AN ORIGINAL GIRL

By Christine Faber

CHAPTER XXXVII.

The time came for the issuing of the invitations to the Club reception, and in the Geddings' household there was much wonder as to how Miss Burram would respond to hers. Rose in any case was contented; she felt she had done her duty and had carried her point; whether Miss Burram accepted or not, nobody would be able to gain-say the fact that she and her Charge been invited, and in another week tonville Herald among the list of intended guests; the Herald was the paper which had been started in the interest of the Reference. their names would appear in the Renterest of the Reform Party; their names would also appear in the Ren-tonville Times, unless that paper, o ving to Herrick's animosity since he had failed to get an invitation, should re-

fuse to publish the list.

Herrick's failure to get an invitation faction to Miss Gedding, and she listened with glowing delight to the accounts which her brother brought home of Herrick's efforts to be invited. Only for Notner, as Will said, he be, some of the members either through good nature or because of the Super-visor's growing power, being willing enough to concede an invitation, but Notner, with a firmness backed by the reputation of his great wealth, together with the fact that he was President of the Club, carried his way, and the name of every guest outside of the families of the actual members of the Club, being submitted for approval, Herrick's was stricken out, and Miss Burram and that of her Charge, to the utter amazement of some of the members, were allowed to remain. Young Gedding, who was to send the invita-tion, was also, at Rose's suggestion, to send with it a note, giving, as it were credentials of himself and his family and announcing, that if Miss Burram approved, he, with his family, would call upon them the evening in question in order to escort her and her Charge; if

Rose Gedding.

"Of course, this will be the end of it," said Will, as he completed a careful copy of the letter partially dictated with the William Parkey will not by his sister, "Miss Barram will not alone not accept, but she will probably return an indignant answer.'

escort them. The note gave as one of the reasons for the invitation, the friendship formed for Miss Burram's

Charge by her at one time schoolmate,

she preferred, he alone would go

suppose so," said Rose, " judging by the way every overture of the past has been received; but I shall be

But, suppose," said Will, "that she should act by the law of feminine contraries in this instance, and accept; great Cæsar! what a box we should be in, with father and mother who are going to that reception never having been told a word of the company they may have ; that is, should Miss Burram accept my proposition to bring the whole family. Idon't see, Rose, why you made me say that; wasn't it enough

to say that I alone would call for her?"
"No, it wasn't," said Rose, "that
might have shocked a little her idea of propriety; it was much more becoming to put in that about your family; to her accepting the invitation,

out as to her accepting the invitation, you need give yourself no uneasiness.

Miss Burram will never accept it."

"I hope she won't," put in Will;

"that stony face of hers would make me feel as if the marrow was running out of my bones, to say nothing of my difficulty with father and mother."

When Miss Burram got young Gedding's letter accompanying the eard of invitation to the Club reception, she it down, then she rang for Sarah, asking when that solemn-looking woman appeared:

"Has Miss Rachel returned from the solution of the solution

now on her way up-stairs. "Tell her to come to me."

And Sarah, ascending to Rachel's

om, hardly waited to be told to enter before she opened the door and announced with an air of mysterious as-Miss Burram wants you; she's

miss burrain waits you; sale s waitin' for you in her private parlor, and there's a letter on the table open before her." Sarah never could de-liver a message from Miss Burram to Rachel without bringing in an element of mystery or sensation. ention of a letter made the

girl's heart bound perhaps it was from Tom, who might, after all, as the time of his return was so near, have decided to write, and to write even to Miss Burram.

She fled past Sarah and bounded down the stairs, leaving the latter to make her usual ejaculations as she fol-

"Come in," said Miss Burram to the quick, gentle knock, and her Charge flushed and breathless entered. "Close the door tightly and come and sit here," said the lady again, in

dicating a chair near her own, and almost beside a little table on which, as Sarah had reported, an open letter lay. "I have here," resumed the lady when her Charge was seated, blood leaped so turiously into Rachel's face, that Miss Burra

paused for an instant—" from Mr. William Gedding." Rachel's face got as liam Gedding." Rachel's face got as suddenly pale as the instant before it had become red, and the speaker paused again, this time for a longer period, and she looked suspiciously at the girl; then, as if her suspicion had taken root, she said ;

" Do you know anything about this Were you aware that I was to receive it ?

