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HOW NORAH McINERNEY WAS HELPED BY THE FAIRIES.

The Broad Shouldered, Blue Eyed Prince Who Came to Her Home and Changed the World for Her—She Looked in His Eyes and Said Yes.

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When you have grown up among fairies, and have known them well, and have known that they loved you, it is hard to have your father and mother suddenly move to America. Everybody knows that there are no fairies at all in the new western states, and no ship that ever sailed from Queenstown has brought one among her passengers. Even little Norah McIn-



SHE HAD NEVER QUITE SEEN THEM.

erny knew that, little as she knew of the great desolate world she was wandering about in. She knew many fairies around Inniskillen. From the time her mother had first told her about her fairy godmother who had done so much for her, she had loved the wee people, and when the other children had gathered together for their games Norah had always stolen away into the groves and dells she knew so well to talk with her little friends. She had never quite seen them, though sometimes she almost had, and she had many a time found their footprints, and had heard their faint songs plainly whenever she lay on the fragrant grass with her eyes closed. And she knew her godmother loved her, for the McInerneys were poor and many a choice trifle came to Norah which her father could not afford to buy, and there was many a cake of wheaten bread that neither father nor mother would eat lest the fairy godmother should be angered.

But the year of the famine came, and all manner of sorrows fell on all the people around, so that those who could, fled from the homes they could not keep, and McInerney was one.
"Praise God! we have a little hoard put by, Ellen," he said to the wife, "an we have good health and strength. Av we stay here we'll have none o' them three in a year, for the bitter bad times is come to th' ould country, an' many a neighbor'll have nather bit nor sup afore the winter. Best we'd go t' Ameriky whiles we can, for, praise God! nather wan o' us c'd kape a penny put by an' the neighbors shtarvin'."

And Norah cried and said good-by to the fairies with her little heart-breaking, and went with father and mother on the great ship that sailed so many days to the west. And still westward for many days more they went, in wonderful cars that sped like light itself, over hills and through cities, till there were no more hills and no more cities, but prairies of waving grain as far as the eye could reach in every direction. Enough bread was growing to feed all Ireland, and the dear, good people at home were hungry. Norah wondered that the fairies, who knew so much and who could do so much, should not carry some of all this plenty across the sea. She did not know till long afterward that they were busy at that very work, and that ships were loading even then with fairy gifts that would soon gladden so many Irish homes.

Stout hands and willing hearts will make a home almost anywhere, and away out on the prairie there was soon a little shanty that sheltered three strangers, lonely enough in the vast solitude, but happy in one another's love. Only little Norah grieved for the fairies, and wondered always whether they had forgotten her. She was certain her godmother had not, and she asked her mother if she might not pray to the good fairy every night after she had told her beads and prayed to the holy Virgin. Mrs. McInerney said no. Prayers were not for fairies; but she thought perhaps a fairy spell would work, even across the sea, if the good people had not forgotten—and who ever heard of a fairy godmother forgetting?

And winters and summers went by, and Norah from the little slip of a girl with big black eyes and pale thin features, grew into a tall, slender damsel with a merry heart and rosy cheeks. She was shy as the fawns that she sometimes saw on the prairies, and when occasionally some stranger came to the snug house that had replaced the shanty Norah would shrink away, almost afraid to meet his eyes. The nearest neigh-



SHE TURNED AND RAN.

bor were more than a mile away, and she knew them, of course, but seldom saw them. Alone, excepting for the father and mother who loved her so tenderly, she grew up as pure and as natural as the wild birds she loved so well.

And by and by the damsel stood on that strange borderland of womanhood where faint breezes seemed to be wafted from an unknown world into her heart, that stood still in wonder and doubt. Vague unrest and bewildering dreams that could not be remembered, and that were all too mys-

terious to be understood, disturbed the calm of maidenhood. And then a miracle! The whole world changed.

