

# The Carleton Standard.

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## Poetry.

### PAYING TOLL.

BY J. H. ELIOTT.

The night was clear, the stars were bright,  
The silver moon shone full and fair,  
The frosty wind was bracing cold,  
And keen and cutting was the air.  
Half-hidden 'neath the furly robes,  
We nestled snugly side by side,  
What cared we for the biting cold?  
For Sue and I was out to ride.

Our nag was swift, our runners smooth;  
We plied the whip with earnest zeal,  
And soon we left the town behind,  
Our sleigh bells ringing peal on peal.  
The music of the silver bells  
Rang out a sweet and mystic chime,  
With which my Sue's happy voice  
And merry laugh kept time and time.

Sue held the whip and I the reins;  
I found my left arm out of use;  
Where did I put it? Can't you guess?  
Why, round her pliant waist, you guess.  
We were warm as steaming toast,  
With scarce besides our heads in sight,  
And happy as the happiest are,  
Out sleighing in a winter night.

We came upon a rustic bridge,  
I held the reins exceeding tight;  
Our nag came to a sudden stop,  
And Sue looked up, pale with fright.  
"What's the matter?" whispered she;  
"What makes you look so pale and white?"  
"You charming little dunces," said I,  
"We've only stopped to pay the toll."

"Pay toll? to whom—and why—and how?  
There's no one here to pay it too;  
What do you mean, you horrid thing?"  
Said I, "just wait a moment, Sue,  
See I over yonder mean the man."  
She turned to look, and then I stole,  
As quick as thought, a heavy stone,  
And so drove on—I did not halt!

Sue looked my ears; but what of that,  
I gave a kick for every blow,  
Till she was glad to keep quite still,  
Drowsed and dozed in the valley;  
And every bridge we passed that night  
She'd reach up from her sheltered hole,  
Put her red lip up close to mine,  
And say, "Quite handsome, my Sue, the toll!"

## Select Tale.

### THE NEW YEAR'S DREAM.

"Well! well! This is the thirty-first day of December. How fast the years fly!"

Thus soliloquized Mr. Norton as he drew his large easy chair a little nearer the register, and allowed the newspaper to slip off from his knees on to the floor.

"They go like the wind, but they bring their changes—yes, bring their changes to us all. Here we are snugly housed enough for all that I can see. Wife has her wish last. Handsome house in a street—the best court end of the town."

Mr. Norton pronounced these last words with peculiar satisfaction. "Now furnished." His eyes came complacently over the velvet carpet, on whose soft lap the flowers might have been dropped by fairy fingers; over the damask furniture, luxurious, pleasure giving, even if it had been designed for an oriental palace; up to the lofty walls, whose green, trailing grape leaves had surely brought with them the glow and glimmer of the sunny vineyards of France, where old paintings, in magnificent gilt frames, vied with the long graceful mirrors, and tapestried windows softened with their wreathing, twining folds of lace and silk, the gorgeous richness.

"John and Kate," continued Mr. Norton, "have gone to Mr. Sumner's ball—wife is at Lawyer Dunn's—Kate wears her diamonds—wife wears her point lace. Well Mr. Norton, you have made a step up this year—long enough to pay for having stood still for so many years.

Wife needn't have worried over the old house in Chatham street. I always told her to be patient—and wait my time. So it's come at last, and here we are."

Mr. Norton, in his repeated movements of his chair, had pushed himself before the mirror, and as he uttered the last words, "here we are," he had a full view of a little, old man, twinkling in a very large chair, with a bald head, smelt, exhaled in a large chair, a short nose, a protuberant upper lip, and an under lip and chin which dropped away as if they had done something of which they were ashamed, and were trying to hide themselves. He could see, too, for the gas was lighted brightly, very brightly, many deep, dark wrinkles about the corners of the mouth, and crows feet, a whole crowd of them, skulking behind the gray eyes. He passed his hand over his head, as if he would cover these ungainly things with the thick, black hair, which used to do that service when they first came, but it only touched a few straggling white hairs, far too low down to be coaxed into any such position. After all, the picture was not pleasant; he had seen finer, nobler specimens of humanity in his day. In some mysterious way the vision had disturbed his equanimity. He began to glance around with a feeling of slight uneasiness.

"It was all very fine—very grand—and what was the best part of it, all paid for, but—oh! As he sat there alone, in the midst of his magnificent and very different picture came up before his mind's eye. It was of the old home in Chatham street. The small, snug parlor with its bright brass grate and its glowing coals; the old half-dress sofa and chairs shining with their marks of neat, careful housewifery; the solar lamp with its gothic cut glass shade, so handsome and so valued; the round centre table, and three lace-covered but, and quiet and happy in their quiet, cheerful, unobtrusive home."