Rachel stared in blank amazement such amazement as prevented her from answering, and which convinced Miss

answering, and water convinced Miss Barram that her suspicion was wrong. "My question was put," she said somewhat severely, "because of your change of color at the mention of this letter; it seemed to cause you undue

The girl had recovered her voice, at the house, and he asked, sharply:

and while the color dyed every feature of her face she said, with just a shade of the defiant spirit with which she had first met Miss Burram audible in her tone, though it was evident she was

struggling hard to keep it down:
"I thought when you said you had a
letter, it might be from him you told

me I must never mention."
"Ah!" said the lady, and there was a long silence, during which, whatever her thoughts were, she kept them in firm control, for her face was as impassible as ever; her Charge, only she was in Miss Burram's presence, could have cried tears of bitter disappointment; not even her curiosity about not even her curiosity about Mr. Gedding's letter could lessen her unhappiness of the moment. After that long silence the lady resumed as not been inif her first sentence had

"This Mr. William Gedding sends an invitation for you and for me to the reception of the Onotomah Club;" reception of the Onotomah Club;"
Rachel looked up, her interest beginning to dull the e lge of her disappoint-

ment; "he offers us the escort of his whole family; would you like to go?" The color was in Rachel's face again, and all the bitterness of her disappointment had vanished.
"Indeed I should like to go," she

replied, her soul in her voice.
"Well, you may retire now," said Miss Burram, and the girl went, hardly knowing how she felt, owing to the condicting emotions in her mind.

Delight at the bare thought of going to the reception, uncertain though Miss Burram had left her going, struggled with her amazement at that lady for seeming even to consider the invitation, and with her gratitude to the Geddings for having sent it. deed, for the remainder of that day mind was in a whirl that no effort of hers could quiet, and she found herself at luncheon almost expecting Miss Burram to say something more about the reception, but the latter was as usual

old and grim. In the afternoon as Miss Burram was about to follow Rachel into the car riage for their customary drive, she handed a letter to Hardman to post, but before he could take it, it fluttered with the adfrom her fingers and lay dress turned up directly before Rachel's She could not help reading:

"Mr. William Gedding,

Rentonville, P. O. As Hardman picked it up Rachel's eyes met Miss Burram's; the latter could not but see in them the girl's expectation and her longing to ether that letter was one of accept ance of the invitation; but the cold face told nothing, and Rachel threw rself back in her seat with a had

When young Gedding received Miss Burram's answer he could hardly credit the evidence of his own eyes; there it was, however, in large unmistakable penmanship:

Mr. William Gedding:

"Mr. William Godding:
"Dar Sir—I nive received the card of invi-tation to the reception of the Onotoman Club-for mr. Charze. Miss Ruchel Michara, and my self, with your accomp saving letter. I have decided to a rept it, and to accept also the cort of your family on that evening. Thanking decides to decide the courtesy you for the courtesy and an arrange of the courtesy of Bodula Burram "Bodula Burram"

"Great Cæsar!" he said, his eyes almost starting from their sockets, and

atmost starting from their sockes, and then he sought his sister.

"We're in for it, Rose; it is just as I remarked to you, Miss Burram has acted according to the law of feminine contraries; she has accepted that invi-'Oh, never!" ejaculated Rose,

bounding to her feet.
"Read for yourself," and he turned

the letter over to her.
"Well, I'm glad; this is better than

when that solemn-looking woman beared:

Has Miss Rachel returned from her at the prospect of being brought into contact with Miss Burram? It will "Just come in, mem; I met her destroy all her anticipated pleasure, and I shouldn't be surprised if she refased to go."
"She need not know," said the im-

pulsive Rose. "Need not know? How in thunder

are you going to associate two people with each other, and yet keep one presence of the other? "Oh, Will, don't be so impetuous-

nean, mother need not know till the last minute. You can answer this note stating that we shall call in our family carriage for Miss Burram on the eve ing in question, and mother need not know but that she is going directly to the reception; when she finds herself in Miss Burram's house, she will accept the situation."
"I don't know that I shall," mut-

tered her brother, really in some dismay at this imminent confronting of Miss Burram; he had been so certain that she would decline the invitation.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

