Winter.

(After Tennyson in Chicago Inter-Ocean.)

Short grow the days
And dark the lowering skies,
The sun is quick to set
And slow to rise.

The world is white,
And red the windows glow
Through the creamy moonlight
On brightening snow.

Silvery steeds
With flashing sleighs fly past,
A chime of bells—a laugh—
Float on the blast.

Ubiquitous
With tiny sled the boy
Slides down the icy hill
Brimful of joy.

The creaking wheels
Of heavy laden carts
Grind slowly on their way
Down crowded marts.

Ah! 'tis winter,
'Tis winter cold and blue;
Crisp snow-birds have their wills
And blizzards too!

MONICA:

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PHYLLIS," "MOLLY BAWN," AND OTHER POPULAR NOVELS.

"At that," says Monica, breaking in eagerly, feeling, no doubt, she has been left too long out in the cold and that it is time her voice were heard, "I suppose I looked rather forlorn, because he said, quite nicely, 'May be ye'd not be too proud, miss, to get into me cart, an' I'll dhrive the lot of ye up to the House, where, as luck has it, I'm goin' meself.'" She mimicks the soft Southern brogue very prettily.

"So, up we got," says Kit gaily, "and away we went in the nice, sweet hay, jog trot, jog trot, and *so* comfortable."

The Misses Blake by this time are filled with dismay. In Rossmoyne, where families are few and far between and indecent scandal unknown, the smallest trifles are seized upon with avidity and manufactured into mountains. "A good appearance," Miss Penelope was taught at school, "is the first step in life," and here have these children been making *their* appearance for the first time in a common hay cart.

What will Madam O'Connor say? Madam O'Connor's father having always laid claim to being a direct descendant of one of the old Kings of Munster, Madam's veins, of course, are filled with royal blood, and as such are to be held in reverence. What won't this terrible old woman say when she hears of the Beresford's escapade!

The Misses Blake sit shivering, blinkin their eyelids and afraid to say anything.

"We got on splendidly," Terence is saying, "and might, indeed, have finished our journey respectably but for Monica. *She* laid our reputation in the dust."

Monica turns upon him an appealing lance from her large, soft eyes that would have melted any heart but that of a brother's.

"Aunt Priscilla," says this adamantine youth, "what is the name of the house with the big gate, about half a mile from this?"

"Coole Castle," replies she, stiffly, the very fact of having to mention the residence of the detested Desmond making her heart beat violently. But Terry is a person blind to speaking glances and deaf to worded hints. In effect, Terry and tact are two; so he goes on, unheeding his aunt's evident disrelish for the subject:

"Well, just as we got to Coole, I saw a fellow standing inside the entrance gate, smoking a cigar. I fancied he looked amused, but would have thought nothing of that only I heard him laugh aloud, and saw he was staring over my head—I was driving—to where Monica and Kit were, on the top of the hay. It occurred to me then to see what the girls were doing, so I stood up on the shaft and looked, and—"

Here he pauses as though slightly overcome.

"What, my dear?" asks Miss Priscilla anxiously.

"There was Monica lying in an æsthetic attitude—*very* æsthetic—with her chin in her hands and her eyes on the horse's ears, and her thoughts, I presume, in heaven, or wherever young ladies keep them, and with her heels——"

"It isn't *true*—it *isn't!*" interrupts Monica blushing furiously and speaking with much indignation. "I don't believe a single word of it!"

"And with her heels——"

"*Terence!*"

"In mid air. She was kicking them up and down with delight," says Terence, fairly bubbling over with joy at the recollection. "It was the most humiliating sight for a modest brother. I shall never forgive her for it. Besides, the strange young man was——"

"If you say another word," says Monica, white with wrath and with tears in her eyes, "I shall never speak to you again, or help you out of any trouble."

This awful threat has the desired effect of reducing Mr. Beresford to subjection. He goes down before the foe and truckles to her meanly.

"You needn't take it so much to heart," he says soothingly, "there wasn't much in it, after all, and your shoes are very pretty and so are your feet."

The compliment works wonders; Monica quite brightens up again, but the two old ladies are hopelessly scandalized.

"I feel assured, Terence," says Miss Priscilla with much dignity, "that under *no* circumstances could a niece of mine show too much of her——her——"

Here Miss Priscilla blushes and breaks down.

"Legs?" suggests Terry politely.

"But who was the strange young man?" asks Miss Penelope curiously.

"Our friend of the hay cart said his name was Desmond, and that he was nephew to the master of the house behind the big gates," returns Kit fluently.

"Desmond!" says Miss Priscilla greatly agitated. "Let me never hear you mention that name again! It has been our bane! Forget you have ever been so unfortunate as to encounter this young man, and, if ill luck should ever drive him across your path again, remember you do not—you never *can*—know him."

"But I'm certain he will know Monica if he sees her again," says Kit. "He stared at her as if she had seven heads."

