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Literature.

CHRISTMAS IS COMING?

Feathery flakes are dancing, dancing, In the gray morn's frosty gleam-Heralds they of reindeer prancing From the gardens of our dream—
From the bright land of the elf-king,
Where the bonbons gavly grow
Just like sweets of summer gardens,

When the tulips smile in row. Feathery flakes are falling, falling, From the skies in softest way; And between are voices calling:
"Soon it will be Christmas day!" Don't you know how in the springtime Wintry snows are scattered wide

Ere the lovely purple blossoms

Dare to peep from where they hide? Feathery flakes are sifting, sifting, Through the chill December air-Here, and there, and yonder drifting, Making everything more fair; Laving whiter folds than linen

On the houses and the trees, Softer than the richest damask Spread our dainty guest to please. Soon the bonbons will be falling As the flakes have fall'n to-day, And the children will be calling To their patron saint so gay:

"Ah! we know when came the snowflakes You would come, dear Santa Claus-For we always (you remember) Know the wind's way by the straws." See, the trees are fair as any

That elves have wreathed with snow Will be planted—oh! so many!— In our better homes. And lo! Something better far than snowflakes Shall be hung about their green-Candies, toys, and fairy taper, Lighting up the merry scene.

And the children dancing, dancing, Till all tired their little feet, Shall, with half-shut eves up-glancing Wonder: "Why is life so sweet?" And some tender voice shall whisper-Flake-like falling from above: "Christmas is so sweet, my darling,

Just because it's king is love !"

THE QUEEREST CHRISTMAS.

CHAPTER I.

voice indignantly. duct has been disgracefully unlady- Carla, you may unbend your brows, like, and treacherous, and--'

same voung voice (in spite a gentle, the Christmas festivities?' acted in any way that would disgrace ingtons.' I will not so belie myself!

in vain to play the peacemaker.

really sinking to the spiteful. 'You half-whisper.

you shall not go away till you have lurch. Why, with these berry-brown care in a loose box.' wrong, and expressed some penitence door only two or three days ago.' destination the last traces of Miss some one to love and protect me.' you would stand aside Drusilla.'

trying to soothe her aggrieved friend. traction all along.' it's a great impertinence on your part. ugly husband attached to it.' the one I give her-dare to meddle in gry as if she had.' what does not concern you?'

expression on her face that cowed the began to resent it. ence, and make me as happy as you I recall her ruel speeches.'

enter society under your auspices' very well!' cried her aunt, shaking sant anticipations are at an end. In- they went away thanking the ladies currie-powder intended for the rabbit been,' yawned Gerald Power, throw- cribed to her with pain I suffered last all. with passion. 'Your father shall stead of joining the merry party at profusely, and wishing them all sorts stewing close by. But the mincement ing up his arms, and kicking together evening. She is most aimable.' After Carla, by help of Ernie's ju- 'While we are looking forward to a happy know all I have had to endure from Mr. Lavington's, Drusie and I are of homely and seasonable good the ingredients for which had cost old the blazing logs before which had cost old life to Miss Taunton's caprices.'

to return to it.' indifferently, 'I will go to Mr. Lav- not persist in exiling you.

But here she was tartly interrupted.
But here sh have written to the Lavingtons to tell girls were to travel.

WEEKLY JOURNAL DEVOTED TO AGRICULTURE, LITERATURE, AND NEWS.

ANDREW LIPSETT, Publisher.

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NO. 37.

'I am glad that the house is a se- the dragon must be obeyed; but bring that dainty napery, or that primitive places; but in consideration positive I heard a smothered laugh Let me come too, I am so very they would promise to join in the cluded one,' answered Miss Taunton, while we yield to tyranny, shall the pretty silver tea equipage, or that for your fears, dear, I will run and the other side."

'Don't be absurd, Ernie!' said Mogg's horn spoons, two-pronged Ernie's light footsteps carried her seen that a figure was standing on the furled and unfurled her huge fan in on, Ernie trilled an ancient country her utmost to attract attention. After Carla, half crying, half laughing. forks, and chipped crockery? Or who to the side of the old woman before threshold half obscured by the gather- some perturbation, he did not choose ballad, in which a lady confessed her what has happened, I should not be Let me finish my speech before but Ernie could have so thoroughly she had time to unfasten the heavy ing twilight of the short winter day. to hear the objection she stammered, love, and a fond youth vowed to adore justified in permitting you to reside you abuse it, young woman. I say infected her companions with her own bolts, and she stood beside Mrs. 'It is she!' in any family where you could, with again that Miss Tannton shall not light mood, that the lonely old house Moggs prompting the queries she There, in threadbare velvet dress- "fal, lal, la!" at the end of every