On the morning after the posting of her note to young Gedding, Miss Bur-ram, at the breakfast table, informed her Charge of her acceptance of the invitation to the Club reception. Sarah, who was waiting on the table, almost dropped a dish in her amazement and very nearly made aloud her customary exclamation: but Rachel only looked up with smiling, sparkling eyes, and an increase of color in her cheeks.
"Directly after breakfast," the lady

went on, "we shall go to the city; you will accompany me, and tell turning to the amazed Sarah, "to have the carriage ready

"Yes, mem," answered Sarah, glad to have an excuse to get out of the room in order to vent her feelings, and on her way to the carriage-house, whither she fairly ran, she made her custom ary ejaculation many times, each time in a higher and in a more horrifled tone. She had so little breath when she reached Hardman, that she could only look at him in a gasping way, and move her lips without making any distinct sound. He was alarmed thinking there must be some calamity

"What is it, woman-why don't you

Sarah managed to recover breath enough to answer:
"Miss Burram's goin' to the Notmah
Club reception and she's goin' to take
Miss Rachel."

Hardman was disgusted; too much so even to try to conceal his feelings as he usually did. "Sarah," he said, squarely facing

or, "you're a very upsetting woman—
if that's what took your breath you
night have spared yourself;" and then,
learing her sharp reply, he turned hastly and went through the passage that ily and went through to the stable. Sarah looked after him, indignation at the manner in which he had received her news causing her to nod her head several times in a very ludicrous manner; then she followed him, saying in a high, shrill voice that carried every word to his reluctant

That's what it is to be made on the bias—anybody cut on the straight would feel how perplexin' it is to the senses to have Miss Burram actin' the she's doin'-goin' to a reception next door to her own house when she's so set against everybody that lives nigh her that she can't give 'em anything better than a look that'd freeze a corpse without ice—and takin' Miss Rachel with her, and goin' to the city to buy dresses; if that's not enough to take a body's breath I'd like to know By this time she was herself in the

and whence she saw him in a remote corner plying an empty shovel with And you're to have the carriage ready to take them to the city—they'll go right after breakfast." With which

passage through which Jim had gone,

order shrieked at him, Sarah went back to the house. Hardman dropped his empty shovel.
"Now, why couldn't she have come and told me about the carriage sensible like, instead of making the hair rise on my head the way she did? But she's a

oman ; that's the only way of explain-In the city Miss Burram drove to a fashionable modiste, where she left such orders as nearly took Rachel's breath cause of their cost-the modiste, evi dently understanding her customer said the hundreds so lightly and ly while the customer made no demur. Then Hardman was told to drive to a totally different part of the

city—a part in which dwelling-houses seemed to have no place, only tall stone buildings or what might once have been residences, now turned into the most public and busiest kind of offices. Before one of these high buildings the carriage stopped, and Miss Burram alighting, bade Rachel follow. Within the building they were met by an attendant, to whom the lady said something in low tone that Rachel did not catch he conducted them to a private office, whence another attendant led them to a room in which iron closets seemed to be set in the walls; one of those opened in manner that Rachel could not under stand, and then he silently withdrew. Miss Burram, waiting till she heard the door shut behind him, took from the iron recess an ebony box which she ed with a key that she produced her satchel. It looked, when from her satchel. It looked, when opened, like a miniature chest of drawers, each one having a tiny knob; upon these knobs in succession she pres revealing compartments from which flashed upon Rachel's eyes such a wealth of gems that she held her breath in awe and admiration and wonder. Diamonds, pearls, topazes, opals, each comprising the full set required for a lady's toilett and each reposing in its own handsome case. One by one Miss Burram took them up, her eyes glittering strangely anything I ever hoped for with regard to dear little Rachel. Now I shall have but Rachel was absorbed alone in the

> key and conducted Miss Burram and her Charge to their carriage. From that time till the day on the evening of which was to be the recep-Rachel see ned to live in a strange ly delightly atmosphere—delightful, be-cause of her anticipations of the reception, something so new to her that it appeared like going to begin an exist ence in another world—and trebly de-lightful, because the time of Tom's comng was so near. Everything about her appeared to take on the same new and delightful change; even Miss Burram Rachel fancied, was much less cold and rim. She had one saddening thought the prohibition with regard to Hardman—a prohibition which she had not once disobeyed though it was more than three years since it had been given; but she comforted herself by thinking

