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NOTICE TO READERS.

Contributions to the columns of the SNOWFLAKE may be addressed to—  
 "The Snowflake Club, Newcastle."  
 or  
 "The Snowflake Club, Chatham."  
 or  
 "The Snowflake Club, Douglastown."  
 Original articles in prose or poetry gladly received from any of our readers.



NOTICE TO READERS.

Friends of this paper will please band in their subscriptions, as soon as convenient, to the Treasurers—  
 Rev. J. A. F. Melbain, Chatham.  
 Rev. James Anderson, Newcastle.  
 William Russell, Jr., Douglastown.

MIRAMICHI, CHRISTMAS, 1878.

THE SNOWFLAKE.

MIRAMICHI, CHRISTMAS, 1878.  
 INTRODUCTORY AND EXPLANATORY AND THAT SORT OF THING

It is, perhaps, due to the public, to whom we appeal, to explain our sudden appearance in the ranks of journalism. Perhaps it is! and certainly if we could do so it would afford us great pleasure to explain, and relieve the public mind, doubtless agitated by our unheralded coming! When first our Club was organized, and the SNOWFLAKE scheme proposed, we had in view a target at which to cast our energies—a worthy object, we assure our readers—*pro bono publico*. However, on reconsideration, remembering that "discretion is the better part of valor," and fearing a financial failure in our scheme, we shall, for the present, allow the beneficiary of the SNOWFLAKE's monetary success to remain incognito. In view of eventually rendering untold benefits to our country and its people, in one form or another, we hope all who can will give the SNOWFLAKE their support. The money we shall be enabled to raise by the kindness of subscribers (only 25 cents for six consecutive numbers of the SNOWFLAKE) we shall apply worthily. We shall endeavor to instruct and amuse our readers, and should here and there considerable chaff appear amongst the wheat, we beg the leniency of critics and the forbearance of friends. We make our *debut* with December and shall, in May, bid our readers farewell. We trust we shall, in the interval, so comport ourselves as to leave no remorse or evil conscience at the close of our humble literary career, and that when "lilies revive again and the dragon-fly dreams on the river" we shall be able to look back with pleasure upon the pure and profitable life of the SNOWFLAKE. Wishing our readers a merry Christmas, we remain respectfully,

THE SNOWFLAKE CLUB.

A CHRISTMAS ANTHEM.

So sang the angels 'mid the stars on high,  
 "Glory to God, on earth good will to men."  
 Re-echo far the anthem of the sky;  
 Ye rolling ages chant the glad refrain.  
 Chorus—Glory to God on high!  
 Who gave His soul to die  
 For man defiled.  
 We hail the hallowed morn,  
 The Lord of life was born—  
 God's Holy child.  
 Let war its clamour still, and sheath the sword,  
 And accepted potentates their homage lend,  
 In Beth'lem's lovely shade behold the Lord!

Adoring bow the knee, your praises blend,  
 That natal morn redeems all other days,  
 The blessed advent of the Christian Year;  
 It shines on all munificent with grace,  
 A light from Heaven teaching far and near.

Ye sons of wealth, your gaudier treasures bring,  
 To pining haunts of poverty repair;  
 Lay forth your tribute to the new-born King;  
 The poor of earth are his peculiar care.

Yea, stoop to cheer the wretched and the vile,  
 Grudge not a hand to succour and to save;  
 He stooped for you, poor slaves of sin and guile,  
 And bowed his head to sorrow and the grave.  
 ARNOLD, GLENGARRY. C. C. A. F.

THE NEW YEAR!

In a few days we will have to bid an eternal farewell to this year 1878, with all its laughter and tears, its jokes and jests and "merry quips." The echoes of its funeral knell will, however, have scarcely died away on the frosty air, before the shouts of joyous welcome of the year 1879 will come floating across the snow-clad field and forest. The first foot-pace of the New Year on Time's stage will be the signal for friend to greet friend with the salutation, "I wish you a happy New Year." In this, or in some other form like this, will the same kindly wish be expressed by many loving lips, or kindly look, or warm grasp of the hand from the centre to the circumference of the civilized world.

Some will utter it with accents of intoxication, as they reel across the mysterious line dividing the known past from the unknown future, with the certainty that unless they dash the intoxicating cup from their lips forever their career through the days and weeks and months of the New Year will but add to their sin and shame and ruin. Some will utter it with pained hearts, because of the memories of those gone into the great Hereafter, who made years past new and happy to them. Some will utter it with mingled fears and hopes, because of the shadow of some loss or disappointment which falls athwart their heart and home. Some will utter it in the exuberance of youthful spirits, to whom the new and the future are all sunshine and flowers.

Thus, "A happy New Year!" will pass from lip to lip in the palaces of the rich, be heard in the humble homes of "honest poverty," mingle with the sigh and wail of wind and wave on board ships and be repeated by the lumbermen in the depths of silent and lonely forests.

