

Too Much Credit.

Mr. Keene, a shrewd and thrifty farmer of Allenborough, owned a large flock of sheep, and one autumn, when it came housing time, he was greatly annoyed upon missing a number of his finest muttons, among them three or four wethers which he raised and fattened for his own table. He was not sure it was not the work of dogs, and the most he could do was to await further developments.

On the following spring, when his sheep were turned out to pasture, he instituted a careful watch, and ere long he detected Tom Stickney, a neighboring farmer, in the act of pilfering a sheep. He made no more noise about it at the time. Stickney was a man well to do, and Keene did not care to expose him.

Autumn came again, and upon counting up his flock, Mr. Keene found eight sheep missing. He made out a bill in due form to Thomas Stickney for eight sheep, and presented it. Stickney choked and stammered, but did not back down. Like a prudent man, he paid the bill and pocketed the receipt.

Another spring time came, and Mr. Keene's sheep were again turned out. Another autumn came, and the farmer again took an account of his stock, and this time fifteen sheep were missing.

As before, he made out the bill to Tom Stickney for the whole number missing; but this time Tom objected.

"It is too much of a good thing," said he. "Fifteen sheep! Why, bless your soul, I haven't had a fifth part of em."

Mr. Keene was inexorable. "There is the bill," said he, "and I have made it out in good faith. I have made no fuss when my sheep have been missing because I deemed your credit good sufficient."

"Well," groaned Tom, with a big gulp, "I suppose I must pay; but," he added, emphatically, "we'll close that account from this time. You have given me too much credit altogether—some other rascal has been stealing on the strength of it."

A poetic Hibernian explains that love is commonly spoken of as a "flame," because it is a tender sentiment.

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