"What does it matter; this is a great deal better and I am a greater man if—if I do spend my evenings now all alone," murmured Mr. Norton, in reply to these memories, but nothing is so unwilling to retire as an unpleasant thought. Mr. Norton began nervously to hunt among the new pictures for the portrait of his mother, that always occupied a conspicuous position in the old home, and was so much company for him when he happened to be alone. Here now, was a Madonna and child. He had paid one hundred and twenty-five dollars for it in Rome, and no one knew how much for bringing it home, but John's friend purchased it and the children admired it very much, but still it was not to him like that mother's face. He seemed to himself to be missing it for the first time, and wondered almost angrily why and where his wife had put it away. He would have it hung up to-morrow. The New Year should hardly dawn before it should be done.

Thinking of this, and over that dead mother whose memory grew every moment, as only a mother can, greener and greener, as he thought, he fell asleep. The gas light burned on brightly as before, lighting the flowers on the carpet, lighting the trailing grape vines, glowing from the rich pictures, and kindling itself over and over again in the burnished mirror, as if it felt the mockery of the scene—all for this one poor, old man, soundly asleep.

As Mr. Norton slept, he dreamt, at first disconnectedly, but soon the visions began to assume form and voice—no longer airy nothings, but the recollections of his real life.

He was walking briskly home from his store, for it was a little late, he had been detained to finish a heavy mercantile transaction. Standing close to the edge of the sidewalk, by one of the crossings, was a miserably clothed little boy. It was a cold December day, but he had only a few rags to cover him, and was so pale and pinched, so shrunken and attenuated, that really he was an unpleasant object to look upon. He held out his thin hand, so thin and purple from the cold that it looked hardly human, and said in a weak, pitiful voice:

"Charity! for the love of God, charity!"

Then, he (Mr. Norton) lifted his gold headed cane, and struck that small hand a sharp, quick blow. It fell as if it had been cut off, and the child uttered a moan, soft, choked, almost as if it had not strength to make a louder sound, and the rich man passed on without turning so much as a thought back. From then, till now, he had been entirely forgotten—but here he came to-night ever uttering that dull moan, ever drawing away that bitter, pinched hand, with his sharp, bony fingers, but never taking it quite from sight—lengthening, lengthening forever, and always the same—just the same.

Mr. Norton moved so restlessly in his chair, in order to avoid the hand, that he partially awakened himself. The gas-light danced and sparkled before his half-shut eyes, then all was dark again; and now came the low, old wooden building that he owned in Bond street. He never trusted an agent to collect his rents, he was stumbling along now up the broken stairway—up—up—it seemed as if those stairs would never end, to the tenant in the attic. Some invisible force kept pulling him down, but he must go, slowly and very painfully, but on, on. He had reached the door, it is shut—locked—and he takes an axe to force it. There it goes, and he pitches his axe into the room—falls upon the bed where the dying woman is giving up her last breath, and those orphan children are now pulling him away, and now kneeling with folded hands as if they were praying to him instead of God. Then he rises and pushes them all away, and as he does so an array of coffins walk into the room. They are plain, black unvarnished, but with broad silver plates, each one bearing some name and date. And he reads, though he shuts his eyes, and would give all he possesses if he need not. Still he reads: "Anne Glyde, ad. 25. Died from exposure and starvation, Will, sc. 6."

"I did not turn you out, you know I did not," groaned Mr. Norton aloud in his sleep. "You hadn't paid a cent of rent for three months. Your proper place was the almshouse, and if you died there, why, was it my fault? There is no one in your room now—no, nor will be; the poor are afraid of it. Isn't that enough? They say you haunt. Cheat! beggar! Three months' rent, and not done yet!"

Mr. Norton waked himself by shaking his fists at the empty air. How large and lonely that elegant parlor was! He walked to the gas and turned it off till more brightly. How could spectres haunt it now? With his dim and bleared eyes, he could look up to its most hidden recesses. Ah! it was a beautiful thing to be alive and awake!