The very universality of the interchange of the friendly greeting shows that every

New Year every new period of time is of incalculable importance to us. Important it is as containing the scenes and the elements of our happiness. What are these elements? They are partly outward and partly inward. The outward elements are such as health, money, troops of friends, etc. For us to wish our friends to have these is surely a good wish. But are they the sum and substance of a person's happiness? Decidedly, no! A person may have them all, and in overflowing abundance, and yet be far from being happy. Other elements which belong to the world of mind and spirit must mingle with these to produce real heartfelt joy. A mind and heart full of noble thoughts and kindly sentiments, and exercised by the spirit of the law, which teaches us to do to others as we would have others do to us, can alone extract the honey of happiness from the flowers of outward property. The natural flowers which yield honey to the bee, yield poison to other insects. So it is only the mind and heart permeated by the spirit of goodness which can draw wholesome sweetness from the flowers of outward prosperity. The snarling, snappish, waspish spirit will fly from flower to flower, with no hum of happiness, because unable to extract any honey from them.

When, on January 1, 1879, we will wish each other "A happy New Year!" our wish will or should embrace these two kinds of elements of happiness, especially the spiritual. The SNOWFLAKE, in the spirit and meaning of our definition of happiness, begs to greet its every reader, in anticipation of January 1, 1879, with the personal salutation, "I wish you a happy New Year!"  
 NEWCASTLE.

THE CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL.

Is observed with important religious ceremony by the Roman Catholic Church, by the Church of England and all of its branches in the English dominions and the United States, by the Lutheran Church all over Europe. It can hardly be said to be regarded by any of these as of the importance of Easter, which marks the fulfilment of Christ's earthly mission, and of all the promises made by God to man; but is second only to that great festival. The Presbyterian Church, and the whole body of "dissenting" churches, as they are called, at one time entirely rejected the day as they did all the feasts of the early Church, but they do not do so now with the same rigidity. We may mention, as an interesting fact, that the Edinburgh "Advertiser," for the year 1811, makes not the slightest reference of any kind to Christmas Day, even in its issue of December 24, the day before

Christmas; and so late as 1844, the "Christian Messenger" of Halifax, N. S., a Baptist denominational paper, contains no hint whatever of Christmas or the holiday season, although its issue of December 27th has a poem on "The Death of Stephen." It would be next to impossible now to find a paper printed in the English tongue that does not contain something about Christmas, either in its reading or advertising columns. — St. John Globe.

STANZAS IN WELCOME TO THE MARQUIS OF LORNE AND PRINCESS LOUISE.

Sons of Britain's sea-girt strand,  
 Sons of Erin's sister-land,  
 Sons of France in heart and hand,  
 True to Britain's Queen,  
 Europe's race of far descent;  
 Those o'er whom her skies have bent  
 In life's morn; with others blend,  
 And red tribes, I ween—

All in the glad welcome share,  
 Of your rule O! high born pair,  
 Lord of Lorne, and Princess fair,  
 Welcome, warm and true,  
 To the land where man has made,  
 Fertile plain and smiling glade,  
 Marts of commerce and of trade,  
 Where vast forests grew.

Land where forests' axe-swept trees  
 Bend their high tops to the breeze,  
 Sougling weird-like symphonies,  
 Through the loneliness,  
 Land where Nature, emblem-shade  
 Of the Almighty, is displayed  
 In new vastness, and arrayed  
 In new Western dress.

Keen, where frosty breezes blow,  
 Long and deep the winter snow,  
 And congealed the waters flow,  
 Rivers, lakes and bays,  
 But this land of yours and ours,  
 Lacks not gladsome winter hours,  
 And a gorgeous glory pours,  
 O'er the summer days:

Chief! thy Princess-wife has been,  
 Daughter of our gracious Queen,  
 In her virtues' beautiful sheen,  
 Winsome and sincere,—  
 They to worldly hearts shall prove  
 Better things there are to love,  
 Than the power and wealth that move  
 Men to homage here.

Spring of Scotland's good and great,  
 Thine 'tis to consolidate  
 In firm union every state  
 Of this wide domain,  
 Each whose interests divide;  
 With the races' jealous pride;  
 And the strongest hope to guide  
 Sorrid hope of gain.

All in the glad welcome share,  
 Of your rule, O! high born pair,  
 Lord of Lorne, and Princess fair,  
 Of old Brunswick's line,  
 From the East to Western shore,  
 With our heart we all implore,  
 On both may Heaven blessings pour,  
 Heaven's choice favour shine.

MIRAMICHI. J. R.

OUR GALLANT SHIP.

With rippling sea and freshening breeze  
Our gallant ship sails on and on,  
And hopeful hearts repose at ease,  
And merry thoughts take vent in song.

No adverse winds disturb the sail,  
The gallant ship sweeps proudly by,  
A few more billows and we'll hail  
Our fatherland, "sweet by and by."

A soft, clear voice sings out the strain  
That oft has cheered the weary soul,  
Then all take up the rich refrain  
Till o'er the waves the accents roll.

The night is dark, the moon is young,  
A heavy mist comes spreading out  
The signal lights aloft are hung  
And all aboard is trim and taut

The bells ring out the midnight hour,  
In murky sky and splashing tide,  
When lo! a bark of giant power  
Comes crashing on the harbour side.

With staggering lurch she heels around  
Like vanquished hero seeks a grave,  
With riven beams and gurgling sound  
She sinks beneath the dismal wave.

