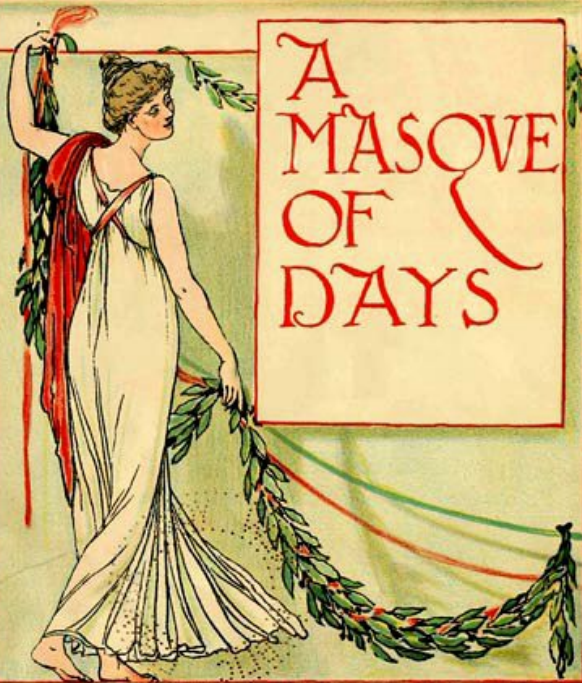


A MASQUE OF DAYS



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From the Last Essays of Elia: Newly Dressed & Decorated

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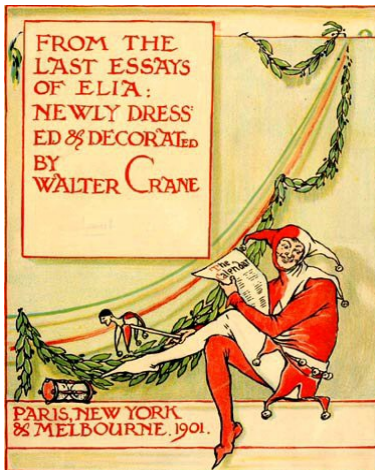


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A MASQUE OF DAYS

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FROM THE LAST ESSAYS OF
ELIA:
NEWLY DRESSED &
DECORATED
BY WALTER CRANE

PARIS, NEW YORK & MELBOURNE. 1901.



THE OLD YEAR being dead, and the NEW YEAR coming of age, wh: he does by Calendar Law, as soon as the breath is out of the old gentleman's body, nothing would serve the young spark but he must give a dinner upon the occasion, to wh: all the Days in the year were invited. The Festivals, whom he deputed as his stewards, were mightily taken with the notion. They

2.
had been engaged time out of mind, they said, in providing mirth and good cheer for mortals below; and it was time they should have a taste of their own bounty. It was stiffly debated among them whether the Fasts should be admitted. Some said, the appearance of such lean, starved guests, with their mortified faces, would pervert the ends of the meeting. But the objection was overruled by Christmas Day who had a design upon Ash Wednesday.



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(as you shall hear),
and a mighty desire
to see how the old
Domine would be:
have himself in his
cups.

Only the **VIGILS**
were requested to
come with their
lanterns to light the

(as you shall hear), and a mighty desire to see
how the old Domine would behave himself in his
cups.

Only the VIGILS were requested to come with their
lanterns to light the

gentlefolks^{*} home at night. * . * . *

All the Days came to their day. Covers were provided for a three hundred and a sixty-five guests at the principal table; with an occasional knife and fork at the side-board for the Twenty-Ninth of February.



gentlefolks home at night.

All the Days came to their day. Covers were provided for three hundred and sixty-five guests at the principal table; with an occasional knife and fork at the side-board for the Twenty-Ninth of February.



^{5.}
I SHOULD have told you that cards of invitation had been issued. The carriers were **THE HOURS** twelve little, merry whirligig foot-pages, as you should desire to see that went all round, and found

I should have told you that cards of invitation had been issued. The carriers were THE HOURS twelve little, merry whirligig foot-pages as you should desire to see, that went all round, and found

6
out the persons invited
well enough, with the
exception of **E**aster
Day, **S**hrove **T**uesday,
and a few such **M**ove:
ables, who had lately
shifted their quarters.
✻ . ✻ . ✻ . ✻



out the persons invited well enough, with the
exception of Easter Day, Shrove Tuesday, and a
few such Moveables, who had lately shifted their
quarters.



