



ONE NEW YEAR'S RESOLVE.

BECAUSE SHE KEPT IT, ONE WOMAN'S LIFE WAS MADE MISERABLE.

"I never make another New Year's resolve as long as I live," signed the postcard.
 "Hi! Suppose you failed to keep yours?" replied the guest.
 "Failure? if you had, you'd have been wearing wings instead of hair and a halo rather than a picture hat."
 "I kept mine, but it gave me a lot of trouble. You see, it was the first New Year's since my marriage, and I felt it necessary to turn over a very white new leaf, so I resolved—"
 "Never to tell another fib? Then I hope Anne did not ask you if her new gown was becoming."
 "I did not—neither did she. If she had, I would have at least told her that it was more becoming than the last one. I resolved to give up society and devote my time to charity. It is really so difficult to induce Arthur to go anywhere that I—"
 "Might as well have the credit of giving it up voluntarily. Still, if you cried each time that he refused, he would bring you candy and flowers, and—"
 "And spend so much money on them that I'd have to give up a hat or two, besides having my complexion spoiled by the candy."
 "No, to mention the doctor's bill, if it made you ill. See?"
 "Nor the fact that I'd have to take the medicine! No, I resolved to devote myself



"I SENT A BOY FOR A CAB."

to good deeds—I always did like giving and vice."
 "Was Arthur delighted?"
 "I suppose so. He was reading his paper when I told him. It is queer, but that absorbs him as much as curling my hair absorbs me."
 "Men are so queer. Did you really keep your resolve?"
 "M'h'm; I gave a silk waist that came from Paris to a woman with three starving children and even showed her how to make it fit her. Then I went to see a blind woman who lived in an alley, and took her a bunch of roses and a lovely embroidered doily. And there was Elaine, who never did a thing for anybody; I told her she ought to be ashamed, when I was devoting myself to the poor."
 "And was she?"
 "No. She remarked that I was wearing a new fur box, and that I was evidently not depriving myself of imported hats. I told her that I had to set the poor a good example in neatness."
 "True. But—"
 "Yes. It was raining when I came away from the blind woman, and I sent her grandson for a cab. He never returned, and I found that my watch was gone, too. When I told Arthur, he—"
 "Yes, go on!"
 "He said that charity was only covered a multitude of sins, but a good many dollars as well. Well, I caught a cold that day and was sick for a week. The cook promptly left, and in boiling two eggs and making some undrinkable coffee Arthur burned his hand, scorched his coat sleeve and broke two eggs. He blamed that all on charity."

"Of course."

"M'am. Then, we had to buy a good many tickets for charitable entertainments, and all my poor people got out of work and said they'd rather have money than advice, so Arthur—"
 "Complained? How like—"
 "Yes. Finally Mrs. Swellstyle decided to give a colonial bazaar, and asked me to help. The proceeds were to go to great good, in buying photographic copies of good pictures on which the starting poor could feed their hunger for beauty. I consented to help, but—"
 "Arthur?"
 "He said that if I continued my charitable deeds we should soon be objects of charity ourselves. He hasn't refused to go anywhere with me since, but if you will believe it, Elaine, is telling everybody that my good resolve was only a scheme to bring about that result."
 ELISA ARMSTRONG BENGOUGH.

THE TURNING OF A LEAF.

MR. SIMPLETON TURNED IT, BUT DIDN'T KEEP IT TURNED.