Fond hearts were there, the true the brave,  
Deep buried in the swirling tide;  
How blest who know that Christ can save,  
On sea or land, what'er betide.

The winds a mournful requiem sing  
With wailing moan and tender sigh,  
And in our hearts the voices ring  
That sang at eve "sweet by and bye."

Old ocean let them sleep,  
Give them a quiet resting-place  
In thy waters still and deep:  
Safely hold  
Thy treasures, mighty sea:  
Until the Archangel calls -  
"Give up thy dead to me."

ATHOL, GLENGARRY. C. C. A. F.

GLEANINGS.

It is said that the devil has many imp: it is presumed the following are among the number:—Imp-erfection, imp-etuosity, imp-lacability, imp-udence, imp-ertinence, imp-urity, imp-icty.

"Come, Doctor," said a gentleman to his minister, "I can give you a treat—a bottle of claret forty years old." The Doctor was in raptures, and eagerly accepted the invitation, when, to his dismay, the expected quart proved only to be a pint bottle. "Waes me," said he, taking it up in his hand, "but its unco wee o' its age."

A friend attending on Charles Mathews the elder, the celebrated comedian, in his last illness, intending to give him his medicine, gave in mistake some ink from a phial on a shelf. On discovering the error, his friend exclaimed, "Good Heavens! Mathews I have given you ink." "Never—never mind, my boy—never mind" said Mathews, faintly, "I'll swallow a bit of blotting paper."

A church in the North Country, which required a pastor had a beadle who took an active interest in all proceedings taken to fill up the vacancy. One of the candidates, after the afternoon service was over, put off his cloak in the vestry and stepped into the church in which our worthy was just putting things to rights. "I was just taking a look at the church" said the minister. "Ay, tak a guid look at it,"

said the beadle "for it's likely ye'll ever see't again."

Pause before you follow example. A mule laden with salt, and an ass laden with wool, went over a brook together. By chance the mule's pack became wetted, the salt melted, and his pack became lighter. After they had passed, the mule told his good fortune to the ass, who thinking to speed as well, wetted his pack at the next water; but his load became heavier, and he broke down under it. That which helps one man may hinder another. Be cautious in giving advice; and consider before you adopt advice.

One of the most amusing scenes in the legislature of Pennsylvania occurred on a motion to remove the Capitol of the States from Harrisburg to Philadelphia. A matter-of-fact member from the rural districts, who had heard by the great facility with which brick houses are moved from one part of a city to another, and who had not the least idea that moving anything but the State House was in contemplation, rose and said, "Mr. Speaker, I have no objection to the motion, but I don't see how on airth you are going to git it over the river."

A poor woman, who had seen better days, understanding from some of her acquaintances that Doctor Goldsmith had studied phisic, and hearing of his great humanity solicited him in a letter to send her something for her husband, who had lost his appetite, and was reduced to a most melancholy state by continual anguish. The good natured poet waited on her instantly, and after some discourse with his patient found him sinking into that worst state of sickness—poverty. The doctor told him they should hear from him in an hour, when he would send them some pills, which he believed would prove efficacious. He immediately went home, and put ten guineas into a chip box, with the following label:—These must be used as necessities require; be patient and of good heart. He sent his servant with this prescription to the comfortless mourner, who found it contained a remedy superior to anything Galen or his tribe of pupils could administer for his relief.

BORRIOBOOLA GHA.

A stranger preached last Sunday,  
And crowds of people came  
To hear a two hours' sermon  
With a barbarous sounding name:  
Twas all about some heathen  
Thousands of miles afar,  
Who lived in a land of darkness  
Called Borrioboola Gha.

So well their wants he pictured  
That when the plate was passed,  
Each listener felt his pocket.  
And goodly sums were cast;  
For all must lend a shoulder  
To push the rolling car  
That carried light and comfort  
To Borrioboola Gha.

That night their wants and sorrows  
Lay heavy on my soul,  
And in deep meditation  
I took my morning stroll,  
Till something caught my mantle  
With eager grasp and wild,  
And looking down with wonder,  
I saw a little child:

A pale and puny creature  
In dirt and rags forlorn;  
What could she want, I questioned.

Impatient to be gone,  
With trembling lips she answered,  
"We live just down the street,  
And mamma she's a dyin',  
And we've nothing left to eat."

Down in a wretched basement,  
With mould upon the walls,  
Through whose half-buried windows  
God's sunshine never falls,  
Where cold, and want, and hunger  
Crouched near her as she lay  
I found a fellow creature  
Gasping her life away.

A chair, a broken table,  
A bed of dirty straw,  
A hearth all dark and fireless  
But these I scarcely saw,  
For the mournful sight before me,  
The sad and sickening show  
Oh, never had I pictured  
A scene so full of woe

The famished and the naked,  
The babes that pine for bread,  
The squalid group that huddled  
Around the dying bed,  
All this distress and sorrow  
Should be in lands afar;  
Was I suddenly transplanted  
To Borrioboola Gha?

