, we'll have a jolly good slug for old times' sake."

And in the big park, where they plinked, Myles and Long Johnnie tasted the poteen and transported themselves again to Tyrone. For more than thirty years Myles had wasted very little thought and certainly less speech upon Tyrone, yet it was surprising how freshly and vividly old times, old friends, old scenes, crowded his memory and made his tongue glib.

"An' the master, too," said Long Johnnie Haraghey, "I've mind the times we had with Master Muldoon of Purlainey, eh, Myles?"

"Faith and I do," said Myles, smiling a reflective smile. "Do you mind the day Mick Meehan made him sit down on his castor?"

"Fa, ha! I do, I do! That was a hard day. An' do ye mind the day we tied him to the stanchion in the school gavel? Another wild day."

"I mind that, and I mind the day he made you mount me on your back till he'd dog me for breaking in Donald O'Donnell's door."

"I mind that, Myles, as if it was yesterday. Bekase I was so long he thought he'd make me useful in some way. He called me his assistant tatcher bekase on me back he fogged into ye manners. An' do ye mind, Myles, the day ye an' me fought an' malavogued each other at the Lazy Bush bekase I said your mother counted the pratties when she was puttin' them in the pot?"

"Ha, ha, ha! Upon me soul, I do that, Johnnie! What a throncing match it was! I always thought meself a purty boxer, but that day, Johnnie, you went within an ace of knocking the konsalt out of me. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Within an ace of knockin' the con-

salt out of ye! But, Myles, don't ye mind I did knock the konsalt clane out of ye? Ye mind how I doubled ye over the stone ditch an' pounded ye till ye called 'Marcy'?"

"But, begging your pardon, Johnnie, your memory's slightly at fault. You mind it was me that doubled you over the ditch and lathered you till you shouted 'Marcy'?"

"Myles Maguire," said Johnnie feelingly, "I'm ashamed of ye."

"Long Johnnie Haraghey," Myles said, "no, but I'm heartily ashamed of you."

"I'm very sorry indeed that ye forced it out of me, but, Myster Maguire, I must say I'm a liar."

"Mr. Haraghey," said Mr. Maguire, "I'm very sorry indeed to say it, but you're a notorious liar."

"I see no other way out of it," said Mr. Haraghey, "than to go into the grove beyant an' settle it."

"Done!" said Mr. Maguire. In the silence and obscurity of the grove both doffed coat and vest, tied their suspenders round their waists and rolled up their sleeves, just as they had done forty years before under the Lazy Bush. They squared up to each other.

"Johnnie," said Myles, "I don't like to strike you in cold blood. Please to aggravate me."

"All right, Myles. Used n't yer poor mother—God rest her!—count the pratties when she'd be puttin' them in the pot?"

"You lie, you scoundrel!" yelled Myles venomously, and he emphasized the remark by a terrific blow on Long Johnnie's stomach.

In an instant a hot and fierce encounter was in progress. Myles found he had not forgotten a certain set of the thumb knuckle which, digging into his antagonist, used to deal damage in the after school fights and made him an object of admiration, respect and even awe among his comrades. On the other hand, Johnnie made good use of the swinging sledge hammer strokes that half a century ago he had cultivated and made a specialty. For five minutes they pitched into each other with hearty good will. They were once more boxing beneath the Lazy Bush, with encouraging comrades about them, and they did not care whether "Master Muldoon" saw them or not, for they were fighting for glory and absorbed in the dream of it.

But Long Johnnie Haraghey was not as young as he used to be, nor his wind as good. After five minutes he was puffing hard, and then a timely and happily placed punch of Myles' put in the neighborhood of Johnnie's gastronomic machinery, did him up. He sat down hurriedly, and when he could he gasped out:

"M-M-Myles—that's enow-nough!"

To tell truth, Myles was not sorry. Still he had a duty to perform.

"Johnnie," said he as he stood over his victim, "did na poor mother count the pratties going into the pot?"

"She didn't, Myles."

"Johnnie, who's the liar—me or you?"

"I'm the liar, Myles."

"And, Johnnie, who asked for marcy that day under the Lazy Bush?"

This one gave poor Johnnie lengthened pause.

"I say again, Johnnie, who?" Myles had the awe inspiring knuckle scientifically.

Johnnie saw the knuckle, and he said: "It was me axed for marcy, Myles—me," and he added soliloquizingly,

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"Enough I'm rammed if I believe it." "That's all right, Johnnie. Give us a grip of your fist. So long as you give in to the truth you're free to believe what pleases you."

They shook hands heartily. Myles helped up his fallen friend. Each helped to dress and smooth out the other, and then they went back to the picnic place, spent a most jovial evening and went home joyous, both, and happy.

