

"VICTIMS,"

A Play in One Act.

By A. Patrick Wilson.

I have watched thy beauty fading.
And thy strength sink day by day;
Soon, I know, will Want and Fever
Take thy little life away.
Famine makes thy father reckless,
Hope has left both him and me;
We could suffer all, my baby,
Had we but a crust for thee.
Sleep, my darling, thou art weary,
God is good, but life is dreary.

Adelaide A. Procter.

Dramatis Personæ.

JACK NOLAN A Mechanic.
ANNE NOLAN His wife.
GEORGE PURCELL A clerk.
JAMES QUINN A rent-collector.
SCENE:—The garret occupied by the
Nolans.

The door is at top right, and there is a small window high up in the wall at top left. A door at right gives access to a small cupboard and on the left is a fireplace, in which there is no fire. The whole aspect of the room gives the impression of the most abject poverty. A few huddled rags in a corner denote that the only place available for sleeping is the floor. A shaky old table, on which there are some scattered shirts, two broken-backed chairs; and an old box, rigged up as a cradle, are the sole furnishings of the place.

The time is late afternoon on a winter's day.

Curtain.

(Anne Nolan is discovered. She is apparently about 24, but her rather wild and unkempt appearance make her look older. She is bending over the cradle, gently rocking it to and fro, crooning softly as she does so.)

ANNE (singing):
Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
Father will come to thee soon;
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
Father will come to thee soon;
Father will come to his babe in the nest,
Silver sails all out of the west
Under the silver moon;
Sleep, my little one,
Sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

(With a slight sigh). Asleep at last! (Speaking softly and caressingly to the child), Sleep on my darling, sleep on my pretty one, and forget all your suffering and hunger. Oh God! to think that my little child should be dying with hunger, and his mother powerless to save him. My boy, my boy. (A brief pause during which she bends closer over the cradle, then starting up more wildly, breaks out): But you must not die. You shall not die! God cannot be so cruel as to take you from me now. Your father will find a job, someone will give him work soon, and then your mother will get lots of food and nice things for her little baby. (Relapsing again into her former mood.) Oh, how wasted and worn he looks, and it is growing so very cold with no fire to warm the room. (She looks round the room, then rises and crosses to the corner where the scattered rags are, and taking one of these comes back and tucks it round the child.

While she is doing so a knock is heard at the door. She does not heed it, but goes on with her task. The knock is repeated much louder, and Anne turns towards the door.)

ANNE: Who is there

PURCELL: Can't you open the damned door and see?

(Anne crosses to the door and opens it.)

PURCELL: Is this where Nolan lives?

ANNE: It is.

PURCELL (entering the room without being invited, and looking around): And a nice place, too,—I don't think! (Purcell is about 20 and has all the arrogance and insolence usually to be encountered in the average clerk of that age.)

ANNE: What do you want?

PURCELL: You're sewing shirts for Scott and Scott, aren't you?

ANNE: Yes!

PURCELL: Well, the old boss, old Scott himself, sent me up here to ask if you had that last lot of shirts you got from the factory done yet?

ANNE (turning to the table and lifting the shirts up nervously, and laying them down again): No, I haven't them quite finished yet, but I'm trying hard to get them all finished by to-morrow night.

PURCELL: Oh, that ain't a bit of use. Old Scott says that if they weren't finished when I called, I had to tell you to bundle them up and bring them finished or unfinished back to the factory to-morrow morning.

ANNE: Oh, but Mr. Scott doesn't know the circumstances or he wouldn't take the work away from me, surely?

PURCELL: Wouldn't he! You don't know old Scott or you wouldn't say no such thing. I tell you he's as mean as the very devil, he is. His younger brother, that's the other partner, ain't half a bad old skin, but old Scott is absolutely awful.

ANNE: But I have never done shirts for a factory before, and Mr. Scott would give me more time if he knew.

PURCELL: Would he! Don't you believe it. If he knew you hadn't done shirts before, you wouldn't have got them at all. He don't like new hands, he doesn't. He always says as new hands can make so little money that they get a bad name to the firm for sweating. Some regular hands at this shirt sewing work can do as many as a dozen and a half a day, or if they have handy kids they can do two dozen, and that means twelve bob a week at a shilling a dozen. How many have you done.

ANNE (in a low piteous voice): I have only done one dozen.

PURCELL (laughing boisterously): What! only one blooming dozen and you've had 'em for three days!

ANNE (passionately): Yes, one dozen, and I've worked as long as I could at them. I couldn't work during the night at them because I had no candles and no money to buy them with. My husband is out of work and my poor baby is dying of hunger. You laugh at my poor attempt to get these shirts done for Scott and Scott. I thought I could help a little to keep a roof over our heads by doing this work and I have failed. Even

a shilling for three days work would be a God-send, but (sweeping up the shirts in her arms and throwing them at his feet) that, too, is to be denied me. Take them back with you and leave me, leave me! (At her last words she bursts into tears and sinks into one of the chairs.)

PURCELL (taking out a packet of cheap cigarettes and carefully selecting one which he lights): Well I like that, I do indeed! Take them back with me! I will, I don't think! Do you take me for a blooming porter! I'm carrying no shirts for Scott and Scott. I'm not! I'm a clerk, I am, and not a carter. I wouldn't have come up here at all, only the old boss asked me himself because I suppose he thought you had done a guy with 'em. You bring them round in the morning yourself, Missus, and get your blooming shilling. Scott and Scott don't take no notice of dying kids; they've heard all that yarn before. As for your husband being out o' work, well, maybe he is and maybe he isn't. Maybe you have a husband and perhaps you ain't got no husband. I don't know, and Scott and Scott don't care (kicking the shirts out of his way). Here take your blooming shirts and bring them round in the morning mind. So long. (He goes out leaving her still sitting on the chair, where her head has gradually sunk almost to her knees.)

ANNE (after a pause gets up slowly and picks up the shirts which she places on the table, where she stands looking down at them. As she is doing so the door is opened and Jack Nolan enters. Jack is about 30, but anxiety and want have made him look much older in a short time).

JACK (dejectedly coming forward to table on which he lays down his cap): Well, Anne, not working?

ANNE: No.

JACK: Who was that fellow I met on the stair?

ANNE: He was a clerk from Scott and Scott's.

JACK: Scott and Scott's; what did he want?

ANNE: He said—he said—(she bursts into tears).

JACK (crossing to her and taking her into his arms): Why, lass, what is the matter? What did the cad say?

ANNE (trying hard to speak bravely): Oh, it wasn't him, Jack. He had just to do what he was told, and I don't blame him. I've tried hard, Jack, I've tried very hard, and I've failed.

JACK: Failed! How failed?

ANNE: I've to take back the shirts, Jack. They won't give me any more to do. I'm too slow at them. They can get others to do them quicker.