Tom's coming would remove that. Sarah, between the scraps of gossip which she heard outside of Miss Burram's house, and the information she got within, both from her own cavesram's pping when messengers came from city dressmaker, and from what Rachel-in her high spirits departing from her wonted reticence—imparted about her visit to the city when she acompanied Miss Burram to the place where the jewels were kept, was in a

state of perpetual ejaculation. To Mrs. McElvain she told as he solemn conviction that a change was coming to the house—a change that boded no good, and night after night she tossed her cup, declaring that the same ill-omen always turned up in the

shape of a certain tea-leaf. Of course, the Geddings' cook was faithfully informed of all that Sarah knew, and she in turn lost no time in imparting such information to the young lady of the family. Thus Rose became aware that Miss Burram was going to wear a yellow satin dress with great yellow jewels, and Miss Rachel was going to wear one made entirely white lace, and she guessed a pearl necklace and pearl bracelets that belonged to Miss Burram, for the latter get them from the deposit vault, and though she hadn't told her Charge they were for her, it seemed against common sense to think she was going to wear tears. I did feel so sorry, but for being them herself? What would she be doing with white and yellow jewels a grandfather and such a grandaunt.

together? All of which when Rose told her brother made him screw up his face into a most doleful expression, and

Great Cæsar! What an astounding picture Miss Burram will be— enough to dazzle everybody whose eye-sight isn't imperfect. And what will mother say when she finds herself actually in company with that yellow dress and those yellow iewels? Why, she'll and those yellow jewels? Why, she'll be overwhelmed," he went on, striking a ludicrously piteous attitude; "our other who doesn't even poor little mother who doesn't even know, thanks to her daughter's careful mislaying of the paper, that Miss Bur-ram's name has appeared among the list of invited guests to the Onotomah Club eption."
I was assiduous in putting the Times

before her," put in Rose archly.
"Of course," assented her brother,
"after you had first slyly ascertained that the Times had published no such list—but, seriously, Rose, you have got me into a deplorable difficulty."

"I don't see how," she answered.

'Don't see how," he repeated half grily, "don't see how, when you angrily, "don't see how, when you have shouldered upon me the responsi-bility of taking father and mother in them, to Miss Burram's home, thence to thrust upon them, regardless of how they may feel about it, the chaperoning of this eccentric woman and her Charge? Now, if you were coming I might have a little more courage—you could help to fill the awful gaps, and perhaps to deaden the explosion that must occur when our eminently respectable parents find the way they have been imposed upon. And I think," waxing warmer as he spoke, " it is your duty to come, or it will be my painful duty to inform our much-imposed-upon father and mother whom they are expected to take

to that reception."
"Oh, Will, don't do that; you'll spoil it all if you do. Father will rebel, and mother will refuse, and all my plans

will be spoiled.' your plans are bound to be poiled anyhow; how do you suppose ather and mother are going to take it when they find themselves thrust upon Miss Burram—or rather find that dread-ful woman thrust upon them—and in yellow satin with yellow jewels? Great Cesar ! won't there be a scene.

No, there won't," said Rose stoutly, though her heart was beginning to quake at the picture he drew. "Father is not the kind to make a scene before a lady, and mother-well, mother will ac

the situation. cept Yes, she accepted the situation so amicably before — no, Rose; there's only one way out of this pickle you have got me into, and that is, if you won' accompany us instead of going with Hattie and her uncle and Mr. Notner, let Hattie come with us.'

"Oh, Will; I understand you now, and his sister laughed till the tear rolled down her cheeks; "you don't want me—you want Hattie—you are want me-you want Hattie-you are afraid to trust her within the influence

of that handsome Mr. Notner."
Will blushed like a girl.
"Who wouldn't be afraid," he said with an imitation of bluster, "when for two months past you two silly girls have but rave about that man Notner? Now he will have an opportunity to exert all his fascination, after which good-bye to any chance for us poor fellows

"My suffering brother!" exclaimed Rose in mock pity, "I am sorry for you, very sorry for you with regard to Hattie, for she really must accompany Hattie, for she really must accompany her uncle and Mr. Notner, but you shall be satisfied in one respect—I shall go with you.'