Well, they all met at last, foul Days, fine Days, all
sorts of Days, and a rare din they made of it.
There was nothing but, Hail! fellow Day,—well met
—brother Day—sister Day—only LADY DAY kept
a little aloof and seemed some

8
what scornful. Yet
some said, **TWELFTH**
DAY cut her out and
out, for she came in a
tiffany suit, white and
gold, like a queen on
a frost-cake, all roy-
al glittering, and
Epiphanous. ❧
❧ · ❧ · ❧ · ❧



what scornful. Yet some said, TWELFTH DAY cut
her out and out, for she came in a tiffany suit,
white and gold, like a queen on a frost-cake, all
royal glittering, and Epiphanous.



The rest came, some in green, some in white—but old Lent and his family were not yet out of mourning.

Rainy Days came
in, dripping; and
sun-shiny Days
helped them to
change their
stockings



Rainy Days came in, dripping; and sun-shiny Days
helped them to change their stockings.

Wedding Day
was there in his
marriage finery,
a little the worse
for wear.



Wedding Day was there in his marriage finery, a
little the worse for wear.

Pay **D**ay came
late, as he always
does ; and **D**ooms
day sent word—
he might be expected



Pay Day came late, as he always does; and
Doomsday sent word—he might be expected.



13

April Fool (as my
 young lord's jester)
 took upon himself
 to marshal the guests,
 and wild work he
 made with it. **I**t
 would have posed a
 old **E**rra **P**ater to
 have found out any
 given **D**ay in the year,
 to erect a scheme
 upon-

April Fool (as my young lord's jester) took upon
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 made with it. It would have posed old Erra Pater to
 have found out any given Day in the year, to erect
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good Days, bad Days
were so shuffled to
together, to the con-
founding of all sober
horoscopy. He had
stuck the Twenty-First
of June next to the Twen-
ty-Second of December,
and the former looked
like a Maypole siding
a marrow-bone.



good Days, bad Days were so shuffled together, to
the confounding of all sober horoscopy. He had
stuck the Twenty-First of June next to the Twenty-
Second of December, and the former looked like a
Maypole siding a marrow-bone.

Ash Wednesday got
wedged in (as was concerted)
betwixt Christmas & Lord
Mayor's Days. Lord! how
he laid about him! Nothing
but barons of beef & turkeys
would go down with him
to the great greasing
& detriment of his new sack-
cloth bib & tucker. And
still Christmas Day was
at his elbow, plying him
with the wassail-bowl,



Ash Wednesday got wedged in (as was concerted)
betwixt Christmas & Lord Mayor's Days. Lord! how
he laid about him! Nothing but barons of beef &
turkeys would go down with him to the great
greasing & detriment of his new sackcloth bib and
tucker. And still Christmas Day was at his elbow,
plying him with the wassail-bowl,

till he roared, & hiccupp'd & protested there was no faith in dried ling,* * * a sour, windy, acrimonious, censorious hy-po-crit-crit-critical mess & no dish for a gentleman. **T**hen he dipt his fist into the middle of the great custard that stood before his left-hand neighbour, & daubed his hungry beard all over with it, till you would have taken him for the **Last Day in December** it so hung in icicles.



till he roared, & hiccupp'd, & protested there was no faith in dried ling, a sour, windy, acrimonious, censorious hy-po-crit-crit-critical mess & no dish for a gentleman. Then he dipt his fist into the middle of the great custard that stood before his left-hand neighbour, & daubed his hungry beard all over with it, till you would have taken him for the Last Day in December it so hung in icicles.

AT another part
of the table, Shrove
Tuesday was help-
ing the Second of
September to some
cock broth,—



At another part of the table, Shrove Tuesday was helping the Second of September to some cock broth,—

which courtesy the
latter returned with
the delicate thigh
of a hen pheasant
—so there was no
love lost for that
matter.



which courtesy the latter returned with the delicate
thigh of a hen pheasant—so there was no love lost
for that matter.

