

that in Mr Percival's drawing room, our friend Lizzy, the mother, sister, presiding over it. From all that appeared, to offer the customary salutation of the season, Lizzy's thought often turned to him who did not come—who could not, must not—but she indulged a hope natural to the young and good (and therefore happy) that all would yet be well, and she met the greetings of the day with a face lighted with smiles, and a spirit of cheerfulness befitting them. Mr Percival's family being one of the oldest in the city, one of the most extended in its connexions, and one of the few that have been resident for several generations, their visitors were innumerable and a continued stream poured out, emitting in its passage the stereotyped sayings of the season, such as,

‘Percival—may you live a thousand years, and as much longer as you desire!’

‘A fine old custom this, Miss Percival, transmitted by our Dutch ancestors.’

This staple remark was made and often reiterated by some profane interlopers, who had not a drop of the good old Dutch blood running in their veins, alas, for the fallen dynasty!

‘A custom peculiar to New York and Albany; they have tried to introduce it into other cities, but it is impossible to transplant old usages, and make them thrive in a new soil.’

‘Charming custom,’ exclaims an elderly friend, kissing Lizzy's offered cheek, and heartily smacking the children all around, ‘it gives us old fellow's privileges.’

‘Uncommonly fine day, Miss Percival, much pleasanter than last new year's day, but not quite so pleasant as the year before.’

‘What a happy anniversary for the children—a lovely group here, Miss Percival, and the prettiest table, (looking at that on which the toys were spread) I have yet seen.’

‘I guess why,’ replied little Sue, casting a sidelong glance at the speakers through her dark eye lashes, ‘nobody but us, has a sister Lizzy.’

‘Do you keep a list of your visitors, Miss Elizabeth.’

‘In my memory, sir.’

‘Ah, you should not trust to that, you should have the documents to show. Miss M. last year had two hundred on her list, and Mrs

11. one hundred and eighty, exclusive of married men.’

Lizzy was quite too young to make any sage reflection on the proteous shapes of vanity. She laughed and she cared only for the names she could remember.

‘What a splendid set out has Mr T.’ exclaimed an enthusiastic lover of fine arts, that mistress to eating and drinking oysters and sandwiches, chocolate, coffee, wines, and whiskey punch.’

‘Whiskey punch! I thought!’—Lizzy ventured modestly to say, ‘was banished from all refined society.’

‘Shockingly vulgar, to be sure—mais charmant a son gout.’

‘Mrs L. has a most refined entertainment, champagne and cakes, upon my word, nothing but champagne and cakes.’

‘Ah but you should have seen the refreshments at the Mrs C's, quite foreign, (this opinion judiciously delivered by a youth who had been once over the ocean, on a six week's agency to Birmingham,) soup à la defoie gras, mareschino, etc. etc.’

‘Is my cousin well to day?’ asked Lizzy, ‘I hear she does not receive her friends.’

‘Tie up the knocker, John, she said, Say to my friends I'm sick, I'm dead.’

But between ourselves, my dear Lizzy, the draperies to the drawing room curtains are not completed, that is all.

While some practised and ultra fashionable visitors were merely bowing in or bowing out, some other young gentleman, more ambitious or more at leisure than the rest, made flights into the region of original remark. One admired Miss Percival's bouquet, commented on the triumphs of man's (especially that rare individual florist Thorburn's) art over the elements, and noted some pretty analogies between the flowers and the children. Another lauded the weather, and said that nature had, last of all the publishers, come out with her annual, and the gentlemen had found a Book of Beauty.

The morning wore on. Mr Percival returned to his house, having made a few visits to the o'd friends, and claiming as to the rest his age's right to exemption. He sat down and pleased himself with observing his daughter's graceful reception of her guests. Her cordiality to humble friends, her modest and quiet demeanor to the class technically yclept