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THE DAWNING OF THE YEAR.

When the snowflakes of December robe
The earth in spotless white,
And the stars in dazzling beauty decorate
The wintry night,
We watch the old year vanish like a
ghost into the past,
To the music of the sleighbells and the
dirges of the blast,
We bless it for its kindness and we sigh
above its dead.

Across the heart graves it has left most
solemnly we tread,
But we turn with hope and gladness as
we brush away a tear
To pleasures which still hidden lie with-
in the glad New Year.

When it dawns in all its glory we shall
put the past away,
And, trusting in its coming, greet its
bright, initial day.
The sun will burst in grandeur on the
era that it brings,
And loves unknown today will touch the
heart's melodious strings.
Oh, when it breaks upon the world may
every mist depart,
And may its bells ring joyously in every
human heart:
For everywhere on land and sea the mil-
lions wait to cheer
The banners which in splendor wave
above the glad New Year.

I can almost see its footsteps in the soft
and fleecy snow
And hear its wondrous anthems as its
bells swing to and fro,
For Father Time is standing 'twixt the
new year and the old,
He rings for one a parting dirge, for one
the chimes of gold.
Aye, in the crisp, clear night he stands,
A smile upon his face,
And wishes joy, while he rings, for all
the human race:
For in the sweet tones of the bells what
heart can never hear
The promises of peace that crown the
dawning of the year?
—New York Clipper.

A LEGEND OF NEW YEAR'S EVE.

This is the 30th of January, 1871,
said Dame Madeleine, laying down her
knitting with a serious look in her
brown, shriveled face, like one about to
tell a strange story. I'm 91 years old
today. I have lived to see many won-
derful changes. I have seen the French
at Berlin and the Germans in Paris,
and now I thank the God that these
good old eyes of mine can see but little
more evil in this world.

It is seldom enough that I stir from
home now, for my own limbs are not so
lissom now as they used to be in the
days of the great emperor, when I
danced down all the village girls at our
eve of Paques (Easter) and New Year's
feast and prayed for the soul of our young
lord, Henri de Mortemar, for it was up-
on that day that he sinned his greatest
sin, and sorely indeed was he punished
for it. May God have mercy upon his
soul! You say you would like to hear
the tale? Well there are not many gen-
tlemen who would care to sit and listen
to an old woman's idle stories, so if
you're good enough to wish to learn it
you shall have it, and welcome.

There's but little remaining now of
the old chateau of Mortemar, and if
monsieur the marquis could come back
to it he would hardly know his own
home again, for when the people rose
up in 1793 they scarcely left one stone
upon another. You can just see a half
burned corner of one of the towers, and
that's all. But in the days before the
revolution what a place it was! Such
feasting all day long! Such music and
dancing and gaiety of every kind! Such
troops of servants in rich liveries, and
fine gentlemen with laced coats and sil-
ver belted swords, and beautiful ladies
with powdered hair, and glittering
with jewels like the shrine of the Holy
Virgin in the cathedral yonder. But to
pay for all this splendor we of the peo-
ple had to make soup out of nettles and
to go without fire in winter, and that's
why I'm glad the times are changed
now.

M. Henri was the only child, but his
father, the great marquis, had adopted
a young lady, the daughter of an old
friend of his who had been killed by his
side at the battle of Minden. These
were all that lived in the house, but
there were always plenty of young gen-
tlemen from the neighborhood hanging
about the chateau—and well there
might be when such a pretty girl as
Mlle. Adela was in it. It would take a
good hour to tell you of all her admir-
ers, but the two gayest and wildest of
them all were Gaston de St. Cyr, and
Raymond de Mericourt, whom they
used to call the Black Eagle.

