

AN AMERICAN WRITER TELLS
OF A DAY SPENT AT A FAIR
IN ENNISKILLEN, IRELAND

(Negley Farson in New York Sun.)

I had left Strabane, in County Tyrone, and taken the wrong road out of Newtown Stewart. I was sitting on the mountains, looking down into a lovely valley, half asleep in the sun. It was the drowsiest, most lovable farmland I had been in many a day. The town lay in a fold of the green hills, the gray tower of the Protestant church just below me. Far off, across some curving plowed fields, lay the white walls of the Catholic church. It was Sunday, and as I lay watching, the Catholic bells rang out across the valley. Then the Protestant bells took it up.

I heard steps behind me, and looking over the yellow furze I saw two boys and a girl going down the mountain to church. And then, following them, limped an old dusty man. When he saw me he stopped.

He said it was a fine day, and I told him I had never seen a better one. I pointed to the fat plowed fields and said no man ought to go hungry in a country like this.

"Aye," he said grudgingly, "that's so." He stood beside me, staring at the fields with a blankness on his face. I saw that he was not so very old, but just work-worn. His hands were gnarled and lumpy. "Which way did you come?" he asked. "From Derry," I said. "I'm going to Enniskillen. I'm on the wrong road."

"I'm going to Enniskillen, too," he said hopefully. "Will you give me a lift?" I told him to get in.

The Living Wage.

"Now," I said, when we had turned

around and were going down the mountain side, "which is the right road to Enniskillen?"

"I don't know," he said anxiously, as if I would chuck him out. "I've never been there before. I'm going down there to work. I'm working for the brother of the same man I worked for last year in Strabane."

"You contract for six months?"

"Aye. Six months. From the 10th of May to the 10th of November, and very little of your time you have to yourself during that time, I can tell you. During the harvest they work you so hard when night comes you don't know one end of the fork from the other. And if you run away from them they can summons you and bring you back for breach of contract."

"How much do you get for six months?"

"Fifty or seventy-five dollars. It depends upon how good a man you are. I've seen the time when I got a hundred and fifty dollars for the season, but that was during the war—the German war. I know how to run a reaper and how to use the farm implements and how to be gentle with a horse, so I get sixty dollars."

"You usually get a duck egg for your breakfast. Yes, we have porridge. And a cup of sweet milk. They bring your dinner to you in the field; it's bacon and cabbage or mashed turnips. And do you know what some of those farmers say?—they say 'Shovel it down boys.' Heh. They don't even want to let you stop to eat."

"I was one of the 'B' police, driving out the Sinn Feiners. We used to go to 'em in the night and say, 'Get out of here!' Yes, we had to get 'em out." And he rambled on about this and other things.

"Thank you, this is the place," he broke off suddenly just outside of Enniskillen. "Thank you again, sir."

He left me, walking, under the leafy trees, down a long, twisting road.

On to the Fair.

The roads were still fresh and cool and quiet from the night. The leafy beeches formed an arch over them. Smoke was coming from the white-washed cottages on the green hills, and the farmers and their boys were driving their cattle in to the Irvings-town fair. They walked slowly, with little sticks in their hands, whacking the heifers and bullocks and bulls. It was to be a big fair, the farmers all told me.

Along the left of the square I found the pig men already had up-ended their carts. The carts were display rooms in themselves, each red crate-like top full of straw—and pink pigs. They formed a long line along the left of the square and their farmer owners stood between their shafts.

"Look at the lovely lard on him!" said a farmer when I looked into his cart. "Look at the grand skull on him!"

He stuck his broad finger into one of his little pale-eyed pigs to show me his excellence. He pulled him out from his warm bed in the straw, took hold of him by the tail and hauled him out from his nine brothers and sisters and hefted him.

"Aye, there's nine weeks' fine fattening in him." The pig squealed with dismay.

At the head of the square the cattle were being marshaled. There were no barriers, they just stood in the

street or on the sidewalk with their owners whacking them into clumps and the buyers walking around them.

"I'll give you nine pounds."