"No wonder, considering her equivocal position. And as to knowing Monica, I'm notcertain of that, of course, but I'm utterly positive he could swear to her *shoes* in a crowd," says Terence with unholy delight. "He was enchanted with them and with the clocks on her stockings. I think he was taking the pattern of them."

"He was *not*," says Monica almost weeping. "He couldn't see them. I was too high up."

"What will you bet he doesn't know the color of them?" asks her tormentor with a fresh burst of appreciation of the undignified scene. "When I see him again I'll ask him."

"Terence," says Miss Priscilla, growing very pale, "you must never see him again, or, at all events, you must never speak to him. Understand, once for all, that intimacy between us and the inhabitants of Coole is impossible. This fond I hint at touches you even more closely than it touches us, but you cannot feel it more than we do—perhaps not as much. The honor of our family has suffered at the hands of the master of Coole. He is the enemy of our house!"

"Priscilla!" murmurs Miss Penelope in a low and trembling tone.

"Do not try to check me, Penelope. I *will* speak," says Miss Priscilla sternly. "This man years ago offered one near and dear to us an indignity not to be lightly borne. The world is wide," turning to the astonished children, "you can make friends where you choose; but I would have you recollect that *never* can a Beresford and a Desmond have aught in common."

"But what have the Desmonds done to us, Aunt Priscilla?" asks Monica, a good deal awed by the old lady's solemnity.

"Some other time you shall know all," says Miss Priscilla, in the low tone one might adopt if speaking of the last appalling murder.

"Yes, some other time," echoes Miss Penelope gently.

CHAPTER III.

HOW MONICA STUDIES THE LANDSCAPE.

"Is it thrue, ma'am, what I hear, that ye'll be wantin' a maid for Miss Monica?" asks Mrs. Reilly, the cook at Moyne, dropping a respectful courtesy just inside the drawing-room door. "Ryan let dhrop a word to me about it, so I made so bould, ma'am, as to come up-stairs an' tell ye I think I know a girl as will come in handy to ye."

"And who is she, Reilly?" asks Miss Priscilla anxiously.

"She's a very good girl, ma'am, an' smart an' nate, an' I think ye'll like her," replies the cook, who, like all Irish people, finds a difficulty in giving a direct answer to a direct question. Perhaps, too, there is a little wiliness in her determination not to name the new servant's parentage just at present.

"I dare say; I place great reliance upon your opinion, Reilly. But who is she? Does she come from the village or from one of the farms? I should prefer the farms."

"She's as tidy as she can be," says Mrs. Reilly amiably, but still evasively, "an' a bit of a scholard into the bargain, an' a very civil tongue in her head. She's seventeen all out, ma'am, and never yet gave her mother a saucy word."

"That is as it should be," says Miss Priscilla commendingly, "You feel a great interest in this girl, I can see. You know her well?"

"Yes, miss. She is me uncle's wife's sisther's child, an' as good a girl as ever stepped in shoe leather."

"She is, then?" asks Miss Priscilla faintly, puzzled by this startling relationship.

"She's that girl of the Cantys', ma'am, and as likely a colleen as ever ye met, though *I* say it as shouldn't, she being kin-like," says Mrs. Reilly boldly, seeing her time is come.

"What! That pretty, blue-eyed child that called to see you yesterday? She *is* from the village, then?" with manifest distaste.

"An' what's the matther wid the village, ma'am?" By this time Mrs. Reilly has her arms akimbo and has an evident thirst for knowledge full upon her.

"But I hear she is flighty and wild, and not at all domesticated in any way."

"An' who has the face to say that, ma'am? Give me the names of her dethractors," says Mrs. Reilly in an awful tone, that seemed to demand the blood of the "dethractors."

"I feel sure, Reilly," says Miss Priscilla slowly, "that you are not aware of the position your arms have taken. It is most unbecoming." Mrs. Reilly's arms drop to her sides. "And as for this girl you speak of, I hear she is, as I say, very flighty."

"Don't believe a word of it, ma'am," says cook with virtuous indignation. "Just because she holds up her head a bit, an' likes a ribbon or two, there's no holdin' the gossips down below," indicating the village by a backward jerk of her thumb. "She's as decent a little sowl as you'd wish to see, an' she has as nate a foot as there is in the county. The Cantys has all a character for purty feet."

"Pretty feet are all very well in their way," says Miss Priscilla nodding her head. "But can she sew? And is she quiet and tractable, and——"

"Divil a thing she can't do, ma'am, axin' yer pardon," says Mrs. Reilly, rather losing herself in the excitement of the moment. "Just thry her, ma'am, an' if ye don't like her, an' if Miss Monica finds even one fault in her, just send her back to her mother. I can't say fairer nor that."

"No, indeed. Very well, Reilly, let her come up to me to-morrow; and see that her inside clothes are all right, and let her know she must *never* be out after dark."

"Yes, ma'am," says the triumphant Reilly beating a hasty retreat.

Half an hour afterwards she encounters Monica upon the avenue.

"Way, where are you going, Mrs. Reilly?" asks Monica seeing that cook is got up in all her war paint, regardless of expense.