luctant hand of Miss Taunton, and pleasant engagements than you can 'Girls,' said Ernie, the next morn-stranger demanded. 'The mist is so tacles partially concealed her still them. fast, 'I foresee that we shall have to house if we had not stumbled against black patches on her cheeks. Her versation this morning,' said Miss and Carla was also peering at them the top of the morning to you! And 'My loves, I have a notion that do everything for ourselves. Mrs. the gate. And to add to our difficul brocaded silk dress stood out stiffly Ernest. 'A man with his capacious through her great spectacles, when what has happened? Did the cockatoo the air of the fens will be good for Moggs is not a model maid of-all-work. ties one of my companions has slip around her, and in one of her mittened mind cannot be troubled with our she astonished them all by springing get frozen last night? How cold it my health,' was the placid reply; One's notions of cleanliness suggest ped down a bank in the darkness, and hands she carried a large Japanese mundane affairs.' And when Mr. to her feet with a joyful shriek, tosswas! When I awoke this morning I 'and it will be such an excellent op- putting her under the pump, but one twisted his ancle so badly that he can fan, in the other an ivory-handled Danesborough had selected from the ing off the scull-cap and goggles, and

to take in our poor friend, and look 'Not at all, sir. We thought it Ernie, taking out a pocket mirror to this night only you will ask no ques-

her companions had just vacated. His been sacrilege to have disturbed 'Entertaining the Comte," an. she found it difficult to preserve her

caresses and loving whispers, was and he declared that Clara was his at- opinion of her own, was heard to part I have serious thoughts of found- and refinement condemned to dwell and the young Frenchman followed these wandering spirits.'

trusion, said the elder gentleman, who Assisted by Drusie she presided at absurdities, observed the Count. gaily as she used to do when under 'And stay in the fens?' exclaimed though but a vear or two the senior the tea table, chatted pleasantly, 'See, she is quite agitated.' of the others, took the lead. 'Is there though a little formally, the while, But they are not absurdities,' has taken it into his wise head to charity—a girl who has no home but ly. 'But Miss Taunton is just as an- her father. The guards and finally withdrew, with a pro Gerald Pro Gera porters were all civil to the three fair charming cottage near some pleasant, the woman who admitted us. We mise to visit them again in the, stop- since I have been here I have been without me. Oh! Carla, he is too Pretty Ernestine threw herself back refined young creatures who appealed lively town, and, admit no visitors will send a message to them by her.' ping and turning at the door with a voices and strange good, too sensible for such a butterfly

CHAPTER III.

me because I will not permit her to papa innerited from an eccentric, brightly. 'The first persons who pudding was ready for mixing; an answered his invalid friend, waking this place dull. follow her own perverse and degrad- miserly cousin. Imagine what our have crossed the threshold of our new hour's careful study of the cookery- up from a doze. 'I wish from my But Mr. Ernest sent an excuse by in which she excelled, with Mr. kindly than his friends? While Danesing inclinations. But this ends it. I Christmas will be spent in such an home have invoked blessings on us. book had resulted in Ernie declaring heart that you and Danesborough his sister, when she appeared at the Danesborough quite ealmly, except borough and I were being perplexed by a wash my hands of you. To-morrow isolated spot, while you and every one Oh! girls, I'm so hungry; let's bestir herself equal to the turkey a neigh- would leave me to my own devices breakfast-table. He rarely quitted when Gerald Power came near to couple of saucy masqueraders, he was basking morning you shall quit my roof never else will be enjoying yourselves.' that ancient dame and equally ancient bouring farmer had offered them, and why should you be detained in this his study; if Mr Danesborough liked torment her with his quizzical to think Drusille the prettiest name in the 'A dismal prospect, truly. But spouse into helping us, and we'll they felt justified in reposing on their insolated place because I am so un- to visit him there before he went speeches and the merry but search vocabulary. I left him closeted with Mr. lucky as to have injured my ancle?" away.-

You will retire to your father's estate special pleader,' cried Ernestine, had brought such an ample supply, Visitors!' gasped Drusie, putting troubles me is a fear that we are in- contrived to entangle her scholarly to bury her face in her handkerchief, in Cambridgeshire, and there await starting up. 'If she will not let you hid the faded chintz of the worm eat- up her hand to smoothe her wavy commoding our kind entertainers. guest in such a discussion on magne- lest she should laugh aloud. Then I have contrived to make Mrs Noggs tism, and showing such absorbed in- Geraid and the Count sang, and prised him that it is impossible for fuse you permission to accompany and while Drusie toasted bread, and 'Visitors at this hour? Absurd!' -Moggs. is it?-comprehend that terest in his explanations, that when Drusie, who had a sweet soprano me to my uncle's. It will be very Carla, watch in hand, boiled eggs, retorted Ernie. 'Besides' no one we are anxious to be permitted to see she brought it to an adrupt close the voice, was persuaded to join them in and thank them for their hospitality, subject had not been recurred to.