JACK: God, has it come to this now! The bloodsuckers can not only sweat women, but they must select what women taking the shirts i:trtc..ea they will sweat. (Taking the shirts up and casting them into a corner.) If they must go back, you shall not take them. Let them send for their rags; surely my very manhood has been snapped and taken away when I allowed you to attempt such work at all. I felt that I was beaten. I knew that I was crushed and

hopeless, but to turn my home into a sweating den was degradation and I allowed it—I allowed it.

ANNE (*hopelessly*): But the work has been taken from me, Jack.

JACK: Taken from you, yes, but why? Was it because your husband hated to see his wife at sweated labour? No, he was too great a cad for that. It was taken from you because the vampires who gave it were hungry for blood-stained profit, and your inexperienced hands were of no use to them.

ANNE: But we must starve, Jack.

JACK: Starve! What are we doing but starving! What have we been doing for weeks but starving! Suppose we go on starving it only means death.

ANNE: Don't, Jack, don't.

JACK (*fiercely*): Yes, death. It is the one thing left for us to do that can cost nothing. They have taken away my right to work, they have taken away our right to live. The only things they give us in exchange are starvation and death.

ANNE (*pitifully*): Think of the child, Jack, think of the child.

JACK (*his whole demeanour turning to anxiety*): The child! Ah, yes, I had almost forgotten the poor little chap. (*He crosses while he is speaking over to the side of the cradle where he kneels down.*) How ill he looks, but he seems to be sleeping peacefully enough—peacefully enough.

ANNE (*crossing to Jack and looking over his shoulder*): Yes, he is sleeping now, I just got him to sleep a little time ago. I think the poor mite was tired out with crying and suffering. He was very bad all day, and I could do nothing for him, nothing at all. Mrs. Green brought up the last drop of milk she had. She told me her husband was paid off last night for slack trade, and she won't have enough for herself now, and her with a little infant at the breast. One time I thought my little boy was going to die. He grew all black and seemed to be in convulsions, I sent little Bessie Green to get the doctor (*she pauses*).

JACK: Yes, and then?

ANNE: He sent back word that he wouldn't come unless I sent the money first.

JACK: The brute! The coward. His fee against the life of my child. (*Bitterly*) What does it matter. (*To the child*) You're only the poor starved kid of an out-of-work mechanic. Had you been the cub of some rich employer you would have had nurses and doctors, heaps of them dancing about you, but you don't count. Your father is only Jack Nolan, a poor fool, whose one way of earning his bread is by the work of his hands and when work can't be got, he and his must starve and his kid must die.

ANNE: Jack!

JACK (*still to the child*): Yes, his kid must die, and why not? You will be better dead.

ANNE (*pleadingly*): Don't say things like that, Jack, you musn't.

JACK (*turning round and facing Anne and speaking in a low voice with suppressed feeling*): Listen to me, Anne. For ten weeks now I have been out of work. I have tried to get any sort of work to do during that time and have failed. I have been willing to do anything and have got

nothing to do at all. I have tried every place with always the same result, nothing to be got.

ANNE: Don't give up heart, Jack, something will turn up and things will be better.

JACK: So I have been telling myself, Anne, but now I know better. Listen! To-day I went round every place in the city where I knew mechanics were employed. I know it is the bad season with the winter only half over, still, I am known to be a good workman, and in any case I thought there might be some small chance. Everywhere I went, however, the same reply was given. They had paid men off, or were going to pay men off, and no jobs were being given. The last place I called at was the waggon works. Old Bill Brown is the foreman there and he and I have always been pretty good friends.

ANNE: He was at our wedding, wasn't he, Jack?

JACK: Yes, that's the very man. Well, he hadn't a job but he asked me if I had tried Wheeler's place. I told him I had and that they were paying off men. That's very funny, said he, for I know they have just booked a big contract and were wanting men. That's queer, I said, for they certainly told me they were paying men off and couldn't start anyone.

ANNE: Why did they tell you that Jack?

JACK: Hold on, Anne, I'm coming to that. Old Bill looked straight at me for a second then he said: They were telling you a lie, Jack, for they have plenty of work. But, good heavens! Bill, said I, what did they want to do that for. Bill was silent for a little then said he: I'm thinking they don't want you Jack.

ANNE (*in astonishment*): They don't want you, Jack! Why, Bill Brown must be talking nonsense. You were always punctual and steady, and Tom Green downstairs always says that a better workman couldn't be got anywhere than you. Bill must be joking, Jack.

JACK: No, Anne, Bill isn't joking. He was quite serious, and he is quite right. I'm not wanted, Anne, and that's an end of it. I wonder I didn't see it for myself before this.

ANNE: But, Jack, I don't understand, why don't they want you?

JACK: They don't want me, Anne, because they think I am a dangerous man.

ANNE (*laughing nervously*): A dangerous man, Jack, what nonsense.

JACK (*bitterly*): It isn't nonsense, Anne. When the employers call me a dangerous man, it is not their lives or their limbs they are thinking of, but it is their profits. Two years ago, before you and I were married, Anne, there was a strike amongst the mechanics. The Union, of which I was an active member, called the men out on a question of wages. The strike lasted for several weeks, but like nearly all sectional strikes it was doomed to failure. The Union was smashed, and then the masters, not content with their victory, sought to teach the men a lesson by proclaiming a lock-out. After three months, the men had to crawl and beg for their jobs back at worse terms than they had before. All the men were taken back then, and the masters

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had a greater whip-hand over them than ever before, which they used unrelentingly. The men are growing discontented again, and with a little organisation, and profiting by their last mistake they might in a short time be able to force the employers' hands. The masters, however, are going to take no chances. They have all combined together, and they are starting already to nip the next revolt in the bud.

ANNE: But how can they do that, Jack?

JACK: It is very easy, Anne, very easy. They are taking advantage of the present slack season to get rid of every man who took even the slightest official part in the last strike. They are putting them out and they are going to keep them out. Do you understand what that means, Anne?

ANNE (*in a terrified tone*): Does it mean, Jack, that you will not get another job?

JACK: Yes, Anne, that's what it means. I never thought of it till Bill Browne told me to-day. But Bill says that the Master's federation have been just waiting the chance, and now it has come, and they are taking it. They have calculated well—damnably well. They create slack trade for the purpose of tossing on the scrap heap the men who they think will endanger their profits by demanding a living wage, and then they will hold up their hands in pious mockery and cry out about foreign competition. The vampires! The blood-suckers!! The murderers!!! (*he has risen to his feet in an outburst of passion and Anne crosses to him and puts her arms around him*).

ANNE (*in pleading tones*): Jack, Jack, I know it is hard, hard. They are cruel, but don't give way to despair, Jack. Something will happen. There will be a brighter dawn, there will—

JACK (*taking her hands in his and holding her slightly from him and speaking into her face*): There will be no brighter dawn, woman—nothing can happen. It is decreed that I can get no work in this town. They have already left me penniless, so that I cannot move to another place. Even if I did it would be the same thing. Workingmen are fools to combine in small sections, but the masters combine together everywhere the same, an employer's Masonic order for the preservation of their one common interest, profit. Every man who makes a move against that god of profit is marked out as their victim, who must be remorselessly smashed to atoms.

