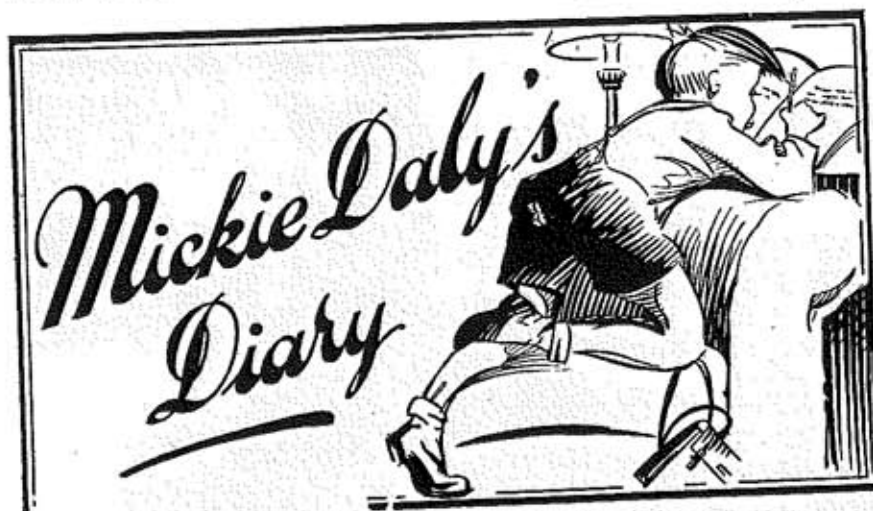




"It was at lunch time."

"Silence, sir. You will have no time for this racketing about the town. There's work always in the garden, but you never seem to recognise it. I'll introduce you to it—"

"But I've got to stay in every afternoon for a fortnight to do sums. That Sister Pawl—"

"Don't speak in that disrespectful tone of Sister Pawl. You must have her nearly in her grave. Only that I promised your mother, I'd take you in to the Brothers in the morning, and I'd tell them to make a man of you—you big lolly! That's all you are. The nuns are too soft with you. So am I. So is your mother. We all treat you as if you were a baby. It's your mother's fault. I'll take a hand from this out. Home you come every afternoon as soon as Sister Pawl is finished with you—poor woman, she has my sympathy—and you'll work like a—like a—"

My father paused for breath.

"No. Like a Greek slave. I'm glad Sister Pawl is going to give you sums every afternoon for a fortnight. I wish she had made it a year. Keep you out of mischief! You young reprobait."

When he was finished and had folded the bill and put it in his pocket, I said very softly:

"Didn't it ever happen to you?"

"What?" he growled.

"You know—twenty-five years ago. You said histy repeats itself in this family, and that all the things that happen to me now happened to you then."

"No," growled my father.

"Are!" I said in a voice of disappointment.

"It wasn't a Greek; it was an Italian. And it wasn't a fish shop; it was a fruit shop. And I didn't ring a gong; I merely asked him for a yard of tripe and two dozen of sos-sidgls." Something flashed over my father's face—something like a light

—and made it look like a little boy's face, for a minute. "He did not chase me round the shop. The door was open. He vorlited over the counter—he was yung and nimbil—and chased me down the mane street. A perleeceman saved my life."

"Tell's more about it," I coaxed.

"I'll tell you this, young man—my father took his belt off to me. Well I remember how he used it! That's what I should do to you—if I wore one."

I'm glad my father does not wear a belt. He wears braces. Braces are better. My grandfather must have used one hand only with the belt; he'd need the other to hang on to his trowsers.

My mother was very dissappointed with me. She did not think I could behave so badly. My father looked resined; but not my mother. She could not get over it for a long time. She did not seem surprized at Dacey and Freddie doing such things, and only a little bit surprized at Dickie. But she seemed unable to beleive that I would do it. My poor mother thinks that because I am her boy I am better than other boys. You see, my dear diery, I am not. I youst think I was. But not now. I know better.

I hope the "Far East" that has this account of the Greek epersoat will get lost on the way to Kien-changfu, so that the Right Rev. Dr. Patrick Cleary, Perfect Apostolic, will never see it.

That is pride.

I do not want him to know of my bad deeds. I should want every one to know of them if I were really in good disposishins.