Holy St. Joseph! What a wild set
they were, those young madcaps! I can
remember as if it were yesterday
(though I was only a child then) how
they used to racket about the streets of
the town at night, kissing every pretty
girl they met and pricking every quiet
old burgher with their swords till he
jumped and hallooed like a dancer at a
fair. It was no use complaining, for no
one dared to touch a gentleman in those
days, and once, when the mayor ventur-
ed to object to their doings, they an-
swered by hanging a dead dog at his
door with a piece of paper in its mouth
saying, "A ton tour, mon frere!" (In
your turn, brother.) Little did they
dream, then, that their own friends and
kinsmen were to be hung along those
streets in the very same way only a few
years later.

But there was one among the roister-
ers so different from the rest that he

quite put me in mind of that picture of
St. Antoine among the demons which
hangs above the font in our church.
This was young Armand de Courval,
who had been bred up for the church,
only his elder brother died suddenly
and left him heir to the family prop-
erty. But every one said he would have
done much better for an abbe than for
a lord, he was so grave and so gentle
and so quiet, hardly ever speaking or
lifting his eyes from the ground. Our
wild young gentlemen used to make
fine fun of him, as you may think, but
he bore it all without a word, till at
last they got tired and left off.

Now, of course, there was a good deal
of talk in our neighborhood about the
young lady and her admirers, and plenty
of guesses were made as to who would
be the man. Some said it was M. Henri,
while others declared that, having been
brought up together like brother and
sister, they would never think of each
other in any other way. Most people
were for M. de Mericourt, and indeed it
wouldn't have been easy to find a hand-
somer or a bolder man if he only had
not been so terribly wild, but just then
a thing befell which gave us all some-
thing else to think about.

It was terribly hot all over France
that summer of 1788, and the older men
shook their heads and said that if we
didn't get some rain soon it would be
all over with the harvest. This was bad
news for us poor folks, who had little
enough to live on anyhow, but upon it
came another piece of news that we
liked still less—namely, that several
dogs of the neighborhood had gone mad
and were running about the country bit-
ing every one whom they met.

Now, one evening about that time
Mlle. Adela went out to stroll among
the trees by the riverside, which was a
favorite walk of hers. All at once there
came bursting through the bushes a
huge black dog, raving mad, with its
tongue lolling out and the foam flying
from its open jaws. She shut her eyes
and sank helplessly to the ground, too
much terrified even to scream.

Just then, when all seemed over, out
from behind a tree (where he had been
reading all the afternoon) sprang
Armand de Courval, the scholar, the
dreamer, the man at whom every one
laughed. He ran right at the savage
brute, weaponless as he was, flung his
coat over its head, so as to blindfold it
for an instant, and then quick as light-
ning seized and hurled it bodily into
the river.

When the other gentlemen heard
what had happened, they were greatly
amazed, as you may think, and praised
his courage up to the skies, but he only
said: "Why do you extol me? Give the
praise to God, who helped me." And
then he slipped away, as if he didn't
want to hear any more of it.

But the next day Mlle. Adela came to
him as he sat in a nook of the great
eastern window and said very earnestly:
"M. de Courval, I can never thank
you enough for your bravery. I think
few of these gay cavaliers who make
sport of you would have faced such a
death half so well."

But De Courval only smiled a sad,
sweet smile, such as one might fancy
on the face of a martyr when the flames
are rising fast around him.

"Ah, my child," said he in his soft,
low voice, "it is better to be doing
good than to live doing nothing."

And for several days after that our
young lady was strangely silent and
thoughtful.

The summer passed, and the autumn
passed, and as winter began to draw on
every one made his preparations for the
Jour de l'An (New Year's day), which,
as you know, is our great day in France.
There used to be a great fete every year
at the chateau of Mortemar, and this
time it was to be even grander than
usual, for monsieur the marquis had
invited friends from all parts and had
announced that he should give a feast
on New Year's eve to all the tenants on
his estate, of whom my mother was one.

So then the young gentlemen began
to talk about getting up some kind of
show to amuse the tenants, and M.
Henri, who was always foremost in every
kind of fun, cried out:
"Hark ye, gentlemen, these good peo-
ple say we're wild as devils, so suppose
we take them at their word. We'll
dress up as demons and treat them to a
demon dance."

