

TWO ANGELS.

ANGEL of the parting year,
Winging back to
Heaven thy flight,
Sad the burden thou
must bear

From the darkness into light;
Burdens of my wasted days,
Fragments of my broken hours,
Budding promises that grew
Never into fruit or flowers.

Happiness I might have won,
Worthy deeds I might have wrought,
Wrongs I hate, but did not shun,
Good I crave, but never sought;
All my proud and lofty aims,
Withered now to vain regret—
Feeble, foolish as the will
To no noble purpose set.

Take them all, my griefs, my joys,
Lay them at the Father's feet;
He will search if yet there be
Mid the chaff some grains of wheat.
He will fan my faint resolves
To a purer flame and clear,
Bear to Heaven my heart's desire,
Angel of the parting year.

And angel of the coming year,
Though thy face is veiled, I see
By the glory round thee shed,
Thou hast some good gift for me.
Is it gold, power, or fame?
Perfect peace from toil or care?
Or some sweeter, greater bliss
I have never hoped to share?

Nay, I know 'tis none of these;
Still I walk my narrow ways;
Still does lowly labor fill
All the measures of my days;
This the treasure thou hast brought,
Prized in every age and clime,
Life no greater boon can crave—
God's most precious gift of Time.

Time to shape my common cares
Into duties high and sweet;
Time to learn that patience smooths
All rough ways for tired feet;
Time to scatter here and there,
By the wayside, love's small seed,
Knowing lowliest hands may oft
Minister to highest need.

So may each day be a cup
With life's sweet flavors fraught;
Every hour a shining pearl
Strung on golden threads of thought;
Every moment a bright flower,
Shedding perfume far and near.
Lend thy grace to make it so,
Angel of the coming year!

—Susan Marr Spalding, in N. Y. Weekly.

HIS HAPPY NEW YEAR.

ORDINARILY the fall term of school in the Brown district would have closed before the holidays, but this year there had been an invasion of measles right in the middle of the term, necessitating a vacation of two weeks, and Director Hathaway had insisted that the teacher make up the lost time, much to the disgust of the younger children, who had thus been deprived of their holiday freedom.

But the teacher had not been in the least incommoded by this prolongation of the term. Herbert Allen had enjoyed his first term in a country school. For some reason, which he had never stopped to analyze, there had been a peculiar fascination about his work, although it had been in a sphere of life and amidst environments so different from what he had dreamed of a year before. And yet he had unwittingly incurred the displeasure of the school board and had been recently informed that his services would not be needed longer.

And now, on the last afternoon of December, the term was over. The school had closed with "exercises" and the whole community had turned out to hear them. The boys had stammered through their "pieces," the big girls had read their "essays," and the little ones had gone through their songs and "motion exercises" to their own great satisfaction and the infinite delight of their admiring parents. Director Hathaway and Elder Sloane, at the teacher's invitation, had talked edifyingly on the "advantages of an education" and the "proper training of the young," and the teacher had spoken a few words of modest farewell.

At last all was over, the last scholar had said good-by to the teacher and gone. The young master seated himself at his table and sighed deeply as he looked around the now quiet room, especially as his eyes rested upon the seat of Helen Hathaway, the charming young daughter of the director.

The schoolhouse, on whose interior he was so disconsolately gazing as the setting sun shone through its windows and lighted up the familiar objects—the charts and pictures on the walls, the neatly executed maps and drawings, the specimens of "busy work" done by the children, the mottoes and diagrams and quotations on the blackboards—had been indeed a pleasant place to Herbert, save for the one disturbing incident. Many a cheerful modern schoolroom can be found in the country districts of the middle western states, and it is easy to see how an enthusiastic, refined young man like Herbert Allen could become attached to such a pleasant, intellectual workshop.