I have solumly promised my mother not to go into oister serloons ringing bells or into any shops anying people like that.

Thursday.

I haven't written in you all the week. I've been too disgussted with

myself. Sister Pawl rubs it in to us every day—morning, noon and afternoon.

It's stiff at school. No play. I'm sick of being kept in every arvo, to work sums. I feel I'm not a boy at all—just one of those masheens they have in offices—a Kom-Tom-Itter. Only I don't give the corect anser. I wish Father Dale would get us off. If I have to do another week of this I'll go into unconshisnus and have to be taken to Hospitil.

Friday.

The classes went out to games at 3 o'clock. We three poor retches had to stay and work sums. Father Dale came along. He must have forgotten the Greek epersoat.

"Well—what are you fellows doing in here? Working out your income tacks?"

"Kept in, Father," said Dacey.

"Doing sums, Father," said Freddie.

I said nothing.

"All the others at sport and you poor fellows in durinse vile! What for?"

"You know, Father—the Greek shop."

"Oh. Haven't you worked that sentinse out yet?"

"No, Father. There's another week to go."

"Hum. Sister Pawl does not beleive in tempuring justis with mercy. Well for us all that she has not to judge us on the Last Day. I'll see what I can do for you. But you'll have to watch yourselves well if I speak up for you and tell her you are going to try to give no more trouble—until the next time." The lines of his face all went up as he smiled and left us.

"Bet she won't let us off," I said.

"Bet she will."

"She wouldn't if the Bishop asked."

"Oh! come off, Daly!"

"She wouldn't if the Pope asked."

"Don't be silly, Daly."

I am glad to say I lost the bet. Father Dale came back to say the sentinse had been repeeled and we were free—but that if we were brought before Sister Pawl on any charge whatever during the coming week, we would have to work out the old sentinse as well as a new one. We all promised to watch our step. No jay walking thro Sister Pawl's condishins.

As we were going out, Father Dale called me back.

"You don't look yourself, Michael. Are you sick?"

"No, Father."

"The sums have the spirit crushed out of you. Is that it?"

"Yes, Father. But that is not the worst of it."

"No?"

July 1, 1934.

THE FAR EAST.

"You know about St. Columban's, Father. I—I—I am going to write to tell them not to keep a place for me. It's no use. I can't change myself."

"Of course you can't. Did you ever think you could, my poor child?"

When Father Dale called me a "poor child" two tears popped right out of my eyes. I didn't know I was going to cry. They just burst out.

"Of course you can't," he said again. "But God can change you, Michael. You must pray more."

"Yes, Father," I said hopfully.

"Did you go to Mass to-day?"

"Yes, Father."

"Then don't be discouraged. Go to Mass. Pray. Try your best, and we'll have you in China one of these days, please God. Don't write that letter to St. Columban's. Forget all about the Greek. Off with you now, and see if you can bowl Dacey out in three."

"Yes, Father. Thank you, Father," I said, and ran out. I didn't get Dacey in three. But I did not care. I was too happy.

Sunday.

I am practising drawing, so that I'll be good at Chinese writing.

How's this? Any good?



Signed

Michael J. Daly.

Munday.

Maurie's aunt has been to China. She brought back all sorts of interesting things—silk gowns and silk fans, and china boles and cups and brooches and all kinds of vases and ornaments. Some of them are ugly little images—false gods, I suppose. I wouldn't have them in my room until I sprinkled holy water all around them, I can tell you. They look like devils. Maurie took me in to see the things. His auntie would not let us touch the cups and boles and vases. She said all boys suffer from dropsy when they touch breakable things. I bet they don't. I hardly ever break anything. Ask my mother.

The thing I liked best was a belt. It has Chinese letters on it, and Maurie's aunt was able to explain the meaning to him. The belt is made of mother-of-pearl and silver. Maurie says you buy the mother-of-pearl and a bar of silver, and take them to the Chinese silversmith. He makes anything you like. You pick out the design you want. This one is made of round pieces of

mother-of-pearl, about the size of a shilling; they are joined by little silver rings, and there is a nice big silver buckle. On each round piece of mother-of-pearl there is a Chinese letter in silver, rivited on. It is very strong work.

The letter is like the one below, marked 1.