"To mass first, miss," says Mrs. Reilly. "Where's that?" asks Monica with foreign ignorance.

"Law! To the chapel, miss," says Reilly with an amused smile.

"But it isn't Sunday!"

"No, miss, it's a saint's day—may they be good to us!" crossing herself. "It's different with you, miss, you see; but we poor folks, we must say our prayers when we can, or the Virgin will dhrop us out of her mind."

"Is your chapel pretty?" asks Monica, who has now been a week in the country and, through very weariness, feels a mad desire to talk to somebody or anybody.

"Faix, it's lovely, miss, since Father Jerry took it in hand! There's the finest pictures ye ever saw on the walls, an' an altar it 'ud do ye good to look at."

"Would it? Then I'll go some day to see it," says Monica smiling, not knowing that her aunts would as soon let her enter a pandemonium as a Roman Catholic chapel.

Dear old ladies! Frightened by shadows, they have been bred in the belief that the Evil One dwells beneath the shade of the Roman Catholic Church and will, therefore, surely die in it.

"Do, then, agra!" says Mrs. Reilly, who has, of course, like all the other servants, gone down before Monica, "its proud we'd be to see ye there."

There is no thought of conversion in the woman's mind, you must remember—merely an hospitable desire to let her know she will be welcome anywhere.

"By the same token, Miss Monica," says she, "there's something I was near forgettin' to tell ye."

"Yes!" says Monica.

"Ye're goin' to have me uncle's wife's niece for your own maid, miss."

"Am I? I'm glad of that," says Monica with native courtesy. "Is she"—with some hesitation and a faint blush—"is she pretty, Reilly?"

"She's the purtiest girl ye ever set eyes on," says Mrs. Reilly with enthusiasm.

"I'm glad of *that;* I can't bear ugly people," says Monica.

"Faix, then, there's a bad time before ye wid she ould ladies," mutters Mrs. Reilly *sotto voce*, gathering up her cloak and stepping onwards. She is a remarkably handsome woman herself, and so may safely deplore the want of beauty in her betters.

Monica, turning aside, steps on a high bank and looks toward the village. Through the trees she can see the spire of the old cathedral rising heavenwards. Though Rossmoyne is but a village, it still can boast its cathedral, an ancient edifice, uncouth and unlovely, but yet one of the oldest places of worship in Ireland.

Most of my readers would no doubt laugh it to scorn, but we who belong to it reverence it, and point out with pride to passers-by the few quaint marks and tokens that link it to a by-gone age.

There is a nave, broad and deep, comprising more than a third of the whole building, with its old broken stone pavement, and high up, carven upon one of its walls, the head of St. Faughnan, its patron saint—a hideous saint, indeed, if he resembled that ancient carving. How often have I gazed upon his unlovely visage and wondered in my childish fashion why the grace that comes from so divine an origin had not the power to render his servant's face more beautiful.

In these later years they have improved (?) and modernized the old structure. A stone pulpit, huge and clumsy, erected by subscription to the memory of some elderly inhabitant, stands like a misshapen blot before the altar-rails; a window, too broad for its length and generally out of proportion, throws too much light upon the dinginess within; the general character of the ugly old place has lost something, but assuredly gained nothing, by these innovations. It is hard to put "a piece of new cloth on an old garment" successfully.

The village itself stands upon a high hill, the ocean lies at its feet. From Moyne House one can see the shimmer of the great Atlantic as it dances beneath the sunbeams or lashes itself into furious foam under the touch of the north wind. The coast-guard station, too, stands out, brilliant in its whitewash, a gleaming spot upon the landscape.

To the left of the station lies Ounahincha—a long, deep line of sea beach that would make its fortune as a bathing-place under happier auspices and in some more appreciated clime.

Monica, looking down from her height, takes in all the beauties of the landscape that surrounds her, and lets the music of the melancholy ocean sink into her very soul.

Then she lets her eyes wander to the right and rest with pardonable curiosity upon Coole Castle, where dwells the ogre of her house. Above Coole, and about two miles farther on, lies Aghyohilibeg, the residence of Madam O'Connor, that terrible descendant of one of Ireland's kings; whilst below, nestling among its furs and beeches, is Kilmore, where the Halfords—a merry tangle of boys and girls—may be seen at all hours.

Then there is the vicarage, where the rector lives with his family, which is large; and, nearer to the village, the house that holds the curate and his family, which, of course, is larger. Besides which, Monica can just see from her vantage ground the wooded slopes of Durrusbeg that have lately called young Ronayne master—a distant cousin having died most unexpectedly and left him all his property.

Six months ago, Ulie Ronayne was spoken of by anxious matrons as a wild lad, with nothing to recommend him save his handsome face and some naughty stories attached to his name. Now he is pronounced charming, and the naughty stories which, indeed, never had any foundation, are discovered to have been disgraceful fabrications. Marriageable daughters are kinder to him than words can say, and are allowed by the most cautious mothers to dance with him as often as they choose, and even to sit out unlimited hours with him in secluded corners of conservatories unrebuked.