It would have been even easier to understand his fondness for the spot if one could have seen the sweet face of Helen Hathaway and noted the deep interest which she evinced in her algebra and history and the readiness which the young teacher displayed to help her in her pursuit of knowledge. It would have amused a disinterested observer to see the earnest devotion with which the pedagogue and his most advanced scholar delved into the mysteries of quadratic equations and how willing

the young man appeared to "show" his interested and interesting pupil. Such amiability, however, was not at all pleasing to John Warren, another of the oldest, though by no means brightest, scholars in school. Before the advent of the new teacher, John had been the recipient of an occasional smile from the director's daughter, but of late the young lady had apparently forgotten the young man in her deep absorption in algebra and history.

It was this unfortunate condition, speaking from John Warren's standpoint, that had led to Mr. Allen's discomfiture. Squire Warren was a neighbor of Director Hathaway and the two farmers were firm friends. So when the squire's son began to make disparaging remarks about the teacher, and the father, whose faith in his only son was unbounded, had become prejudiced against the young man, he mentioned the matter to the director and easily persuaded that worthy official, whose acquaintance with the teacher had extended little farther than had been incidental to the duty of making a contract with him, that "young Allen" was not a "fit person to conduct our school. He is too familiar with the scholars and hasn't enough dignity to fill such a responsible position."

Director Hathaway was a man of promptness and decision, whose will was law with the board, so when he called his colleagues together and delivered the opinion that the teacher was too young and inexperienced to conduct the winter term, the assessor and the moderator meekly acquiesced, though they both felt in their hearts that the young man had performed his duties well.

So it came about during the last week of the term that Mr. Allen had been given formal notice that his services would not be needed any longer. He had been greatly surprised and mortified at this announcement, and his pupils had shown their disapproval of the board's arbitrary action in a way that threatened open revolt—all but John Warren, who could hardly repress his exultation at the turn affairs had taken.

One year before this incident Herbert Allen had been the favored son of a rich merchant in an eastern city. His mother had long been in the grave and Herbert had spent most of his boyhood days in a famous preparatory school. Just as he was ready to enter college, financial disaster came upon his father, resulting in his ruin and subsequent death. This sudden blow of fate left Herbert dependent upon his own resources. Young and resolute in char-

acter, he made his way to the west and finally found the congenial work in the country school which he had pursued so happily until a cruel fate had again thrown him upon a selfish world without the means of employment.

Finally the young ex-teacher, as he now felt himself to be, was aroused from his reverie by a rap at the door, and before he could collect his wandering thoughts a curly-pated lad, breathless from running, stumbled into the room with a letter in his hand. "Say, teacher," said the boy, "I was down to the 'corners' to get Dad's mail and Mr. Jones wanted me to fetch this letter for you. He said it had been in the office 'most two weeks.'"

"Thank you, Charlie; my correspondence is so limited I had forgotten there was such a thing as a post office," and he took the business-like envelope in his hand and wonderingly tore it open. It read as follows:

New York, Oct. 3, 1898.—Office of J. W. Penniman, Attorney and Counselor at Law.—Mr. H. W. Allen, Oakville Corners, Mich. My Dear Sir: For the past two months I have been looking for your address and have just this day learned it. I now hasten to inform you of a very agreeable turn in your affairs. When your late lamented father became involved in financial difficulties one of the largest and most valuable of his steamships, the Dolphin, bound for the East Indies, was reported lost in a tropical hurricane. Without attempting to inform you of details, which I can better explain in person, I will simply say that the supposed loss, followed by inability to obtain the insurance, came at a critical time and brought on the failure. It now transpires that the report was incorrect. On the 20th of July, only three weeks after your father's death, the Dolphin arrived in this port with an exceedingly valuable cargo. By this unexpected stroke of fortune you are again a rich man. I have very gladly taken charge of your business interests, believing, sir, that you would wish me to do so, and shall take the liberty to act in this capacity until I hear from you.

No doubt you will at once communicate with me, but thinking it might be an ac-

commodation to have a little ready cash I enclose draft on New York for \$1,000, subject to your order. Awaiting your further instructions, I am your obedient servant. JOHN W. PENNIMAN.