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ANNE: You must be mistaken, Jack, you are overwrought and do not know what you are saying. These men are not only employers but they are Christian men.

JACK (*breaking into a wild laugh*): Christian men. God, how mockingly the Almighty must smile when these profit fiends are dubbed followers of the Prince of Peace. (*Crossing suddenly to the side of the cradle.*) Look in there, Anne. There is the child whom we have built our hearts upon. The child whose future we planned even before he was born. He is dying of starvation, being slowly murdered by the master gang whom you call Christian. Christians! God, how long, how long will you suffer these things? Pagan murderers worshipping their one and only true god, the god of profit, and offering men, women, and children upon their altars as victims.

ANNE: Don't, don't, Jack, our child will live, it must live. They shall not have my boy as one of their victims.

JACK: Alive or dead, he shall be a victim; now or later it is all the same, he cannot escape the system. If they do not succeed in killing him now, they will chain and grind him as a chattel all the days of his life. He will not live, however. He is sleeping now but it is the sleep of utter exhaustion before the end. I saw the same thing happen during the lock-out, children starved to death for the sake of profit. It is better to die thus than live to be a slave. If I thought my child would live I would take him up in my two hands and save him from such a fate by dashing his brains out.

(*Anne sinks into a chair in a huddled heap weeping hysterically.*)

ANNE: Jack, Jack, you will break my heart.

JACK (*his whole mood changing as he crosses to her and takes her in his arms*): Ah! forgive me, lass, forgive me. God help me, I hardly know what I am saying. I was well-nigh hopeless before, but what I have heard this day has made me reckless. It is not my life alone which they are wrecking, but yours. I blame myself for that, Anne, you were so happy and contented before I married you, and all I have done is to bring you down to want and misery along with myself. You should curse the day you married me, Anne, as the worst day in your life (*he almost sobs at the last words, and woman-like she at once forgets her own misery and tries to comfort him*).

ANNE: No, Jack dear, not to curse it but to bless it. If I did not know the discomforts of life before I married you, neither did I know the sweets of life until that day.

JACK (*half bitterly as he looks up into her face*): Is this miserable garret one of the sweets, Anne?

ANNE: Ah! you are a man, Jack, and don't understand. It is not comforts or even happiness that make up the sweets or the joys of life, I think sometimes it is the battle. It is the fighting for those you love. The joys of life are only secured after strenuous fighting. The greatest joy a woman can know, the joy

of motherhood, is but a victory gained after a great struggle. I do not envy the people who live in a palace, but I can pity them. They do not know the discomforts, but neither can they know the glorious joy of combat; in fighting a great battle, even though it may be but for a little thing, if that little be for those who are dear to us. That is what made that message from Scott and Scott so very hard. The work may be sweated, as you say, and I believe you are right, Jack, but women do not think of these things. It is not for a firm they are working, but for those they love. I would have worked my fingers to the bone with no thought of anything save you and the child. It is losing that great joy that made Scott and Scott's message so hard.

JACK: Women are funny beings, Anne, and hard to understand.

ANNE: Yes, Jack, and the great big strong men are just like little children who never will understand.

(*During the long speech of Anne's, Jack has sat down on the floor with his cheek resting against Anne's knee. They are like this when a loud knock is heard on the door.*)

JACK (*rising as he speaks*): Who can this be?

ANNE: I'll answer the door and see.

JACK: No, you stay where you are and I'll answer it. (*He crosses to door and opens it. Standing on the threshold is James Quinn. Quinn is about 50, and looks shabby genteel.*)

ANNE: The rent-collector, Jack.

QUINN (*entering*): Aye, the rent-collector.

ANNE: But you are a day before your time.

QUINN: Well, that's good, man, real good, indeed. That's real smart and no mistake. I got no rent last week and no rent the week before that and now you tell me I am a day before my time, that's real good now, real good indeed, but you know, man, its no joking matter now for I'm three weeks after my time and not before it, and my boss says that if I don't get your money I've got to put you out to-night and get another tenant to-morrow.

JACK (*who has remained standing at the door, holding it open*): We are not going out to-night.

QUINN (*taking out his notebook*): I'm glad to hear that. I never like to put decent people out into the street, when they have the money. There will be three weeks to pay now, that will be—

JACK: We have no money to give you.

QUINN (*closing his book with an angry snap*): But I don't understand; you are not going out to-night, yet you say you have no money.

JACK: Yes, that is what I said; isn't it plain enough.

QUINN: No, sir, it is not plain enough. I think it is the height of insolence and ingratitude. For two weeks now I have saved you from being turned out by ap-

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pealing to my employer, the landlord of this tenement, on your behalf. Now, when he refuses to wait any longer, and in fact threatens to sack me if I don't get you to pay up at once, you reward my kindness by saying you will neither pay, nor yet will you quit. It is scandalous, sir, indeed I may say it is infamous.

JACK: I did not say I would not pay you, I said I had no money to give you which is a different thing.

QUINN: It is not a different thing to the landlord, sir! Why, sir, what do you think would happen if I went to my employer to-morrow and said: The Nolans have no money to give you they would like to pay you but they can't. What, sir, do you think would happen? I would get the sack, sir, for being a fool, and what would I do then.

JACK (*still speaking quietly as he has been since the entrance of Quinn, but gradually getting excited as he proceeds*): What you might do if you got the sack, I do not know. Maybe you would have to be doing what I have been doing. Going round day after day looking for a job that could not be got. Coming home night after night to tell your wife how hopeless was the task of trying to get a chance of earning your living. Pawning and selling your furniture little by little to pay rent until you have to come to a miserable garret for which you have no longer any prospect of paying, and which you may be told you will be thrown out of. These are the things that may happen if you get the sack, my friend. You will be a victim as well as me then. We are all victims and as we cannot fight profit-mongers we fight one another. One victim tearing another victim and all done in the sacred name of profit. Now, I am not going to plead with you because you would only get into trouble if you listened. At the same time, I am not going out of here to-night. My child is ill, dying, I believe.

(*Anne who has been standing below the table up till now, quietly listening, starts at this last remark of Jack's, and burying her face in her hands, crosses to the cradle, where she kneels down.*)

If all the rent existing under heaven goes unpaid, I will not stir out of this house to-night, and have my child disturbed. Go back, then, to your employer and tell him that I refuse to quit possession. It will save you from dismissal.

QUINN (*stubbornly*): I will not go back and tell him that, I won't stir a foot out of here till you do quit.

JACK: Then by the living God I'll throw you down the stairs head first.

QUINN (*moving towards the door*): I will have you thrown out to-morrow.

JACK: To-morrow can look after itself, my friend, (*closing the door and locking it behind Quinn*) to-night the place is mine. (*As he says the last words he turns round and sees Anne bending over the cradle, as if rubbing the baby's hands. Crossing rapidly to her.*) Has he wakened up, Anne?