"NOTICE that to-day is the first of January," remarked Mr. Wimpleton, as he unlocked the breakfast napkin. "The day has set me to thinking that I had better revise my boyhood's habit and make the resolve to turn over a new leaf. In the past, I—"
 "Now, you are not going to resolve to help the poor by giving away all your second-best clothes, are you?" said his wife, apprehensively. "You did that once, I remember, and had to shovel the snow off the front pavement in your best suit."
 "I have done nothing of the kind," hastily replied her liege. "The fact is that I have not been as kind a husband in the past as I might have been, and—"
 "Oh, I guess you've been as good as the average," responded his wife, calmly.
 "No, I have not, my dear, that is merely your gentle, witty way of putting it. I know that I have often displayed great temper when the provocation was slight, but in future you shall have no cause for complaint."
 "Well, of course, you were very unpleasant about those bills, Nathaniel. I thought at the time that you never behaved in that way before we were married, and—"
 "Displayed some temper, did I? No wonder. An angel on a tombstone would have displayed temper over such extravagance as that. Did you expect me to remain as quiet as a— as a gingerbread baby while I was robbed by a lot of— However, in future I shall do it, since you are so anxious."
 "You are sure that you are not ill, are you, dear? The doctor said—"
 "Never better in my life. I have merely seen the error of my ways and resolved to mend them in time. When I think of the terrible fits of anger to which I have sometimes given way, I—"
 "Well, I was afraid that the last cook would make trouble because of the things you said to her about the biscuits, still—"
 "The things I said, eh? Let me tell you, Sarah Wimpleton, that many a man would have deserted his wife for less than that. If I did make a few slight remarks I was fully justified, I can tell you. However, it shall never happen again."
 "I am glad to hear it, dear. Now that I think of it, I feel very badly over your quarrel with the people next door, and your feud with the ice-man, and the things you said about the cigars I bought you at Christmas were—but what is the matter?"
 "The matter? Let me tell you, I shall not remain here to be insulted. I am the most patient and long-suffering of men, but even I will not stand this. I shall be at home late this evening, if you send me a note of apology in the interval for this unprovoked attack upon me!" The banging of the front door put an impressive period to the sentence.
 "And all," said Mrs. Wimpleton, shaking her head at the clock, "all because he had decided to turn over a new leaf on New Year's day!"

Greeting to the New Year. Hall, glad New Year! We do not ask Our woes you should disperse. We merely urge this simple task— Pray do not make them worse. —Chicago Record.

The Simple Fact. Stuyvesant—Going to turn over a new leaf, New Year's day, old man? Schermerhorn—No, going to turn over the same old leaf.—Brooklyn Eagle.

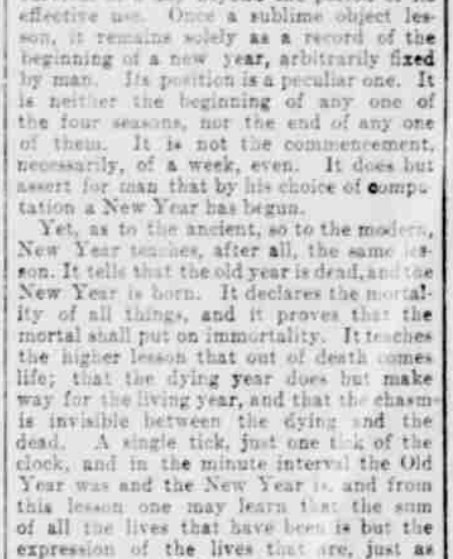
SOME NEW YEAR THOUGHTS.

THE PAST IS MERELY THE EXPRESSION OF THE LIVING PRESENT.



