

AN AVALANCHE OF GIRLS TEN THOUSAND IRISH COLLEENS COMING TO NEW YORK.



AS some anonymous philanthropist, working silently, decided that the housewives of America shall no longer wrestle in vain with the servant girl problem? Has some Fenian with blood leaping hotly in his veins decided that the girls of Ireland must leave their native land and thereby rob Great Britain of one of her fairest possessions? Have steamship companies grown greedier than ever, and do they send emissaries into the peaceful hamlets of Erin to beat up recruits for the steerage? Are times harder than usual in the land of hard times and easy tempers, and does American prosperity look alluring across the "oceans of say" that the colleens are crossing in such crowds this Spring? What is the cause of the avalanche of Irish girls that has descended upon this country? If you put such theories as these before any one of them, she gazes at you with appealing, limpid eyes and says:

"Oh, no! O'm an me way to me sither in New Rochelle." Or, "Sure, OI came because me uncle in Chiccago sint afther me." Two or three weeks ago 500 led the list. Upon their heels followed little detachments of two or three hundred, and on last Thursday morning the Teutonic unloaded over nine hundred clear-eyed, rosy-cheeked young damselfs, who came from Ireland to seek their fortunes. The Immigration Bureau reports that this is but the beginning, and that before the season closes ten thousand Irish girls will be here to fill housewifely hearts with mingled emotions and to cause the legendary stir among the blue-coated lawkeepers of the city.

Whatever the cause of the unwonted Irish immigration, whether it is a blight upon the "pitties" or the eloquence of a steamship company's "runners-in," the girls do not take themselves as solvers of problems for American mistresses or regard themselves collectively at all. Each one as she hands her green passport to the inspector and declares her capital is ready to give the name of the brother or sister to whom she is bound, and can talk of her individual prospects with cheerful unconsciousness that she is a factor in a problem. Whether she is pretty little Bridget Cassidy, who is so young that she will travel "tagged" to her aunt out West, or as old as Catherine Tinaa, who vainly endeavored to begin life in the New World by knocking three years off her age as registered in Ireland, she is full of hope and interest in her own future.

For the most part her future is represented by "servt." hastily written in the blank form that tells all about her. Household labor is to be her field of action. Her hand shakes as she passes her green passport over to the inspector, but it is generally a muscular, capable hand that will do effective work with mop and broom. She is an honest-eyed young person, too. Though she is as bashful as the traditional colleen should be, her glance does not falter as she states her assets to be "wan pund" or "two shillins," as the case may be, or as she laboriously and proudly translates the sum of which she is possessed into "foive dollars," or whatever it may be. Sometimes she is very young like little Bridget Cassidy. Bridget is fourteen and she has the face of a rose and the courage of several major-generals. All alone from a hamlet near Londonderry to Queens town Bridget travelled and all alone from Queens town to New York.

"Weren't you afraid, Bridget?" she was asked. "Afraid av phwat?" quoth Bridget, raising calm eyes.

"Oh—of—of everything. Of the sea. Of the strange people. Of the strange land." "Sure, the say cudn't hurt me, though it gave me the great shakin'," answered Bridget philosophically. "An' the people, they were not strange. An' America's no strange land to me, for OI've two sithers an' a brother here. They're in Trinton, an' OI'll be seen' thim by avenin', plaze God. So phwat was there OI cud be afraid av?"

"What are you going to do here, Bridget?" Bridget's face, thanks to the air near Londonderry and the sea voyage, was already as rosy and radiant a countenance as one would be likely to see on a May morning, but it suddenly grew brighter. Pride lit up her limpid eyes and joy curved the corners of her lips.

"OI'm goin' into service," she announced, as a young princess would proclaim her approaching coronation. "My sithers, they can get me worruk. An' OI'll worruk an' save an' we'll all sind money home an' by this toime next year, sure we'll be sindin' fur me mother. OI ain't very big." Bridget went on, displaying her first sign of nervousness, "but OI'm growin' fast an'—don't ye think OI can get worruk, mindin' a baby or belike tindin' some man's dure?"

Such is the ambition that fires the heart of the youngest of Thursday's arrivals. And by and by when she was properly tagged, so that conductors would pass her safely on to Trenton, she started out in the gray drizzle with a shower of benisons from the older girls who had been her fellow voyagers, and from the few youths with their blackthorn sticks and their bundles.