To young Donohoe McAttee of Corraclough Upper, Meenading P. O., county of Tyrone and Ireland, Johnnie Gavigan next day addressed a letter containing a respectable check and a

promise to pay all charges incurred in polishing a priest out of the foresaid Donohoe. "I have been forgetful in the past," the letter said, "but for the time to come, please God, your poor mother will not find me so. I am going home this summer to find if Knockaugh hill flames as yellow with white flowers as it used to do and if the trout are as plenty as ever in the burn at the back of Phelim McGlinchey's garden, God rest him!"

Myles Maguire went home again and again for many summers, and his eyes filled one Corpus Christi that he sat in the old chapel and heard Father Donohoe McAttee of the black head and handsome, thoughtful face read his first mass for him, Myles Maguire.

And when he turned to look at his sister Ellen her bowed head and frame were trembling as she sobbed with joy. "Myles," she whispered, "Myles, I'm happy an' content to die any time God calls me now. May the good God bless an' reward you, me brother."

"Whisht! Arah, whisht with you, woman!" Myles said reproachfully, but the big tears ran from his eyes and sank with Ellen's into the sacred clay floor.

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So it didn't by no means come like a thunderclap when the news went round that Roddy had discovered his cows wouldn't give the milk till any wan but Una, since she had made on them so, an' that he decided he'd have to marry her so he'd have her to milk always.

An' married they wor, too, an' had a mortal great weddin' entirely, at which poor Roddy had to stand his own share in sconein' about his suddint change, him that was so sore again' all womankind. An' in right good part Roddy tuk it all. He said there never was no rule since the worl' begun that hadn't an exception, an' his Una was 'most the only wan exception to the docthrines he used to lay down.

Father Pat was wan iv them that used to have the greatest passages with Roddy about not marryin', an' he was now helpin', as hard as he could, the neighbors to salt him for his suddint change.

"An' is it yer belief," says Father Pat, "that Una'll go as far as ye used to think a woman should afore she'd be worth takin'; that she likes an' will like ye better nor ye do yerself?"

"My Una," says Roddy, "startin' goes that far. That's why I tuk her."

"Whew-ew-ew!" says Father Pat, that way.

"Father Pat," says Roddy, "ye may whist or do as ye please, but it's so. Father Pat looked hard at Roddy for a minute to see was he rally so far gone entirely as to believe that. "An', Roddy," says he, "do ye rally believe it?"

"May I niver ait the bread in corn if I am n't sartin iv what I say," says Roddy.

"Ye're a dale foolisher man than I thought ye," says Father Pat. "Would ye mind puttin' a little bait (bet) on it that ye'll be in the same opinion this day twelvemonth?"

"I'll bait ye," says Roddy, "me spotted springer again' yer oil' gray mare—an' that's long odds—that me opinion isn't aithered this day twelvemonth."

"Done," says Father Pat. "An' yous, boys, are all witnesses iv this."

Roddy promised Father Pat faithfully to keep the transacction a deep secret from Una. An' so he did. Roddy was in the height iv good humor over it, for that he felt so sartin iv Una's love for him, an' so sartin, too, that it would last, as it was not for was twelvemonth or fifteen, but for fifty-five twelvemonths if God 'ud only spare them that long.

An', sure enough, the second month they wor married Una sartinly seemed to be fonder iv Roddy than she was the first, an' the month after she was fonder iv him than the other two put together. An' so it went on month after month, Una sartinly gettin' fonder iv Roddy an' Roddy prouder iv Una every new day that come. An' every time Roddy'd meet Father Pat he'd have a hearty laugh at the priest, an' "Father Pat," he'd say, "I hope ye're givin' my gray mare all the attention ye should." "Och, niver mind, niver mind, Roddy," Father Pat 'ud say; "the year isn't up yet. It's yer self had better take good care iv my spotted springer. Mind, I'm warnin' ye." But, och, Roddy would break his hearty laugh in at the foolishness iv the priest.

Well, the twelvemonth seemed long passin' to Roddy till he'd humiliate Father Pat. But the longest iv times 'll pass some time, an' the longest iv stories 'll some time have an end. An' Roddy's year, too, wore round at last till it come to the last day iv it, an' on that very evenin' Roddy met Father Pat at a neighbor's funeral.

"Well?" says Roddy.

"Well?" says Father Pat.

"What time will I be sendin' a gar-sun over for the mare the morra?" says Roddy.

"Aha," says the priest, "I see it's always 'too sure, too loose' with you, Roddy. It isn't 12 o'clock the morra yet."

"God look to yer wit, yer reverence!" says Roddy. "Ye're the thronwin' man catchin' at a very thin straw."

"Roddy McGinn," says Father Pat, "there was a gentleman kilt another man in anger some days ago—kilt him dead. An' that gentleman is now undher sentence iv death—to be hung outside Dublin jail the morra mornin' at brekwint time."

"Well?" says Roddy.

"Well?" says the priest, "this is a great gentleman entirely, an' he has advart-ist all over the country that he'll give £500 to any man an' get hung in his place."