COMMEMORATION of the beginning of the year is, essentially, purely, since the first day of January makes no special appeal in history, nor is it the anniversary of the birth or death of any hero. It is not set apart for the performance of any specific duties, nor the teaching of any particular lesson; yet New Year is observed, quietly, it is true, and without any ostentation, in all parts of the United States.
 In looking for the beginning of this practice, one must go into the prehistoric past, for New Year is the most ancient of all the days which man has set apart for special distinction. In the former days, though, it began with the advent of spring, when the buds and leaves began to open and the voices of the song birds were heard again. The Latins, from whom came the months now used, celebrated their New Year as the seasons older than they had done, in March. This explains why December, meaning "tenth" month, should be twelfth in our calendar.
 The day, then, neither a festival nor a fast, not one to keep alive the fires of patriotism, as the Fourth of July, or to bear remembrance, as Christmas, the sublime life of a Christ, is, nevertheless, universally observed, because at one time it did stand for a most beautiful sentiment—the revivifying of nature. It banished the banishment of cold and of the sterile winter; it gave assurance of a harvest for man, who could see in the bursting of the seeds autumn days of harvest.
 Thus was it with the Chaldeans, oldest of the civilized peoples, whose name Abraham, the founder of the Jewish nation. They were as puzzled as moderns are over the mystery of death, and that greater mystery, life. Of the generative principle they made a god and worshipped it. The presence of their god was felt, seen, as they taught, in the new path put on by the trees, in the tiny spires of green grass which peeped through the bare blades of the previous year, and in the many-colored little flowers that nestled cozily beside the grass-blades.
 They knew their god lived and was pleased with his people. They broke forth into rejoicing which lasted many days. There was worship in the temples and the groves, and infinite gladness everywhere. Through century after century this religious and festive observance was had, and the remains of it are seen to-day in the chief holy day of the great Catholic church during the vernal season, although now held in commemoration of a grander and more glorious event.
 The New Year observance, then, is the survival of a day beyond the period of its effective use. Once a sublime object lesson, it remains solely as a record of the beginning of a new year, arbitrarily fixed by man. Its position is a peculiar one. It is neither the beginning of any one of the four seasons, nor the end of any one of them. It is not the commencement, necessarily, of a week, even. It does but assert for man that by his choice of computation a New Year has begun.
 Yet, as to the ancient, so to the modern, New Year remains, after all, the same lesson. It tells that the old year is dead, and the New Year is born. It declares the mortality of all things, and it proves that the mortal shall put on immortality. It teaches the higher lesson that out of death comes life; that the dying year does but make way for the living year, and that the chasm is invisible between the dying and the dead. A single tick, just one tick of the clock, and in the minute interval the Old Year was the New Year is, and from this lesson one may learn that the sum of all the lives that have been is but the expression of the lives that are, just as the New Year is born. It declares that have been is found in the New Year just begun.
 WILLIAM ROSSER COBBE.

CAN'T DO ANYTHING ELSE.



"I SNATCHED HER CLOSE"

It thought it a breach of courtesy to cough or sneeze before her, and many a heroic struggle have I had with self to avoid these storms.
 My mother was altogether different. She was a small, fair woman, with merry little ways, a continual laugh, and the manners of a child. The sort of a person that one must pet, and indulge, and excuse. My mother was also a very small woman, but her manner to Mrs. Steele was that of a tall woman bending to a midge.
 Year after year passed in pleasant, even fashion, until I reached the age of 12. Mother wakened me as usual one New Year's morning, but, contrary to her custom, seated herself on my bedside, and, facing me, clasped my hand in hers.
 "My son," she said, "you are old enough now to bear responsibility, and learn many ways and ideas. Your father was a gentleman. He was kind, loving and tender; ever ready to defend a girl, a woman, and the right. He never drank to intoxication, and hoped his son might also be exempt from this temptation. If not, he prayed that strength might be given him to leave it entirely alone."
 I wondered why mother was saying this to me, when tears came in her beloved eyes, and she continued.
 "I am telling you this, dear lad, because you always visit the Steeles on New Year's day, and there are many young men whom you may see there—young men who drink too much, say too much, and whose manners are not always the manners of gentlemen."
 Then I understood, and putting my arms about her neck, pledged myself in the name of my dead father to be temperate, faithful and true. The bells of St. Margaret's broke into a merry chime just then, and mother ran away crying:
 "Up, up, Jack! My son must not be a sluggard on New Year's day."
 The day had been dull and gray. A whitey snow of snow thrilled through the sharp, wintry air, which made the warmth and comfort within intoxicating. From nine o'clock in the morning a line of callers had poured over the door-sill of the Steele house. Carriages emptied their loads of elegant-looking men at their curbstone, the tails of rich coats flourished like black wings behind the flying figures, while white satin waistcoats and light gloves gleamed in contrast as the callers rushed up the steps. Few little boys were among the guests, and my jealous heart absorbed a grain of comfort from this knowledge.
 I hurried from my outlook, and into my hat and raglan, when mother called:
 "Come, Jack! It's four o'clock! Aren't you going over to the Steeles?"
 When Pompey opened the door, he showed all his double molars in astonishment at my magnificence. I was clad in broadcloth from shoulders to ankles, instead of the velvet, short trousers and braided jacket that had fretted my masculine dignity for two years. Some one has said that "a sense of being well-dressed gives one a self-possession that religion cannot bestow."
 I felt this as I entered the parlor, and caught a glimpse of Mary. The fact, too, that Mary's pink sash exactly matched my