TO BE CONTINUED.

MARGIE'S CHRISTMAS The Yule-tide Spirit that Made

Happy Home-Coming.

BY M. E. HENRY RUFFIN. Old General Flint, who was the landlord of our handsome Irish home in pretty Malahide, had been one of Wellington's officers. It has always seemed a fortunate thing, and one that ociated me with most stirring history, that I actually knew, in my of the men who had fought beside the Iron Duke, when he contested the famous field of Waterloo. I always looked with awe at the tall, gaunt, stern

My father had leased the General's house, all except a few room on the ground floor; which were occupied by the veteran himself, his sister, an an cient, nervous spinster and his grand-daughter, Margie Dunn, a girl of fourcient, nervous spinster and his who was as happy and girlish as she dared to be in presence of these two relatives

General Flint's home was a beautiful house, from the stately entrance hall, the winding stairway that led to the large drawing-room and the pleasant large drawing-room and the pleasant sleeping-rooms. Here the Hintons, of

sleeping-rooms. Here the Hintons, of whom I was the youngest member, found an agreeable abede, while exiled from America by the Civil War.

"Eily," said Margie Dunn, as we sat together in our breakfast room one snowy December morning, "I wish I could go home and see my mother at Christops. I always miss her so much Christmas. I always miss her so much

when Christmas comes. Why don't you go, Margie?"

The young girl shook her head.
"Grandda won't let me even call her name." The pretty rosy face grew very serious. "You know, Eily, he never forgave her for marrying my father. Grandda is a General, and was one of Wellington's officers. My mother was his only child and he wanted her te marry a high-up officer, or a rich man, or one of the nobility. But she ran away with my father, who was only a half-pay lieutenant. Grandda has never spoken to her nice. When my father died Grandda wrote her a letter and said if she would send me to live with him, he would leave me this house and all his money when he died. Grandda is so awfully stern and Aunt Martha is so hard on me, and I do want to see my

mother. Margie's voice broke into a sob and her pretty brown eyes were filled with tears. I did feel so sorry, but for being without her mother and for having such

Miss Martha Flint was certainly a fussy old lady. I think my small self was a severe trial to her. I made a was a severe trial to her. I made a most delightfully dangerous toboggan of the bannisters of the winding stair-way. Then my John Gilpin exercise on way. Then my John Griph exercise on my high-spirited donkey! I think that Miss Martha believed that the fact of my being a wild little American was all that saved my life from hour to hour.

I tried to comfort Margie, for I liked her so much. "Perhaps you might go and see your mother at Christmas." She shook her head. "I darsen't ask it. Grandda would

murder me if I mentioned her name. I shuddered, for I believed him quite capable of it.

"You know, Eily, Grandda always has a splendid dinner at Christmas; but plum pudding don't taste right and the tarts aren't nice a bit when you are away from your mother." Margie chocked down chocked down a sob. were standing together at the window, looking out upon the snowy streets. We had raised the sash and scattered a few broad anually.

pread crumbs on the window attracting quite a colony of "May be your mother will have a nice dinner, too, Margie." I said, try-ing in my childish way to comfort my hungry robins.

Then she broke down utterly. The tears fell on the frosted panes as she leaned her brown curley head against

the window. "Oh, no! Eily, she won't have any nice dinner. She has only a little pension to live on, and she is all by herself. She is so sad and lonesome she will just buy a few penny buns and make a cup of tea and then sit down by a poor little fire, while we will have a fine with Col. Floyd and his wife and Major

Burton and his wife!"
"Oh, yes! I cried," I know, and you will have a new dress, a lovely red de-laine, and your Aunt Martha will have gray poplin. I saw them at the man tua makers in Dublin when I went to

try on my new dress!"

But even the recital of these glories did not cheer up Margie. The picture of the poor lonely little mother was too much for the loving heart. Before I could think of anything further to say way of comfort, a voice, strong, metallie and hard, rang through the corridor.

'Margie! Margie!" 'Coming, Grandda!" and the little rirl flew to answer the summons.

