

AN APPRECIATION

(BY A FRIEND)

God is good and He puts good people across our path to help us; we get used to their goodness; we take it for granted; we get to like them, to need them; we scarcely ever assess their value to us. Then one day God calls them back to Himself, and we feel their loss; we realise at last all they meant to us; our life will never be the same: of such was Tom Long. He worked at Todd's for forty years, and for so many of us Todd's was Tom Long.

"I'll call into Tom Long." "You'll get that from Tom Long"—that's how we put it. The management is the best judge of how much this universal popularity was merited, and how often did the management assent to our dropping in when it was wet or cold just to have a chat with Tom; a chat, a joke, a good laugh, a shake hands, and we left happier.

Tom was a Catholic who radiated good example without knowing it, ever cheerful; ever charitable—the optimism of the children of the good God was his lot—he was a secret friend of the poor—we knew it; he was the best man one ever had as neighbour; he would come in where others had failed you.

He had a solid foundation of the Christian faith, true humility. We all knew of what an illustrious family Tom was—yes the real lustre of eternal quality, the fame reserved for the most active children of the Church—yet with what simplicity would Tom speak of these brothers and sisters in their family names of childhood. He was genuinely proud of them, but in Tom Long's heart there was no room for pride, God be praised.

His jollity was infectious. Once in Cardiff, amongst a few friends, tellers of "tall yarns" were talking about the railways of England and their superiority. The friend who told me the story heard Tom expounding about this station in Ireland where 25 trains could come in abreast. "What station is that?" said one of them. "Odlá is the name of it," said Tom. That was a sample of Tom's unpremeditated merriment, and for this and a thousand other reasons we loved him.

He is gone now, and we'll have to travel on without him; it will not be easy. We know that a happy household has been stricken by this abrupt departure. We share in their immense grief. May God comfort them. We sympathise with the manager and staff at Todd's, and we'll go on praying the Almighty and Merciful God to reward the innocence, humility, and charity of His servant, Tom.

PLASSY BRIDGE

IN NEED OF REPAIRS

MUSIC ADJUDICATOR'S REMARKS

At the Feis and historical pageant held in Ballylanders last Sunday, Mr. Tadhg Smalle, A.L.C.M., who was adjudicator in the music competitions, paid a very special tribute to the high standard in the violin and instrumental trio competitions. He stated that during the past twelve years he had the honour to adjudicate at a large number of Feiseanna all over Mupster and the standard of violin playing at Ballylanders was the best he had heard. He advised the members of the instrumental trios to enter for that particular competition at Feile Luimnighe next year, as he was certain they were quite capable of giving a good account of themselves. He hoped to hear a broadcast from the winners from Radio Eireann in the near future.

A special word of praise was due to Mr. G. Clifford, music teacher, Kilmallock, for his work in Irish music.

It was a pity to hear some of the juniors endeavouring to produce good tone from a cheap factory made violin. This was not possible and a bad instrument was a terrible handicap to any student of music, particularly one learning such a difficult, delicate and sensitive instrument as the violin. A cheap instrument was a very bad investment and had invariably a disastrous effect on the students' ear. He advised the teachers to select simple melodies for young performers and to pay more attention to the bow.

More legato playing was required in slow music, and special attention should be paid to correct phrasing. If the young performer can understand the simple melodies a natural love for music will develop in time. He suggested some special pieces to the Feis Committee to be presented for the senior violin and ceilidhe band competitions next year. He mentioned two very beautiful compositions "The Blackbird" and "Roga An Feile," by Treasa Halpin. He advised those anxious to study Irish music to secure a copy of the excellent Violin Tutor published by Miss Halpin, of Limerick, "Teagosc Leabhar na Bheidhline." This book was most reliable, and was produced by a first-class musician, who was a credit to her native city. He also recommended Roche's Collections, which were authentic, and were a God-send to those who love "Our Native Music Beyond Comparing." Professor Frank Roche, of Elton, deserves a place of honour in the ranks of those who laboured for the preservation and restoration of our Gaelic culture.

(A full report of the Feis, with results of the competitions, will appear in our next week-end visit).