A NEW YEAR'S BASKET

By ELVIRA FLOYD FROEMCKE

FROM the time I was a boy in kindergarten, and the Steeles formed part and parcel of my New Year's day. They lived in a great stone house across the way. Their windows were larger, their front door broader, and the iron pineapples on their gateposts bigger than any others in the neighborhood. I am sure about the pineapples, for Mary Steele and I measured them one day after a wordy battle. We used the hem of her pinafore as far as it would go, and finished the inches upon my pocket handkerchief.
 She was right. The pineapples were twice the size of ours, and I admired her pretty, exultant face, as it pressed closely to see that I "played fair." She was so near that her breath blew her loose hair across my cheek. Suddenly, I snatched her close and kissed her again and again. She struggled and freed herself, indignant tears were in her eyes. "You are a very mean boy," she said, "and I'll never speak to you again."
 It was a mean trick, and my cheeks flush yet when I think of it, but I was "only a boy," as Grandma Steele said, when she patted up the row, "and boys have impulses, as well as girls."
 After that error I felt it my duty to become more winning and agreeable. I tried with my boy's might to keep myself neat, and corrected a downy small fault, of which mother despised, in order to stand well with Mary. Strive as I would, there was a lost something that could not be restored, and Mary's distrust of me made my self-love ache. It was only on New Year's day that she treated me with the interest I craved. Dear old New Year's day! I love the memory of them.
 Though the Steele house was stately outside, once within those hospitable doors formality was forgotten, until one met Grandma Steele. Her handsome face and fine manner suggested high-breeding, and unconsciously one put forth one's best speech and conduct when in her presence.



"I SNATCHED HER CLOSE"

table. We feasted, girl and boy fashion; I had proposed a philopona, and was about asking for one of those pink ribbons when a party of gentlemen came in, and suddenly the air changed. In a moment I became evident they had imbibed too freely, and were too hilarious for the society of ladies.
 Grandma Steele drew herself up very tall, proudly so. She smiled and talked, but her smile was like the frost on a window-pane, and her words were like bits of ice striking the sides of a thin goblet. In a quick undertone she gave Pompey to understand the punch-bowl needed replenishing. It disappeared as swiftly as if he had been a prestidigitator, and the black conjurer forgot to bring it back. Clever Pompey, when Mrs. Steele smiled and jested gayly, exchanging badinage in her light-hearted way, and looking very fair and pretty. She ripped out a merry laugh, as one young man fell to his knees while making a gallant speech over her extended hand. Across Grandma Steele's face came a flash of color. She stepped quickly toward her daughter-in-law, exclaiming:
 "Mary! Be careful!" but she was too late. The daring young man was on his feet, and made a rush for the new-fashioned lady. He caught her tightly in his drunken embrace, and started to run off with her. The other men were laughing helplessly, treating the matter as a huge joke.
 Mary groaned and covered her face with both hands, and I, in a fury of rage, dashed in front of the young man and tore open his arms with the power and ease of some mighty avenger. Mrs. Steele, thus freed, fairly flew up the stairs, her face filled with terror and distress.
 I stood by the newel post a second, flushed and panting; gazing down in disgust at the prostrate man. Then, as Pompey lifted the drunkard to his feet, a volley of curses, black and deep, that were intended for me, befouled the air.
 The memory of my morning's pledge came to my mind. I walked to the parlor, and said to the three gentlemen:
 "Your friend is ill. He is in his carriage. Pompey is waiting at the door. I will make your excuses to Mrs. Steele."
 They bowed themselves out in a maudlin