> was kept in a state of open-mouthed murmured Drusie. 'Oh-oh, Carla, 'Very odd that they don't show came into the room at twilight bedecked herself. a banner screen. 'It appears that would have been so thoughtful as to bulgaries are unknown in these when I reached it, and I am almost himself.'

was afraid to look in the glass, for portunity for adding snipe shooting can't carry them out while the water only walk with our assistance. crutch-stick on which she frequently shelves a couple of books for himself, flying to the door of the room. Then

Miss Ernest, and named the embarr- men were bowed out. 'For Heaven's sake admit us!' assed, blushing Drusie who had timid As soon as they had departed the fore him. her temper too thoroughly to be poli- 'Who says it will be a sacrifice?' knows a stout girl who will come up quire shelter till the morning, and ing under her care.

achieve more failures than suc- churls; and then another speaker ex Danesborough, when he had present- and listening so attentively to my Carla.

'Never! never!' interposed the been refusing you?—new dresses for Drusie, depressed by the bitter edibles, and somebody will roll out the village you name, if you'll consent ed her head loftily.

with some entreaties, she consented 'You will make Mademoiselle sure,' Carla persisted; 'for I am

has to her?" queried St. Evremont. study, and in spite of sundry feeble 'Poor Drusie! how could we for-What sweet, innocent eyes your protests, triumphed over all opposi- get her!' exclaimed Ernie, suddenly, country woman have! Hers filled tion, and brought him down to din. as she stood with the betrothed pair,

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some glees, to which Ernie strummed pelled to trespass upon it a little urged on by Captain Power, preferred found in the lumber closet amidst the his request again when Miss Ernest ancient finery with which she had

great pleasure in obliging them if

her 'as long as he did live,' with a

and another for the lady, which would they saw her rush into the arms of a muttered something about 'opodel. With a stately and old fashioned assist her in comprehending some- grey-moustachioed gentleman, who, you look strangely grave—has any- 'But, indeed, Ernie, we cannot let 'And scrub the floors? And wash doc,' and then asked what was to be curtsey she introduced herself as thing she had asked him, the gentle- for the last minute or two, had been

to Ernestine Hayes, who was a belle looked wistfully from one to the 'Certainly not. There is a village cried the person outside, speaking ly followed her into the room, as a skull-cap and spectacles were thrown 'It's papa, Ernie! Drusie, it's my

'Apparently we are not well this would not mind betting the blighted Christmas in orthodox fashion, and trick you are playing upon us? We taken good care of you. Moggs is Danesborough is very nice, but that have suddenly gone back a century,' morning, was Ernestine's saucy com one a box of gloves that we three there is the dinner to be considered. are lonely and old, Mrs. Moggs re one of our ancient retainers; useful if bandsome, borrible Irishman! he was the good humored reply. But ment, as she swept the retreating lady a mocking curtsey. 'Now, girls, will; and so adieu till to-morrow, and come out strong in cooking,' laugher come out str 'If you will say that you are really what's the matter? Drusie, if you red- then hurrah for liberty and a frolic Carla; 'for I'm afraid I should tion on the inhumanity of English ful for your kindness,' said Granton he has been plying me with questions dresses. Let me look at you again, ed his friends as Captain Gerald answers, that I think he must have But already the blushing Carla had

Carla, you may unbend your brows, the ogress has vanished! What's she She was at the station when Carla and jar of mincemeat amongst your would make pies if you have a mist, we'll not press our claims upon seriously alarm you.'

Light-hearted Erine kept her word. think I could make pies if you have a mist, we'll not press our claims upon seriously alarm you.'

The lady waved her fan and erection? I wish I had not let him in.'

'My dear Mr. Taunton, permit me

'Pray Carla, dear Carla, do be 'It would not signify if she had,' ged' at them till the last moment, 'Upon my word, young ladies,' to him till we can bring a vehicle and right to exercise due caution ere we examine one of the wrinkles painted tions. These gentlemen who have patient!' whispered, pleadingly, in answered Carla, still choking with drove thither through a pelting shower said Ernie, severely, 'your ignorance remove him. He is fainting with admitted you; but courage is here so cleverly on her smooth skin. 'It unexpectedly become our guests will and a chilly fog. But the very sight is shameful! You know no more of Ernie standing on the platform, her about cookery than I do myself! But Half a dozen hurried sentences exprised, certainly, for I must tell you strangers go away and tell the gos. I have faithfully discharged the or even displease the dear father who placed me in your care! No, aunt, no, affair decided. Did you not throw hands tucked into the pockets of her placed me in your care! No, aunt, no, affair decided. Did you not throw hands tucked into the pockets of her your brave leader to the kitchen. Sips that they had been domesticated duties I took upon myself, when I had now joined her, an injunction 'Indeed, then you must be bored with three unprotected young girls.

