

GLEANINGS FOR THE NEW YEAR

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Gleanings for the New Year by Edmund Nugent

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EDMUND NUGENT

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THE NEW YEAR**

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BY

EDMUND NUGENT, ESQ.

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ROME IN '49.

BENEATH a southern sky fair Nature's face
Will greenly bloom, with every vernal grace,
The early sun bids lingering tempests cease,
And fragrant breezes softly whisper peace.
Summer, with all her rainbow-tinted train,
Dancing o'er hill and vale, returns again.
But all in vain the glorious sun for thee
Shines o'er thy beauteous fields, fair Italy!
Music no more is heard in hall or bower,
At early morn or noon-tide's sultry hour;
No minstrel now in song a chaplet weaves,
As zephyrs murmur 'mongst the glistening leaves,

When Sol's last rays the West bespangling o'er,
Bids mirth, light-hearted, claim the hour once more.

Still, chief of all, does memory turn to thee,
Home of the past, the boast of Italy.
Again the seven hilled city's pride laid low ;
No Goth or Vandal now the ruthless foe,
But brethren, christian men, are leagued to slay,
Roll back the past as if 'twere yesterday ;
Alas for Rome ! Cannot history tell
With solemn warning, as a passing ball,
How vain intestine strife ! how vain to be
Lured by the empty show of Liberty !
As o'er a deep, dark stream bright flowers will blow,
Untelling all the cataract below.
Has gilded Freedom now a boon in store ?
Does arch triumphal wait the conqueror ?
What are those marks of recent shell and ball,
Deep-denting o'er the Roman Capitol ?
A monument, in vain, of empire gone,
Truth-telling relic of the Cæsars' throne,
The Colosseum, too, must claim a tear,
As if dark ancient days were present there.
Tis consecrated now, a ruined fane,
Undreaming barbarous times would come again,

When slaves in the arena strove to win
Another hour of life by conquering.
Can Freedom boast a worthier service now?
Is not the "March of Intellect" bowed low?
Go, view that column to an emperor's praise,
His statue crowned it in the olden days;
But now, oh bitter mockery! is reared
St. Paul, apostle of the Gospel word:
He meekly points to realms beyond the sky:
But man still strives with man for sovereignty.

Then, O my country! do thou, thankful, bless
The Lord of life, the spring of happiness,
From which the living waters sparkling rise,
Refresh anew all human destinies,
Thankful that o'er our land they peaceful flow,
A shining light, amid a world of woe,—
That, undeserved, our homes can echo still
All gratitude to God, to man good-will.

ERIN.—A SONG.

O ERIN, awaken! hymn far o'er the land
 Thy advent of triumph, thy right to command
 Our sympathies now in thy smiles and thy tears,
 Unclouded good wishes for happier years.

Long, long has a gloom overspread thy green Isle,
 Vain visions of glory proclaimed the while;
 Bad counsels enslaved thee to bloodshed and war;
 Thine own sons enchained thee to false Freedom's car.

True Goddess of Liberty! smile on thine own;
 Speak peace to thy subjects; bid Discord begone;
 Arise from the deep, and unveil thy fair brow,
 Encircled with evergreen olive-leaves now.

O be it thy boast and thy praise, 'mid the gloom
 Which o'ershadows this Age, like Night from the tomb,
 That warnings are heeded, that Peans arise,
 By thankful hearts wafted to unclouded skies.

The harvest in plenty o'er hill-side and dale
Has hushed the heart-outry, the lone widow's wail ;
The Destroyer, death-stricken, has fled from thy shore ;
Peace and Hope, greenly waving, blossom once more.

Oh ! long may their first-fruits gleam bright in the sun,
All England, rejoicing thy chaplet is won ;
Hand in hand, re-united, range round our Queen,
No home-rending discord to part us again.

Then, Erin, awaken ! let Industry be
Thy motto, thy bulwark : unfettered, and free,
Thou wilt shine o'er the ocean, a beacon and star,
To nations all tempest-tost, warring afar.