The Last of Lent was spunging upon Shrove-tide's pancakes; which April Fool perceiving, told him he did well, for pancakes were proper to a good fry-day.

In another part a hubbub arose about the Thirtieth of January, who, it seems, being a sour puritanic character, that



The Last of Lent was spunging upon Shrovetide's pancakes; which April Fool perceiving, told him he did well, for pancakes were proper to a good fry-day.

In another part a hubbub arose about the Thirtieth of January, who, it seems, being a sour puritanic character, that

thought nobody's meat
 good or sanctified enough
 for him, had smuggled in
 to the room a calf's head
 which he had had cooked
 at home for that purpose,
 thinking to feast thereon
 incontinently; but as it lay
 in the dish **March** **Many**
 weathers, who is a very
 fine lady, and subject to
 the meagrimms, screamed



thought nobody's meat good or sanctified enough
 for him, had smuggled into the room a calf's head,
 which he had had cooked at home for that
 purpose, thinking to feast thereon incontinently; but
 as it lay in the dish **March Many**-weathers, who is
 a very fine lady, and subject to the meagrimms,
 screamed

out there was a "human head in the platter," and raved about Herodias' daughter to that degree, that the obnoxious viand was obliged to be removed; nor did she recover her stomach till she



out there was a "human head in the platter," and raved about Herodias' daughter to that degree, that the obnoxious viand was obliged to be removed; nor did she recover her stomach till she

had gulped down a
Restorative, confected
 of **O**ak **A**pple, which
 the merry **T**wenty-**N**inth
 of **M**ay always carries
 about with him for that
 purpose.



had gulped down a Restorative, confected of Oak
 Apple, which the merry Twenty-Ninth of May
 always carries about with him for that purpose.

The King's health
being called for after
this, a notable dispute
arose between the 12th
of August (a zealous
old Whig gentlewoman,
and the Twenty Third of
April (a new-fangled la-
dy of the Tory stamp) as
to which of them should
have the honour to propose
it.



The King's health being called for after this, a notable dispute arose between the 12th of August (a zealous old Whig gentlewoman), and the Twenty Third of April (a new-fangled lady of the Tory stamp) as to which of them should have the honour to propose it.

August grew hot upon
the matter, affirming time
out of mind the prescrip-
tive right to have lain
with her, till her rival
basely supplanted her;

* * * * *

April Fool being made med-
iator, confirmed the right in
the strongest form of words to
the appellant, but decided for
peace' sake that the exercise
of it should remain with the
present possessor.

* * * * *



August grew hot upon the matter, affirming time out
of mind the prescriptive right to have lain with her,
till her rival basely supplanted her;

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decided for peace' sake that the exercise of it
should remain with the present possessor.

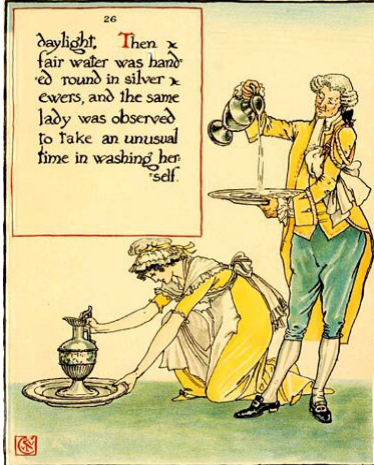
*

It beginning to grow
a little duskish, &
Candlemas lustily
bawled out for lights
which was opposed by
all the Days, who pro-
tested against burning



It beginning to grow a little duskish, Candlemas
lustily bawled out for lights which was opposed by
all the Days, who protested against burning

daylight. Then x
 fair water was hand-
 ed round in silver x
 ewers, and the same
 lady was observed
 to take an unusual
 time in washing her
 self.