One of the great railroads that spread out like spiders' webs across the vast solitudes of the west came pushing along toward the quiet home. A party of surveyors came first, with their strange tools and their funny little memorandum books, and the line of the road they said would come within a quarter of a mile of the homestead. It was not wonderful to them. Their business was to work miracles or to prepare for them. But to the McInerneys it was the bringing of the whole round earth to their doorstep.

And the prince came with the surveying party. It was the very one that the fairy godmother had promised to Norah when she was born. Norah knew him at once. He was tall and broad, and as active as a cat. And his voice was music, and his face was the handsomest that a man ever had. And when he looked at Norah the blushes came to her face. She turned and ran before he could ask for the drink of water he wanted, and much amused and a little surprised he stepped on toward the house, where the good mother gave him milk and cream, and laughed proudly when he apologized for startling the maiden.

"She does be that shy she will not speak to a stranger," said Mrs. McInerney. "An' faith, it's mighty few she sees."

And while the stranger sat and talked—he had a bit of a brogue himself, and the sly rascal knew when to use it—Norah sat in her own room blushing still, and holding one hand, all unconsciously, to her heart as if to still its unusual beating, while she listened through the thin partition to the pleasant chat outside. And how wonderful were the facts she learned! He was in command of the surveying party. Of course he was. Such a prince as he could not have risen step by step like other men, for he was born to lead other men—and maidens. His name was Dennis—Dennis Cassidy, and sure, no man had that name and that voice who was not from the dear old Emerald Isle.

And then—most wonderful of all—she learned that he was going to be in the neighborhood for some days, perhaps a week. And what was her mother saying? It could not be that she was asking this prince to stay in their poor home! It had seemed a very handsome one to her before, but suddenly it grew mean in her eyes. And it was simply a dream that he was accepting the invitation to be under the same roof with him for a week!

But she was, and she was sure that no many days were gone from that week before that fine lad, with his bold and downright Irish ways and the winning music in his voice, had chased away her shyness. And when the week was gone and he was gone poor Norah knew that her heart was gone too.

How she missed the fairies! For this child woman knew as well as she ever did that the fairies were her friends, if only they were not so far away. And she must not pray to her godmother, and however it was she could not tell, but she could not pray to the Virgin about this. She was not ashamed of her love. Oh! no, she was proud of it; but she could not speak of it in her prayers, nor even to her mother.



SHE SAID YES.

And she did not know whether Dennis loved her or not. He had said nothing. He had not even promised to come back, and she had not asked him to. So he had ridden away and she had smiled on him as he went, keeping back the tears till later. Why were the fairies so far away?

The summer was waning when he went, and the strong autumn winds that were soon blowing brought a chill that she had never felt before, strong and healthy as she was. It should be always summer, for that was the time when she knew him, but the cruel weeks went by, each one coming like an envious foe between her and her love who was not her lover. And the prairie flowers faded, and the grass lost its summer color. There were no leaves to fall, no trees to put on their autumn splendor, but the nights grew long, and the harvest was over. It was almost November. And no word came from Dennis.

Came Halloween. All the wonders of that night had been treasured up in her small store of knowledge since she was a child and had played at Halloween games with the other children around Inniskillen. They were almost the only games she played with them. She had tried often enough when she was a child, but peeping into the future, and had always been satisfied when her mother told her that her time had not come yet, but as she had grown into maidenhood she had been too shy to confess even to herself that she might ever have a lover. But now—

There were ways that a maiden might find out—at home—what her fate was to be. There were merry games and strange spells, and all spirits walked abroad that night, and even the most bashful girl of all—the one who could not tell her secret because she would not yet acknowledge to herself that she had one, might learn if he were true.

But there were no hazel nuts, no rowan trees, no limekilns, no kale stalks, and worst of all no fairies in this great western prairie. Even if her godmother remembered her, what could she do so far away? Something, though, must be tried. The dumb ache in her heart at Dennis' silence must be soothed in some way, and at midnight she stole down through the front door, far down across the dooryard where neither mother nor father could see, and plucking one wee lock from the raven black hair she cast it on the chill breeze. If it was almost a prayer she said to that good fairy so far away surely that was not a sin.