So the Count went back to the side gan to ring merry peals in honor of of pretty Drusie, and Gerald Power

contrived to get Carla into a corner,

spend so queer a Christmas again. Three months afterwards, as Ernie Hayes was dressing for a drive, Carla

'Dearest Ernie, I have such news

'So have I for you, dear.' 'Not so strange as mine, I am

'And so am I' said Ernie, blushing brightly. "Granton Danesborough

directly, and has quizzed me most day, which was spent quietly, yet have my revenge that I have consent-

on her finger her own betrothel ring. future, she has no prospect but slavery for

much as his sister does,' said Gerald self in a low chair, with her back to Handsome Gerald Power smiled knowingly barrassment, and played chess, a game Fortune has used Maurice St. Evremont less

"AGRICULTURE THE TRUE BASIS OF A NATION'S WEALTH.

me to bear with you any longer.'

of the year.' so that excuse will not avail you.'

peated a young lady, gaily as she shire.' glided into the room, touched the reof Carla. 'Drusie, my little darling! hearers, simultaneously. tip of my nose! But seriously-for cannot resist it.'

thing terrible occurred?'

den your eyes with crying you'll spoil in the fens!" 'Sorry!' repeated a fresh, young your complexion, and then the prince whose coming I am always predicting 'And acknowledge that your con- will forget to fall in love with you!

her ear). 'Acknowledge that I have wrath. 'I am not going to the Lav- and a chilly fog. But the very sight is shameful! You know no more pain.'

uncertain age, frowned sternly as arranged our plans. As for my aunt, menced their journey. also surveyed the excited speaker. I hate, I despise her! I am thankful 'We're going to have a jolly time the correct term, now-a days, for every benighted travellers. assured, with another wave of the fan. to-morrow. We cannot turn an in- your assurances. I should have felt And yet it was a very charming pic- that she is sending me from her, and of it!' cried Ernie, gleefully. thing that's cost one hours of labour ture she saw before her. Carla, the hope I shall never be compelled to see 'There's a great box of Maudie's had known that the abstruse studies and watch Day, but when that is over let us Carla was in the care of a lady like only daughter of her half-brother, her again!'

newest books with my luggage, and the laid aside over the comforts of my learned hope that the storm will have abated yourself,' and he glanced at Ernie's the Indian judg, who had such im
their guns and shot belts, all their brother, who at the moment of your sufficiently for the roads to be pass powdered locks and wrinkles, with plicit but mistaken confidence in his cried Ernestine, tossing off her hat and be a piano? Then we'll hire two, and 'Which there will be no one to care was for him. Between them he arrival was absorbed in such pro-sable.' sister's good sense and generosity, wraps. 'I came to ask you to drive play duets to the owls; and I've share with us,' Druise rather ruefully was supported to the room Ernie and found researches that it would have 'Where's Drusie?' looked all the prettier for the flush on to the milliner's with me, but I see brought a basket of crewels and new reminded her.

of her small hands was elenched, while as Carla averted her crimson face. stock of nice things, potted meats, and own share.' junior, who, with her blue orbs swim- permission; consider it given. I in exile.' tremulous with alarm, was striving marriage had sweetened the acerbity Drusie, doubtfully.

the guardian of your wouth, of sug- fected horror.

Carla Taunton in her contumacy, and ten thousand a-year, and the elderly, and Carla chattered and laughed as not abjure the world altogether?' How dare you—a girl I keep out of 'No! no!' cried Drusie, vehement- the more indulgent guardianship of both her horrified friends.

my life here a misery to me. I am you let the ill-nature of a disappointed ness; and Ernestine, though chilled a nearly chopped her fingers as well as girls had retired. There a confabu-

daughter who was sent to England to abuses you.'

his commands. I have already ap- go to the Lavingtons she cannot re- en chairs and the holes in the carpet; hair. 'Go to Fencourt!' cried Carla, in quiet there, for the poor dearold gentle- their energetic companion dived into knows we are here.' dismay. 'I'm sure papa would not man is in ill health; but I can promise her packages, and produced from It must be the turkey,' decided especially as we fear we shall be com- However, Granton Danesborough, an accompaniment on an old guitar, wish me to take up my abode in a any friends of mine a cordial welcome, their depths so many pleasant acces- Carla. damp, ruinous old house at this season and as much fun as your humble ser sories to the tea table that Mrs. Moggs Or the waits or the carol-singers, longer.' vart can make for you.