The others shouted with laughter
and said it would be just the thing; but
Armand de Courval shook his head.

"For heaven's sake, my friends,"
said he, "don't make a jest of such
things! You know"—
"We know that you have a right to
be shocked, my dear abbe," broke in
M. Henri, laughing, "but it can't matter
much for poor sinners like us. I'm
sure if satan himself likes to come and
head our dance he'll be heartily wel-
come."

New Year's eve came at last, and
the tenants were there in their best
clothes, my mother and I among them.
The great courtyard had been covered
in with canvas and warmed by a big
fire at each end, and there we had our
supper. Monsieur the marquis and our
young lady went out among us to see
that we had enough, while the rest sat
at the windows and looked on.

When supper ended, there was a sud-
den burst of wild music. Up went a
curtain at the end of the yard, disclos-
ing a stage painted to represent the
depths of a forest, and out came M.

Henri and his two friends, dressed as
demons, and began dancing and halloo-
ing and waving burning torches till
they scared us children so that we cried
as loud as they did.

The fine folks at the windows clapped
their hands and applauded lustily, but
all at once somebody cried out:
"I thought there were only three of
them. Who's the fourth?"

And when we looked, there, sure
enough, where there had only been three
dancers a minute back, there seemed
now to be four. But no one could tell
exactly what the fourth was like, for
he flitted about like a shadow, now
here, now there and sometimes seeming
to be everywhere at once.

Then a strange horror fell over the
whole assembly, and every one saw in
his neighbor's face the terror that was
upon his own. The lights burned blue,
and the air suddenly became foul and
stifling, like the air of a charnel vault.
And as the courtyard grew darker a
pale, dismal light, like a half quenched
fire, began to rise over the stage, show-
ing us that the faces of the dancers had
grown haggard and ghastly and that
their dancing was like the writhings of
men in mortal agony. Many of the
great ladies, who had always mocked
at such things and believed neither in
God nor the devil, fainted outright,
and the boldest of the gentlemen were
little better.

Then, amid all the tumult and terror,
forth came M. de Courval. Up he went
on to the stage, and, lifting his calm,
commanding face above the tortured
visages of the doomed men, said so-
lemnly:
"Stranger, if you are of mortal mold
come forward and meet me like a man.
If you are a spirit of evil, begone in the
name of him who died for us all."

There came a clap of thunder that
seemed to rend the very sky, and all
was dark as night, but through the
darkness and the silence wailed a low,
dying groan. When the light came
again, all the gay guests were huddled
together like scared sheep, while the
three dancers lay prostrate upon the
stage, with their dresses all scorched
and blackened as if by lightning, but
the terrible fourth was nowhere to be
seen.

Monsieur the marquis sprang upon the
stage and called to his son, but Henri
made no answer. He was dead. It fared
even worse with M. de Mericourt, for
he, the bold, high spirited, reckless
cavalier, was a hopeless idiot ever after,
crying and cowering like a frightened
child. As for Gaston de St. Cyr, the
shock sobered him once for all. There-
forth he devoted his life to good works,
and died long after in a foreign land,
reverenced like a saint.

"And the young lady?" ask I, as
Dame Madeleine pauses.

"She married M. de Courval six
months later, and went away to Amer-
ica, where they lived many years, work-
ing manfully for their own living and
beloved by all who knew them, and only
two years ago their grandson (he's an
officer in the American army, and such
a fine fellow) came over to see the place
where his ancestors had lived, and seem-
ed quite pleased to find old Madeleine
still alive and hearty. So, you see, mon-
sieur, the good can bring good out of
evil, after all."—St. Louis Globe-Dem-
ocrat.

NEW YEAR'S IN SCOTLAND.

Superstitions Regarding the First Caller of the Year.