And before the wind was tired of its pretty new plaything came the patter of a horse's hoofs along the rough road, and in a moment more a rider came in view. It was Dennis.

"I could not stay away, Norah, my darling. The days were long and I could not forget," he said. "I have come back to learn if you love me, for I love you more than I can ever tell."

And she looked into his glad eyes gladly and said "Yes." DAVID A. CURTIS.

LOVE AND MIRTH.
PART-SONG.

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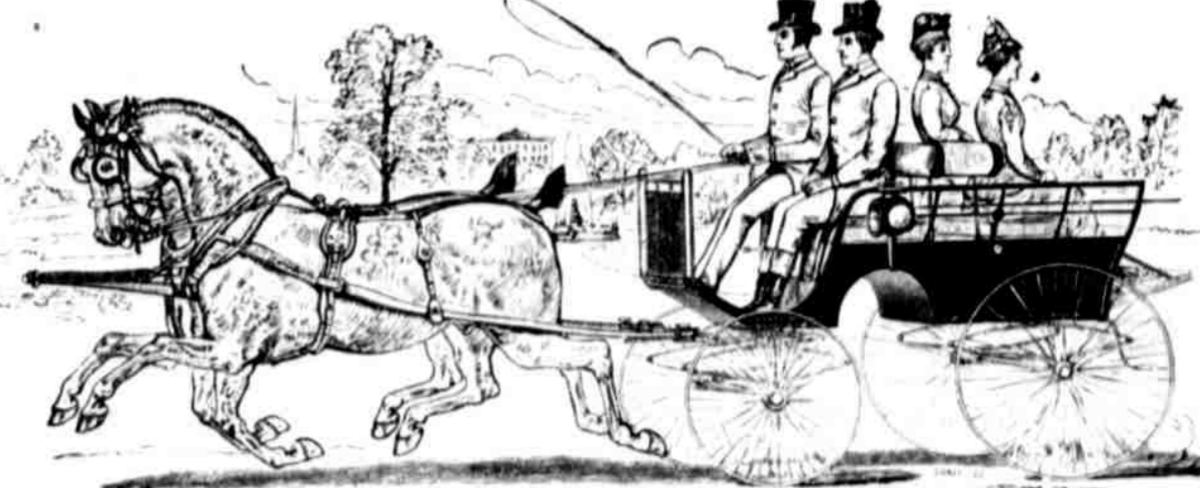
Words by BARRY CORNWALL.

Music by GEO. J. WEBB.

1. What song doth the cricket sing? What news doth the swallow bring? What doth laughing boyhood tell? What
2. When first in the morn she springs A-loft on her gold-en wings, Hark un-to the soar-ing lark— The
3. Sweet fruits a - dorn the leaves, The wheat crowns the golden sheaves, And the sun smiles on the wall— What
4. Then why doth dis-cord-ant man Ex - tin-guish what joy he can? Bid him ra - ther aye re - joice - Sing
calls out the mar-riage bell? What song doth the crick-et sing? What news doth the swallow bring? What doth
e - cho - ing for - ests hark! When first in the morn she springs A-loft on her gold-en wings, Hark un -
cause is be - hind it all? Sweet fruits a - dorn the leaves, The wheat crowns the golden sheaves, And the
out with a mer - ry voice! Then why doth dis-cordant man Ex - tin - guish what joy he can? Bid him
sun shines o - ver all— What cause is be - hind it all? Mirth and Love! Love and Mirth, in the
ra - ther aye re - joice— Sing out with a mer - ry voice Bid him sing! Love and Mirth, in the
air and on the earth; Very ver - y, ver - y soft and mer - ry Is the na - tive song of earth!
air and on the earth; Very, ver - y, ver - y soft and mer - ry Is the na - tive song of earth!

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