how could I live there, with no one to bear me company but the old man and woman who have charge of the stepping into a chair and flourishing and woman who have charge of the stepping into a chair and flourishing and woman who have charge of the stepping into a chair and flourishing deserved it. Who but Ernie Hayes are not flourishing that the only man in the house was who certainly wasn't Mrs Moggs, you find him absent in manner you and I followed her to the door through the seat of honour, and certainly she as a grotector. Of course which she flitted. But it was locked abstruse often carry him quite out of wished to hear her she would have

'You, Ernie-you who have more hobbling in the rear.

fear I should find a chilblain on the to my other accomplishments that I is frozen, so we must be our own | Ernie looked at Mrs. Moggs, who leant.

you make such a sacrifice for our the dishes?' asked her dismayed done. Miss Taunton was generally civil sakes,' persisted Carla, while Drusie auditors.

tic; and, snappishly saying that she retorted Ernie, merrily. 'But me occasionally and do the rough work, will pay liberally for the trouble we I am sorry I culd o not see you friend's.

CHAPTER II.

speeches of Miss Taunton, who 'nag- some crust.'

Moggs a journey to the next town five seated.

ulster, and her sparkling face beam- We'll devote the day to experiments, very forcibly impressed on Mrs. to death!' said Gerald, with a com- They are gentlemen, and even if they daughter and her friend Drusilla. Miss Taunton, a plump handsome, 'Pray don't question me! I should ing with smiles, was reviving, and it and to-morrow, with the aid of a Moggs, and then the three girls flit- miserating glance at pretty, blushing should penetrate our disguises, they Mr. Taunton bowed low to the imbut not amiable-looking spinster, of be ashamed to tell you what has dis- was in the best of spirits the trio com- cookery-book and our dearly-bought ted away, while the old woman un- Drusie.

healthy coloring. n vain to play the peacemaker.

'No; she means to go in for the better, his friends had leisure to draw of her disposition.'

'No; she means to go in for the better, his friends had leisure to draw of himself cussion.'

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'No; she means to go in for the better, his friends had leisure to draw of himself cussion.'

'No; she means to go in for the better, his friends had leisure to draw of himself cussion.'

'But Miss Taunton is not going to Cambridge examinations, and be a to express the unworthiness of the better, his friends had leisure to draw of himself cussion.'

it. Your language is choice, very lover, after haunting the house so per- have secured a a very gentlemanly hunting, and worst of all their conceit the elder, a slender, scholarly looking 'But you'll not run away from us Miss Ernest's politeness compelled to the sober talk of the judge and mean enough to change his mind, and retriever, and at the present moment have a lover,' Drusie made confession the house by have the pleasure of our hostess's vitation was eagerly accepted, 'And sullenly defy me! No, Carla, leave the blighted maiden in the he is travelling under the guard's with many blushes. 'I have always this,' said his companion, pointing to society.'

for your shameful behaviour. I wish 'Yes,' assented Drusie, ruefully; Taunton's ill-nature had vanished. 'Do you know the price women Drusie had dropped in her hasty ciety of gentlemen, she did not know old houses, especially when there's a usual excitement. little clinging creature, who, with proposed to Carla instead of her aunt, she scarcely ventured to have an tent as you are, pet. For my own from his couch—'women of culture Danesborough added his pleadings, amused me to watch the vagaries of

Leave Drusie alone, exclaimed on a couch, and went into such con- to them for their help so frankly; who presume to talk of such But Mrs. Moggs, shaking her head, rustle of her stiff skirts to make sounds; and once I softly opened my as I am. Carla, gliding between them with an vulsions of laughter that at last Carla fellow-passengers were courteous; the hackneyed topics as love or matri- and pleading her deafness, would say an elaborate curtsey. weather cleared; and not even the mony. But these are subjects that nothing but that there was a double A charming woman, observed glide along the corridor and vanish at How glad I am that you went with splenetic spinster in spite of herself. Really, Ernie, your mirth is ill- long drive in a rickety old fly from can be discussed at some future time; bedded room ready for the gentlemen Danesborough. How she has con- the end of it. Let Drusie alone, or I shall be tempt- timed. My aunt blames me for Mr. the nearest station to the solitary our present consideration is the as soon as they liked to be shown to trived to retain fresh feelings and No one commented on this infor- has won for you a heart as warm as their wanderings, the invalid was 'Marvellous !' exclamed Gerald a cup of tea into her lap, and she whom papa has promised his sillyof the dwelling itself, were fortunate- of food for mirth in reviewing the ad- where in the lonely house but the brother she talks about. There,s a with her.

