

**FLORENCE ARNOTT;
OR, IS SHE
GENEROUS? PP.1-135**

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Florence Arnott; Or, Is She Generous? pp.1-135 by M. J. McIntosh

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M. J. MCINTOSH

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"I will swing you twelve times, Florence."—Page 26.

Florence Arnott;

OR,

I S S H E G E N E R O U S ?

BY

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FLORENCE ARNOTT.

CHAPTER I.

A WINTER MORNING.

WHEN last I took leave of my young friends, it was autumn, and we were looking forward to Christmas entertainments at Flowerhill, where a play written by Mr. Dickinson himself was to be acted. Those of you who have read Jessie Graham, may remember that I thought it probable my next story for you would be of these entertainments.

Mr. Dickinson kept his promise. The play was written; and a fortnight before Christmas, came William Temple, full of joyful expectation.

The day after his arrival he rode over with his uncle to see me, and to invite Harriet and Mary to be at Flowerhill the next morning, to hear the play read, and to receive their parts, for parts they were both to have. Soon after Mr. Dickinson and William left us, the sky was overcast with heavy clouds, which, as evening approached, became more and more wild and dark. I predicted a snow-storm, and Harriet and Mary went to sleep with little hope of being able to fulfil their engagement.

The snow-storm came, but it lasted only a few hours of the night, and the next morning's sun rose clear and bright. Bright indeed, dazzlingly bright, as its rays fell on the pure, white snow with which the whole ground was covered, or shone through the icicles, with which every tree was hung, making them look like glittering diamonds, in each of which there seemed a tiny rainbow.

I had ordered the carriage at an early hour,

and we had scarcely breakfasted when the merry jingle of the sleigh-bells told that it was at the door. Even the horses seemed gayer than usual, and whirled us along so rapidly, that had not the reins been in the hands of Henry, whom I knew to be the steadiest and most careful coachman in the country, I should have been half frightened. William saw us from the parlor window, and had the door open for us as soon as we were out of the sleigh. We were just cold enough to enjoy the warm parlor; and as we drew close to the blazing wood-fire, Mary exclaimed, "Aunt Kitty, do you not wish it was always winter?"

"No, Mary, for I love spring flowers and summer and autumn fruits."

"Oh! I had forgotten them," said Mary, "but I am very glad there is a winter too."

"So am I, Mary, very glad, and very thankful to Him who gives us the varying pleasures which make each season welcome."

We were interrupted by Mr. Dickinson, who

came in with the play. He read it for us, and I am sure no play was ever heard with more pleasure. Harriet and Mary received their parts, and were now quite impatient to get home, that they might begin to study them.

This pleasant morning visit was all which I saw of the Christmas entertainments at Flowerhill; for, on my return home, I found a carriage waiting for me, and a letter requesting me to come to a very dear friend, who was both ill and in trouble, and needed a nurse and a comforter. You may be sure that I made no delay in complying with this request; but before I tell you anything of my visit, I would give you some account of my friend, Mrs. Arnott, and of her daughter Florence, as she had appeared to me about eighteen months before, when I had spent some weeks with her mother under very different circumstances.