I stood, awhile, watching the nimble robins picking up the crumbs and think-Margie. Now I did wish she ould have her mother with her Christmas. What a very dreadful man the general was! The Martha, Margie's grandaunt! Then Hiss a penitential exercise all by herself. The general was reputed to be wealthy. He was also the possessor of quite a quantity of silver plate, which was always brought out when the General gave a dinner to his friends. For days before and after such a function, Miss Martha lived in terror of robbers break-

ing into the house.

At this time, Fenianism was quite prevalent in Ireland. The old General was loud in his wrath against the Feni-ans, but they divided with the con-stantly-expected burglars a large share of Miss Martha's dread. early nightfall came in those short December days, Margie had a wearisome pilgrimage to make of every door and window and gate—to see if all were strongly secured.

One bleak, snowy night we sat beside the fire in Miss Martha's room. Margie was reading to me the Arabian Nights and I was lost to the world, in following the fortunes of Ala Baba and the Forty Thieves. All at once the knocker of the street door fell with a heavy sound, one lonesome stroke, the regular "beggar's knock."

Margie stopped reading and looked in uiringly at her aunt. Miss Martha laid down her knitting and listened. Again the lonesome knock was sounded. Margie stopped reading and looked "It's a beggar," whispered Margie.

"Maybe it's a Fenian," suggested Miss Martha, with a shiver. world I did want to see it was a Fenian,

-a real live Fenian. I jumped up and started towards the 'Stop, Eily!" called Miss Martha.

"O Margie, is the plate all locked up? O! I'm sure it is a Fenian and we will all be murdured. Stephens, the head Fenian, has got out of jail and is at large.

cried trembling with a delightful terror. I was determined now to get at the door and open it. For the third time the humble, solitary knock resounded. "Well, aunt Martha, "said Margie, ining me at the door, "if it is a Fenjoining me at the door, ian or Stephens himself, we cannot let him stand there and freeze."

"Well! well!" sighed Miss Martha resignedly, "we will all go together; you girls go on ahead and I'll carry the light."

She lifted the tall silver candlestick and placed it high over our heads; and in this order the little procession moved the front door. The heavy bolts were drawn back. The great key of the huge lock turned laboriously. Then the ponderous oaken door swung open.

flakes, sharp as needles flew in upon us. Without, the candle light fell the muffled figure of a man. His hat was drawn down and his face scarcely visible. My excited imagination was at work.

"He looks just like the picture of Stephens," I whispered to Miss Martha. That good lady almost dropped the candle in her fright. Her trembling hands sent the hot wax on my face and neck. A gruff voice came from under the slouched hat.

"Please, ma'am, does Miss Margie Dunn live here?' "Yes, that is my name," Margie

answered faintly.
"Well, I've a letter for you, Miss. Your mother sent it from Kells. She is very sick and she said as how I was to

give it into your own hands."

The man drew out a letter from the pocket of his great coat. Margie took

the letter and was so distressed that she

could not answer.
"I'm a carman," the man continued,

"and I was going to Dublin, so I passed this way. I will pass here again the day after to-morrow, so if you have any message, Miss, I will fetch it back. Miss Martha here found her voice.

"Won't you come in and have a hot cup of tea, my good man?"

of tea, my good man?"
"No, thank ye, ma'am, but I will kindly bid ye good-night."
With trembling hands, Margie barred the door and we returned to the room. Kneeling down beside the table, Margie placed her letter beside the spluttering candle to read. It seemed to be quite short but she kept on reading it over and over softly. Suddenly the door was opened and in marched old General Flint. Margie sprang up and ran to-wards him. The tears were falling fast as she put out her hands.

"O Grandda! Grandda! my mother!

my poor mother?"
"Hush!" thundered the General; and I thought that must have been the way the cannon sounded at Waterloo. How dare you speak of her?

"How dare you speak of her?"
Silenced and cowed, poor little Margie crept back to the fireplace. Miss Martha was as pale as a ghost and the knitting needles clinked in her shaking For me I waited until the old ingers. General turned towards the mantle and I flew through the open door and breathlessly mounted the stairs.