They were sipping their tea, com- 'Of course we shall not leave you, "I will go to him this morning," in dread of discovery. ington's for the Christmas holidays, 'Does this look like it?' asked In a very short time wood was piled paring notes, and jesting over their said Granton Danesborough, closing Granton Danesborough, with The dinner—the finishing touches 'I am so glad,' said Ernie, earnessly. as we have already arranged, and Clara, holding towards her friend a in the wide fireplaces of all the rooms mistakes and mishaps, when a his book, which had been put in the dead of 'And so am 1,' responded Gerald. 'Out of

ANDREW ARCHER, Editor

'The house has just been repaired, but for once Ernestine experienced astonishment, and there were con- it is not likely to be burglars, is it?' up,' said Power, who was a viva- leaning on her crutch-stick, and this is not likely to be burglars, is it?' up,' said Power, who was a viva- leaning on her crutch-stick, and this is not likely to be burglars, is it?' up,' said Power, who was a viva- leaning on her crutch-stick, and this is not likely to be burglars, is it?' up,' said Power, who was a viva- leaning on her crutch-stick, and this is not likely to be burglars, is it?' up,' said Power, who was a viva- leaning on her crutch-stick, and this is not likely to be burglars, is it?' up,' said Power, who was a viva- leaning on her crutch-stick, and this is not likely to be burglars, is it?' up,' said Power, who was a viva- leaning on her crutch-stick, and this is not likely to be burglars, is it?' up,' said Power, who was a viva- leaning on her crutch-stick, and this is not likely to be burglars, is it?' up,' said Power, who was a viva- leaning on her crutch-stick, and this is not likely to be burglars, is it?' up,' said Power, who was a viva- leaning on her crutch-stick, and this is not likely to be burglars, is it?' up,' said Power, who was a viva- leaning on her crutch-stick, and this leaning on her cru 'But it is so lonely!' the young came back from Miss Taunton's dres- from the hungry girls. speaking very boldly, though her caught a glimpse of a female this girl objected, with a shudder; 'and sing room vexed and indignant, and With one accord they kissed their face paled a little as she remembered afternoon when I was strolling about, your coming,' she added. 'But if bridled, and expressed her fear that

anxious to see this learned gentle- refrain. deliberately. 'It will be a fitter iron enter our soul? No! a thousand well-filled case of table requirements, abode for one who can never be for five times no!'

The speak,' whispered the man!' cried Gerald Power: and which enabled them to banish Mrs. till she had inquired who is there.'

Franchman, who from his couch had though Miss Ernest bit her lip, and frequently improvising as she went but followed to the study.

your customary indelicacy and bold. have the spiteful pleasure of making rung with their girlish laughter? quavered out.

ness, seek out fresh victims. As for either of us miserable. Pack your Miss Taunton would have confessed 'Strangers in an awkward flx,' was was that of a tall, slight, elderly as huge as his sister's, sat the savant; The singer arrived at last at the Drusilla, as she is no use to me, and trunks, wreath your lips with smiles herself fairly circumvented if she had the reply to her first question. 'My lady, whose white hair was drawn but he scarcely vouchsafed to notice tragical death of the fond lovers, and as little to be trusted as yourself, she and never say die. Ernie Hayes will seen the banished demoiselles marching friends and I have been shooting in over a cushion in a style that pre- his visitors, bending his head over signed to her amused friends to join go home and do likewise, for she to bed, headed by Ernestine singing this neighbourhood and lost our way.' vailed in the reign of George the the mouldy tome lying open before her in the long drawn melanchol 'After what has happened!' re- means to accompany you to Fen- one of Offenbach's liveliest airs, Mr. Tell him that there is a viliage Third. This was surmounted by a him, and only answering in mony. 'fal, lal, la!' that concluded the and Mrs. Moggs-still open-mouthed about a mile hence,' whispered Ernie. lace cap, above which she wore a syllables, and tones so hoarse and ballad. Granton Danesborough paused But how are we to reach it?' the black silk hood. Large blue spec- muffled, it was difficult to understand in the act of proclaiming 'check' to then affectionately kissed the cheek keep? Impossible!' exclaimed her ing, as they idled over their break- thick we should not have found this bright eyes, and there were little 'He is not in the mood for con- enjoy the sight of their merry faces,

had no time to answer irrelevant ques tions, she marched out of the room.

no more buts, but look out for me at tions, she marched out of the room.

no more buts, but look out for me at the station to-morrow morning. I ourselves. Of course we must keep to attempt this masquerading.

sooner, she added, in very dignified the room.

the station to-morrow morning. I ourselves. Of course we must keep to attempt this masquerading.