ANNE: No, Jack, but he has turned very cold.

JACK (*bending over the cradle and then speaking in a low, broken whisper*): Aye, my poor lass, he has turned very cold—he is dead—

Slow Curtain.

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Useful Hints.

To clean currants for the Christmas pudding rub them, a portion at a time, through flour. Washing them makes pudding heavy.

To make bread crumbs get a stale loaf; tear it apart, and rub one soft side against the other. It grates very finely, and if any large piece should fall, it can be easily picked out. Equal quantities flour and bread crumbs are often used; but sometimes more bread crumbs and less flour is preferred.

Cut peel very small, and remove all sugar from it before doing so. When storing raisins keep a saucer of water handy. Dipping the finger-tips in it occasionally keeps them from becoming sticky.

Put pudding in bowl, if possible; if not, then put plate in bottom of pot. Put pudding in cloth wrung out of boiling water, and dredged on the inside with flour. Be sure water is boiling when pudding is put in, and kept so all the time.

A pudding improves by keeping so.

Make your pudding as soon as possible, and reheat on Christmas Day by boiling it for a couple of hours. A little spray of holly (with berries) on top improves appearance, and makes it look "Christmasy."

The Table.

MAKE the table look nice. Have a perfectly clean cloth, with knives, glasses, etc., shining. A touch of red brightens and improves the appearance of the table wonderfully. A small scrap of red satin, velvet, or even sateen makes a nice table centre; but be sure to scallop the edges. Last Xmas I used a few sprays of red-berried holly in a tall glass. When it was surrounded by some ivy trails, with a small sprig of holly at each corner, the effect was charming, while the cost was practically nothing.

Make the Xmas table a bright spot in reality, so that when you look back to Xmas gone past you may have a vision of a well-laid table surrounded by happy faces.

To Boil Turkey.

MAKE stuffing of bread, herbs, salt, pepper, lemon-peel, a few oysters or an anchovy, a bit of butter, some suet, and an egg; put this into the crop, fasten up the skin, and boil the turkey in a floured cloth to make it very white. Have ready a fine oyster-sauce, made rich with butter and a little cream, and a spoonful of soy if approved, and pour it over the bird or liver, and lemon sauce.

Hen birds are best for boiling, and should be young.

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To Roast Turkey.

THE sinews of the leg should be drawn whichever way it is dressed; the head should be twisted under the wing, and in drawing it take care not to tear the liver nor let the gall touch it.

Put stuffing of sausage meat, or, if sausages are to be served in the dish, a bread stuffing, as this makes a large addition to the size of the bird. Observe that the heat of the fire is constantly to that part, for the breast is often not done enough. A little strip of paper should be put on the bone to hinder it from scorching while the other parts roast. Baste well and froth it up; serve with gravy in the dish and plenty of bread sauce in a sauce tureen; add a few crumbs and beaten egg to the stuffing of the sausage meat.

To Roast Goose.

AFTER it is picked, the plugs of the feathers pulled out, and the hairs carefully singed, let it be well washed and dried, and a seasoning put in of onion sage, pepper and salt. Fasten it tight at the neck and the rump and then roast.

Put it first at a distance from the fire, and by degrees draw it nearer. A slip of paper should be skewered on the breast-bone. Baste it very well when the breast is rising. Take off the paper, and be careful to serve it before the breast falls, or it will be spoiled by coming flatted to the table. Let a good gravy be sent in the dish.

Gravy and apple sauce; gooseberry sauce for green goose.

Giblet Soup.

SOALD and clean all giblets. Set them to stew with a pound or two of gravy beef or scrag of mutton, three onions, a bunch of herbs, a teaspoonful of pepper, a tablespoonful of salt. Put five pints of water and simmer until the gizzards are tender. Add an ounce of butter and a desert spoonful of flour and a little ketchup or cayenne pepper.

Christmas Plum Pudding for Children.

THREE-QUARTERS of a pound of beef suet, a pinch of salt, a pound and a half of bread crumbs, half a pound of flour, three-quarters of a pound of raisins, three-quarters of a pound of clean currants, two ozs. of candied peel and half a nutmeg. Mix thoroughly; then add four beaten eggs,

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enough milk to moisten it, not too much, or the pudding will be heavy. Tie in a pudding cloth well floured, and boil for six hours; sufficient for eight children. A little treacle will be an improvement.

Plum Pudding (Rich).

TAKE a stale loaf of bread, rub it through a wire sieve until you have three-quarters of a pound; add a quarter of a pound of flour, a little salt, three-quarters of a pound of chopped suet, a pound and a half of muscatel raisins, half a pound of currants, half a pound of candied peel mixed, six bitter almonds blanched and pounded, and half a pound of moist sugar, a wine glassful of brandy. If for teetotalers the brandy may be omitted; eight good eggs well whisked. Mix all well together; add a little milk if necessary. Take a piece of new calico, dip in boiling water; wring it dry; flour it; tie the pudding securely in it; leave room to swell; plunge into boiling water; be sure it is boiling; keep boiling for eight hours; if it is boiling dry add some boiling water. It is always best to put a plate under all puddings when boiling.

Cottage Pudding.

TAKE all stale bread crusts; put in a basin; steep in boiling water; when soft squeeze off as much water as possible; beat up with a fork. Add two spoonfuls of sugar, half a nutmeg grated, a couple of ounces of suet or unsalted dripping, three eggs well beaten, a handful of clean currants; add a little flour. This pudding can be steamed or baked—the former one hour, the latter three-quarters.

"Bread and Butter Pudding."

CUT any left over stale bread in nice squares; have ready a quarter of a pound of butter warmed; dip squares into it; put buttered side next pie dish (this saves greasing the dish); fill up dish three-quarters full; beat up four eggs, a teaspoonful of sugar and a tablespoonful of cornflour; put in the mixture; add sufficient milk to cover the bread; bake in a moderate oven (over meat will do) for three-quarters of an hour. Half-a-pound of clean currants may be added if liked sweeter.

If a scales is not to hand, the following measurements will be found convenient: One breakfast cupful flour to $\frac{1}{2}$ lb.; ditto of crumbs, $\frac{1}{4}$ lb.; of sugar, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb.; of cheese, $\frac{3}{4}$ lb.; breakfast-cup half full of butter to $\frac{1}{4}$ lb.; breakfast-cupful of liquid to $\frac{1}{2}$ pint; 1 tea spoon, $\frac{1}{4}$ oz.; 1 table spoon, 1 oz.

Observations on Making Puddings, etc.

THE outside of puddings often taste disagreeably, which arises from the cloth not being properly washed and kept in a dry place. It should be dipped in boiling

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water, squeezed dry, and floured when to be used.

A bread pudding should be tied loose; if batter, very tight.

Water should be boiling when puddings are put in, and if more water is added it should also be boiling, or the pudding will be heavy. Pans and basins must always be buttered.

A pan of cold water should be ready when a pudding is lifted. It should then be dipped in it; then it will not adhere to the cloth.