It is an exceptional thing for a Scot-
tish family to go to bed on Hogmanay.
On the contrary, they sit up waiting
for the "first foot," or the one who is
the first to put his foot over the doorsill
after the clock has struck 12. Refresh-
ments have been prepared and are kept
in readiness on tables decorated as elab-
orately as possible.

There are many superstitions connect-
ed with "first footing." The most mark-
ed of these has to do with the lucki-
ness or unluckiness of "first footers." It
is generally believed that the prosper-
ity or adversity of any family is due to
the "first foot" of that year. So strong
is this belief that when it is known that
a reputed unlucky person intends to
"first foot" a family all sorts of schemes
are resorted to in order to prevent it. A
lucky friend is besought to get there
first, or a member of the family stands
outside the door to enter as soon as the
moment arrives.

But all this is done with the greatest
delicacy, so as not to violate the string-
ent laws of hospitality or offend in the
least the unlucky "first foot."

The lucky "first footers" are friends
and wellwishers, a kind man, a good
man, a sweetheart, people who spread
out their feet, those who were born feet
first, a man on horseback, a man with a
horse and cart. Unlucky "first footers"
are thieves, pigeon-toed people, cripples,
deformed or weak-minded folk, a hypo-
crite, the hangman, a gravedigger or an
undertaker, a midwife, all who were
suspected of dealing in witchcraft, those
whose eyebrows meet and men with
red hair.

There is always great rivalry among
the young men for the honor of "first
footing" the home of the reigning belle.
Excitement runs high when four or five
athletic young men reach such a house
before the hour has struck. It is the
wise youth who incites his companions
to a bout at wrestling to decide the dis-
puted question, and himself steps over

the threshold on the stroke of the hour
while the others roll and tumble out in
front.—New York Herald.

In England Long Ago.

Dunbar, in his poems, greets James
IV thus:
My Prince in God gif the guid grace,
Joy, gladness, comfort and solace,
Play, pleasure, myrth and mirrie cheir
In hantell of this guid New Year,

and Scott, in "Ane New Year Gift to
the Queene Mary, Quhen Scho Come First
Hame" (1561), says:
To seiss thy subjectis so in luf and feir
That rycht and reason in thy realm may
rule,
God gif the grace aganis this guide New Year
—Selected.

New Year's Bells.

Ring in the new year with gladness,
Ring out the old with a tear;
There's always a feeling of sadness
As we witness the death of a year,
A year so swift in its fleeting,
With sorrow we watch its last hour,
Then give the new one a greeting
From the bells in each steeple and
tower.

A sigh for the year that is dying,
A tear where the memory dwells,
Then banish the past with its sighing
And list for the voice of the bells,
The song of thanksgiving and pleasure
That welcomes the birth of an hour,
The soul stirring, vibrating measure,
That rolls out from each steeple and
tower.

THE WESTERN FARMER.

It Is a Great Race That Is Peopling the Plains and Prairies.

Dr. Albert Shaw says, in an article
in the Century, on "The Trans-Missis-
sippians and their Fair at Omaha":
When one bears testimony to the fine-
ness and beauty of all this array of
machinery—a beauty that lies in the
ever-increasing perfection of its fitness
for the conditions that have to be met
—one is really paying a tribute to the
brains, energy and character of the
Western farmer. I have been on the
Hungarian plains and witnessed the
costly attempts of a progressive gov-
ernment to teach the landowners and
peasants the use of improved farm
machinery imported from America or
else adapted from American types.

And I have also observed—what is
confessed by the government and noted
by all who visit those regions—the
persistent fact of scores of men, wo-
men and children in the corn-fields
with old-fashioned hoes, while long
rows of white-tunicked men, in the
hay-field or the ripe grain, are swing-
ing sickles and short scythes. And a
little later in the season it is common
enough to see the oxen treading out
the grain or to hear the thud of the de-
scending flail. Meanwhile, the new-
fashioned corn-plows are rusting; the
rejected moving and reaping-ma-
chines rot in their neglected corners;
and the threshing-machine is viewed
askance as an ill-omened monstrosity.