"Long enough to ask myself if I

'What else could we do?' asked to welcome you, and to beg that for are too honorable to remark upon posing figure he saw be:ore him.

swered Ernie, starting from a reverie. gravity.

the other was clasped between the 'Then you must be the speaker, Dru- preserves, and goodies; and, oh! girls, 'I think all men are detestable, crimson wrappers heaped over him, I hope I shall be permitted fun this masquerading. I should en. nature has not marred your enjoy. palms of a girl a year or two her sie. Go on. Don't look at Carla for I mean to develop myself while I am especially elderly ones, said Carla, till the ghastly paleness, that made to make the acquaintance of joy it excessively if I were not afraid ment of the season. Introduce me to ming in tears, and her pouting lip thought Miss Taunton's approaching the share in your amusements.' subjects for pleasant and useful dis- the bells of the village churches be-

Taunton, trying to be majestic but be married,' said Drusie, in an awed girl graduate,' suggested Carla. | male sex!' added Ernesiine, vehe near the table replenished with viands and finally declared that she never | Comte St. Evremont was so much where, if her blushes and protesting 'Bad guessers, both of you. It's mently. 'I have seen a great deal of for them, and to look curiously presumed to intrude upon her brother better as to be able to walk with a looks may be relied on, he tormented after he had retired to his study. little assistance, and Granton Danes- her unmercifully. fected horror.

'Don't tell me that her elderly instead of mental gymnastics; and I their selfishness, and their money
'Don't tell me that her elderly instead of mental gymnastics; and I their selfishness, and their money
'Where are our hosts? I should instead of mental gymnastics; and I their selfishness, and their money
'Where are our hosts? I should instead of mental gymnastics; and I their selfishness, and their money
'To-morrow, then. Perhaps Mr. borough said something at breakfast about intruding no longer; but when her assumed character, and listened gentlemen, in whose pocket there lay ma'am, urged Gerald Power, wheel- her to hope he and his friends would Granton Danesborough, wondering ing forward a chair. ' Pray let us not burry away, the half spoken in- the while if ever either of them would

'I am very glad we are to spend been such a lonely, friendless little the Sevres china of Ernic's tea equip- Miss Ernest spread her fan before our Christmas here' observed Gerald her face as she answered primly, that Power, as he spread some potted ham He held up a little slipper, which anaccustomed as she was to the so- on his toast. 'I do love these quaint burst into her room in a state of unwhether she could yield to this re- good ghost or two attatched to them. 'Ladies,' feebly muttered the invalid quest. However, when Granton as there is to this one. It has quite for you!'

door and saw two figures in white

mation, for Miss Ernest had just upset |-as that of the foolish Gerald, to

affinity that charming little Drusilla knocked at the door of Mr. Ernest's he is waiting to see you.'

ing glances that kept her continually Taunton, who has promised to assist his

ordered out, and charged the full time it has

somewhere near, and Mrs. Moggs with great urgency. 'We only re young gentlewoman who was resid- off, and Carla's face, half terrijed, own dear, dearest father. Oh! kiss half amused, was raised to her me again, papa. When did you ar-

'I am sadly stupid myself,' ac- 'Faith, if you're so afraid for your Power and Le Comte St. Evremount. detected the tremor in my voice. shaken herself free of the grey wig knowledged Drusie, modestly; 'but I selves that you'd let us perish in the 'I hope our intrusion did not What could be mean by asking if he and threadbare dressing gown, and

experience, we'll improvise—that's bolted the door, and admitted the 'Bored, sir! Not at all!' he was them, Besides, it is only till ofter 'Madame I am quite satisfied with their guns and shot belts, all their brother, who at the moment of your sufficiently for the roads to be pas- powdered locks and wrinkles, with such utter unconsciousness of the youth and heauty they concealed, that

> 'Still,' he added, caressing his admissions. After all, Carla, it's rare send you here. I am glad her illthe rest of your friends, my dear, and

'Not a bit of it,' retorted Carla. us to Fencourt! Your unselfishness

place?

minutes in male society without doing

and an heiress, but now she had lost other.

accuse me, the sister of your father, Ernestine clasped her hands in af- my muscles I am thinking of, not my the creatures since I came of age two around. sistently, and acting as her shadow fellow to act as my guardian. Don't has quite disgusted me.' 'If it offends you I can leave the for these many months past, has been be shocked, his name is Bob, the 'I used to think it would be nice to a volume of a Greek author.

'Mr. Robertson was here on Tuesday Even the timid Drusie, who had been have to pay for such protection?' ask- flight. And now her wrath burst upon the and again yesterday; but-but he has so cowed and snubbed all her life that ed Ernie, with scornful air. 'Be con-

ed to write to papa, and tell him that Robertson's defection, though I was house which was to be their abode, Christmas dinner, so come along girls, it; and, as they were all fatigued with sympathies of her youth.' his confidence in you has been all a merely civil to him on her account damped their vivacity. mistake. That instead of obeying his and she has said such dreadful things The dreary, flat expanse of country, When they drew their chairs round assisted to climb the stairs, and in a Power, with covert significance sailed away to change her dress, tak- no, happy—daughter. Do you know injunctions to treat me with indulg- of me that I blush with shame when grass grown avenue, and the aspect the fire that evening, there was plenty very short time silence reigned every- in longing to see the learned ing the blushing and confused Drusie Ernie, he saw through our disguises can till he joins me, you have made | 'My poor Carla! But why should ly concealed by the approaching dark- ventures of the day. Drusie had distant apartment to which the three mystery in this seclusion I sha'nt rest | No other contretemps marred the shamefully ever since. It's solely to