Truly, O Plutus! thou art a god indeed! Thou hast outlived thy greater brethren! Thy shrine is honored as of old!

After a lingering glance at the distant ocean and the swelling woods that now, in merry June, are making their grandest show, Monica jumps down from her bank again and goes slowly—singing as she goes—towards the river that runs at the end of Moyne.

Down by its banks Moyne actually touches the hated lands of Coole, a slight boundary fence being all that divides one place from the other. The river rushes eagerly past both, on its way to the sea, murmuring merrily on its happy voyage, as though mocking at human weals and woes and petty quarrels.

Through the waving meadows, over the little brook, past the style, Monica makes her way, plucking here and there the scarlet poppies and the blue cornflowers and daisies, "those pearled Arcturi of the earth, the constellated flower that never sets."

The sun is tinting all things with its yellow haze and is burning to brightest gold the reddish tinge in the girl's hair as she moves with dallying steps through the green fields. She is dressed in a white gown decked with ribbons of a sombre tint, and wears upon her head a huge poke bonnet, from which her face peeps out, half earnest, half coquettish, wholly pure.

Her hands are bare and shapely, but a little brown; some old-fashioned rings glisten on them. She has the tail of her gown thrown negligently over her arm, and with her happy lips parted in song and her eyes serene as early dawn, she looks like that fair thing of Chaucer's, whose

> Berthe was of the wombe of morning dew
> And her conception of the joyous prime.

And now the sparkling river comes in sight. Near its brink an old boat-house may be seen fast crumbling to decay; and on the river itself lies, swaying to and fro, a small punt in the very last stages of decline. It is a very terrible little boat, quite at death's door, and might have had those lines of Dante's painted upon it without libel:

> Abandon hope, all ye who enter here.

But Monica, in happy ignorance of rotting timbers, thinks only of the joy she felt last evening when the discovery of this demoralized treasure was made. In the mouldering boat-house she had found it, and so had claimed it for her own.

She has told no one of her secret, not even Kit, who is, as a rule, her prime minister, her confidante and her shadow. She has, indeed, had great difficulty in escaping from "her shadow" just now, but, after much diplomatic toil, had managed it. To find herself upon the calm and gentle river, to dream there her own sweet thoughts beneath the kindly shade of the pollard willows, to glide with the stream and bask in the sunlight *all alone*, has been her desire since yester eye.

To-morrow, if to-day proves successful and her rowing does not fail her, of which she has had some practice during the last two years of her life, she will tell Kit and Terry all about it, and let them share her pleasure. But to-day is her own.

The boat is connected with the shore by a rope tied round the stump of a tree by most unskilful hands. Flinging her flowers into the punt, she strives diligently to undo the knot that she herself had made the night before, but strives in vain. The hard rope wounds her tender hands and vexes her gentle soul.

She is still struggling with it, and already a little pained frown has made a wrinkle on her smooth brow, when another boat shoots from under the willows and gains the little landing place, with its pebbly beach, that belongs equally to Coole Castle and to Moyne.

This new boat is a tremendous improvement on our heroine's. It is the smartest little affair possible, and as safe as a church—safer, indeed, as times go now. Not that there is anything very elaborate about it, but it is freshly-painted and there are cushions in it, and all over it a suppressed air of luxury.

Besides the cushions there is something else in it, too—a young man of about six-and-twenty, who steps lightly on to the bank, though it is a miracle he doesn't lose his footing and come ignominiously to the ground, so bent is his gaze on the gracious little figure at the other side of the boundary fence struggling with the refractory rope.

It doesn't take any time to cross the boundary.

"Will you allow me to do that for you?" says the strange young man, raising his hat politely and taking the rope out of Monica's hand without waiting for permission.

CHAPTER IV.

"You are very kind," says Monica slowly, feeling not so much embarrassment as surprise at this sudden advent.

Then the young man loosens the rope, and, having done so, casts a cursory glance at the boat to which it is attached. As he does so, he lifts his brows.

"Surely you are not dreaming of going on the river in *that!*" he says, indicating the wretched punt by a contemptuous wave of his hand.

"Yes. Why not?" returns she.

"There isn't a sound bit of timber in her. What *can* your people be thinking of, to let you trust yourself in such a miserable affair?"

"My people have nothing to do with it," says Monica somewhat grandly. "I am *my own mistress*."

She has picked up her flowers again out of the despised punt and now stands before him with her hands filled with the June blossoms, blue and white and red. They show bravely against the pallor of her gown and seem, indeed, to harmonize altogether with her excessive fairness, for her lips are as red as her poppies, and her cornflowers are blue as her eyes, and her skin puts her drooping daisies all to shame.

"As you *are* your own mistress," says the young man, with a suspicion of a smile as he takes in the baby sweetness of her mouth and each detail of her slight, girlish figure, that bespeaks the child rather than the woman, "I entreat you to have some mercy upon *yourself*."

"But what is the matter with it?" asks Monica, peering into the boat. "It *looks* all right. I can't see a hole in it."