Next morning I caught only a passing

impse of Margie. Her eyes were red and swollen and her usually merry face quite dejected. I hung about the winding stairway, hoping to get a sight of my little companion and afraid to go too ear the old General. Now upon this winding stairway there were two land ngs. At the first was a large portrait neral Wellington in full u At the second landing and just above the entrance door of the drawing-room was a handsome portrait of Que toria in her coronation robes. When-ever old General Flint mounted the stairway he always paused before the Iron Duke and gave him a most dignified military salute. "My commander at Waterloo!" he would impressively announce, to the irreverent you Americans, who would afterwards hearse this salutation, when they were sure that the old General wa sight. Then when he reached the drawing-room door, he would pause again and make a most profound

ance, a regular salaam, to the portrait of the Queen.
"My most gracious sovereign!" he would impressively remark to the snick ering tribe of American democrats, who gathered on the stairway to see this

special performance.

Next morning I was sitting in the drawing-room and looking out on the white road. Over the frozen fields I could see the crests of the Hills, the peautiful "Hills of Malahide," that I loved so dearly in their spring and sum mer glory. There they rose up, cold and white and I could imagine, for I could not see, how the hard clear waves dashed like broken crystals on the strand at the feet of the rocky hills.

The old General was mounting the stairway with the ponderous and precise tread of a war charger. I went to the door because I could not miss seeing him salute his Commander at Waterloo

ahd his most gracious sovereign.

After he had given Queen Victoria his most gracious salaam, he surveyed my small self from his soldierly altitude. When our exchange of "good-morning" was over there was a painful pause. Whatever could a poor little girl say to a tall stern straight old man, who elped the Iron Duke fight the battle of

Waterloo? I had so often been puzzled by the old General's reverence for the Queen that I now ventured to inquire:

"Do you think Queen Victoria is such a beautiful lady, General?"

as to her superlative beauty. But I was an American; and besides, the Queen did not seem anything like as atiss Martha, with a shiver.

Now if there was one thing in this

Fairies I had seen in the Christmas pantomime in Dublin, and I did not think that the most gracious sovereign could dance near as long on one foot as the agile young performer. Then I remembered a picture which

Margie had shown me of just as she was going to the Castle Ball in Dublin.

"Eut, General, the Queen isn't near such a pretty lady as Margie's mothe Maybe its Stephens himself," I These last two words were almost whis But he evidently heard me, for he

wheeled about, facing me. "How do you know that Margie's mother was so Because I saw her picture. Margie showed it to me. Such a beautiful lady, all in a lovely dress going to the Castle Ball. Margie says you were roing with her and she does look so

vely-lots more lovely than Queen Victoria.' The old man was so silent that I grew frightened. But I kept on. "She's sick now too. That's what the carman said when he brought Margie a letter. And she's poor and she won't have any Christmas dinner. Only some penny buns and a cup of tea. Margie says that the plum pudding don't taste righ

then you want to see your mother."

Gen. Flint stood silently staring at Then he asked: "Do you think that Margie's mother, my daughter, is really prettier than the

Queen?"
"O lots prettier!" I nodded decided-

"And Margie can't eat her plumpudding without her mother."
"It don't taste right. Then how can she eat it when her mother is so sick?' That must be so. It must be so

The old man was ascending the steps. He stopped half way and looked up at me.
"Little girl, what was it the angels sang on Christmas? My poor old head

cannot carry even a song."
"Peace and good will to men." "Good will to men. Peace and good will." He took a few steps down-wards. He seemed to be talking to

himself.
"Mother and Child. They were to-

gether that Christmas night. How can a Christian man separate a mother and her child at such a time?" The old man was slowly descending the stairs. He forgot to salute the Duke of Wellington and he did not look like a veteran of Waterloo. Only a sad and tired

for

old man. That evening, Margie flew up to my

"O, Eily! Eily!" she was half cry-ing and half laughing. "Grandda says I am to go back to Kells with the car-man; and when my mother is better I am to bring her back and we are to be together not only for Christmas but for together not only for Christmas but for all the time."