But not to-night, Mr. Norton. This is the last night of the old year, and no gas shall lay those grim and ghastly visions. Hurrying thick and fast upon you, here they come! For once in this long earth-bound life of yours, the unseen and spiritual shall have the supremacy. Back again to your easy chair! a ghastly figure is beckoning you there, and go you must. Like one walking in the nightmare he sees his seat, and hardly has he closed his eyes before that old clerk, the very one who was laid aside by side with him, but with the terrible odds of less shrewdness, less cunning, is sitting in his place upon the high stool in the familiar counting room. Now he is a young man, fair-haired, clear, blue-eyed, gentle, smiling. Mr. Norton laid his hand lovingly upon his heart, and felt it beat, warm and full. Now he is older, middle aged, gray hairs are laying themselves softly upon his head. There is a look of care and anxiety about his mouth, and no heart to beat for Mr. Norton now.

Again, he bends low over the ledger; his hand shakes as he holds his pen; there is a tremulous motion of the head as he writes. He has served his master more faithfully than he has himself, but every look, every motion utters the dumb appeal—"When I am old and gray-headed, oh, then, forsake me not." But the counting room and the desk dance for a moment before Mr. Norton's straining vision, and then there sits a young man in old Colby's place, and he stretches his hand out eagerly for the old friend, but he is not there. Where is he? Mr. Norton had never troubled himself to ask since that last day at the store. The knowledge might bring dependence; better far to be ignorant. But here he is to-night; how wan, and how pale! and as he stands there beside his chair, not a word does he utter, only looks with fixed, stony eyes, directly into his. Away! away! it is worse than the coffin, and the dead—for once he had loved this man—once, a long, long time ago.

He glides away as if even in the land of dreams his sensitive spirit could not bear a harshness, and then troop on defrauded creditors—honorably defrauded, but never able to surmount the obstacles which the losses brought. Poor, underpaid parties, Irishmen of all work, small boys about the store, mechanics, whose large, valuable stock, had passed for a trilling sum in ready money into his hand.

How could it be? Each and all of these to-night were not business transactions, they had nothing to do with bought and sold. They were part and parcel of humanity. Every bond became a pound of living flesh, and now the righteous judge was sitting in stern judgment and demanding in his turn payment for every drop of blood which had been shed in the sacrifice.

Tormented beyond the power of expressing any emotion, the old man sinks down, down, away from the

gorgeous parlor, away from the new fashionable house, away from the court end of the town, and gazing down into the abyss into which he is falling, without so much as lifting a finger to save him, stands the wife and two children. There is a quiet, satisfied smile upon their faces which is perhaps the hardest of all to bear.

"Wife! Anne! John!" he calls more and more loudly. And—yes, they have resolved to save him, he feels a strong hand on his shoulder, and a familiar voice says:

"Wake up, father! why, I do believe you have had the nightmare. You were screaming as if the house was on fire when we came in."

Anne Norton! yes, there she was, bending over him with her fresh young beauty, her gay tail dress and her diamonds, glowing like many-colored stars, and the old man clasps her warm, living hand in his, and said with a shudder,

"We will make reparation, child. We will hasten to do it, for everything—everything—that is the way we will keep this blessed New Year."

### Curious New Year's Day Customs.

JANUARY 1st, 1865.—So we must date our letters to-day, and just as merchants of years gone by would head their new ledgers with "Louis Deo," we would do the same, or rather write that word of Bible note, "Ebenzer," and say, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." "January" we call this month, as the Romans did from their god Janus who, at the threshold of the New Year, stood with two faces, one looking back on the past, and the other forward to the future. He was the god of gates and avenues, and held a key in his right hand and a rod in his left, to symbolize his opening and ruling the year; and sometimes he held the number 300 in one hand, and 65 in the other, to signify the number of days in a year. The Saxons call the month "Wollmonath," because wolves driven by hunger were wont to howl about and attack even men in their desire for food. It was also called by the Saxons "After-Yule," or after Christmas. The month was often represented by a man with faggots, and a woman's arm, shaking and blowing his fingers. The 1st January, according to some, was ushered in with rejoicings, presents, and good wishes, as early as the days of Romulus and Tatius, and the usual presents then were figs and dates covered with leaf gold; and pieces of pottery have been discovered bearing inscriptions suitable to the day, and evidently intended for presents commemorative of the season. In our own country, so far back as the times of the ancient Britons, we read of Druids, on a certain day, cutting down branches of mistletoe with a golden knife, and distributing them as gifts for the new year. Coming further down, we find our kings receiving, and, as some say, extorting presents from their subjects. Both Henry III. and Edward VI. are mentioned by an antiquarian writer, the former requiring New Year's Gifts, the latter rewarding from the public revenue those officers and servants who had sent presents to the king's majesty. In Henry VIII's reign, honest old Luther is said to have given to the king, instead of a purse of gold, as was the custom, a New Testament with the last turned down at Heb. xiii. 4. "Good Queen Bess," too, received her share of princely gifts from her nobles and courtiers—very princely, if we may judge from lists given by Dr. Drake in his "Shakespeare and his Times." Oranges stuck with cloves were popular gifts, and pins were considered acceptable by ladies of the fifteenth century, when wooden skewers were the only things they had to fasten their dresses. Sometimes they received money instead; hence allusions to their separate use came to be called "pin-money." Gifts were often given as New Year's Gifts. Sir Thomas Moore, when Lord Chancellor, having given judgment of a certain lady, received on the next New Year's Day, a pair of gloves and forty angels inside. In thanking her, Sir Thomas said, "It would be against good manners to forsake a gentleman's New Year's Gift, and I accept the gloves; their lining you will be pleased to bestow otherwise."

