

# COLONIAL PEARL

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## THE ANNUALS.

### CHRISTMAS'S ADVERTISEMENTS.

In almost every other part of the world, where the English language is spoken, the Annuals are hailed with pleasure, and honored with some literary notice, if not with a formal review. In Halifax, we generally inform the public of their merits and beauties only in an advertisement. To do the Booksellers, or rather Belcher, who is the chief importer of these works, justice, the advertisement is usually made as long, and as poetical as possible—but still it says but little for the literary taste of Halifax, that there is not some hand stretched out, and some voice raised, to hail the advent of those delightful exhibitions of the continual triumph of the kindred arts, of engraving and typography, over the difficulties which beset their progress towards perfection: a point that we thought they had reached several years ago, but which it would appear is still to be attained. Be it understood then, that we intend hereafter to wipe off this reproach, and to bid the annuals welcome to our shores. If the people do not buy them any the faster, the fault shall not be ours—we will let them know what there is in this department of literature and the fine arts, as regularly as the year comes round.

Some surly old fellow, who we once heard teased by a pretty daughter for money to buy an Annual, excused his parsimony by declaring that they were all alike—that the Forget-me-nots of one year, were just like those of the next, and that to buy more than one was the height of folly and extravagance. Now admitting that this were true of the annuals—it is true also of the Roses, the Pinks and the Mayflowers—and yet are not these welcome in their season, and do we not revel in the aroma and beauty of the new growth without fancying that they are worse for the strong family likeness they bear to those which enchanted us the year before. With kindred feelings to those that our favourite flowers would call forth, we now sit down among the Annuals, and having ran our eyes hastily over them to ascertain the probable extent of the pleasure in store, we take up for a more deliberate examination.

#### *The Juvenile Scrap Book, for 1840.*

This volume is neatly done up, in crimson and gold; it contains 105 pages of beautiful typography, and 16 engravings. A notice of the latter may give a clue to the whole. The first engraving then is a vignette, called the Bark of Hope; it is a marine view,—the sun setting behind a group of mountainous islands, a flock of sea-fowl skimming over the slightly agitated waters, a couple of boats beating about, and a cutter under press of sail bearing for the land. The lines which this illustrates tell a melancholy tale of two ship-boys, one an orphan,

“Cast on the world alone;  
He scorned to fear the tempest wild,  
And mock'd its bilowy moan.”

The other,

“A fair and fragile form,  
Nurs'd by a mother all too kind,  
Affections all too warm.”

They met happily on the deck at morning, but ere night the storm and the reef had done their work,—the vessel went down, and the two boys are left amid the billows on a part of the wreck. The orphan endeavours to cheer his comrade, but the gentler lad grows faint at the horrors which surround him, and at the thoughts of home,—

“He knew the billows heaved around  
In all their awful might:  
But his ear was listening to the sound  
Of his mother's prayer at night.”

A bark at length appears in sight, the orphan hopes that his little comrade may be saved, and urges him to good courage; but in vain, he droops and dies, just as rescue arrives.

“The blissful hour of safety parts,—  
And never, never more,  
To one of those young trusting hearts,  
Shall life its joy restore.”

The next embellishment is entitled the Unwilling Philosopher. It represents a mother, in an “English garden,” lecturing her fair haired boy on the flowers which he has collected in his lap.

We then meet a very characteristic picture of a “Volcano in the Sandwich Isles.” Darkness in the distance, and a number of craters emitting their flames and volumes of smoke from a lake of liquid lava.

“Day Dreams” represents a comely girl, her book on her lap, her eyes gazing at vacancy, and her thoughts far away.

“Broken Force” is a scene in Cumberland, of rocks, and firs,

and torrent, and precipice, and cascade, and rustic bridge, and lonely heron;—while “The Hour of Trial” represents a sick bed and its group of weeping women and children:—an hour of trial indeed.

“Sidon” is a scene of sea shore;—a sheet of water, castles and other massive piles of buildings in the distance, and in the foreground camels and a group of reposing Turks.

“City of ancient splendour! where is now  
The wreath of fame that bound thy stately brow?  
Thy wealth of merchandise, thy pomp and pride,  
That rode triumphant on the heaving tide?”

“Chivalry” is a battle group of the olden time, with the royal pavillion, spectators, castle, and other fitting adjuncts. The accompanying letter press is descriptive of the crusades, of jousts, tournaments, and other matters of chivalry. Three other engravings embellish this article. One a lady, on a milk white charger, with her falcon in hand, and a couple of spaniels at her side, galloping over the heather, towards a group engaged in the sport of falconry: (By the by, if any thing disparaging may be ventured, the lady's bird, although little removed from the foreground, is smaller than those which are engaged in the air much farther off.) another, a picture of an “English Knight,” and a third, a mockcombat in front of a barbican at Greenwich, where Queen Elizabeth appears witnessing a scene of “the good old times.”

The next is a Sea Chase,—

“The far booming knell of the cannon was sounding,  
From sea cave to headland its echoes rebounding:  
On, on! 'tis for life or for death that she goes,  
'Mid the surgo of the wave, and the fire of her foes.”

The Cathedral at Worms, is one of those beautiful representations of ancient structures, which are generally so attractive.

An engraving named “The Fortress” embellishes some very pretty lines, entitled “The Discontented Page.” They describe a lad brought away from his cheerful home, placed in a gloomy sea side castle as a lady's page, and joyfully escaping from that pompous thralldom.

“He pines to see the forest gay,  
To hear the hunter's horn;  
Or well remembered roundelay,  
With sweet-toned echo, far away  
On mountain breezes borne.”

The remaining embellishments represent, Infant exposure in India, and a mother reproving the first falsehood of her abashed child.

