

## VIOLETS.

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED TO THE "WEAKLY" SER-  
VANTS IN *The Week* OF DEC. 13TH.

## I.

You read in green,  
And in blue;  
Again I dream  
You're sipping cream  
Upon a beam.  
I sip! Do you?  
Since you like cream,  
"You bet" I do.

## II.

Because I've nothing else to send,  
This ring of rhyme I send you;  
For rhyme is easier far than sense,  
And yet it's just the same expense.  
And so, while in the present tense,  
You see, my dear, I'll make it do.  
Because I have no sense to send,  
This ring of rhyme I send you.



## A LESSON IN NATURAL HISTORY.

## THE CAMPAIGN ROOSTER.

The Campaign Rooster belongs to the *genus Avis*, and is one of the most peculiar members of that extensive family. He inhabits the arid wastes of printing office racks, and feeds chiefly on dust. As a general rule, he is exceedingly shy, and although ranking amongst *game* birds, he is never seen during a fight. He has, however, a keen instinct for Right and Virtue, and never makes a mistake in following this instinct. He is rarely seen by man, excepting on the day after a political contest, when he comes forth in vast flocks and perches upon the topmost branches of triumphant editorials, invariably appearing in the journal which represents *Right and Virtue*, and never, by any accident, favoring the rival sheet with his presence. Our illustration is engraved from a drawing of a Campaign Rooster lately captured in the columns of the *London Advertiser*, where he had strayed just after the West Middlesex campaign. Mr. Piper, of the Zoo, is understood to be negotiating for a live specimen, but it is doubtful if he will succeed in securing one.

Dagonet, in the *Referee*, gets off this:—The Dean of Bangor's French motto—*sans the, sante* (without tea—health).

## THE FATAL RING.

A CHRISTMAS STORY

BY FLORA FERNFINDER.

## CHAP. I.

Perhaps not in Toronto, nay in the whole broad Province of Ontario, were ever seen two prettier or brighter girls than Lillian McMurdo and Gwendoline Gertrude O'Flynn, her cousin, nor in the wide Dominion stands to-day; a more stately town residence than "McMurdo villa," which rears its massive *facade* overlooking a small tributary of the mighty Don river, adding its small quota of water to that proud and mighty current which, especially in the spring, rolls down fiercely to Ontario and Ashbridge's Bay, depositing therein its wealth of *sotsam* and *jet-sam* and other things, which, together with the aromatic offerings from Gooderham's distillery makes the mouth of that river so popular with pleasure seekers and lovers of the beautiful.

But enough of the Don and its bewitching surroundings. Let us to our story.

It was in the glorious joyful season of Christmas, and all was gay in McMurdo villa. The drawing rooms were redolent of hyacinths and precious exotics, wax candles shone from their sconces on the frescoed walls, the gas chandeliers glistened in their diamond-like pendants, and a huge electric light suspended in the great hall made the scene fairy like in the extreme.

Lillian McMurdo was a blonde of the most pronounced type, no canary in all her father's aviary could show a plumage to rival the color of her luxuriant hair. Her eyes were as blue as the skies of fair Italia, or the new tunic of the police officer who walked the beat on which the villa was situated. Her form, though inclined slightly to *embonpoint*, was to most observers perfection, and as she sat in graceful repose, with priceless pearls in her glowing hair, on one of the magnificent ottomans that bedecked the room, she looked, as indeed she was, a daisy.

She had invited her cousin and whilome schoolmate, Gwendoline Gertrude O'Flynn, to stay with her during the holidays. Ah, could she have foreseen the consequence—but we anticipate. Gwendoline Gertrude was a brunette. Her raven hair was as dark as the visage of an unsuccessful agent on his return from Algoma. She had the clear complexion of her father's race, and her charming *nez retroussé* also indicated her Celtic blood. She was a lady susceptible of great emotions either for love or hate, could love you half to death or blow you up with dynamite, just according to circumstances or the state of her somewhat wayward mind. She likewise was a daisy, but a daisy of quite another order.