"It's nothing *but* holes, in my opinion," says the strange young man, peering in his turn. "It is a regular *coffin*. You will be committing nothing less than suicide if you put your foot in it."

"Dear me," says Monica blankly, feeling impressed in spite of herself, "I do think I am the most unfortunate person alive. Do you know," lifting her eyes to his, "I didn't sleep a wink last night, thinking of this row on the river to-day, and now it comes to nothing! That is just like my luck always. I was so bent on it; I wanted to get round that corner over there," pointing to it, "to see what was at the other side, and now I can't do it." It seems to the young man looking at her as though her glance is reproached, and as if she connects him, innocent as he is, with her disappointment.

"There is no reason why you shouldn't," he is beginning anxiously when she contradicts him.

"After all," she says doubtfully, bending over to look into the clear bed of the river, "I don't believe, if things came to the worst, and I *did* get swamped, I should be drowned."

"Certainly not, if you could swim, or if there was any one watching your welfare from the banks that could."

"Well, I can't," confesses Monica with a sigh, "and unless you," with an irrepressible laugh that shows all her white and even teeth, "will promise to run along the banks of the river all the afternoon to watch over me, I don't think there is much chance of my escaping death."

"I shouldn't mind in the least being on guard in such a cause," says the stranger politely, with the same carefully-suppressed smile upon his lips (which are very handsome) as had moved them a while ago. "Command me, if you will; but I would have you remember that, even though I should come to the rescue, it would not save you an unpleasant ducking, and—and your pretty gown," with a glance that is almost affectionate at the white Indian cotton, "would be completely ruined."

"Even that dare ideа doesn't daunt me," says Monica gaily, "you forget that the more limp I am the more æsthetic I shall look. Well," with a sudden relapse into melancholy, "I suppose I must give it up, and not go round the corner to-day."

"But why not?" exclaims he eagerly.

"My boat is at your service. *Do* take it. I have quite done with it, I have indeed, and it is lighter than it looks."

"Too heavy for me, I am afraid," says Monica with a sigh.

"Is it? Then," with desperate boldness, "let me row you."

"Oh, no!" returns she, blushing warmly.

"You forget," with a swift glance at him, "you are quite a stranger to me."

Yet he is not quite such a stranger as she thinks. She is not such a stranger to him, at least, because her face, seen for a moment about a week ago, has haunted him persistently ever since.

"As we live in the same neighborhood, we can not long continue strangers," he says gently, "and, in the meantime, why lose this lovely afternoon, and that corner you were speaking of? The view of the sea, when you get round it, is really worth seeing."

"Yes, yes, I dare say," reluctantly turning to leave him. "I shall see it some day."

"Look here," says the young man very earnestly, following her as she moves, "if you will come with me you will see it *now*. I will only be your oarsman; I won't say a word to you unless you wish it; I won't even look at you. Think of me as a common boatman you have hired by the hour; or, better still, don't think of me at all. With a little care you might bring yourself to imagine I wasn't there."

"But if we met any one?" says Miss Beresford, visibly relenting.

"Impossible! There is never a soul on this stream save myself. I have been here now every day for ten days and never yet came upon even the ghost of anything human."

"Very well," says Monica, though still with palpable hesitation. "Now, remember, you have pledged yourself not to speak to me, or to look at me." At this he fires upon her so prolonged a gaze that one may readily understand he means it to be a last one for some time.

Then he turns aside and having brought his boat to her side of the fence, holds out to her his hand. As he does this he keeps his eyes bent upon the ground as though determined to let her know his penance has already begun.

"I am not in the boat, yet," says Monica, with a quaint little smile, laying her palm on his. Whereupon he looks at her again, and then, as their eyes meet, they both laugh joyously, as youth will when it meets youth.

Lightly she steps into his boat, and slowly, lazily, he rows her down the little river—flower-clad on either bank—letting the boat drift almost at its own sweet will.

The willows, drooping towards the water's edge, woo them as they pass; the foolish weeds would hold them in embrace; the broad flag flowers would fain entwine them. But they, though loving them, go by them, thinking their own thoughts and wondering vaguely at the beauty of the

> Starry river-buds among the sedge,
> And floating water-lilies broad and bright,
> * * * * * *
> And bulrushes and reeds of such deep green
> As soothes the dazzled eye with sober sheen.

So far silence has been scrupulously kept. Not a word has been spoken since they left the bank, not a look exchanged. Monica is letting her little slender fingers trail through the water and the flat leaves of the lilies. He, with his coat off, is pretending to row, but in reality is letting his body grow subservient to his mind. He has even ordered honorably to his promise not to look at her, and is still mentally ambitious about being true to his word in this respect, when an exclamation from her puts an end to all things.

"Oh! look at *that* lily!" she says excitedly. "Was there ever such a beauty? If you will row a little more to the right I am sure I shall be able to get it."

"Don't stir. I'll get it," returns he, gratefully to the lily for this break in their programme, and presently the floating prize is secured, and he lays it, wet and dripping, in her outstretched hands.