We next take up Friendship's Offering. Its binding is deep purple, calf, richly embossed, and elegantly gilded. The plate which fronts the title page is, very appropriately, that of the “Fair student.” A young female, in antique costume, and reclined in an easy chair, intently pores over a folio volume.

The next embellishment is an elegant representation of the overflowing of the Nile. A cloudless sky, a group of sail boats, Turks reclining in their usual luxurious manner,—colossal monuments insulated by the rising waters, and distant buildings and ruins, are the features of the picture. It is accompanied by an article descriptive of Egypt, which contains the following remarks on the engraving:

“The exquisite little engraving which embellishes and which has called forth this rambling paper, represents a portion of the site of ancient Thebes during the overflowing of the river. The scene is full of interest. Four distant villages are now scattered over the ground where once the city stood. Two of these are here visible. On the right is Medireet Abou, and in the central distance, to the left, is Luxor. The two obelisks at the entrance of the latter are the most perfect now existing, and are each about eighty feet in height, and monoliths (that is, formed of a single stone.)

“The two enormous seated figures seen rising out of the water to the left, each about fifty six-feet high, are, or rather were, also monoliths; for one of them was long since destroyed by an earthquake \* \* \* It has been since restored by a succession of many layers of stone. \* \* \* But what perhaps, gives this statue its greatest interest, is the fact that this is the real,

“Mernon's broken image, sounding tuneful 'midst desolation,  
still.” \* \* \* To complete the picture, by the strange union of the past and the present, we have on the right, a group of langias, or Nile boats, shading by their sails, from the evening sun, a party of Mooslims, \* \* \* who are regaling \* \* \* to the sound of the Ood, or Egyptian guitar; while to the left are the aborigines of the land, half naked, or in rags, toiling under their antique urns, filled with the precious waters of the stream.”

The next engraving is a splendid scene of the “Court of Lions” in the Alhambra. A magnificent piazza, formed by a grove of slender pillars which support exquisite Moorish arches, surround an area, in the centre of which a number of marble lions support a fountain. In the shade of this most airy and noble architecture, are very graceful groups belonging to the times when the building was a temple of chivalry, and ruin was unknown amid its halls.

“Old Alhambra, in thy grove  
Moorish kings no longer rove,  
Listing to the golden lute,  
Gazing at the fairy foot,  
That, to its delicious sound,  
Seem'd on viewless wings to bound.  
O'er yon sculptured battlement,  
Turbaned brows no more are bent;  
Warriors' forms, with flushing eyes,  
Cheeks, of damask roses dyed;  
Gazing where the evening glow  
Gilds the palace pomp below,—

All are gone,—all are gone;  
All is silence,—all is stone.”

The Co-heiress is the title of the next engraving, which represents a couple of beauties, of other days, in a Gothic hall.

The next is a very beautiful specimen of the fine arts. An elegant hall, a noble Turkish figure,—a beauty, surrounded by her pets, parroquet, monkey and lap dog,—a Christian knight, and an African attendant,—a banquet laid, statues, flower vases, and other elegant details, from the picture called “The Renegade.”

“The children of Lady Burghersh,” is the title of a portraits of a boy and a girl, busy with flowers, on the terrace of their hereditary mansion.

“The Sicilian mother” represents a joyous woman, looking up to her babe, who sits on her shoulders,—while another “mother's pride” holds by her scarf, full of childish glee.

Melrose Abbey is a beautiful picture of that celebrated ruin.

“There was a time when, 'mid those ruins gray,  
The pomp of Church and Chivalry were seen;  
Amice and Armour mingled there to pray;  
And beauty from those galleries did lean,  
Watching the entrance of the long array,  
The abbot haught, and knights of austere mein,  
Her drooping eyelids glancing down abashed  
As some plumed warrior's gaze from the raised vizor flashed.  
But they are gone.”

“Yanekint in Bulgaria” is the title of the next embellishment. It is a grotesque landscape;—precipitous rocks, with a building perched on the summit, approached by long flights of steps,—a softer height, church-crowned and tree-shaded, and a dark glen through which flows a glistening stream, are its chief features.

This is the last embellishment in this elegant volume, and we pass to the next of the beautiful series, which, like birds of the East, attract by the texture and tint of their plumage, if not by the peculiar excellence of their song.

The Forget me not, is somewhat similar, in outside appearance, to Friendship's Offering.

The first engraving of this beautiful volume, is a full length portrait of her Majesty, in her robes of state. It gives a pleasing specimen of the artists power, in depicting various textures by the graver alone. The fur of the royal robe,—the satin, silk and lace of her Majesty's dress,—the flesh of the face, bosom and arms,—the carved wood work, the stone of the pillars, the carpet and the curtain, have each a character of its own, and exhibit the amazing controul which engravers have in this respect.

The next embellishment is a beautiful representation of “Count Egmont surrendering to the Duke of Alba.” A Gothic apartment, an old warrior seated in an antique chair,—his secretary anxiously intent on the business in hand,—the Count tendering his sword, and a guard at the door way, are the chief particulars. The principal figures are finely managed, as are the elegant details, and the whole seems finely characteristic, and possessing a rich historic and story-telling interest.

The Masquerade is a lovely picture. A richly appalled Mask is addressing a young beauty in a saloon, which opens into a ball room. The accessories are very pleasing, but the face and figure of the lady are nearly perfect,—the expression is life like, and the attitude eminently graceful and natural.

A poem entitled “A Tale of the Tower” is embellished by a painfully interesting picture. It represents the “Young Princes” the victims of Richard the Third, at prayers before retiring to rest on the fatal night. A dreadful gloom lies on the recesses of the apartment,—a stong light, from the solitary lamp, falls on the white night dresses and innocent faces of the brothers,—they kneel