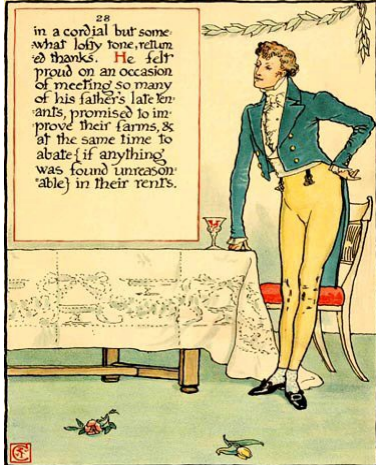
daylight. Then fair water was handed round in
 silver ewers, and the same lady was observed to
 take an unusual time in washing herself.

May-Day, with that
 sweetness which is
 peculiar to her, in a neat
 speech proposing the
 health of the founder,
 crowned her goblet (and
 by her example the rest
 of the company) with
 garlands. ~~xxx~~ This be-
 ing done, the lordly
New Year from the up-
 per end of the table,



May-Day, with that sweetness which is peculiar to her, in a neat speech proposing the health of the founder, crowned her goblet, {and by her example the rest of the company} with garlands. This being done, the lordly New Year from the upper end of the table,

in a cordial but somewhat lofty tone, returned thanks. He felt proud on an occasion of meeting so many of his father's late tenants, promised to improve their farms, & at the same time to abate {if anything was found unreasonable} in their rents.

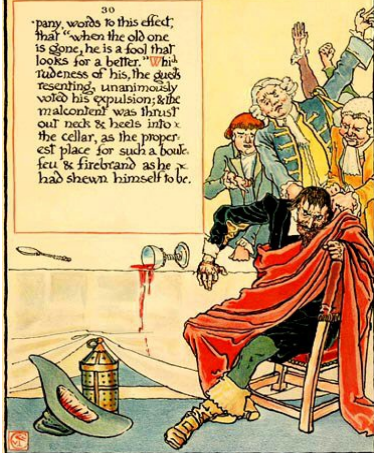


in a cordial but somewhat lofty tone, returned thanks. He felt proud on an occasion of meeting so many of his father's late tenants, promised to improve their farms, & at the same time to abate {if anything was found unreasonable} in their rents.



At the mention of this the Four Quarter Days involuntarily looked at each other, & smiled; April Fool whistled to an old tune of "New Brooms" & a surly old rebel at the further end of the table {who was discovered to be no other than the Fifth-of-November} muttered out distinctly enough to be heard by the whole company,

pany, words to this effect; that "when the old one is gone, he is a fool that looks for a better." Which rudeness of his, the guests resenting, unanimously voted his expulsion; & the malcontent was thrust out neck & heels into the cellar, as the properest place for such a boutefeu & firebrand as he had shewn himself to be.



words to this effect, that, "when the old one is gone, he is a fool that looks for a better." Which rudeness of his, the guests resenting, unanimously voted his expulsion; & the malcontent was thrust out neck & heels into the cellar, as the properest place for such a boutefeu & firebrand as he had shewn himself to be.

Orders being restored—the young lord {who, to say truth, had been a little ruffled & put beside his oratory} in as few, & yet as obliging words as possible, assured them of entire welcome; &, with a graceful turn, singling out poor **T**wenty-Ninth of **F**ebruary, that had sate all this while mumchance at the side-board, begged to couple his health with that of the good company before him—which he drank accordingly; observing, that he had not seen his honest face any time these four years—with a number of endearing

April Fool swore they had exchanged conditions; but **G**ood **F**riday was observed to look extremely grave; &



Order being restored—the young lord {who, to say truth, had been a little ruffled & put beside his oratory} in as few, & yet as obliging words as possible, assured them of entire welcome; &, with a graceful turn, singling out poor Twenty-Ninth of February, that had sate all this while mumchance at the side-board, begged to couple his health with that of the good company before him—which he drank accordingly; observing, that he had not seen his honest face any time these four years—with a number of endearing

April Fool swore they had exchanged conditions; but Good Friday was observed to look extremely grave; &

*



expressions besides. At the same time, removing the solitary Day from the forlorn seat which had been assigned to him, he stationed him at his own board, somewhere between the Greek Calends and Latter Lamm^{mas}.