It is all simply a difference in men.
It is a great race that has peopled
our prairies and plains, and that is
producing corn, wheat, and oats by
the thousands of millions of bushels
where only a few years ago there was
the ancient matted sod of the prairies,
unbroken for centuries. The men
who drive the gang-plow, ride the
sulky-cultivator, manipulate the twin-
binder and send millions of horned
cattle, hogs and sheep to the packing
establishments of Omaha, Kansas
City and Chicago are to be credited
with a series of achievements worthy
not merely of respect, but even of en-
thusiasm. I cannot for a moment
doubt the ability of such men to rear
a fine and varied fabric of civilization
upon so great a material foundation.

A Daily Incident at the Postoffice.

Enter Mamie Blank—"Any mail for me?"
"Nothing to-day."
"Anything for Mr. John Blank?"
"No."
"For Sallie Blank?"
"No."
"Jennie Blank?"
"No."
"Susie Blank?"
"No."
"Harry Blank?"
"No."
Exit Mamie Blank, followed, one at a
time, by Sallie Blank, Jennie Blank, Susie
Blank, and Harry Blank, each of whom puts
the amiable party at the window through
the same rigid examination. Could you blame
the postoffice people for occasionally saying
"Blankety blank."

The Lewistown "Gazette" says that by the
use of milk and pumpkin seeds a tape worm
over seven feet long was removed from a
young son of John B. Keller of that town.
As the lad is only 4 years, it is believed
he is the youngest child known to be afflicted
in this manner.

Save the Pennies,
the Dollars will take
care of themselves.

A DOLLAR

Will do as much as
two at this store now.

Every Suit,
Every Overcoat,
Every Storm Coat,
Every Boys' Reefer,
Every Hat,
Every Tie,
Every Shirt,
Every Sweater, Etc.,
At and Below

ACTUAL :: COST.

Hundreds of SHOE
BARGAINS are here
for men, boys, women
and children. A small
lot of \$3 and \$4 wom-
en's Shoes still here.

Gidding &
Comp'y,
THE WHITE FRONT,
BLOOMSBURG.

HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN ANYONE.

There are few things more embarrassing than to be a recip-
ient of a gift where you have not been a giver. Have you been
placed in that predicament? Don't worry.

A NEW YEAR'S PRESENT

from our store will fix matters up and give you an easy mind.
We always carry good stocks and you will find what you want
in our

Carpet and Furniture Departments.

We have a number of tasty Screens, Tabourettes, Fancy Ta-
bles, which we will move quickly with the lever of low prices.
They are good goods, but, as we are just now commencing to
take inventory, we don't want them on our list.

Fancy Rockers.

We can give you a bargain in, this week. Manufacturer was
to have them in our store Dec. 1st. In the rush they were de-
layed. To induce us to take them he gave 15 per cent. reduction
in the price, and to induce you to take them, we add another 15
per cent, and you can buy the chairs at 70 cents on the dollar, as
compared with former selling price.

Fancy Mirrors and Pictures.

Same old story. Bought too many, and want to make them
move. Will not a low price enhance their beauty to you?

Dry Goods Department.

Lots of odds and ends we find as we take inventory. Prices
will be low, rather than to carry them into the Spring stock.
Some Fancy Handkerchiefs, Towels, or Linens, might suit you
for New Year's gifts.

Toys.

We had a good business. The few we have left will go for
cost. We want their room for our new departments.

Grocery Department.

Weren't those Grenoble Nuts fine? All who ate them say
our assertion as to their being cheaper, weight for weight, than
the 12ct. sold elsewhere, was strictly true. Try a sample pound.
For the New Year's dinner try our fine Mixtures at 2 lbs for 25c.
They are fine. Everything fresh and good in this department.
We replenish twice a week, so as to not have stale goods.

The Leader Store Co., Ltd.,

Fourth and Market Sts.