"After all, you see, you keep your promise," she says a moment later, most ungratefully, glancing up at him coquettishly from under her long lashes.

"But who made me do it?" asks he reproachfully, whereupon she laughs and reddens.

"I never confess," she says, shaking her pretty head, "and after all—do you know—I am rather glad you spoke to me, because, though I like being quite by myself at times, still I *hate* silence when any one is with me."

"So do I," says her companion, with the utmost cheerfulness.

"I think," leaning towards him with a friendly smile, "I cannot do better than begin our acquaintance by telling you my name. It is Monica Beresford."

"Monica," lingering over it lovingly, "a beautiful name, I think. I think, too, it suits you. Mine is not to be compared to yours; but, such as it is, I give it you."

He throws a card into her lap.

"I hope it isn't John Smith," says Monica, smiling and picking up the card. But, as she reads what is printed thereon, the smile fades, and an expression of utter dismay overspreads her face.

"'Desmond'—Oh! *not* Desmond!" she says imploringly, her lips growing quite pale.

"Yes, it *is* Desmond," says the young man, half amused, half puzzled. "You really think it ugly, then! Do you know, I rather fancy my surname, although my Christ——"

"You are not—you cannot be *the* Desmond," interrupts she hastily.

"No; that's my uncle," says the young man innocently.

"Oh! then you acknowledge the crime?" in deep distress.

(To be continued.)

SAVED BY A DEVOTED DOG.

A Teamster's Terrible Experience in the Snow in a Western Valley.

A wood-hauler by the name of Jean Baptiste Larue left the city late one evening for his home, somewhere on the other side of the valley. It appears that by the time he had reached the middle of the valley the effect of the liquor he had drank died away, leaving him to the mercy of the cold. At first Larue tried to overcome it. He got the waggon and ran beside the team, but in his weakened condition the exercise soon exhausted him. The motion of his arms seemed to startle the horses, and they struck off on a round trot, leaving Larue behind. The team disappeared and Larue dropped to the ground tired out and discouraged. How long he remained at the roadside he does not know, but he was first partially and then wholly aroused from the stupor which had overcome him by his dog tugging at his coat and finally biting him, first slightly and then more severely in the leg.

Maddened at the dog he staggered to his feet with the intention of beating him, but he was too far gone to even raise his hand to strike a blow. The faithful dog seemed to take in the situation, and instead of running from his master he again slightly bit him in the leg. Larue kicked at the watchful brute several times, but failed to reach him.

The exercise forced the blood to his extremities, and at the same time he gained a clearer comprehension of his real danger. With a great effort he aroused himself to action, but having lost his reckoning he didn't know which way to turn.

Again his faithful dog came to his rescue. With a whine and low bark the animal led off at right angles from the road. Larue, now trusting all to the dog, followed him as fast as he could, and in the course of half an hour reached a cabin on the hillside, occupied by a wood-chopper, who let him in and kindly attended to his wants.—*Butte City Inter-Mountain.*

Instinct as a Guide to Health.

Many of our progress-loving contemporaries would be rather alarmed at the discovery that the principle of our social, medical and educational reforms during the last two hundred years has been a restored trust in the competence of our natural instincts. So foreign was that rule of conduct to the moral standards of the middle ages that its importance was recognized only in its apparent exceptions, the supposed "evil propensities of our unregenerate nature," such as poisonhabits, sloth and sexual excesses. The real significance of such aberrations would reveal the difference between natural appetites and abnormal (artificially acquired) appetencies, and teach us the necessity of applying the tests of that distinction to all persuasive instincts, and occasionally to otherwise unexplained aversions. But even within these limits a critical study of our protective intuitions would surprisingly show in how many respects the hygienic reforms of the last two hundred years could have been anticipated by the simple teachings of our senses. For the wards of instinct a temperance sermon would be as superfluous as a lecture on the folly of drinking boiling petroleum, for to the palate of a normal living being—human or animal—alcohol is not only unattractive, but violently repulsive, and the baneful passion to which that repugnance can be forced to yield is so clearly abnormal that only the infatuation of the natural depravity dogma could ever mistake it for an innate appetite. In defence of the respiratory organs, nature fights almost to the last. The blinded dupe of the night-air superstition would hardly assert that he finds the hot miasms of his unventilated bedroom more pleasant than fresh air. He thinks it safer, in spite—or perhaps because—of its repulsiveness. "Mistrust all pleasant things" was the watchword of the mediæval cosmogony. Long before Jahn and Pestalozzi demonstrated the hygienic importance of gymnastics, children embraced every opportunity for outdoor exercise with a zeal which only persistent restraint could abate. *Dr. Felix L. Oswald, in Popular Science Monthly for February.*

A Week in the Snow.