"Well?" says Roddy.

"Very well," says Father Pat. "We're now goin' to put Una to the final test whether or not she likes ye better nor ye like yerself. Ye're to propose to get hung in this gentleman's place so as to get the £500 for Una—an' then we'll see what we'll see."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Roddy. "Ye poor, foolish Father Pat, ye! No, nor if it was fifty times £500 she would get be it. Una wouldn't listen for wan minute to such a purposal."

"Never mind, never mind," says Father Pat, says he, smilin' such a confident smile as angered Roddy out an' out. "Never mind," says he. "Ye do are ye're bid—an' we'll see what we'll see."

"I'll make the purposal," says Roddy, "an' yer reverence'll be responsible if Una faints or dies iv heart disaise."

"I'll be responsible," says Father Pat.

says he, laughin'. "If Una faints or dies iv heart disaise, an' I'll put over her a monument higher nor the church steeple, an' I'll inscribe it, 'Here lies the strangest woman ever lived—a woman who loved her man better nor he loved himself.'"

That night as Roddy an' Una sat across the fire after their supper, Roddy smokin' an' Una sewin' a patch on an oil coat iv his Roddy says:

"Una, there's a gentleman to be hung the morra mornin' for kiltin' another."

"Poor divil!" says Una. "May the Lord have marcy on him!"

"An' he's advart-ist that he'll give £500 to any man that offers himself to get hung in his stead," says Roddy.

"Lord, look to his wit, the poor am-dan," Una says. "Doesn't he know it?"

But he said it himself, an' I don't put yet when the thinnin' is over. An' if he wasn't bid to do it, he'd get hanged to the gallows for afore the mornin' 'll be over. Una was thinkin' till she was time to get up an' go to bed, an' she said:

"Una," says she, "ye've disaivered himself an' set down. I've been thinkin'."

"What have ye been thinkin'?" says she.

"I have been thinkin'," says she, "that if I'd only not be in too big an' not mind gettin' hung this mornin' I'd have offered to be another gentleman's hang afore long wotd offer £500 for a substitute."

"Them that break down on bones often go to bed hungry," says Una. "An' a bird in the han' is worth tenn in the hedge," says she. "Burry yerself up!"

"An', moreover," says Roddy, says he, "there's another great daber. If there's a divil a sow to do a turn about the house or the farm, an' all 'll go to the dogs."

"Roddy, darlin'," says she, "if all this ye make yer mind aye, some young widda—though it is me—says it—with £500 in dhray money to mention at all, at all, the same as farm stock, wotd ye long till she was a brin' new man."

"Och, och, och, och, och," says Roddy, says he, broken hearted, an' ly.

An' at this very point who should lift the latch an' walk in but Father Pat himself.

"Eh, eh?" says he. "What are ye, och, och, och, about, Roddy?"

"For reverence," says Roddy, says he, "please-step out here with me. I loves lookin' ye out the spotted spot an'."

"An' so," says Roddy, says he, "an' so, boys, for a warnin' I'll keep afore me eyes the story iv Roddy McGinn, the parvaried bachelor."

Quite Right.

Wearin' Willie—Modern improvements may be fine, but they have their drawbacks.

Tired Treadles—For instance: Wearin' Willie—When a fellow goes into a stable to sleep nowadays, he finds nothing in it but heated mud.

A Jeweled Gold Challenge.

The Ancient Order of Hibernians of New York has presented to Archbishop Farley a valuable and artistic gold challenge. It is a reproduction of the best example of ancient Irish ecclesiastical art known as the "Ardrigh's Jewel," which was found some years ago near the ruins of an old Irish abbey. It is of gold and stands nine and a half inches high. The pattern is six inches in diameter. Thirty bosses, another and emeralds are set in the base, and the crown of the crown is a reproduction of the famous ancient Celtic cross of Monasterboice. On the front of the base a model of the cross of Cong and on the back one of the cross of Clonmacnoise are placed.

The ornamentation of the plaque is to within the band that runs round the cup is divided in the interior pattern associated with the Celtic art of the ninth and tenth centuries and taken from the old illuminated manuscripts that are still the wonder of modern artists. The work is thoroughly Celtic.

One Prayer.

A prayer of dependence and a prayer of confidence, not a request that be taken out of temptation but that be kept in temptation. We need not be testing into which any man is. When in loyalty to life is standard it is your purpose to best you can to do the best that count (all joy when you fall into flood temptations. They are a call to battle in which you may the crown of an eternal life. Let him that thinketh he standeth heed lest he fall.

Scottish Conversations.

There is a slow addition to the from quarters least expected. The for of the Scotch college in Glasgow that out of thirty-two students, the Scotch college in Glasgow.

Another Irishman's Story.

Another Irishman's Story.



Welcoming shouts and cheers greeted them along the route.