Eggs (the yolks and whites) should be beaten separately, and then mixed; it makes them lighter.

How to Make Pancakes.

TAKE two pounds of flour, four eggs, a pinch of salt; beat the eggs; add flour and salt; mix a little milk into the consistency of thick cream; have a clean pan hot and well buttered; pour out a cupful at a time; when fit to turn slip a knife around the edge and toss over; if batter is made half an hour before it is wanted it will be much better. Serve pancake with sugar and lemon, and lay a knife and fork for eating.

Dublin Labour Party.

IRELAND'S OWN BAND

will head a Parade of Wood Quay and Merchant's Quay Wards in support of the

Labour Candidates,

on Sunday, December 22nd, starting from Lord Edward Street at 1.15.

A Mass Meeting

will be held at New Street, at 2 o'clock. Prominent Labour Men will speak.

"An injury to One is the concern of All."

—THE—

Irish Worker.

EDITED BY JIM LARKIN.

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We do not publish or take notice of anonymous contributions.

DUBLIN, SATURDAY, Dec. 21st, 1912.

CHRISTMAS.

FOR one thousand nine hundred and twelve years the message "Peace on earth and good-will to all men" has been trumpeted throughout the earth. From the heights to the depths that glorious message has been echoed and re-echoed. And with what effect? Let each judge for him or herself. Yet we have a duty to perform to those whom we are responsible to—a reply to be given on behalf of those for whom we speak of in this land. Is there peace? Without hesitation our answer is—No; there is no peace! Nothing but strife, wrongdoing, and war! Is there good-will to all men? Emphatically we reply No! On the contrary, ill-will to all men is

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the gospel of the hour. Not peace, but the sword; not good-will to all men, but ill will to all men seems to be the watchword and message of the present un-Christian days. Those who preach and teach and try to practise good-will are laughed at and scorned, insulted and reviled, taunted as dreamers—madmen, and treated as criminals. Such is the result of one thousand nine hundred and twelve years of propaganda, of preaching "peace and good will to men." Look where you will, everything seems awry. In all lands the God of War, of Grab, and Money-making seems to have dethroned the Eternal God in the hearts of the people. To talk of "PEACE" seems mockery; and to suggest "GO D-WILL TO MEN" a living lie. Massed on the frontiers of the States of Europe and Asia are millions of armed slaves, who may at the command of unscrupulous beasts, in the guise of Statesmen and Kings, be launched against each other to the slaves undoing. And still worse—these Kings and Statesmen call upon the ministers of their various Churches to Blasphemously implore the Prince of Peace to bless their arms and grant them victories. Think you, common people, of the absurdity of it all. The God Who created men, and Who is responsible for our existence, is implored by these hypocritical scoundrels to outrage His own Divine teaching, and to work against the fulfilment of His own message of peace and goodwill to all men. Such is the condition of the alleged civilized world. Look out across our own land, and from pulpit and platform creatures who claim to be Christians are howling like veritable devils to their poor ignorant dupes to organize into bands for the purpose of stirring up strife, bloodshed, and murder, and the denial of peace and good-will to others of their fellow-countrymen. These ministers of peace—so they designate themselves—know they are doing what is manifestly opposed to the teaching of the Prince of Peace. Let us quote one of the Reverend Shepherds as reported in the daily Press of December 17th, within eight days of the Feast of the Birth of the Prince of Peace:

Preaching to the Portadown Apprentice Boys on Sunday evening, the Rev Chancellor Hobson referred to the troublous times with which Ireland was threatened. He said that if the trouble they feared did come they would need to watch that excitement did not lead them to wrong lines of action. They wanted to avoid violence and rioting. If, in the end, they should have to resort to violence in an organised way, under the guidance and directions of their leaders, that would be a different matter. What he wanted to warn them against was unorganized violence and disturbance by irresponsible youths, who did not belong to any organization. Such conduct only brought discredit on their cause.

The Rev. Chancellor Hobson wants no "unorganised" violence and murder. He wants it properly organized, led by leaders, such lambs as himself—a sort

CHRISTMAS.

FOR HAMS AND BACON

CALL TO

JOHN O'DONOHUE,
24 LR. STEPHEN ST.

of mature Balkan War. All this foulness, blasphemy, and incitement to act against God's teaching and Divine message, "Peace on earth and good will to all men." All for a comfortable manse and steady income. The cowards are afraid to preach the true message. And not only is that true of certain pulpits, but it is true also; there is a want of moral courage amongst those whose duty it is in season and out of season to point out man's duty to man. We are becoming a nation of cowards, because we, the people, are taught by cowards. Go where you will throughout the thirty-two counties of Ireland—in every parish, townland, village, town, or city—you can feel the unrest that is on the people. The dissatisfaction is making itself manifest in many ways. Certain people are crying peace where there is no peace; talking of good-will to men, knowing in their hearts that it is ill-will they practise. Employers look upon their workers as dumb cattle, to be driven as machines to produce wealth which they (the employers) may waste and abuse. No consideration is given to the aged and infirm workmen. During the years of our manhood we are sweated and overworked. When the back is stooped and the step feeble our refuge is the Work house or death by starvation. This week our attention has been drawn to the dismissal of a carter after forty-one years slaving for one of the richest carting contractors in this Christian city. We wonder was it good-will to that poor work-slave which compelled the slave-driver of an employer to dismiss his wage-slave on the eve of Christmas? Can you wonder, reader, that the workers seem at times to forget the message? For it seems to us that many people think the application of that message applies only to the common people; and with that opinion we fully concur; for the people who, in our opinion, follow out in their daily lives the teachings of the Prince of Peace are the common people. No other class in this country, with a few brilliant exceptions, have ever understood the message—that only by men recognizing that they who require service must give service, and that it is not by mouthing platitudes nor writing high-sounding phrases that peace will be brought into the hearts of men and good-will abound. We must LIVE up to the message. During the past year the work-

Independent Labour Party of Ireland.

Lecture by Frederick Ryan.

"Syndicalism" is the title of a lecture to be delivered in the Antient Concert Buildings on Sunday, December 22nd, at 8 p.m., by Mr. Frederick Ryan, Editor "Egypt." Admission free.

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May never a trouble peep near you,
And never a whisper of pain;
May your presence be always as welcome
As the sunshine after the rain

May the hearts of the people around you
Beat with joy at the sound of your
tread;
May your days go by like a midsummer
dream,
And the years sit light on your head.

May all that you love be near you
Till we sing our next Christmas lay,
And then, shure, mavourneen, I'll wish
you
The same as I wish you to day.

A. M. SCOTT.

lursne fán oróce.

I.

Di tighín mhuil ó Dúompaig fá cúineap ríor-ruaimneac.

