

special dances are got up for our benefit. Generally some old man has to be sent for who has learnt the jig in his youth. Perhaps there is a call for Dan Sullivan, and a deputation is sent to his cottage hard by. After some persuasion Dan appears, carrying his shoes in his hands, which he proceeds to put on with great deliberation, at the same time chaffing the young men about the size of their feet, saying their shoes are like "baby's coffins." We make a ring, and the jig begins with great solemnity, only four taking part in it. Dan dances with much grace and agility, the audience fixing eyes of envious appreciation on his feet, and now and then bursting into applause. When the jig is over we begin to say good-bye, but they beg us to stay for at least another set. "It's so seldom you come," they say; "it's too soon for you to be going; anyway, you must come again soon." And so we leave them still dancing in the golden evening sunlight. What strikes us particularly is the extreme politeness of the young men to the girls of their own class. There is no older man or woman present, no one above thirty or thereabouts, (for as soon as the jig is over Dan disappears,) yet the most perfect decorum prevails, not a rough word is heard, or a rough gesture seen. It is not surprising that a neighboring farmer, speaking of the "Patterno," should say that he did not object to "this open-air courting" for his daughter, for one could not imagine a more innocent and healthy amusement. The girls and "boys" are never to be seen going to the "Patterno" or leaving it in couples. The girls walk together and do not join the "boys" at all.

It is just as well that these customs should be observed in a country where marriages are arranged more for the benefit of the farm than with regard to the affections of the young people. If the eldest son of a farmer marries what is called an "empty girl," that is a girl who has no fortune, that son is frequently disinherited in favor of a younger brother. In these cases the "empty girl" and her rash partner generally go and seek their fortunes in America. Second marriages are not looked on with much favor; one man by way of excuse for himself said: "But indeed it was a very advanced girl that I married for the sake of the children." A glance at the "advanced girl" explained the epithet as referring to her age and not to her views.

The tact and ingenuity displayed by the people in saying pleasant things is often very amusing. An old woman, hearing from a lady that she had no children, and wishing to make the best of what in the eyes of a real Irish-woman is a misfortune almost amounting to a curse, said: "You musn't mind, dear, it's the highest up families that don't have children." On another occasion an old man, wanting to be polite, and at the same time to convey the truth, said to the doctor who had asked him how he was: "Oh, I'm greatly improved, thank you, doctor, as far as remaining stationary is concerned." Sometimes the answers are unexpected and disappointing to the questioner, as when an American tourist, who was both a teetotaler and a Home Ruler, lately asked a railway porter what he thought about Home Rule. "We'll drink nothing but whiskey and porter then," was the answer. The American tried to impress on his mind the merits of Home Rule combined with cold water. But the only reply he could get was: "Divil a bit of water will I drink when we get Home Rule." It would be humorous, if it were not so deplorable, to hear all that the people expect Home Rule to bring them. They dream of a country flowing with porter and whiskey, where the laborer will have no need to work, the farmer no rent to pay, the cattle-dealer no foreign competition, and where the tradesmen will have protection,—a country in which there will be a millennium of "no Government at all," to quote the words used a few years ago by an Irish member to an audience of farmers in this same county.—R. J. B. in the Spectator.

BOOK GOSHIP.

As one turns over the pages of the *Century Magazine* for December the sweet faces of Maddonnas and Holy Children are found smiling at the reader. No less than five exquisite conceptions of the Blessed Virgin and her infant are given, and all are charming. These prints are not familiar copies from the old masters, but are done from paintings of such modern artists as Abbott H. Thayer and Edward E. Lammons. Several poems on the beauty of that holy motherhood are found. Four lines which a full page picture fittingly illustrates are perfect and beyond criticism:—

"Bending, she gazed upon the little head,
Nor heard a sound.
Her lips, drawn up to bless, were tender red
And kissing-round."

Many phases of the Christmas tide are kept before the readers, although the hackneyed prosaic emblems of turkey and plum pudding are kept scrupulously out of the pages. Six or seven short stories are full of holiday charm. "My Cousin Fanny" is a clever piece of work—the tears seem to come of their own accord when at its close the silent beauty of the soul so hampered by the infirmity of the body dawns suddenly on the reader. "The New Cashier," by Edward Eggleston, and "A Knight of the Legion of Honor," are both meditative in their nature, and are decidedly well done in very different veins. In "Lorene's Religious Experience," we find a young girl searching eagerly for the strength which will enable her to bear a burden of disappointments. One of the stories of this holiday number is, however, almost unforgivably poor and amateurish. In "Their Christmas Meeting" the plot is excellent, but is ill-carried out, and an undue prominence is given to minor characters. One would almost conclude that the story had been cut down to fill an empty page by an unskilled hand. The new continued stories, "Sweet Bells out of Tune" and "Benefits Forgotten," are from the pen of the dead author, Wolcott Balestier. Musicians will delight in the anecdotal paper on Jennie Lind, while all lovers of the stage will peruse eagerly the "Leaves from the Autobiography of Tommaso Salvini." That

erudite yet interesting author, the Rev. Stopford A. Brooks, has a mystery article on Browning's art. "Picturesque New York" is well described by Mrs. Van Rensselaer, and her article is also ably illustrated. The various departments are full of interest, and one may well close the number with a hearty laugh over the dialect poem from the pen of John Whitecombe Riley.

The complete novel in Lippincott's Magazine for December, "Perverse Emerson's Will" is from the pen of Colonel Richard Malcolm Johnston. The plot of the story is entirely novel and the unveiling of the shroud of mystery of the villain Willy Emerson is sure to delight the reader. The minor characters speak and act most naturally, and the flavor of old-time Georgia life is pervasive. The short story of "An Honest Heathen," by Ella Sterling Cummins, tells of an intelligent young Chinese who could not reconcile the actions of his American friends with their religious ideas, and after a severe struggle returned contentedly to his heathen gods at Canton. In the Journalist Series Major Moses P. Handy gives an interesting account of the surrender of the Virginians. China lovers will gloat over the well-illustrated article on the old china factory of Tucker and Hemphill, and intending travellers will follow in the footsteps of Floyd B. Wilson through the "French Champagne Country." The lives of many noted men are all sketched in this number. Spencer, Sardon, Robert Lincoln, Phillips Brooks, Renan and Tennyson all receiving due attention. Many bright poems are given, and the pages in which the caricatures are given are even above the average. Published by J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia. Price twenty-five cents.

The Countess of Aberdeen, who keeps eighty servants in her home in Scotland and is considered to be the one woman in Great Britain who has come closest to a solution of the servant-girl problem, will tell of her methods of treating her help, etc., in an article for *The Ladies' Home Journal* entitled "How I Keep My Servants."

The January *St. Nicholas* will contain the opening paper in a series that magazine is to print on leading American cities, illustrated. In this article Colonel T. W. Higginson describes Boston in a way to interest boys and girls in the literary history of that city. For future numbers of *St. Nicholas*, Dr. Lyman Abbott will write of Brooklyn, Edmund Clarence Stedman will describe New York, and other famous residents of the different cities will describe them.

"The Potted Princess" is the title of Rudyard Kipling's East Indian fairy story which will appear in the January *St. Nicholas* with Birch's illustrations.

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