"Dear Gwendoline," said the fair Lillian the afternoon before the eve of Christmas, "try and look your best to-night, and be as amiable as possible, and merry for my sake (in good sooth it must be confessed that during the day Gwendoline had given some evidence of her latent temper), "for," continued Lillian, "let there be no secrets between us dearest, young Fitz-Percy Smygthe is coming, and you know he seeks my hand. He is a most eligible young man—and as papa says has 'lots of hoodle.' So I intend to-night to allow him an opportunity to pop the question. There, dear Gwen, you see it all now, so you must help me dear, won't you?"

"Yes," said the dark-browed daughter of the O'Flynn, with a sardonic smile, "I'll help you," adding, *sotto voce*, "over the left."

## CHAPTER II.

"I'll put up three balls if you like and give you a chance," was the remark made by an exquisitely dressed young gentleman to another elegantly dressed young gentleman.

Both were in full dress, each had a bouquet in his button hole.

The scene was in the Rossin billiard room, and the "putting up" referred to the fascinating game of pool.

"Cawn't do it, me boy!" answered the party addressed. "Cawn't stand playing with those wretched Canadian balls, besides ye know, we have to go to old McMurdo's to dinner, and be jove it's near 7 o'clock."

"Haw, be jove, forgot all about it; wait a moment and I'll telephone for a coupe."

"Do" said the other, "If you caunt get a coupe get an 'ack.'"

The two gentlemen were the Hon. Fitz-Percy Smygthe, of Smygthe Hall, Hants, and Captain Trevalyn Tomaskyns, of H.M. 140th Regt. of Foot, late from that part of the Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland known as England. Both were aristocratic in the extreme, as became their high lineage, both temporarily impecunious, and both "waiting for a remittance from 'ome ye know." However, the Hon. Smygthe condescended to borrow a dollar of Bob the "barkeeper," a coupe was ordered, and soon the twain arrived at the scene of the Xmas festivities.

## CHAPTER III.

Such an array of beauty, brilliancy, and brightness, seldom is seen as that which dazzled the eyes of the young English gentlemen, as they were ushered by the bedizened lackey into the best drawing room.

"Delighted to see you," said McMurdo pere to Fitz, as he entered.

"Same to you and many of 'em," replied that gentleman. "Low me to interjuice friend, Captain Tomaskyns. 'Avin' a good time I see."

Lillian then approached, and was at once taken possession of by the Hon. Fitz. He promenaded the rooms with her. He viewed the oil paintings, he inspected the aviary, the aquarium, and the conservatory; never was a more devoted slave than the Hon. Fitz Percy Smygthe.

What is that dark form hidden behind the Peruvian Gooseberry plant in the conservatory?

It is the form and eye of Gwendoline Gertrude O'Flynn.

"What, why, wherefore," she hoarsely muttered between her clenched teeth of pearls, "does this proud cousin of mine, the daughter of a vulgar tho' Plutocratic old retired Scotch soap man, take up the attentions of these young fools, those hated scions of the detested Saxon, why? I give it up, no I won't give it up either. *Blathershin na bockish blatherin aroo*," she exclaimed in the language of the down-trodden Gael (which being interpreted, meaneth, "I'll sarve ye out.") "Why should she take precedence of a daughter of a long line of Irish Kings. Ah, ha! ha! *Arrah na pogue shin Jane*, no surrender, but I must dissemble."

Fitz Percy Smygthe led the fair Lillian to a seat, his cup of happiness filled. He had proposed, was accepted, and he now thought of depleting in a small degree the claret cup in an adjoining room.

Gwendoline approached the fair daughter of the house. "Lillian," said she, "I know all, you have captured the Saxon, got him dead to rights, now I know, though you don't, dearest, the ways and customs of society on such occasions as this. Forgive me, dear, I've been to your rip and you haint (the fair Gwendoline in her excitement was getting a little off in her language). "It is the custom there on Christmas eve to put a wedding ring in the plum pudding, and whoever gets the portion containing it is supposed to be the first one of the company to be married. It is an old and perhaps foolish custom, but aristocratic, very aristocratic. Your lover will no