"I'll not take it."

Two men were arguing in front of a stalled flivver that was trying to get through the melee. They spat on their hands and whacked them together. A third man spoke up—for it always takes more than two to make a bargain in an Irish fair.

"Will ye break his word now," declared the buyer, "divide the pound?"

"I'll not."

"Will ye give 'im to me?"

"I told you ten pounds."

The buyer walks off.

"You'll be back now," cries the seller.

The buyer, to answer that taunt, comes back and leans his nose almost against the seller's face.

"He's all legs."

The buyer walks off and the man around the seller start berating him. One of them runs after the buyer and seizes his hand. He smacks it against the listless hand of the seller.

"Will you break my word now—will ye split the pound?"

"No," says the buyer and walks off again.

The buyer is called back, the sale is made and the buyer takes out his scissors and clips his mark in the yearling's rump.

Girls stand, with switches in their hands, beside great lowing cows. The air is full of bellows and the smell of fresh manure. The cattle mull about like the herd before a prairie fire. There are high squeals from pig street. There are silent sheep in carts on a side street. There are old women dressed in their Sunday best gossiping and examining the coats hung out before the stores. Vendors of pottery are laying out their wares. A man

with a booth is selling everything from cast-iron visors to jewelry. Carts keep adding to the mob. A negro is rigging up a shooting gallery before the bank. The pubs are beginning to have steam on their windows. Deep carts full of sheep, great, black wall-eyed bulls, the whacking of great hands—there is something epic about it.

WHITE FROST

Hoar frost crept down the hills as quietly.

As shadow lengthened sleep. Star shod he came

Marauding dusk; his torch a cold white flame

To blaze his way in fine spun filigree Of ghostly radiance. Invincibly He trailed the valley, eager to reclaim

His heritage; to trace his ancient name

On Autumn's gold and crimson witchery.

Bewildered dusk, transfigured held her breath

As heart beats crystalized. A riding moon

Swung low its rebel brightness taunting death

In mirrored water of the dark lagoons

No faintest clink of Winter's spur was heard

When frost slipped down as lightly as a bird.

—ANNE M. ROBINSON in New York Times.

Vaudeville Agent (dubiously)—There are so many strong man acts just now—do you fellows do anything out of the ordinary?

Strong Man (impressively)—We wind up our act by opening the drawers of an old fashioned dresser.

\$1000 BULLDOG HANGS ITSELF

New York, Oct. 29—By clear proof of corpus delicti the case of grand larceny against Herman F. Smith today was resolved into a simple but unusual case of dog-gone by accidental hanging.

If this isn't clear, it may be added that at the request of Judge Barrett, Bronx county court, Detective Dunwoodie, Wakefield precinct, dug into a heap of debris and found the body of Dell, \$1,000 bulldog, and thereby proved that Smith told the truth when he insisted that he had not stolen the dog, but that Dell had hanged herself.

This satisfied William H. Dohm, Manhattan veterinarian, who owned the dog, and on motion of Assistant District Attorney Maglesky the case against Smith was dismissed.

Dohm's story was that in July he took Dell to the Pearl Brook kennels, owned by Smith in the Bronx, and left her there for board and lodging. When he came back he found that Smith had sold the kennels and had disappeared, also the dog.

Smith was located at Maple View Farm, Brandon, Vt., and arrested and charged with grand larceny, for Dohm was inclined to be severe. His dog, 11 years old, had won many prizes, and was both valuable and dear. Smith was indicted, and the grand jury had to suppress a smile over his tale about the dog hanging herself.

He said that following the sale of the kennels he had returned for Dell and found that the dog, given too much leeway on a rope fastened to a stake, made for the fence, leaped, and had been suspended in the air until dead.

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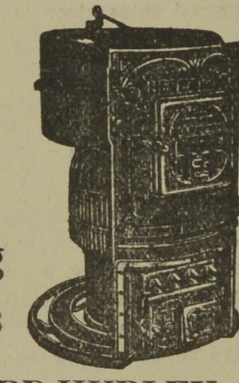
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