Ah, no; the poor and wretched  
Were close beside my door,  
And I had passed them heedless  
A thousand times before.  
Alas for the cold and hungry  
That met me every day  
While all my tears were given  
To the suffering far away.

There's work enough for Christians  
In distant lands we know;  
Our Lord commands his servants  
Through all the world to go,  
Not only to the heathen;  
This was the charge to them  
"Go, preach the word, beginning  
First at Jerusalem."

O, Christian, God has promised  
Who'er to thee has given  
A cup of pure cold water  
Shall find reward in Heaven.  
Would you secure the blessing,  
You need not seek it far:  
Go, find in yonder hovel  
A Borrioboola Gha.

THE BEAUTIES.

When St. Stephen's Green was the fashionable promenade in Dublin, not long after pretty Mrs. Delany and tuncful Mrs. Donellan walked three times around it, and three times passed the brass statue of George the Second, every fine day, in order to recruit their constitutions and complexions for the Bishop of Cork and Ross's hospitalities, two girls in the poplins and mantuas of the genteel life of the period, walked in the dusk of the evening in the direction leading from Leeson Street to Fishamble Street. They were panting with the speed they were making, while they occasionally talked with much eagerness.

"I wonder if we shall get them, Sally?"  
"If we do they will be at the top of the mode, Peg, for she never had anything behind the fashion."

"I wonder if we shall charm her ladyship?"  
"Sure we can try, Sally; if we do it will be the making of us."

Clearly, it was a mission of great importance in the girls' eyes, enough to engross them so completely, that they neither looked to the right nor to the left as they pursued their way, though more than one passenger in the dim light looked after them. Maria Edgeworth tells us, that

at the Dublin Ranelagh her young sister Honor was mobbed and compelled to retire from the scene—of her personal attractions; but these girls in the sprigged poplins, they not only charmed Dublin, they turned the dogged John Bull head of the City and Court of London. They were not altogether safe from notice and annoyance at this hour and in these streets, but Irishmen are gallant and Irish-women fearless.

However, as the girls approached the door of a house in Fishamble Street, one of them hung back.

"I cannot do it, Peg; she will be angry."

"Angry child! she is the best-natured woman in the world."

"She will grudge her lute-strings and laces."

"Grudge, Sally! she is so free-handed, she scatters silver coin every night among the boys and girls that run after her chair."

"And they cry, 'We don't want your poor money; we want one of your smiles, you jewel, for they are like the dawn of day.' But now, Peg, don't you think it is low in us to push ourselves into a player's house and borrow her bravery?"

"My dear creature, we cannot help it, it is our only hope. Such a dance as I have run to get the card to the Lady Lieutenant's, and it is plain we cannot go without fine clothes, and father finds he cannot furnish them. Bless you, we will pay them back like queens when we are ladies of quality, with rich lords at our backs."

"Pay them back, indeed! When did rampant selfishness remember a benefit, worldly or unworldly? The tradition lingers of the loan, but who records the repayment? What mention is there made of the two loveliest and stateliest peeresses in his Majesty's realm supporting and consoling poor, penitent Peg Woffington?"

"Oh, Peg, Peg Gunning! I don't think it is becoming."

"You silly, changeable chit, we have no time to lose," scolded the bolder adventuress. "I'll tell you what, Sally: will you go in with me, if I fetch out Sally Fortesque, who is to introduce us to her ladyship, and if she consent to bear us company?"

"It would not be so bad, Peg," granted Sally, like all cowardly, credulous persons, inclined to snatch at the defence of company: you know you often say the more the merrier."

"I never need folk to lead me by the nose," grumbled Peg. "But Sally Fortesque is good-natured when you speak her fair; and she wants sorely, for her own ends, to be sure, to be off with her ladyship, while we want as mightily to be on with her; so for the present we suit each other like curls and cream. Just wait a bit in the entrance, Sally, and see that you don't let any of the men look under your hood."

Away dashed the proud, schemer and leader, who bore down and dragged after her the more fretful, but more scrupulous companion. In a few minutes she returned with a girl blushing under her hood, and plucking nervously at her apron.

"I'm afraid it is not right, Peg; you may have anything you like of mine, and welcome; I'll rather stay at home myself."

"Heyday! and who would present us to her ladyship? Besides, you know,

your aunt would not let you, and you have nothing to suit us. Why, you are three inches lower than Sally here, though they do couple you, and call you the "sweet Sallies."

"What will your father say?"

"He would swear like a trooper if he knew it to-night; but he'll laugh till his sides split when he hears it to-morrow, more, by token, if we make a hit. I tell you what, Sally Fortescue, I cannot dawdle in the street till nightfall, and have some of those fellows of St. Patrick to keep off you two silly Sallies. Oh, dear, and it is time to dress already. What is to hinder us from committing a piece of folly like our betters? merely calling, in a frolic, on the most bountiful woman in Ireland or the world, and asking her if she will consent to succour two distressed wretches in their extremity. If you do not come with us this minute, Sally, I will judge you are not in earnest in proposing us to take your place, and travel with her ladyship to deliver her from the vapours."

"Oh, it will be such a disappointment if we are not allowed to meet her eye, and make our fortunes," broke in the other Sally piteously. "If, after all, we have to stay at home and darn frills, and cry our eyes out to-night!"