Trádnóna breas bpiogmar fá n-earraig do beadé; bí obair an lae críochnuigte as mhuil, 7 bí fé 'na focaireact 7 scataoir rugáin coir teine, 7 é sáiríogab tobac le fuinneam. Dá deap an reompaé; 7ac pur 'na áit féin, 7 7ac pur go deap ann. Bí oropúil leir an m balla, 7 plataí ail 1 mairaid inofaró a ceile go néata; cupán ail pó cupáin 7 ceann eile na fúide go lonnraó ar an ceann abí faoi. Bí crúigáí ann 7 fúidáí eile 7 iao go léir feucapníc go uiof-7lan faoi polar na teinead. Bí rean-clof ar críocad, an an mballa ar agharó an oropúir 'sá inríte rígeil faoi imteact 'na noiméro, act níor tusaó fá n-veora é. Or cionn na teinead bí pictúir an Teonaig a b-ainead ar páiréur ecint a táunig ann faob, 7 le na n-air bí pictúir deap, 7siannac den rean-taorrig 7aebeal, Cozan Ruad. Act níor tusaó fá deapna iao-ran.

As an taoib eile den teine bí bean mhuil 7 i críotáil go dian; read, com dian rín ir a ceapreac doimne go raib fearam an tige ar an peire ríocai a bí 'sá cup le ceile arci.

Ar lár teimteáin. Bí cat oub 'na fúide víreac or comair na teinead; dá dóigte go raib rérin, leir, fá viraofbeact an cuinnur fá mar v'feuc ré irteac fá v'teine 7 cuma maectnaim donaríanaig air.

Ní feurpead doimne teact irteac san tabairt fándeara an bpat deap upláir ar dat oub-deapig abí mar clúbac ear an méro den upláir ba 7iorra don teine.

Bí inghín mhuil a cuir 7ac pur le ceile 7 7coir an rúiréir, 7 bí cuma maectnaim orra fá mar mbionn ar doaimib uair-eannta san cúir bunadára.

O'forgiait an vora, 7, buail caoi-feap ós reiteameal, 7 rírad ré 1 lár an reompa 'sá feucant go cútatac euis mhuil.

Burpead ar an maectnaim. Dúompaig mhuil, 7 baime 7iof ar an cataoir rúgán 'sá iompoó.—"Ambara," ar reire, 'sá cup a cataoir 7 é féin 7iota níor fúide ónteme, "tá tú, a Mhuir, an a-déim-eannac anoc; bí Sígle a ceapó ná tuccarvead tú maon cor." Sead, "mar tús ré fádeapna go raib ionga ar Mhuir nac raib Sígle 1 laraip—tá ré imtigte cun na pataí do nígtead 1 7ioir an rúiréir, 7 béro rí ear nar le pnap rúile."

"Maire," arpa mnaoi mhuil, "caró a coimead tú, a Mhuir?" "7ab annreo níor 7iorra don teine actá an oróce out 1 brúaire."

Dam Mhuir a cóta móp de, fúid ré ríor coir teinead 'sá ráó fá mar a bpeadpead ré a'caunt-leir féin;—"tá, act ní aríugim-ré fuair a naon cor."

Taunig cúineap ar a raib ann aríre. O'feuc Mhuir earc timceall 7 'leas ré a rúile ar pictúir Eogam Ruad. "Do tarraingead an pictúir go deap," ar reire, fá veire, fán toit do burpead, bfeoir, "ir maí an vealb é."

O'arouig mhuil a liac ceann v'feac ré go 7radac, 7 go b'póveamait ar an ceann agharó an taoirig 7aebeal. "Ir deap, ar reire; "ataip m'atar do tarrainig é; bí clíreac cum a leicéroe O'obair ann. Ir minic v'innir m'atar, Solur vé o'a anam, rígeul cata beinn buirb dom víreac mar clor ré o'n atair fein é."

Innir dúinn-ne an rígeul arpa Mhuir, 7 luirne 'na leacáib; "innir dúinn é, le do toil é, ir maí liom doimne 'clor acuir ríor ar tréant 7noimaid na reana. 7aebeal." "Dam rean-mhuil a píopa dá veal; cuir ré fob eile ar an v-teine; 'fín ré a cora cuicí, 7 do focpúig ré é fein fá scataoir, 7 san a fúile do tógáil

ing class have given expression in no uncertain manner to their belief in peace and good-will; but we must go further—we must enforce peace amongst and extend our good-will to all men during the coming time. Let us show in our own time our belief in the ultimate hope that some day the peoples of the earth will realize there is nothing so necessary or worthy of us as PEACE ON EARTH AND GOOD-WILL TO ALL MEN.

We desire to draw our readers' attention to the matter contained in this number of THE IRISH WORKER. Every line, with the exception of one article by a citizen of America. Comrade Bower (who you will feel has absorbed the spirit of Walt Whitman) has been contributed, without fee or reward, by Irishwomen and men. Amongst the contributors you will notice the names of three of the ablest literary men of the day. You have also men like Alderman Tom Kelly giving his unique knowledge of Dublin to our readers in his own inimitable manner. Maeve Kavanagh, whose little book of verse is now on sale, and can be had from THE IRISH WORKERS' Office—the name title is "A Flame from the Whins," price 1s. Cathal Lally, a young but able writer, and others, who contribute to your pleasure and knowledge, reader, are all women and men whose ideal is a self-reliant, self-contained, self-governed nation. Each and all of them extend to you their best wishes that the coming year will bring to you and yours an abundance of joy, happiness, and hopes fulfilled. Your humble servant, the Editor, can only hope that Nature's cornucopia of good things will be showered upon every reader and those who are nearest and dearest to them. We have to apologise to all our friends for the delay in the issue of this Xmas Number, which, we claim, is one of the best. We have met with many obstacles in our pilgrimage, but the getting out of this issue will be one of the landmarks in our chequered career. Nothing but trouble after trouble came upon us. Thanks to our friends and the good fellows who do the work—printers' angels we shall call them in future. We are on sale or return; and when we say return we mean it; for if any one of our readers is dissatisfied, return your copy to the office and we return your 3d. God e'en, merry gentlemen; let nothing you dismay. When your eyes are set on the good things of life, don't forget the poor. Merry may your Xmas be and 1913 free from care.

JIM LARKIN.

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Den pictiúr, coruis ré ar an tséul d'immreádo:—

CUID A DÓ.

"Do leim mé fá d'ainm 'dul na cón,"
"Ír ar éirinn ní meorfainn cía n-í."

Bí beirt 'na fearaí i mboicéirín mhín le linn ainmpe eirigthe amac na ngeadeal i 1645 buacail 7 cailín do d'ead 1404. D'fuirir tabairt deara go raib a sgoirde lán de ghráó dá ceile. Láim i láim a bí raib fá rgháil éirinn moir fuintreóige do fear go dána or cionn na sgoirde eile a bí tairc timceall uirri ar imeallaid boicéirín.

Da oibinn ar lá dóid. Bí an srian a'caitneam oirraib, 7 gá togháil le neart a teapa cinn na mblát i imeac na sgoirde, 7 coir gac taob an boicéirín. Bí an cruinneacht gá burdeactáin go rriár ra sgoirde. Bí na fuireága 'na ceudaid gá d'ail go méirdeac, 7 gá plearcad a b'pibí, beag nac, le neart a mairraecta.