and made me accept Grandma Steele's formal kiss and Mrs. Steele's laughing greeting. "My! O! My! Jack, but you are a swell," as my rightful due.
 Mary was especially nice and glad to see me. She had two or three little tricks of speech lately that I liked, and her laugh was getting so sweet and low.
 Through the long parlors, under both the big prismatic chandeliers, was spread "that table," that wonderful feature of New Year's hospitality in older New York. It was laden with substantial and delicious, all beautifully arranged; and on a side table steaming coffee and chocolate, and various punches were dispensed by Pompey, who made a capital brown cup-bearer, in color and figure, always ready to "serve de gentlemen."
 Mary and I were getting on very well. Grandma Steele had taken us to the pretty

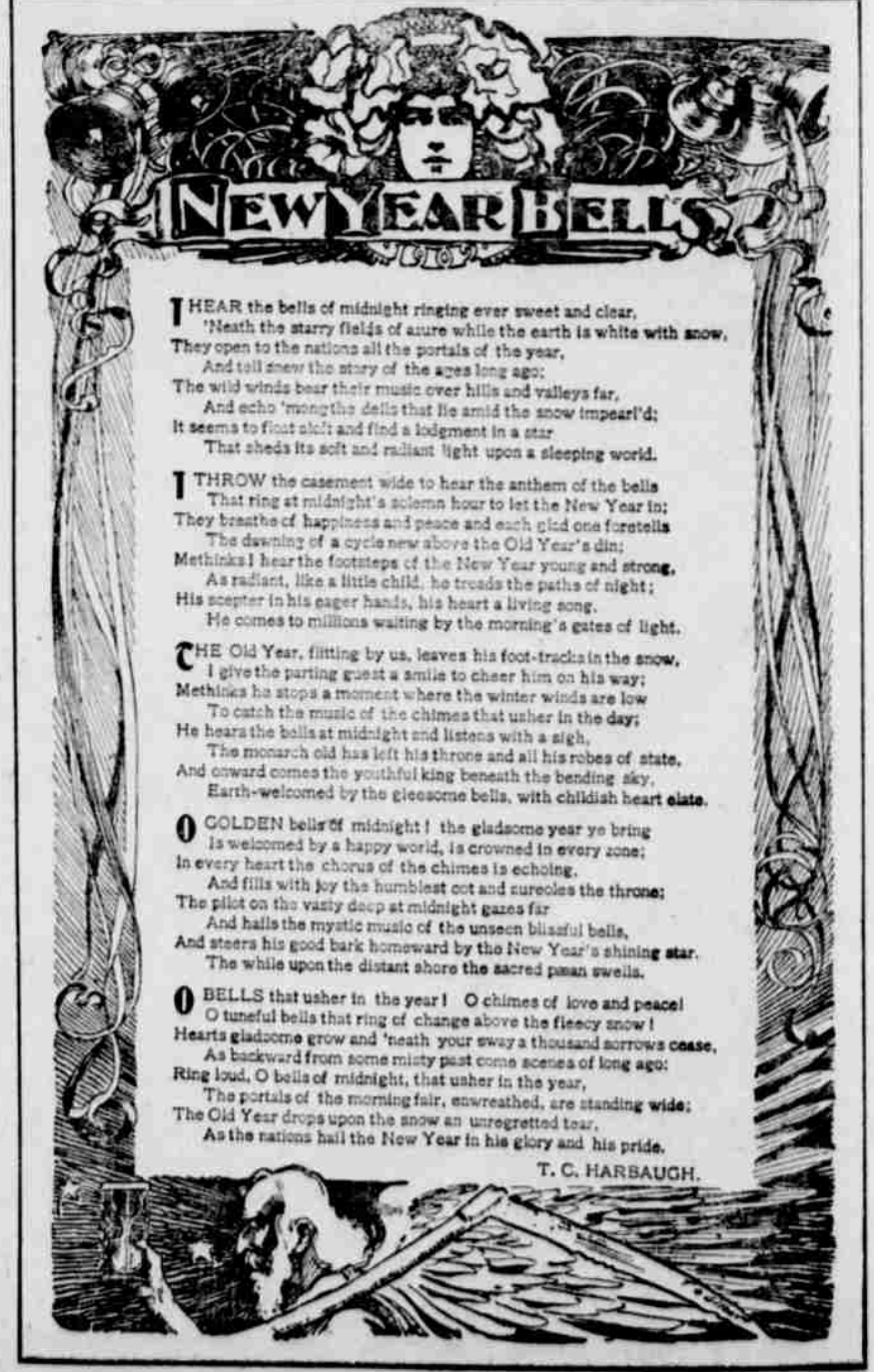


HE LAY PROSTRATE

stately Grandma had passed away, and Mary sometimes wore her pearl-set miniature. Then my home was desolated. My mother's death left me sad indeed. Mrs. Steele was a kind friend in my trouble, and when the worst was past Mrs. Steele showed herself still merry, cheerful, and young. Mary, alone, I could not fathom. I had been in Paris two years, and had corresponded with Mary in fraternal fashion more than a twelvemonth; when I suddenly wrote an impassioned letter, telling her of my life's love, and imploring her to be my wife.
 She responded briefly, and in the tone used through all her letters: "I thank you for the high compliment," she wrote, "but why not keep on in our old friendly way?"
 This was too much. I was hurt deeply, never answered her letter, and resolved to keep aloof, now and forever. Toward the end of December I became uneasy, and resolved to see a horse, at least, to old New York. We landed on New Year's eve, and on New Year's morning, as the bells of St. Margaret's were chiming for service, I found myself opposite Mary's house, looking over at the old place, with the same old boyish interest.