"I wish I were darning frills down at Deanston," exclaimed Sally Fortescue, almost crying herself: "but I have a great desire to help you, since you are not well off here, and could fill my place without any loss to yourselves. I saw Mrs. Woffington at the Bishop's last night. I'll go with you."

The three hurried on a few paces, and stopped before a door. The mistress of the party knocked without a moment's pause. A slatternly lodging-house servant, slatternly, but still pleasant as only Irishwomen can look pleasant in rage and dirt, and hair all dangling about their ears, answered their summons. Mrs. Woffington was at home but could see no company; she was about to get ready for the theatre.

What was to be done then?

"Tell Mrs. Woffington it is three rival beauties in trouble who have ventured to seek her counsel and ask her charity."

"Send them up, honey," called a rich voice over the filthy bannisters: "Peg Woffington don't refuse a favor when she can grant it, and sorry a rival does she fear either."

They mounted the littered staircase, where cabbage stalks and withered nose-gays tripped the feet of the great actress, and entered a parlor smelling vilely of tobacco-smoke, and used as a sitting-room and dressing-room. It was run over with heterogeneous clothes, play-books and play-bills, gilt crowns and nun's heads, and cards of invitation. There was a cleared corner of the table, on which lay fragments of bread and cheese, at which the occupant of the room was still munching. Possibly it was not too untidily or unsavoury a snuggerly for Peg Woffington, who was picked up by Argus-eyed Madame Violante humbly washing clothes at the side current of the Liffey.

In the middle of the mess stood the people's beauty tapping her fingers on the table, and meeting with vivacity the faltering gaze of the new-comers. She was dressed in the universal poplin, with no ruffles but cambric frills round her arms,

and a fly-cap on the back of her head. Her face was somewhat broad, but with the perfection of teeth and eyes to which some faces owe so much, and with that constant succession of light and shade, flicker and flash, which belongs to a mobile expression, and invests it with a fascination which is like that of flesh and blood over wood and stone. She was buxom, brilliant, kindly; but woe is me! there were lines of self-indulgence already written round the flexible mouth with the milk-white glittering teeth; and in the warm hazel eyes there had gleamed ere now evil spirits of wantonness and passion.

"I am Peg Woffington; at your pleasure. What do you Dublin belles want of me? I wot I'm more plagued with Dublin beaux; but perhaps for that very reason I can read your fortunes, or fetch and carry billet-doux."

"Oh, Mrs. Woffington, you can confer on us a huge obligation; but I'm ashamed speak of it," sighed the first intruder.

"Poo! Poo! out with it girls; we are equals when you come to see me, and no one can ever say I turned my back on an ally, though many an ally has played a snavery trick on me. Only don't keep me waiting: I'm his Majesty's and the country's servant, remember that;" and Peg laughed her gay, somewhat boisterous laugh, reflecting to how many her service was slavery.

"We are the Gunnings," declared the petitioner, audacious enough after she had once begun. "and this is Sally Fortescue from the south; and after yourself we are the three rival beauties of Dublin this season."

"I know, I know," cried Peg, delighted with her visitor's frankness: "one of you is called Peg after myself. We are called 'the pretty Pegs,' as the others are styled 'the sweet Sallies.' Which is my namesake?"

"It is I, Mrs. Woffington."

"Let us see you, lass, at close quarters;" and Peg laid friendly but determined hand on the hood. "Hum—not bad; I'm not a wit ashamed of my fellow." Ashamed, Peg? If you had not held the dregs of a noble heart, full of free admiration of all that was beautiful, you would have been furious with jealousy. You had reigned on your own boards; but yours were but pebebian boards after all; hers was to be a patrician footstool to a patrician throne. A whole century has echoed the renown of the of the Gunnings' faces, and their born aristocracy of beauty; their ivory brows; the curl of their long brown eye-lashes; the dimples in their cheeks of velvet, brushed with the bloom of the peach; their fine noses and chin; their delicate, haughty nostrils: their throats where the black velvet bands formed wicked contrasts with the white, firm, yet soft flesh and blood—something not cold like snow, but warm as a little bird, and mellow in its whiteness, like the white in the fur of the ermine.

Peg Woffington drew a long breath of approval. "I'm afeared to have anymore looks," she declared in comical consternation. But she was not frightened or vexed; she was delighted,—poor ardent Peg; and she fairly clapped her hands when, having gazed over the other Gunning, she finally unhooded Sally Fortescue—a face at that moment as

crimson as a stock gillyflower, half shy, half-vexed, yet so open, so pure, with such cool, calm wells of eyes, such a gentle placid mouth.

"You three hate Banagher," cried Peg, making use of her old brogue; "you are a fine set of beggars, you darlings. What can I do for you? Shall I drive every lord from the green-room? Shall I order them to have a ridotto in your honor?"

"Oh, no; oh, no; Mrs. Woffington, we would not be unreasonable; but we have received an invitation to the Castle to-night, and we assure you we have not a stitch of decent clothes for our backs. We believe you have a fellow-feeling for poor young women who have their fortunes to make, and we would be your debtors for life if you would but lend us, for this one night, a pair of your worst gowns?"