Next morning, I watched Margie as

she mounted the jaunting car and rode away. On Christmas Eve she rode back away. On Christmas Even sent for her and which was like a house on wheels. Her mother, pale and gentle but very pretty, was with her. General Flint did not give any Christmas dinner to his distinguished friends.

mas diffier to the distribution of the handsome plate, however, was brought out, and Margie wore her new red delaine and Miss Martha wore her red delaine and think that the dinner of the hand of the gray poplin. I think that the dinner was a great success, for everybody seemed so happy. Margie's mother sat beside her little girl, and her eyes were bright and shining as the goblets that held the wine. Nothing would do but I must come in for the dessert, and th old General asked me if the plum pud-

old General asked me if the plum pudding tasted all right now.

Then he rose up and lifted his silver goblet of wine and drank a toast "to the memory of my commander at Waterloo," and then another toast to "heremost gracious Majesty the Queen."

CHRISTMAS AT BETHLEHEM.

The Celebration of the Vigit-Scenes at the Hour for Mattes-the Patri arch's Mass-the Ceremony at the Christmas in Bethlehem! There is a strange fascination in the words. It awakens every thought that has to do

with the happy season. We see, in the flash of an eye, the manger, the shep-herd keeping night watches over their the brightness and splendor of the angelic host.

To spend Christmas in such a hallowed place is the desire of every pil-grim to the Holy Land, and when that grim to the Holy Lind, and when the time of the year draws near, they begin to fill the little town whose names signifies "The House of Bread," making sure that there is room for them, at

least, in the inn. As one journeys over the road the story old indeed and yet even new, of that first holy night comes into the mind with its many details. Perhaps it is the contrast with that which is today; the strange comparisons born of the centuries. One pictures the Holy Family wandering in the streets of Bethlehem. The inn is crowded. Light streams from the barred windows ; th

sounds of mirth are heard. But there sounds of mirth are heard. But there is no room for a late comer.

Overhead the stars shine coldly; there is a chill in the air. The shepherds who are watching to night draw

their garments closer around them.

And Herod is giving a banquet; his many friends are gathered in his palace, on a hill hard by, to do him honor. It is a night of festival, and those who poor would have done better had they made some provision for their a

After all, what has it mattered? Only a Child born in a stable, a hidder cavern where the ox and the ass are sheltered! All Bethlehem has seen those lights that glow in the ruler's stronghold; but only a handful of shep herds have witnessed the glory of heaven. The many praise Casar to night; a few simple men, just from their toil in the fields, kneel before the

Babe and salute Him King. But they are few and poor and despised.
Such thoughts come into the heart, as one prepares one's self for the cere mies that are to mark the anniversar of this event. And now our pilgrimag has brought us into the sight of the city Those who have never ye beheld the town upon its cluster of hills.

lean forward in their saddles and mur mur: "Bethlehem!" Every year the thoughts of the whole Christian family, no matter what may be its differences in creed or rite, turns to the little town of Bethlehem. Its name is on every lip; and every song and every word in honor of that day brings one in spirit to the distant hill

In Bethlehem itself one is not surprised to find the Nativity observed as it could be in no other place. The gathering of pilgrims, the many colored cos nes of the inhabitants rich in Orien tal splendor, the costly vestments of the officiating priests, the thousands of lighted candles, the decorations, the solemn ceremonies and inspiring music of the Church-all these lend to the occasion a picturesqueness and an im-pressiveness that can scarcely be described to one who has not been pre-sent himself. The whole place gives itself up to rejoicing. The streets are thronged, bonfires are lit, and the basilica of the Nativity is crowded from the beginning to the end of the ser-

The French Consul, who always makes it a point to be present as official protector of the Church in Palestine and the Latin Patriarch of Jerusaler usually arrive a little after noon on the day before Christmas. Almost all the pec ple of Bethlehem are Christians—ther are only 100 Mussulmans in the whol 7000 inhahitants—and nearly all of their gather to welcome the Consul and the Latin Patriarch, who comes under the escort of that official. The gatherin of the Turkish soldiery is the signal of their arrival. Then the housetops an crowded with women while the men fi the narrow streets below. The Patr arch is received with loud cheers, ar a mighty "Vivat!" reads the air as l

Behind the Patriarch ride the Fren Consul, his chancellor and dragoma all mounted on magnificent horse Then follows the crowds of pilgrim gathered from the four quarters of t globe. They press onward with i Patience, full of excitement and fervo