Ác ba cuma leir an óig-bean gac ruo ác an buacail.

Da cuma leir buacail gac nro ác a sgoirde ircais—b' é a cailín é.

"Suidim cun mhuir, a árdáin dia filidceacta, go neartáir dia gac reodaire do Eogáin Ruaid, 7 go dtiocfaid tú tar n-air go rlan cuşam."

"Neartocaró Sé curiact ar n-airm, a cáit, a ghráó; Cuirpró Sé faodar ar ar sclaimitib; rcait ar nairm, reod a áinn Naomta; Dhuigiró Sé sgoirde na n-gall i n'oorin na ngeadeal. Déro ágaró ar crieróim abí faoi b'raicáig b'róim áirre mar b'ruéctad 'na gneine 'n diair na fear-teanna." Nioir cloir an beirt leannán. Fuaim r'odain áar áill teact cuca go dtí go raib ré ruar leo.

Bí buacail ós ar a ór om, 7 feucaint coirig áir. "Deairc ré cuea; 'cuimil ré a lám ra iuan, g'laóic ré 'na deul ar an sgoirde, 7 ar go b'páic leir ruar m'agairó cnurcín abior a comair 7 r'ioir le fanoid i go dtí nac raib le feucaint de ác an cnurcáct cuimriúge 'na d'airreádo a'gáoi-lead leir an gáoir.

"De do deairbráctáir é" arpa cáit, go imni d'urdeac, "ccuairm dom ra nac táitn leir sup tupa toga fear dom."

"Na véun eargóir, a veiró-bean dílrí, ar an laorc ir caolna i b'póola na neun," 7 leas ré a lám go manla ar an ceann

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Donn dílrí.

"Íl náire dom-ra é," arpa cáit.
"Ír náire," d'feiróir sup buail iongnad é náair do b'rapac do sup b'rapar leat an bóro san b'ruig gá an reodaire calm a na sgeuo gac. Ác, ní móir leir é Sóg a éiróde reod raóirre a tírin, ir beag leir gac nuóirre reodcar a tír do reodilead ón báir."

"D'feiróir é," arpa cáit mar a d'píll raib abáile.

"Ánoir, a g'adeala calma Seo, taágaró r'áta áir; Leannáir íad 7 leasáir íad, Ir tuágaró 'Dóid an claream!' tóirna

"Cía n-íad reo cuáim ánoir?"

Dé Eogáin Ruaid feir cuir an Dé Eogáin Ruaid feir cuir an ceir reo ar táoiráig ós, 7 íad na fearaí ar árdáin 'feucaine ar r'luáigtib teann na n-gall abí a' teact ro reolta cuca i n'beag-ríóct áata 7 gá sgoirpugaó sunnaí móra ra n'gleann r'ioir cun mílte áaim míro.

"Cuir cabair cun úi feargáille, a táoirpúg," a r'ia Marcáic com luat 7 táunig ré ruar le Eogáin Ruaid.

"Tá na Sapanáig do a tíomáint r'ómp a coir C'run áir. Connáig leat, a táoiráig, nó béro raib annreo oirraim go r'p'ar."

"Téro tar nair," arpa Coáim Ruaid, leir Marcáig, 7 abair leir an Ó Seair-gáilláig, an fáir ir ná cloirtear r'geu a báir nac mbéro ré o' eáglá oirraim go dtiocfaid na gáill ar ar taob clé oirraim."

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Irish Transport and General Workers' Union.

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The Annual Distribution of Funds will take place on Sunday, December 22nd. A Meeting of all Members of Tontine will be held in Liberty Hall on Sunday, Dec. 22nd, at 12 o'clock.

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"Cáó 'tá oirca?" ar reirrean áirre leir an Marcáig eile abí a fanáct le r'ocáil do cuir cíteac."

"D'áruig an Marcáic a lám ir cionn áceam.

A táoirpúg dílrí, 'tá clann úi Ruairc 'gá r'p'ead le dul irteac ar burdeam an ámuilcáimáig; a' áb'rocaró mé leo 'dul ar ágaró?"

"Nó abair leo r'or; ní n-é b'p'ead ámuilcáim áta de cúram oirraim ác b'p'ead na n-galláile. Cuirpró mé cun r'ubáil íad nuair a b'irdear an fáill áiró."

"Do buail Marcáic eile coir i náirre cuirge "Cáó áta de dílrí?" arpa Eogáin Ruaid."

"A táoirpúg, 'tá clann Máig úirí a' r'p'ead le dul irteac ar luat an úléirnáig. An áb'rocaró mé leo dul cun éinn?"

"Ní hé, arpa Eogáin Ruaid, b'p'ead fáolcom an b'leirnáige áta oirraim inoib, b'p'ead na n-gall úile. Ní fáou go leirpró mé dóid dul a' leimáde oirca."

"D'fan Eogáin go cíim ann go éromad an srian tar órom a fárouirí.

Bí Scaolead uncáir i n-díad uncáir cuir na n'geadeal ar reod an lae, ác níor mairpugaó áoinne.

"Ánoir," arpa Eogáin Ruaid, nuair bí r'ioir áige nac raib an srian a' r'cealláid a r'oluir i r'úilid a áir—"Ánoir," ar reirre 'gá táirpáig a claream, "Tá fáill ágaró a g'adeala cúirugaó o'fágáil ar na gáilláir." Tíomáimró ar ágaró; "A gáillogláig, cuirpró r'pe lár a sgoirde b'p' píróe!"

(To be continued next week.)

CHRISTMAS.

Into the darkness out of the light,
Out of its brightest ray!
Into the darkness where lay the night,
The long-expected resplendent bright,
With balm for the wounded for blindless sight;
Into the darkness out of the light,
The light of Eternal Day.

Out of the darkness into the light,
Into the light of day!
Out of the darkness, fearful, quiet;
Spirits freed to a great birthright,
Following the flame now leading bright;
Out of the darkness into the light,
The Light of Eternal Day.

An Cláirín Dub.

The Adventures of a Christmas Pudding.

By JAMES J. BURKE.

Mrs. Murphy stood at the gate looking after her husband as he jauntily sauntered down the street until he disappeared round the end of those respectable rows of red-bricked houses which form a characteristic feature of suburban Dublin, especially the southern side. A little dispute over money matters had arisen, during which a few volleys of words were discharged by the irritated wife, and were partly responded to by Paddy, who had hastily taken his hat off the hall-stand, and walked out. As soon as he had his back turned she was sorry for what she said. So we discover her at the gate where she had come with the intention of "making it up." Paddy, however, steered clear ahead and never looked around. Of course, had he turned his head the events which are to follow might never have occurred, and the adventures of the Christmas pudding, as set down here, would not have been worth writing, certainly not worth reading.