"My worst! it is the best in my possession you shall sport till you're tired. It is a black shame that you should be in want of them; it is a pleasure to think of their being so well filled. The sparks' hearts will be clean broken to-night. I needn't mind for myself; the best people will be at the Castle; and if any critics bother to remark that Roxalana is not so fine as she would be, I'll give them half-a-dozen more curtsies and smiles. You see, girls, when I'm out of pearls, I make it up in smiles;" and Peg turned on her guests with one of those radiant smiles in which lips and teeth and lovely bent brows over glancing eyes, all laughed together. Ah, Peg, if you had only known the worth of your smiles!

How good Mrs. Woffington was! They were her bounden servants, and tossing over the contents of her great boxes, and casting before them an ample choice. "What shall it be, girls? The plain pink purluosity, or the blue flowered silk? You should know your own mind. You've heard what the Beefsteak Club pretend was my comment on women's conversation—"All silks and scandal." But what shall I offer you, my dear?" turning to Sally Fortescue; "for I spy as plain as paint in your little face that you read the old poets, Shakspeare and Spenser, and the Bible, and talk of them, and the poor, and your work, and your blessed father and mother. What can I have the honor of giving you, my dear Miss Sally?"

"She does not need a loan," explained the Gunnings; "she has her own brocade as new as a gold guinea, but she does not want to shine; she's wild to break with her ladyship, who caught her down in the provinces, and is carrying her away to London, to make her fortune right on end,—marry her off-hand to a rich English squire or grand mylord. It is quite thrown away on Sally Fortescue; she would prefer to run back to Deanston, work in the garden, ride Dennis O'Hourke, help her mother and her father, and all her folk, if she could only contrive to give her ladyship the genteel slip."

"What has come over you child?" demanded Peg, in amaze, arrested in her vigorous operations, and remaining stock still on her knees, surrounded by costly stuffs of all the dyes of the rainbow.

Sally blushed a more vivid red—nearer a sweet-william this time, but looking all the prettier in the high color in company with her clustering chestnut-brown hair and meditative eyes.

"I'd liefer stay, Mrs. Woffington; per-

haps it is vanity, but I think they miss me at home. My father and mother gave me up with reluctance; I am of use there, I might as well be a butterfly here, and I'll not continue a butterfly," persisted Sally pettishly. "I am not fit for it; I was born to be a sober, working girl, and my father promised me that I should write his letters this year, and my mother was to intrust me with the household linen, and, oh, I was teaching Jenny, the crow-boy, to read, and he was coming on so finely! It is not so bad here in Dublin, for I have my old aunt to look after, and she wears for me in the evenings to play her game of cribbage with her; but I'll be of no use at all at all to her ladyship, who has her own young woman, and will not even allow me to set up for her, and sew at her embroidery frame. I'll pine away, or I'll get into mischief, and forget my duty, and lose my peace. Indeed, I must travel home again."

"You good child," vowed Peg, with moist eyes, "I'll tell you what I've read pat to your purpose in some of my foolish play books. An Italian saint left his estates to his brother, and retired into the cloister. His brother accepted the gift, but remarked, sorrowfully, 'Ah! brother, you've taken heaven and you've only given me earth.' I wish I had that speech to make to night, and I'd cause some heart strings to tingle; although the stupid men and women who owned them, starting and staring, pale and disordered, would not be able to tell what ailed them. I'm sorry, I'm mortal sorry, that I've nothing fit for your acceptance, but you'll give me your hand before we part."

"You are over kind, Mrs. Woffington," responded the young girl, all aflame with answering modesty and gratitude: "you who are so charitable to the poor, not so much as asking them when they've washed their hands. You are the first player that I have known; but I admire you, Mrs. Woffington; I love you as much as any sweet soul out of my own dear home;" and Sally, in a fit of enthusiasm, stooped down and kissed Peg Woffington.

Peg was much moved; she drew back and covered her face with her hands for a moment, and spoke hastily, in a half-smothered voice: "My dear, I'm not angry; but you don't know what you've done; you don't know how your lips feel to such a woman of the world as I am. Girls! girls! it is a wicked world; perhaps I should not help you to enter it; but there cannot be more than one wise little one, and I'm glad she kissed me: I'm glad of it though one day the remembrance may burn me to the bone."

That night's work decided the events of three lives. The Gunnings went to the Castle in the borrowed plumes of Peg Woffington, and literally dazzled the assembly by the fairness of their faces. Their success might have intoxicated them; but as a rule, I don't find intoxication on the books of Court beauties. It is rather lofty and joyous elation, joined to the greed of a thief for praise and power. The sisters took by storm the listless imagination of her ladyship, who liked to be roused; and desired to convey with her across the Channel, an Irish gem or gems to adorn her working-closet and her back drawing-room. Sally Fortescue was suffered to excuse herself from the glittering, cold, hard setting, and th

Gummings consented, with all their hearts, to occupy the gaping vacancy. The famous beauties carried out such a raid, and bore off such spoil as only Irish beauties have twice in half a century wrested from close-listed British hands. They reached the toppling summit of their ambition, until the blood-royal alone defied the witchery of their sway; the strawberry leaves, bangles next to the sceptre, were again and again laid at their feet miming to conquest. Verily, the Duke who claimed the wide moors and parks of Clydesdale, and the proud peaks of Goat-fell; and great Macallummore, the Lord of the Isles, submitted to wear the same flowery chains. The Gummings were the true queens of society. To them both wealth and rank went a begging in their time, as they themselves had gone a begging to Peg Wollington. Both sisters became famous women of quality. One sister was twice a duchess. Luckier (yes, lucky is the word we play upon), Luckier lasses never entered London without a penny!