We could lengthen this paper considerably by telling of customs in different parts of England and Scotland. Of "Condams Bull," and "Riding the cow," the former a custom in the Highlands, where "ma nase choll out," and "Condams Bull" upon you," is the customary salutation, and he who, on coming down in the morning, is the first to say this, becomes entitled to a gift from the person saluted. The latter custom prevails in the north of England, where the "stang" or cow-stuff, a large basket with two handles, is carried about, and whoever does not join the procession of merry youngsters is mounted across the "stang," and not left off till they come to the door of the next public house, where the payment of sixpence releases the prisoner.—From the Churchman's Family Magazine.

A person of an observing turn of mind, if he has roved through a country town, has noticed how curiously youngsters along the route will fill the window with anxious faces in order to get a glimpse at the passers by. Our friend Jonathan, a peddler, drove up in front of a house one day, and seeing all hands and the cook staring from the window, got off from his cart, and the following dialogue took place with the man of the house:

Jonathan—Has there been a funeral here lately?

Man of the house—No, why?

Jonathan—I saw that there was one pane of glass that didn't have a head in it.

The following is from Balzac—"In every situation woman has more causes of grief than man, and suffers more than he. Man has his strength and the exercise of his power: he is busy, goes about, occupies his attention, thinks, looks forward to the future and finds consolation in it; but woman stays at home, remains face to face with her sorrow from which nothing distracts her; she descends to the very depths of the abyss in which she is, measures it and often fills it with her woe and tears. To feel, to love, to suffer, to devote herself, will always be the text of the life of woman."

A gentleman, dining at a hotel where servants were few and far between, dispatched a lad among them for a plate of pudding. After a long time the lad returned, and placing it before the hungry gentleman, was asked: "Are you the lad who took my plate for this pudding?" "Yes, sir," "Bless me," resumed the hungry wit, "how you have grown!"

Got. The word got is often used superfluously and incorrectly in familiar expressions. When, in reply to "Lend me a shilling," you say, "I've got no money," you simply say what you do not mean. Omit the got, and your meaning is rightly conveyed. "I've got a bad cold," is not bad English, if you mean to convey the idea that you have procured or contracted a cold somewhere; but if you merely wish to say, as you probably do, that you are suffering under a cold, "I have a cold" is the proper expression. "She has got a fair complexion." Here got is an interloper, for you do not mean to say she has procured a fair complexion, but simply that she has one. "I've got to go to town to-morrow." Here got is redundant and incorrect. "I have to go" expresses the idea.

If. It is the first palpitation of Hope, and the last of Regret. It is uttered by the boy with careless confidence: by the man with careless reproach. "We'll have such a game of cricket," says the boy exultingly, having already in his eye the prodigious "innings" he will enjoy. "If master gives us a holiday," he continues, carelessly. "I should now be rolling in my carriage," says the melancholy merchant. "If I hadn't dabbled in the funds," says the despondent, "if I had taken exercise, and had eaten rationally." Trifling if. "My child would have been a comfort to me in my old age," sighs the weak father, "if I hadn't over-indulged him." Insignificant if. In a word, on this small of rest, our whole existence; if is the moral and physical foundation of the universe! "How so?" asks the reader. "Is it hadn't been made."