George Morbie, a miserably clad lad, aged 13, was charged at the Westminster Police Court, the other day, with sleeping in the open air without visible means of subsistence. Police Constable Thomas Clancey, 61 B, said at an early hour he found the prisoner in a field at the back of Millbank prison under the wall. He had a fire, coffee pot, some coffee, sugar, a candle, a dog without a muzzle, and a religious book for "public worship and private devotion." He said that he had been at Ashford parish schools, but a gentleman had taken him away. His rude pallet had consisted of three old hampers. Mr. Partridge remarked that he seemed to have been out "picnicking." What house did he sleep in last? The lad said at his grandfather's, but he was out of work, and could not keep him. His father lived at Bermondsey, but didn't care for him. He had been seven or eight nights out in this field. He had left home because his father knocked him about. Mr. Partridge wondered that he hadn't caught his death of cold, and sent him to the workhouse for a week, the father and relieving officers to be at once communicated with.

A Bad Year for Some People.

It is not always safe to predict what will happen in a new year, but we venture the role of a prophet on this occasion only: 1886 will be a bad year for the man who lets his interest run up and his business run down; also for the youth who puts a $7 hat on a 70-cent head; also for the man who stubs his nose off sticking it into other people's business; also for the man who nurses a platonic love until it gets bigger than a stack of rye straw, and somebody fills him up with bird-shot, and he pays an Italian $1 a day to pick them out with a jack knife. During 1886 an epidemic will break out among young men who linger Sunday nights until 3 o'clock in the morning, young men who live off the old folks, and young men who learn all the catch words, and say, "Ah, there, you there." It will assume the form of an ague, and be known as the "cold shake."—*Albany Journal.*

M. Pachmann, the Russian pianist, has fallen into the habit of carrying on with his nearest auditors a kind of facial commentary on what he is playing, smiling, frowning and grimacing, more like a clown than an artist.

THE LADIES' COLUMN.

Latest Fashions for Mesdames, Misses and Little Dots

GOSSIP THAT MAY INTEREST THE HOUSEWIVES.

The Origin of the Bridal Veil.

It was once the custom of the bride at her wedding to wear her hair unbraided and hanging over her shoulders, says the Boston *Budget*. At the celebration of her marriage with the Palatine Elizabeth Stuart "wore her hair disheveled and hanging down her shoulders." It has been suggested that the bride's veil, which of late years has become one of the most conspicuous features of her costume, may be nothing more than merely a milliner's substitute, which in old times concealed not a few of the bride's personal attractions and often covered her face when she knelt before the altar.

Mothers Should Laugh More.

Mothers do not laugh enough. The housekeeping is so onerous, the children so often trying to nerves and temper, the servants most exasperating, and even John, good kind husband that he is, cannot understand all our vexations and discouragements, and so wearied do we often feel that it is too much for the household to depend on us, in addition to all our cares, for social sunshine as well. Yet the household does, and it must. Father may be bright and cheery, his laugh ring out, but if the mother's laugh fails, even the father's cheerfulness seems to lose much of its infection. In the sad but forcible line of one of Joanna Baillie's dramas

> Her little child had caught the trick of grief,
> And sighed amid its playthings—

we may catch a glimpse of the stern, repressed life at Cothwell Manse, where "the repression of all emotions, even the gentlest, seem to have been the constant lesson." I remember well hearing a lady say, "When a child, I used to wish so often that my mother would look cheerful."

Then laugh, mother, even if you do feel almost too weary to exert the facial muscles and though you have to make a pitiful effort which comes nigh bringing tears instead of a laugh, you will feel better for the effort, and so will the children. The little ones, unconsciously to you and themselves, are catching the very phases of countenance which will go far to brighten some future home.

Then laugh, mother! Parlor, nursery and kitchen all feel the effects of your smile or frown. The cheery laugh of a mother goes down through generations, as well as her frown. And when the mother's eyes are closed, and lips and hands forever still, there is no sweeter epitaph which children and friends can give than, "She was always bright and cheerful."

Black Tulle and Yellow Plume.

Long gloves and suits of open lace-work, in pale evening tints, are among the novelties for ball-toilets. They are fastened on the arm by a silk elastic band and a bow of ribbon.

Black tulle dresses, with yellow feathers on the corsage and in the hair, are fashionable for the ball and opera. With them are worn black silk stocking, embroidered in yellow and black satin, and jet slippers.

Party dresses for young girls, the corsage cut in a slight V-shape both back and front, and the sleeves short and puffed, are worn this sea on. This style is especially becoming to a slender figure.

A great amount of gold and silver tinsel is introduced into ball-dresses this winter. Tulles are covered with balls and butterflies of gold, and spangles are used on fans, sashes and bodices.

Russian caps of astrachan and cloth, with a pompon of scarlet, yellow or black silk placed in the front, are among the fashionable walking hats.

Natural flowers are used to garland evening dresses, to the exclusion of artificial ones.

Very decollete dresses are worn this winter, the sleeves being nothing but tiny scraps passing over the shoulders. Sometimes a guimpe of white illusion covers the neck and arms.

The English fashion of wearing only one kind of jewellery at a time is finding favor among American women. Diamonds are worn at grand balls and receptions, and sets of rubies, emeralds or pearls on other occasions.

Wide bands of black velvet worn about the throat and fastened by a diamond pin are in favor among matrons.