 What a change from the old days! Every shade of every house on the block entirely covered its window, and on each bell-pull was a tiny basket fastened with a bunch of gay ribbons. I was indignant. "A nice way that," I argued, mentally, "to treat visitors on New Year's day." A closed house, indeed! It should open to me! And that basket! Probably it was the gift of some fond lover, like the Mary day baskets of the olden time. Tied with Mary's favorite color, too! Very well! I would take it down and offer her my congratulations, when I handed her the basket!
 So I mounted the steps and gave the bell knob a vigorous pull. Old Pompey opened the door. He knew me at once, and smiled broadly, as he said:
 "Miss Mary, she'll be delighted. Dismiss! An enquirer; jes what she likes."
 When Mary came, she seemed a little tremulous and confused. "I remembered the basket. It had fallen to the floor, I pointed upon it viciously. In it lay a card.
 "Mr. Stewart Kingsley."
 "Mary," I gasped; "surely you are never going to marry the man who insulted your mother 12 years ago!" and I held up the card before her astonished eyes.
 "You silly boy," said she, and with that years vanished; we were young again.
 "This," snatching the basket, "is the way people receive to-day. We put our own basket, and anyone who wishes may drop his card in it."
 "Then he did not send the basket?"
 "Oh, no!" I lambled.
 "Well," said I, "what a silly fashion! To tie five yards of ribbon to one's bell-handle, that a friend may not pull it!"
 "No. Only two yards," said Mary.
 "Five," I protested, and then said: "Come; let's measure it." So I took my handkerchief to measure and finished up the inches on the ribbon that hung from her belt. This brought us very near each other; my hand trembled, but I had gained a fine courage. A curl of my yellow, tumbled head brushed Mary's cheek. She flushed prettily, and putting her arms about my neck, touched my lips lightly with hers.
 "That was a mean trick!" I cried, delightedly, snatching my darling to my heart, and I'll never speak to you again, unless you promise to repeat it every day of your natural life!"