Eliguetto. The following from a late English paper, may be interesting to some of our readers:

When a gentleman is for the first time introduced to a lady, he should simply bow, and certainly not to shake hands, unless she first extends her hand. It is the privilege of a lady, and very properly so—to define the degree of intimacy to which she chooses to admit a person previously unknown. If she wishes only such distant recognition as implies no special friendship, but merely an acquaintance, she should simply bow, and the gentleman should take his cue from her. If, on the contrary, the gentleman is of some acquaintance or friendship she desires to secure, she will offer her hand as a pledge to conversation. A man possessing superior dignity by rank or age may, of course, offer his hand. Instinctive good taste and good sense will solve many nice points of etiquette.

### Female Fashions.

The fashion, this spring, for ladies' bonnets, are monstrously absurd in that most capricious of all articles of female covering. Hitherto the thing has retreated from the forehead, with a high, rather or capacious front piece. This has been the repository of flowers and all sorts of things vegetable and floral, but all this is about to disappear. The new spring bonnet abandons all attempt at rising above the head of the fair wearer. It clings close to the cranium, and is little else than a delicate bit of gauze or similar material, wrapped over the top of the head and united in a huge bow under the chin. If flowers are used, they adorn the exterior, not the inside of the bonnet, for that is incapable of embracing anything, except the beautiful adornment which nature gives as a covering to the head. By the way, do you see how evidently curls have dropped down upon the shoulders of the sex, and what splendid tresses now adorn people formerly almost destitute of hair. Alas! that art should abuse nature, and that the hair of dead women should grace the heads of living beauty. Such is the demand for artificial curls that even the annual kingdom is brought in to supply this fashionable female necessity.—New York Letter.

### Sandwich Island Women.

A lady, writing from Honolulu, thus discourses upon the native women and their free and easy manner—"The women are erect, wide in the shoulders, and carry their heads like queens; many of them are truly handsome, wearing their hair falling over their shoulders in curls, and surmounted with little straws garlanded with wreaths of lovely native flowers. They clothe themselves modestly and prettily, wearing the dress to cover neck and arms, and falling loosely from the shoulders to the top of the feet, which are often bare. Not being civilized like us, they have not been enlightened into compressing their ribs with iron and whalebone corsets, nor to disturb and torture their feet with overtight shoes, nor to put bonnets on their heads that run up into turrets of silk and artificial flowers, and leaving their ears at the mercy of the bitter winds, nor to make up forty five yards of steel wire into cages and fasten themselves within them, nor to carry an extra half-yard of dress bravely after them on the pavement, through thick and thin. Yet those women have the advantage of us, for we are not forced by the exigencies of custom, when we come with our long garments upon any impurities of the pathway, to shut our eyes and clench our teeth, and rush blindly over them; whereas those Kanaka women, at the sight of even a spot of water, lift their light garments gingerly, and pass over, clean and unsoiled from the contact. Can this be barbarous?"

A love-lorn swain broke a wish-bone with his "heart's queen," somewhere in New Hampshire. "Now what'd you wish, Sally?" demanded Jonathan, with a tender grin of expectation. "I wished I was handsome," replied the fair damsel, "handsome as Queen Victoria." "Jerusalem! what a wish!" replied Jonathan, "when you're handsome 'buff now. But I'll tell you what I wished, Sally; I wished you was locked up in my arms, and the key was lost!"

"My dear sir," said Drumsticks to a young married gentleman, who had just been made father of a bouncing baby, "my dear sir, can you tell me in what your present position varies from that of the same individual one year ago?" "Can't," said I can, Drumsticks. "I will tell you. One year ago you were a sighing lover—now you are a loving sire."

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## General News.

The following is from a speech of Hon. Mr. Mitchell, recently delivered in Northumberland. "You may say Confederation is dead. What can be done by the best men the North can send? I reply—Confederation is not dead. True, our Generals have fallen—poor after post has been taken by the enemy—the South of the Province is prostrate at the feet of the foe, but heart in mind there is a Richmond in the North around which the friends of Confederation will rally, and where they will make a final stand. In one of the campaigns in India, a portion of the British army was surprised by a band of Sepoys who far outnumbered them, and who, flushed with recent successes, were dealing death without sparing hand in the thin ranks of our countrymen. The chief officer in command was absent from the field, and the duty of guiding and directing the tide of battle devolved for the hour on a private soldier, who, by the aid of his own coolness and a common-sense, some blunder in manoeuvring the troops had been observed by the relentless Sepoys, and directing their whole force against the weak point, they were driving back those who had stood their ground for hours. At this critical moment the private soldier arrived on the field, and, by the aid of his own coolness and a common-sense, some blunder in manoeuvring the troops had been observed by the relentless Sepoys, and directing their whole force against the weak point, they were driving back those who had stood their ground for hours. 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