Then there was Maggie Keogh, whose age was down in the list as nineteen. Maggie, when she had shown her ticket and had stated her financial standing, sat down alone on a bench at the end of the room. Tightly she clasped her hand over the tin box that held her belongings. Eagerly she gazed about her. All about her head and face her hair stood out like an aureole. Sometimes she touched carelessly a little green feather in her battered sailor hat. Sometimes it was a brooch—a little bit of colored glass and tinsel—at her throat that she fingered. Maggie did not look as happy as little Bridget Cassidy.

"Sure," she said, pathetically, "OI'll be that glad when OI see me uncle! He's to mate me here an' put me on the thrain fur Chiccago. In Chiccago OI hev two sithers."

"Maggie," said the relentless interviewer, "why did you come away from Ireland?" Maggie sighed.

"Sure OI've two sithers in Chiccago," she said, "an' OI'm goin' to thim, an' thim OI'll go out to worruk."

"But was there no one in Ireland for whom you cared as much as for your sithers?"

Maggie blushed divinely and her hand sought the pin at her collar.

"How did ye know?" she asked, as she caressed it.

"I didn't know anything," I answered. "I thought maybe you had a father and mother and I wondered what there was in America to bring you away from them. But if there is some one else besides, it is all the more a mystery. Why did you leave home?"

"OI haven't seen me sithers these folve years, an' whin we have the money we'll all sind for thim. OI'm to go into service, an' whin he comes—ye think he'll be sure to come?" ended Maggie abruptly.

Reassured on that point, Maggie relapsed into eager watching for her uncle. She was an illogical young person. She declined to realize that she was part of a movement, an unconsidered but essential portion of an interesting whole. She persisted in viewing the whole matter of immigration as something secondary to an Irish love affair.

Nora Doogan was another of those illogical creatures. Like most of her companions, she was about twenty years old. Like theirs, her hair hung loosely upon her shoulders, and like theirs, her hat was a sailor, much the worse for wear. Her black dress drooped limply about her ankles. Her blue eyes looked out piteously beneath the ragged brim of her black hat. A brother was booked to meet Nora, and she waited patiently while boat after boat discharged its load of friends and relatives at the island. She, too, seemed indifferent to the cause of the influx of Irish girls and to all sociological problems connected with it.

"OI wish Phil ud come," she kept saying. Suddenly Nora's soul leaped into her sad eyes and lighted them. There swaggered toward her a youth, the long-awaited brother, Phil. Phil wore a high collar vastly different from the knotted kerchiefs of the boys who had come over with her. Phil twirled a bit of bamboo instead of a blackthorn stick. Phil lightly flicked the ash from a cigarette instead of puffing through a pipe, and Nora gazed at him with pride more strong than even love. But by and by I saw that the light had died out of her eyes and that her steps lagged as she walked by Phil's side. And the words of that young man blown back on the wind explained his sister's dejection.

"Av course, OI grudge ye nothin', Nora; ye know that. But OI think ye should hev waited. Ye'll be lonelier here than ye were there even with me mother gone. An' money ain't to be found on the strates here, an' it's a pretty penny ye've cost me already."

"Oh, Phil, OI can soon get worruk; indeed OI can. An' foost to be with ye, now that mother's gone!"—and Nora, losing sight of the problem of immigration, began to weep as she boarded the boat, greatly to the chagrin of her brother, who said to her: "Sure ye'll hev the whole crowd thinkin' OI'm abusin' ye, an' thet afther all OI've done for ye."

Sometimes it was a prosperous sister who met the girl, a sister who had learned the art of pinning on her hat at a jaunty angle, in whose ears there sparkled doubtful gems and whose person was arrayed in Grand street finery. Then, when tears and laughter and embraces had been mingled recklessly, the Americanized girl would stand off and survey the other critically.

"Ye must put yer hair up the first thing, Neelle," she would say, "an' we must get ye a skirt thet'll bide yer ankles. An'—oh, Neelle—how did he say mother was?"

For they were a painfully illogical set, those rosy, bashful, honest-hearted girls. And they seemed to think that all the vast immigration movement had been set afoot that they might bear greetings from mothers in the "ould country" to daughters in this, or that a home might be established where next year, or the year after or sometime in the golden future, all the Quintans or all the Cassidys might gather again and be happy together.

Political Row in New York Where Every Householder Is an Office-holder.

On Seventh street, between Avenues C and D, is Political Row. Every house in this row, on both sides of the street, is or has been occupied by an officeholder. It is the most remarkable block in New York, even more so than the one on Fifty-seventh street, between Fifth and Sixth avenues, which is said to represent most money. Rich people living close together are common enough in all parts of the world, but only in America would you find statesmen dwelling together in such a humble and unobtrusive quarter as Seventh street and the East River.

Every grade of public office is to be found in Political Row from the Justice of the Supreme Court to the policeman. The Supreme Court is at present represented there by Justice Giegerich, while policemen are very numerous.