The other little pictures, 2, 3 and 4, I have drawn, to explain the whole picture. Maurie's auntie told him the meaning, and I suppose it's right. Someone over there told her.

2 means a man.

3 means a piece of land.

4 means cultivated land—a farm. Because the man is in front of it, it means he is a farmer or land-owner; and, because its good land, he is a prosperous man. So the letter means good forchin, or good luck.

I don't know what the top part of the picture means—perhaps his house. That's all Maurie told me about it. It's easy to make that one letter for "I wish you prosperity," or "I wish you good forchin," or "I wish you good luck" than to write those words in our long way. If it is wrong, don't blame me. It might be a Chinese swear-word. I don't know. Maurie told me, his auntie told him, the Chinese silver-smith told her. He might have been playing a joke on her.

Chinese writing must be easy, all right. You do it with paint and a brush.

Now, when we have a writing lesson, we have about a hundred rules. We must sit at a sirtin angel and hold our pens at a sirtin angel and our books. We've got to sit straight, with both feet together on the floor, and our eyes an elbo-distance from the book. We mustn't crook our first finger, we musn't let the pen slip into the nice, big space near the thumb.

It's mizery.

By the time you are set and told to write, you are so stiff and cramped up that the writing comes out all skrawley as anything. With Chinese writing you just take the brush and go ahead. Goodo.

Chewsdays.

I'm blamed for everything. As soon as anything goes wrong round

here, everybody looks at me. And they say to one another: "Musta been Mickie Daly!" I am pursakuted since that old Greek came to the school. I'm getting nervis. Everytime a visiter comes, I comense to examin my consinice, and altho I haven't done a thing, I begin to think I must have. A perleeceman came the other day, and all the kids turned and looked at me.

Like their cheek! The girls looked a bit ankshish—eckcept Mary Dacey. She'd be glad to know that I had broken the lors of the country. She'd like to see me carted off in the Black Mareyea or in the I'D.77 car. She has no pity. It was only the perleeceman from the corner about the traffic rules for the children, anyhow. So she came a thud.

So I poked my tong out at Mary Dacey. I should not do such a thing. But she exasperates me. All the Daceys do.

Friday.

I am always skiting about getting ready for St. Columban's, working hard at my lessons. The other day a great shock came to me. It was about my spelling. Now, I never worry much about my spelling. I just thort that Sister Pawl made too much fuss about it. What does it matter if you spell different to the book, as long as people can read and understand what you write? That's what I used think, and when Sister Pawl would be going off a treat about my bad spelling I would just think what a fuss to make over a few little letters in the wrong place. Sister Pawl says she really thinks I go out of my way to spell simpil words wrong. I can spell a word 3 different ways, and be wrong each time, so Sister Pawl says. My father says he thinks my spelling is a Gift.

Well, this great shock came to me. I am ten, going on nearly to illeven. I want to pass igzams, and do well at the Brothers, and then go on to St. Columban's. A dreadful thort came to me. "Mickie Daly," a voice seemed to say, "how can you pass igzams if you can not spell? You know you can't spell." This was true. The old chaps who correckt the papers would just take fits at my papers, and give me no marks. At this thort I grew cold all over and felt sick. If I want to be a priest and a Forin



1



MAN

2



LAND

3



FARM

4

Mishiner, I'll have to know how to spell properly. How can I write to the Bishop and the Pope? You can't cart a Dickshiniry all over China. That Webster one that Dad has is an orful size, and Dad says there's a new one being made called the Oxfid Dickshiniry, and it is so big that they can't get it finished. Men have worked at it for years and years, and now they are dead and it's not finished. Dad said there are 16 pages in it about "and." Now, that's silly. "And" has no meaning, so what could they write about it? Everyone can spell "and" Dad says new words are being made, and they have to be explained and put in the new book, and their histry and derrivashin. I didn't know that words have histry.

I think those Oxford Dickshiniry men are wasting their time. A better plan would be to burn all known dickshinirys and just let people spell the way the words sound, now, and for all fewcher generashins. I'm glad I'm not on that Oxford job. I wouldn't be the Office Boy for them for five pounds a week. A man would go mad amongst all those words.

But my opinyin is not asked, and not wanted. People think that a boy of 10 knows nothing.