The domestic wrangle originated in the usual way. It was the eve of Christmas day, and Paddy, who since his marriage to Molly, nearly five years previous to the period of which we write, had always made her a present of a five-pound note as a Christmas gift, on this occasion he only gave her three pounds. To make matters worse he had no satisfactory explanation to offer—at least if he had he did not divulge it. Now Molly had made all arrangements for spending every penny of the expected present on different articles of clothing, etc., for her two children, as was customary with her at this season of the year. She was naturally vexed when the amount fell short of her expectations; and she could not conceal her vexation. As the peroration to a fine flow of abuse she had declared that she would make no plum pudding, knowing full well that she might as well have hit Paddy as say such a thing—and, to be candid, it hit him in a very tender spot. Sweet-toothed as a child, he loved all dainties (as he was apt to call his wife's fancy cakes and pies), particularly pudding. Pudding was Paddy's weak point.

Indeed, Paddy had said more than once, that the Christmas pudding reminded him of the wedding-cake, and in truth it seemed to have the same wonderful power over husband and wife as the magic cake. Mrs. Murphy, as soon as she closed the street door, commenced preparations for the making of the pudding, notwithstanding the declaration to the contrary which she had delivered to her husband.

Paddy and Molly juniors, who had been sent into the back-yard (called a garden, by the landlord) to play, at the outbreak of the war between their parents, managed while the tiff between Molly and Paddy seniors was in progress, to have a slight row of their own, now made their re-appearance in the kitchen to "help mother," as they told her, they did not specify in what way. In spite of the fact that Molly was quick-tempered by times, she was naturally of a loving disposition, and, like most people of her temperament, made atonement for her brief outbursts of temper, by acts of kindness, if not to the person directly concerned to the next of kin, so to speak. Nobody knew or appreciated this trait in his wife's character better than Paddy

himself. Hence the children's offer to assist her was received as were themselves, with open arms.

The mysterious operation of mixing the raw materials was soon in full swing, and before a man could have time to light his pipe, a gigantic pudding was in the cloth, ready for instant consignment to the pot on the fire. In conformity with the adage that says a watched pot never boils, we will leave the pudding to look after itself, while we look around the house.

Reading Christmas stories nowadays, one might imagine [that Christmas was obsolete; hopelessly out of date, a thing of the past! It may be in some households, but the Murphys did not, and let us hope will not, let the spirit of Christmas die out. Christmas was written in every nook and corner of the house. Holly and ivy, mottoes, etc., were displayed in Dickensian fashion on every side (the work of Paddy), and hidden from view for the present were toys and picture books for the children's stockings in the morning. However, the pudding's the thing.

It turned out a great success—superior to the best Molly had ever made, which is saying a good deal. Mrs. Burkenstein, who lived next door, and happened to be in the garden when the pudding was conveyed to the window-sill to cool, said it was a masterpiece, and put down her name for a share. Molly herself was delighted. She well knew that Paddy would fall in love with it at first sight, but she little guessed in what a strange manner he was to come across it. Unfortunately, or rather fortunately, for this tale, she did not perceive a pair of hungry eyes peeping over the low wall at the back of the yard. She did not see a man's head appear gradually, and disappear again when she made a movement to go in. However, the door had no sooner closed, when a human bundle of rages vaulted into the yard, and, taking possession of the pudding, as quickly left.

Paddy returned home about half an hour afterwards, and Molly made amends in an instant for her hasty words in the morning, by flinging her arms round his neck and kissing him. This spontaneous act of conciliation had the desired effect. In passing I would strongly recommend the prescription to other wives in similar cases.

"Well, did you make the pudding, Molly dear?" queried Paddy, when the treaty of peace had been signed and sealed with their lips.

Molly did not answer, but turned her head away evasively when he tried to look into her eyes.

"Of course, I would prefer you not to tell me. I like surprises, and by the way, I have a surprise for you too, so we're equal," he said, pointing to the package which he had brought in with him. There it is. You'll never guess what's in it." This last remark was accompanied by a humorous twinkle of the eyes furthest away from Molly.

"Oh, I don't want to know what's in it," said Molly, petulantly tossing her head. "And you are dying to know if I made a pudding," she added smilingly.

"I can manage to wait till I see the children in the morning, anyhow. They

will know the whole history and geography of it, I'll go bail," he answered.

"I have something to tell you, Molly. You may have remarked—in fact, as well as I can remember you made a lot of remarks . . ."

"But you should forget them; 'tis not good for any man to remember all a woman says—when she is in a bad humour," she interrupted, earnestly.

"Thanks, Mrs. Bernard Shaw. To get to business, the fact of the matter is I left my old place a few weeks ago for a better position, with the result that I did not get any Christmas-box. I made up the money I gave you out of the extra pay I'm getting in the new place, and at the beginning of the New Year I'm promised ten bob more a week, so that will make up for the loss of the Christmas-box. I was going to explain this morning, but you nearly jumped down my throat."

"I was very sorry for what I said—in fact I was sorry before I had it all out," she said, and Paddy, like the sensible man he was, thought the best thing to do at the moment was to kiss her, and did so accordingly.

"I find that there should be no secrets between husband and wife," soliloquised Paddy. "No matter how good the intention, discovery always arouses suspicion, which is seldom dispelled as easily as in the present instance." When he had finished speaking, he pulled over the bundle which he had put on the table, and resumed: "Just to convince you that I mean what I say I will show you what I brought home." An elaborate grin overspread his face as he said this.

"While you are opening the parcel," said Molly, "I will bring in another surprise," and at once proceeded to put her words into action. "But be careful, and don't faint when you see it."

While Molly was gone Paddy untied the parcel, and very soon had exposed to view a large Christmas pudding—which might have been a twin of the one we had the privilege of seeing earlier in the day on the window-sill, and in fact—but wait a minute.

When Molly returned in a few minutes dejection was writ on her face in capital letters. She ran over to Paddy, her face covered with her hands, and broke into tears—a very easy job, which does not require the help of a jemmy. "The pudding is gone, Paddy," she sobbed. "The finest, biggest, richest, pudding I ever made."

"Gone where?" he asked.

"Stolen," she responded despondently.

All of a sudden he seemed to grasp the truth, and a smile which had been playing on his lips developed into a hearty laugh.

"Look at that beauty," he said, indicating the pudding which he had brought in. "Is that like the one you made?"

"That's it," she answered, brightening up. "But where in the world did you get it?"

In a few words he recounted to her his meeting with the tramp on Rathmines Road. This Weary Willie, to give the rogue's own version of the affair, had received the pudding from a kind-hearted old lady who was fond of experimenting with her cooking on tramps. "These ladies must have some craze or they'll go crazy." The philosopher of the road had said. "Give me two bob for it, mister, and I'll pray for you to the end of my days."

"I could not resist the fellows eloquence, and besides, it put me in mind of your puddings, and the fact that you had issued a proclamation to the effect that you would not make one this year decided me," Paddy concluded.

"Perhaps it was instinct," replied Molly, and they both, as the humour of the situation forced itself on them for the first time, laughed merrily.