Sally Fortescue returned to the big house of Deanston as she had left it. The Squire could not resist a hurrah of glee, though he affected to shake his white head wrathfully. The Squire's lady lectured her soundly, but she held her child to her bosom, and from that moment she renounced the spectacles which she had lately assumed and which bestowed so peculiarly precise and pedantic an air on her comely, matronly face. Sally bloomed on a while light-hearted, but soon grew seldat, and became the only stay of her parents. There was a Shane O'Dyer, one of the rank crop of gentlemen-farmers, who rode and danced for a time after Sally, but he was only a gentleman-farmer, of some third cousin of a proprietor. In one of the first eruptions of the rebellion his stack-yard was burnt, his cattle houghed, his hedges broken down, his cabin laid open to the wind and weather. He never recovered the injury; for he was not a man of educated faculties and disciplined resources, but only upright and honest, frank and kind, and a mighty hunter. The match was not to be dreamt of then, though Sally was so gentle a girl, and young O'Dyer so manly and fond, and possibly the brightest young man in these quarters. It was believed the young girl took the loss to heart, although not so much as he did. Indeed the young farmer, ruined now beyond redemption, rode a little more desperately than before, swang from side to side in his saddle with weakness, sat shivering in his wet clothes in the tumble-down house, began to burn and melt away with fever, crept as often as he could to the hillock which commanded a view of the big house of Deanston, and died one fine day in his prime. There was nothing seen on Sally, except that her bloom went off at once and altogether; she who had been so sweet a woman in her blushes was ever after a sweet white-faced woman, who had laid up her brocade in lavender, and only wore sprigged poplins and muslins on Sundays and Saturdays.

Peg Wollington had run her course, her meteor course. Alas, alas! so near the sun the one day; so far off in the blackness of darkness the next. Her generous impulses, her kindly acts were all blurred

and obliterated, like stars behind inky clouds, in the progress of a life flighty and erring, and degenerating often into riot and brutality. But Peg's pitiful light did not leap out in the murky night. The poor soul stopped short in her godless, unrighteous career; she suddenly cried out that she saw the broad way and the pit to which it led, and felt her self sinking to destruction. But she had also a glimpse of the narrow road mounting up to the heights still open to her. How awful it was for her light, dancing feet to retrace the long and weary waste thick set with thorns! What mocking voices and malignant faces tortured her on the backward journey she could have told; but she grasped the rod and bent upon the staff; and sincere, meek and, shame faced in her great repentance, surely she crossed the gulf, forded the stream, and reached the shore. One old, old acquaintance, reading of Peg Wollington's conversion and repentance in the idle gossip of a stray newspaper of the day, knelt down on her saint's knees, and thanked God for it in her saint's humility and gladness.

In the cracked city of Paris, not yet mended after the French Revolution, two English beauties divided the enthusiasm of a French audience. One of them was but a Bristol crystal, a paltry *parceme*, a vulgar city dame, to whom the charmed circle of Almack's was closed. The other was but an Irish diamond: but then it was an Irish diamond of the first water; and think what this diamond felt to be compared by the shallow French to the Bristol stone lacquered in Brummagem! a diamond that had given back the courtliest rays, whose lustre was the perfection of refinement, and whose sensitiveness to impressions was rather increased by the fact that it was a doubtful diamond, and not an assured diamond of the mines of Golconda. And the showy-tasted, rapidly-deciding French had not the discrimination to perceive the difference, indeed preferred the fatter, fairer sprightlier of the two ladies or diamonds. They say the other died of it, the diamond! This lucky Gunning died of mortification and spite, if it was not of the effects of the paint with which she had taken pains to plastering and daubing the fading face once so radiant in its bloom. I see her in the dressing-closet whimpering or scolding, and laying on the poison till she sinks back under one of the attacks of faintness which overcome her. I see her in the theatre or opera engaged in the wretched battle, biting her lips and writhing as if stung, beneath her outward calm, when the superannated marquis or puppy prince is paraded in the box of the exulting rival. I see her in a moment brought face to face with a grinning skeleton; her stagger and shrick fill my eyes and ears. I dare look no longer. Oh, mean and miserable death, tragic in its meanness since it is the dismissal of the slighted, degraded soul into an unknown region of retribution!