'Very well, madam,' said Carla, Miss Taunton will relent. She will commence our reign at Fencourt laurels.

murmur that it was 'awfully jolly' ing a sisterhood. If you, and Carla, in these bogs! Ciel!'

with high tea.'

her olive cheek, and the angry light there's something more serious on the patterns to gossip over, when we are 'So much the better. Gentlemen boot was cut off, his ankle bathed and him.' in her black eyes. Her slight figure tapis than winter chapeaux. What is too lazy to do anything else; and I carvers always reserve the tit-bits for bandaged, a little brandy from one of Granton Danesborough could not I will go to her lest in her simpliciwas drawn to its fullest height; one it? Won't you tell me?' she queried, made Dobbs go out and buy quite a themselves, and now they'll fall to our their flasks administered, his wet coat help smiling a little as he courteously ty she should make any dangerous child, "it was unkind of Lucinda to who had not forgiven Mr. Robertson Mrs. Moggs ask if he were a dying, Mr Ernest. As my own tastes are of being found out.'

confessed that you have been in the eyes of mine I saw him ride up to this By the time they neared their thing, that it has made me long for page; 'and this.'

and let us set to work.' hedged in with restrictions; watched, old maid ruffle you? The storm must little herself by the cold, half-furnish- the cancied peel; Carla had forgotten lation went on that lasted till nearly by the cold, half-furnish- the cancied peel; Carla had forgotten lation went on that lasted till nearly by the cold, half-furnish- the cancied peel; Carla had forgotten lation went on that lasted till nearly by the cold, half-furnish- the cancied peel; Carla had forgotten lation went on that lasted till nearly by the cold, half-furnish- the cancied peel; Carla had forgotten lation went on that lasted till nearly by the cold, half-furnish- the cancied peel; Carla had forgotten lation went on that lasted till nearly by the cold, half-furnish- the cancied peel; Carla had forgotten lation went on that lasted till nearly by the cold, half-furnish- the cancied peel; Carla had forgotten lation went on that lasted till nearly by the cold, half-furnish- the cancied peel; Carla had forgotten lation went on that lasted till nearly by the cold, half-furnish- the cancied peel; Carla had forgotten lation went on that lasted till nearly by the cold, half-furnish- the cancied peel; Carla had forgotten lation went on that lasted till nearly by the cold, half-furnish- the cancied peel; Carla had forgotten lation went on that lasted till nearly by the cold, half-furnish- the cancied peel; Carla had forgotten lation went on that lasted till nearly by the cold, half-furnish- the cancied peel; Carla had forgotten lation went on that lasted till nearly by the cold, half-furnish- the cancied peel; Carla had forgotten lation went on that lasted till nearly by the cold, half-furnish- the cancied peel; the cancied peel; the cancied peel; the cancied peel till nearly by the cold, half-furnish- the cancied peel the c distrusted, and, in fact, treated more soon blow over, for she will be asham ed room into which they were ushered to put any water in the saucepan with morning. like a wilful child than the beloved ed to let the world know why she by a deaf and bewildered old woman some potatoes she volunteered to prewould not let it appear She paid the pare for dinner; and Ernie had spoiled 'Ah! but you have not heard the drivers of the fly and the cart that a lovely custard, at the last moment, 'Very well, Miss Carla Taunton- worst!' sighed Carla. 'All our plea carried the luggage so liberally that by dropping into it a tea-spoonfull of 'Heigho! what a long day this has with tears, real tears, when I des- ner, scull-cap, dressing gown, and absently turning round and round

taken off, his limbs chafed, and Ernie's replied:

'You always do encourage Miss And the dear child has accepted to be here with two such dear girls; and I are happy here, why should we 'We ought to apoligize for our in- to stop and make tea for her guests. Drusilla nervous if you talk of such | going to be married.'

ter actually rebels against and insults the fens you have heard me say that 'A pleasant omen,' she cried, miles away, was in progress, the 'And me, I am inexpressibly sorry,' Power, 'I shall forget that I thought the light, she recovered from her em-

light into every corner. The crimson on a winter's night, at a house remote hours, we ought to be thankful that Miss Ernest declared that her ners she had eaten in her long de- lightful and appropriate finish to The them that my visit will be paid alone. I shall go and try my skill as a rugs and wrappers, of which Ernie from all others, were very startling. | we are so well housed. What brother would be delighted, but she parted girl nood, that Carla was forced QUERREST CHRISTMAS WE EVER SPENT.