Ash Wednesday, being now called upon for a song, with his eyes fast stuck in his head, & as well as the Canary he had swallowed would give

him leave, struck up a Carol, which Christmas Day had taught him for the nonce; & was followed by the latter, who gave "Miserere" in fine style, hitting off the mumping notes & lengthened drawl of Old Mortification with infinite humour.

*

Sunday held her fan before her face, that she might not be seen to smile.

*



Shrove tide, Lord Mayor's Day, and April Fool,
next joined in a glee—

Which is the properest day to drink?

in which all the days chiming in, made a merry burden.

They next fell to quibbles & conumdrums.



The question being proposed, who had the greatest number of followers—the Quarter Days said, there could be no question as to that; for they had all the creditors in the world dogging their heels. But April Fool gave it in favour of the Forty Days before Easter; because the debtors in all cases outnumbered the creditors, & they kept *lent* all the year round.



All this while
Valentine's Day
kept courting
pretty May, who
sate next him,
slipping amorous
billets-doux un=

All this while Valentine's Day kept courting pretty
May, who sate next him, slipping amorous billets-
doux

der the table, till
the **Dog Days**
{who are natural-
ly of a warm con-
stitution} began
to bark and rage
exceedingly.



under the table, till the Dog Days {who are naturally
of a warm constitution} began to bark and rage
exceedingly.

April Fool, who likes a bit of sport above measure, & had some pretensions to the lady besides as being but a cousin once removed,—clapped & halloo'd them on; and as fast as their indignation cooled those mad wags, the **E**mber Days, were at it with their bellows to blow it into a flame; & all was in a ferment: till old **M**adame **S**eptuagesima, who boasts herself the **M**other of the **D**ays, wisely diverted the conversation with a tedious



April Fool, who likes a bit of sport above measure, & had some pretensions to the lady besides as being but a cousin once removed,—clapped & halloo'd them on; and as fast as their indignation cooled those mad wags, the Ember Days, were at it with their bellows, to blow it into a flame; & all was in a ferment: till old Madame Septuagesima {who boasts herself the Mother of the Days} wisely diverted the conversation with a tedious

tale of the lovers which she could reckon when she was young; & of one Master Rogation Day in particular, who was for ever putting the question to her; & but she kept him at a distance, as the chronicle wd: tell—by which I apprehend she meant the Almanack.

Then she rambled on to the Days that were gone, the good old Days, & so to the Days before the Flood—which plainly showed her old head to be little better than crazed & doited.



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Then she rambled on to the Days that were gone, the good old Days, & so to the Days before the Flood—which plainly showed her old head to be little better than crazed & doited.

Day being ended, the Days called for their cloaks & great coats & took their leaves. Lord Mayor's Day went off in a mist as usual; Shortest Day in a deep black Fog that wrapt the little gentleman all round like a hedgehog. Two Vigils—so watchmen are called in heaven—saw Christmas Day safe home—they had been used to the business before. Another Vigil—a stout, sturdy, patrol, called the Eve of St. Christopher—



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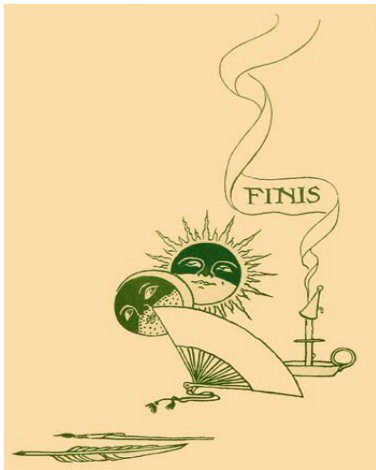
seeing Ash Wednesday in a condition little better than he should be—e'en whipt him over his shoulders, pick-a-back fashion, & Old Mortification went floating home singing—

"On the bat's back do I fly,"

& a number of old snatches besides, between drunk & sober; but very few Aves or Penitentiaries {you may believe me} were among them. Longest Day set off westward in beautiful crimson & gold—the rest, some in one fashion, some in another; but Valentine & pretty May took their departure together in one of the prettiest silvery twilights a

Lover's Day could wish to set in.

FINIS



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