Mull Again Guards Tots.

Simple little party dresses of mull and lace are again in favor for children, and certainly seem more appropriate than silks and velvets. For a tot of 5 or 6 a dress of white French mull and Valenciennes lace is becoming, and may be made additionally so by a sash of bright colored satin and an underslip of the same color, either of silesia or thin silk. Silk stockings to match the sash and little French slippers are also worn.

Little Acadian cloaks and caps with their quaint Evangeline look are among the many pretty out-door wraps made for little people this winter. These coats are both warm and comfortable and give a slender form the appearance of roundness. They are made with short little plain waists and rather full skirts gathered to them, and are trimmed with fur, swan's down or some similar material put in a plain band about the edge, sometimes forming a belt. The caps are made out of two pieces, fitting the head closely, and are bordered with fur and tied with ribbons. The cloaks reach down to the shoe tops and give the old fashioned look now so desirable.

Pale primrose yellow is one of the artistic colors extensively used for children's dresses. For a little girl of five a dress recently made of soft China silk in this color had a full plain skirt finished by a deep hem, above which was a wide band of nasturtiums in deep golden red chenille embroidery. The waist was embroidered in the same way and had little short sleeves and a low cut bodice worn over a guimpe of cream lace. The long sleeves of the guimpe were caught at the wrists by red velvet ribbons.

Domestic Receipts.

Apple Tapioca.—Soak a large cup of tapioca in a pint of water several hours, or over night if you choose; add to it an hour or so before wanted a cup of sugar, a little salt, a cup of cream or rich milk; mix and pour over six large greening apples which have been peeled, cored and the cavities filled with sugar and lemon; grate over the top some nutmeg, and bake one hour.

Chocolate Cream Drops.—Mix one half cup of cream with two of white sugar, boil and stir full five minutes; set the dish into another of cold water and stir until it becomes hard. Then make into small balls about the size of marbles and with a fork roll each one separately in the chocolate, which has in the meantime been put in a bowl over the boiling tea kettle and melted; put on brown paper to cool; flavor with vanilla if desired. This amount makes about fifty drops.

To Clean Decanters.—When making cake or omelette, take your discarded eggshells, crush them into small bits, put them into your decanters three parts filled with cold water and thoroughly shake them. The glass will look like new, and all kinds of glass washed in the same water will look equally well.

Lemon Peel.—One of the nicest flavorings for custards, stewed rhubarb, puddings, etc., is made from the brandy in which lemon peel is soaked. A wide-mouthed bottle should always be kept, in which to put all spare lemon peel; pour brandy over to cover it and keep it corked. This is always ready for use. Another bottle should be kept for some of the spare peel, which should be chopped very fine and a little salt put over it, to be used for forcemeats or meat flavorings. Also dry some peel in a cool oven, and use this, crumbled fine or grated, for apples and various other things.

A BLIND BRIDEGROOM.

After Many Years His Sight is Restored and He Sees His Devoted Wife.

Several years ago a resident of one of the suburbs had the misfortune to become totally blind, a cataract forming over his eyes. While in this condition his wife died.

A young German girl, whom the unfortunate man had never seen, was very attentive to the wife in her last illness, and after her death did what she could to make the grief-stricken husband and his two little children as comfortable as possible.

Such devotion did not go unrewarded. The blind man proposed and was accepted. He married the faithful girl. Two children were the result of this union. During his years of blindness the sightless man never lost hopes that some day he might again look upon the beauties of nature and the loved ones around him.

A physician was finally consulted who agreed to attempt the removal of the cataract. The operation was successful, and he from whom the light had been shut out so many years saw again. He was almost beside himself with joy. A friend, who was at once recognized, came leading a lady by the hand.

"Do you know who this is?" he said to the happy fellow.

"No, I do not."

"This is your wife," and then the pair, one of whom had never seen the other, fell into each other's arms, and a domestic scene of pathetic beauty ensued.

The two little children were also brought into their father. He clasped them to his beating heart, and all the miseries of the past were forgotten in the pleasure of that moment. This is a true story. The actors in this life panorama, covering a period of ten years, are all alive. The husband sees as well as he ever did, and he is now in business in this city.—*Cincinnati Sun.*

The Old and the New.

The old-style pills! Who does not know
What agony they caused—what woe?
You walked the floor, you groaned, you sighed,
And felt such awful pain inside,
And the next day you felt so weak
You didn't want to move or speak.
Now Pierce's "Pellets" are so mild
They are not dreaded by a child.
They do their work in painless way,
And leave no weakness for next day.
Thus proving what is oft contest
That gentle means are always best.

Hadn't Grown an Inch in Two Years.

"Mr. Fangle, I saw in the paper that the growth of the telephone is one of the most remarkable in the history of inventions," remarked Mrs. F.

"So it is, my dear."

"Well, I don't think it is."

"No? Why?"

"Well, we've had our telephone in over two years, and it hasn't grown an inch."

• • • • Delicate diseases in either sex, however induced, speedily cured. Book