and it was the proudest moment of my life when Grandma Steele laid her hand on my yellow head and said, quietly:
 "My boy! My little protector! I thank you."
 Mr. Steele came in shortly after that. Grandma Steele met him at the door, and his order to Pompey, as I went home, was:
 "We are not to come home to-night, Pompey."
 That same month I went to boarding-school, carrying my lady's color with me, in the shape of a pink hair ribbon. Mary had worn on New Year's day. Surely, there never was a prouder knight than I.
 Year by year the good old custom dwindled, killed by just such sights as had disgusted my young soul. The gorgeous toilettes moderated to modest gowns. Luxuriant tables shrank to trays of cakes and wine, or cakes and coffee. Men walked, or rode in street cars, to pay their calls. Family reunions began to be popular. Still I made my annual call on Mary and her mother, and grew no nearer.

The stately Grandma had passed away, and Mary sometimes wore her pearl-set miniature. Then my home was desolated. My mother's death left me sad indeed. Mrs. Steele was a kind friend in my trouble, and when the worst was past Mrs. Steele showed herself still merry, cheerful, and young. Mary, alone, I could not fathom. I had been in Paris two years, and had corresponded with Mary in fraternal fashion more than a twelvemonth; when I suddenly wrote an impassioned letter, telling her of my life's love, and imploring her to be my wife.
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NEW YEAR BELLS

I HEAR the bells of midnight ringing ever sweet and clear. Neath the stary fields of azure while the earth is white with snow. They open to the nations all the portals of the year. And toll down the story of the ages long ago: The wild winds roar their music over hills and valleys far. And echo 'twixt the dells that lie amid the snow impard: It seems to float and find a lodgment in a star That sheds its soft and radiant light upon a sleeping world.

I THROW the casement wide to hear the anthem of the bells That ring at midnight's solemn hour to let the New Year in; They breathe of happiness and peace and each glad one foretells The dawning of a cycle new above the Old Year's dim. Methinks I hear the footsteps of the New Year young and strong. As radiant, like a little child, he treads the path of night; His scepter in his eager hands, his heart a living song. He comes to millions waiting by the morning's gates of light.

THE Old Year, fitting by us, leaves his foot-prints in the snow. I give the parting guest a smile to cheer him on his way; Methinks he stops a moment where the winter winds are low To catch the music of the chimas that usher in the day; He hears the bells at midnight and listens with a sigh. The monarch old has left his throne and all his robes of state. And onward comes the youthful king beneath the bending sky. Earth-welcomed by the pleasure bells, with childish heart elate.

GOLDEN bells of midnight! the gladtime year ye bring As welcomed by a happy world, is crowned in every zone; In every heart the chorus of the chimas is echoing. And fills with joy the humblest cot and cures the throne; The pilot on the vasty deep at midnight gases far. And halts the mystic music of the unseen blissful bells. And steers his good bark homeward by the New Year's shining star. The while upon the distant shore the sacred panoply awails.

BELLS that usher in the year! O chimas of love and peace! O tuneful bells that ring of change above the fleecy snow! Hearts gladsome grow and 'neath your sway a thousand sorrow cease. As backward from some misty past come scenes of long ago; Ring loud, O bells of midnight, that usher in the year. The parts of the morning-fair, sweathed, are standing wide; The Old Year drops upon the snow an unregretted tow. As the nations hail the New Year in his glory and his pride.

T. C. HARSHAUGH.