Far away in a castle, high a palace in its pride of place by the western shores, surrounded by retainers more deferential and devoted than ever were Saxon subjects, a great duchess entertained an English scholar and his complacent *compagnon de voyage*. The great lady had wit enough to be affable to the great Englishman; but to the little Scotchman, even under her

own castle-roof, she condescended to show the cold shoulder. The great lady was so touchy that she could not bring herself to forget and forgive some frivolous offence of the meddling little man's. Thus the rose-leaf that nuzzled the cybarite's couch was matched by the trifl that could fret the petted mind of a great lady, whose story had gone like a fairy tale, whose destiny had equalled Cinderella's in splendour. Such pomp and such irritability, how grand, how irksome! I have said luckier lasses than the Gummings never entered London. Do you think their luck was so much worth having, after all, when the luckiest of the Gummings could not find enough magnanimity to pardon a foolish man's folly? Was this all their luck brought them to? Poor Lady Lechlure was so weak as to die of the pin pricks of vanity and another woman's triumph; and this great duchess showed a peevish face beneath the strawberry leaves, and carried an empty heart, in which rankled the smallest affront, though that heart beat within the state and dignity of proud castle-walls. Why, a meek and quiet spirit in a body clad in hoshden grey, with no better shelter than "a clay biggin," were, if not luckier, a thousandfold more blest.

In the heart of Ireland, away in the corner of a big, tickety house, dwindled down into the dwelling of an agent, whose family occupied it in part, a middle-aged, serene, dainty single woman was, without the least conscious assertion of authority or influence, looked up to and tended by the whole household. Although the least domineering of women, she relished her sweet, natural supremacy; liked dearly to confer favors in the shape of caudles and cakes, and shapes of frills and caps, and was not above receiving gifts in return; nor above stepping in next door to look wistfully round the old bare walls, to make much of and to be made much of, by her simple corrial neighbors. In the sanctuary of her own two rooms, that old lady—the prettiest picture of faded gentility that I can think of—used to indulge herself sometime in turning over drawers and cabinets containing relics of the past. They were not worth it: her own antiquated brocade, the tarnished gilt buttons of the Squire, the soiled pearl hoop of the Squire's lady, the hunting whip which Shane O'Dyer gained at a hunting, match, and insisted on depositing at Deanston, and which his heirs had likewise decided on leaving at Deanston, because it was where Shane, poor fellow! would have wished it to remain. The articles were intrinsically valueless; the very associations which they recalled were little worth in themselves; but these were tender eyes that gazed on them, and the longer they gazed, the more loving, and yet the more contented and clear they became; for it does not so much matter that there have been foiled hopes and forlorn days here, when the future, with its fulfilment and its restoration, is close at the door. Nothing matters then, save that you have dealt fairly both by yourself and your brother in the old Italian saint's bargain; that you have taken heaven, and have not put him off with earth, but have sought that he should share with you in the portion infinite and eternal.

[Margaret Wollington was an actress whose society was highly valued by the

club of talent and fashion of the last century. One of the lovely Gummings was an ancestress of the Marquis of Lome. — Ed.]

CHRISTMAS ECHOES.

"How many families whose members have been dispersed and scattered, far and wide, in the restless struggles of life, are they re-united, and meet once again in that happy state of companionship and good-will, which is a source of such pure and unalloyed delight, and one so incompatible with the cares and sorrows of the world, that the religious belief of the most civilized nations and the rude traditions of the roughest savages alike number it among the first joys of a future condition of existence provided for the blest and happy! How many old recollections, and how many dormant sympathies does Christmas time awaken." DICKENS.

Old Shakespeare quaintly tells us that :  
Some say that ere against that season comes  
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrate,  
The bird of dawn singeth all night long;  
And then they say no spirit walks abroad;  
The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike;  
No fairy tales, no witch hath power to charm;  
So hallowed and so gracious is the time!

The custom of singing carols at Christmas is very ancient. It is rightly observed by Jeremy Taylor, that "Glory to God in the Highest, on earth peace, and good-will towards men," the song of the angels on the birth of the Saviour, was the first Christmas carol.

The earliest collection of Christmas carols supposed to have been published was printed in the year 1521.

The following chorus is from an ancient Anglo-Norman carol :

Hail father Christmas! hail to thee!  
Honor'd ever shalt thou be!  
All the sweets that love bestows,  
Endless pleasures wait on those  
Who like vassals brave and true,  
Give to Christmas homage due.

In ancient times a souse'd boar's head was borne to the principal table in the hall with great state and solemnity, as the first dish on Christmas day.

The boar's head in hande bring I,  
With garlands gay and rosemary,  
I pray you all syng merrily,

The above are the three first lines of a carol sung at this "chiefe serveyce," or on bringing in with great ceremony the boar's head.

Near Raleigh, in Nottinghamshire, there is a valley, said to have been caused by an earthquake several hundred years ago, which swallowed up a whole village together with the church. Formerly, it was the custom for people to assemble in this valley, on Christmas day to listen to the ringing of the bells beneath them. This, it was positively asserted might be heard by putting the ear to the ground and harkening attentively.

A MAN saw a ghost while walking along a lonely highway at midnight. The ghost stood exactly in the middle of the road, and the wayfarer, deciding to investigate, poked at it with his umbrella. The next instant he was knocked twenty feet into a mudhole. Moral: Never poke an umbrella at a large white mule when its back is turned.