Life and property must be very well protected in the row. The most important civil cases can be decided by Judge Giegerich. Then there is Judge Newburger, of the Court of General Sessions, to try and punish criminals. Detective Sergeant William Clark and several other detectives are there to watch for lawbreakers. Plenty of ordinary policemen are always at hand to arrest ordinary malefactors, and it is probably the only block in New York where a policeman can always be found when he is wanted. Several firemen live in the row, and it is sure of the best efforts of the Fire Department as well as the police force.

ray in this city. In the centre of the north side is the Jefferson Club of the Eleventh Ward, a handsome building with a flag-staff, giving a symmetrical appearance to the row, and providing a central meeting place for its leaders.

There are some interesting reminiscences of old New York about the row. Before its political days it was inhabited by a colony of shipbuilders, who at that time had a flourishing business in this vicinity. The business died out gradually on account of the rise in value of real estate.

It began to acquire political importance early in the fifties. James R. Steers, a shipbuilder, was its first leader. His son is now president of the Eleventh Ward Bank. The successor of James R. Steers was Francis J. A. Boole, who came from Nova Scotia. As soon as he was elected Alderman for the Eleventh Ward he moved into Eleventh street and became the recognized leader.

Toward the close of Boole's reign there was a struggle between the Irish and German elements, and in the end the latter prevailed. German predominance was marked by the arrival of the Loews in power. In 1870 Charles B. Loew was elected County Clerk. That was during the Treade rule. He had a number of brothers, of whom Fred W. Loew was Judge of the Court of Common Pleas; Louis V. Loew, Register, and Edward V. Loew, Comptroller.

The next leader was Henry Woltman, who held the offices of Coroner and Senator in various others. When John Holt-

boltd Governor Robinson's nomination Woltman carried the district against Tammany.

After him came Peter Bowe, who was Sheriff, and then John Keenan, who held the district for the County Democracy. The present Tammany district leader is Patrick Keenan, who was County Clerk for a time and still lives in the row.

An old resident of the row furnished a reporter with a list of the officeholders who have lived or are now living in it. He was prepared to prove that every house has been so distinguished.

The north side is the more dignified. Starting from Avenue C, No. 235 is the old headquarters of Tammany Hall. After that come No. 237, formerly occupied by Samuel D. Levy, public school trustee, and by Louis S. Goebel, Senator; No. 239, formerly occupied by Joseph Koch, Senator, Judge and Dock Commissioner. At No. 239 now lives John Conway, docket clerk in the County Clerk's office. The famous Loew family lived at No. 241, and at No. 245 Congressman Harvey C. Calkins.

The Jefferson Club raises its stately facade at No. 247. Patrick Keenan, present leader, and ex-County Clerk, is at No. 249. At No. 251 are Fireman Edward Duffy and several other members of the Fire Department. In No. 253 the present Alderman of the district, William Tate, lives.

No. 255 has a distinguished occupant in Judge Joseph E. Newburger, of the Court of Sessions. No. 257, now occupied by John Trainor, city contractor, was recently the home of Captain Stephen O'Brien, chief

of the detective service.

In No. 261 is William Clark, detective sergeant, and next door to him Edward Stringer, who holds a similar position. No. 265 is now the house of Lawyer Emanuel M. Friend, and was formerly occupied by Francis I. A. Boole, the famous district leader.

At No. 267 lives Judge Leonard Giegerich, the most dignified occupant of the block. The next house, No. 269, was occupied by Coroner Daniel Hanley. At No. 271 lives Victor Helmburger, ex-clerk of the police courts; at No. 273, James Thornton, school teacher; at No. 275, Police Officer Bernard Murphy and others, and at No. 277, John Dunn, police sergeant.

Among the politicians and officeholders now living on the south side of the block are Moses Dinkelspiel, ex-Assemblyman; Thomas Connolly, fire captain; Aaron Hanover, Mayor of Avenue C, and ex-Deputy Sheriff; Patrick McCue, ex-School Trustee; Simon Kaufmann, clerk of the Excise Board; Patrick Cully, sergeant of police; Thomas F. Dailly, ex-Alderman; Thomas Doran, clerk of the Police Department; Charles Newman, court officer, and Mrs. Bowe, school inspector, and Jim Sullivan, fireman.

The other houses have been occupied by Henry Woltman, Senator; Peter Bowe, Sheriff; John Keenan, Assemblyman and leader, and Henry Block, ex-associate leader of Tammany Hall; Edward Hare, of the County Clerk's office; Henry Haight, of the Board of Aldermen.