Well, since they won't do away with mad spelling, I must learn to spell it, so that when I am away over in China, perhaps 100 miles from Han Yang. I won't be puzzled about any words. There'd be no one to ask away over there, and, as I said, a Mishin priest has no room for a dickshiniry in his kit. He has to carry



ESME NARBY, N.Z.

all nolidge in his head where it does not take up any room. Heads are wunderfull. I would not like to disgrace the Mishin by bad spelling, so I must pack all the words into my head.

I resolved to get to my spelling, to take off my coat and bang into it, and beat it. So I spelt words over and over, and I wrote them on pieces of paper, my pockets were full of pieces of paper with words. Not at school, of course. Sister Pawl makes me empte my pockets every morning. I wrote the words, over and over, because Sister Pawl said the eye

remembers the word for you. My eye does not. Perhaps my eyes are a bit weak. I ust tell Dad they were, and ask him to get me off home work. But Dad ust just wink at me when my mother wasn't looking, and he ust advize me to do my homework erly by daylight, and to go to bed erly to rest my eyes. So that fell thru. But my eyes have not a good memory. They do not remember the way the words look. My mother wondered what all the bits of paper with words on meant. My father said in that strange langwidge he uses sometimes: "Marmaduke is trying to conker the vageries of English spelling. Alas, poor Yorick!" But Sister Pawl was amazed at the improvement in my spelling; altho I still had lots of mistakes, I had some words right.

(To be continued.)

PRIZE-WINNERS IN NOREEN'S MAY CONTEST.

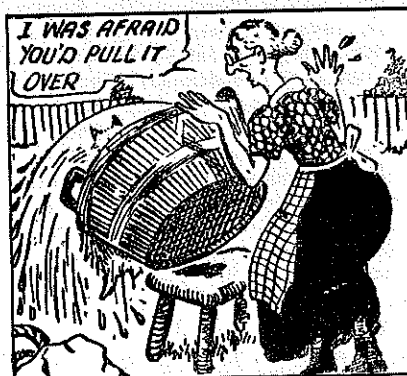
1. Sidney Blatchford, N.Z.
2. Teresa Carr, N.Z.
3. Geoffrey Goldsmith, N.S.W.

Commended: F. Gallagher, Jack McNamara, Morell McKenzie, Murray Aherns, Evelyn Ostini, Jimmy Buttfield, Mary Windsor, Teresa Brown, Betty Fahy, Margaret Home, Patty Phelan, Michael Fasoli, John Cowburn.

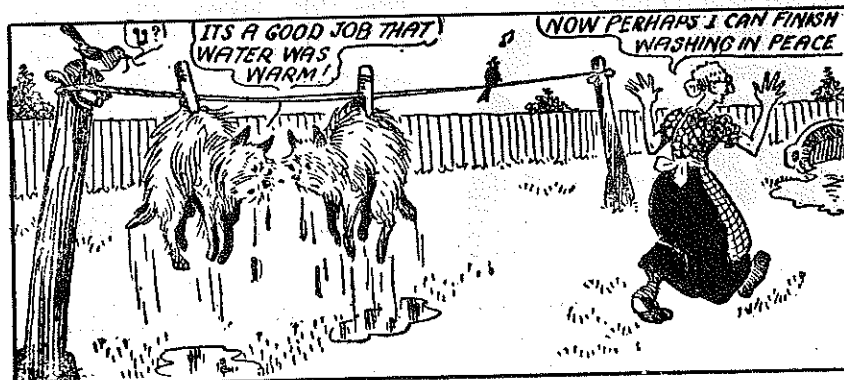
A new subscriber for the "Far East"! There is nothing which gives Maureen such happiness. Have a look around your friends and see that they take it.



OH MRS. MIGGS,
DO LET US HELP
YOU WITH THE
WASHING!



I WAS AFRAID
YOU'D PULL IT
OVER



IT'S A GOOD JOB THAT
WATER WAS
WARM!

NOW PERHAPS I CAN FINISH
WASHING IN PEACE

For Noreen's

Tiny, Tiny Ones

Funny Painting Competition

(For Tiny Ones of Seven and under.)

Colour the picture with paints or chalks. Post to Noreen before July 26. She will give prizes for the best efforts.

Address:—

NOREEN, "FAR EAST" OFFICE,
ESSENDON, W.5, Vic.