Herbert read the welcome news in a dazed sort of way. He reread it more carefully, and as its full import dawned upon him exultation took the place of despondency in his breast. He picked up the draft with a feeling of elation. "This is indeed a New Year's gift! This little piece of paper is worth ten times as much as I have earned this whole term. No more need to worry for the future! The news is too good to be true. Now I can bid defiance to that august body, the school board of the Brown district!"

Just then his eye happened to rest upon some very neat algebraic characters on the blackboard which he had purposely directed "not to be erased" in order to attract the wondering attention of his visitors that afternoon. An instant change came over his spirits. "Still I would have enjoyed another term in this district. It is a shame that one's efforts are so little appreciated!"

The gathering dusk of a winter's day admonished him not to linger further, and he began to gather up his books with a constantly sinking heart. He had nearly completed his task when heavy footsteps and deep-toned voices in the hallway attracted his attention and in walked Director Hathaway, Moderator Stevens and Assessor Simmons.

"Good evening, gentlemen," was the pleasant salutation of the ex-school master.

"Good evening," replied the director, in a somewhat embarrassed tone. "We hardly expected to find you here so late. But we've just had a board meeting down to my house and was on our way to your boarding place. Seein' the door ajar, we thought maybe as you was still in the schoolhouse, and so we stopped in. As I was a sayin', Mr. Teacher, we've just had a board meetin', and we have come to the unanimous conclusion to reconsider our former action and ask ye to stay the winter term. As I've been sayin' to Mr. Stevens and Mr. Simmons, perhaps we was a little hasty in our course. The teacher has taught us a good school, there ain't no gittin' around it, and I guess we've been a little prejudiced. I know my Helen never took so much interest in her studies before. Then another thing that has convinced us that we ought to reconsider our action was the solemn way in which the scholars felt 'bout your leavin'. There's my daughter, for instance, she has been mopin' around



SEATED HIMSELF AT HIS TABLE AND SIGHED DEEPLY.

the house ever since we sent you notice, and last night after school the whole crowd of scholars came traipsin' down to my house with a petition askin' us to reconsider our vote. So, Mr. Teacher, we have thought best to yield to all this pressure and ask you to stay. What is more, we've decided to raise your wages to \$30 a month."

During this long speech the spirits of the young man again rose to an exultant pitch, but he replied in a calm and dignified tone, which the gathering darkness helped him to assume:

"Gentlemen, it is indeed gratifying to me that you have thus vindicated me from the suspicion of failure in my work. But whether I can accept your offer at this late date is a question which I cannot decide without some reflection. The generosity of your offer to raise my wages is appreciated, though I shall decline to accept the increase. I will carefully consider your kind offer and leave my decision with Director Hathaway to-morrow morning."

The interview was now ended, and the board solemnly and with some surprise at the independent but perfectly courteous manner of the youthful master, withdrew.

New Year's morning, as the young teacher repaired to the home of the director, he felt that he had been doubly blessed. Yesterday he was but a poor and unappreciated school-teacher. To-day he is the possessor of a snug fortune and stands vindicated before the school district! Does the reader wonder which thought gave him greater pleasure? And the answer which the young pedagogue gave to the director that morning; if anyone doubts its character, the joyful smile which lit up the sweet face of the director's daughter when she heard it would have made further questioning useless.—Detroit Free Press.

A WATCHWORD FOR THE NEW YEAR.

WHEN you find a certain lack in the stiffness of your back At a threatened fierce attack, Just the hour That you need your every power.

Look a bit For a thought to baffle it. Just recall that every brave, Every coward, can be brave, Till the time That his courage should be prime— Then 'tis fled.

Keep your head! What a folly 'tis to lose it. Just the time you want to use it.

When the ghost of some old shirk Comes to plague you, and to lurk In your study or your work, Here's a hit Like enough will settle it: Knowledge is a worthy prize: Knowledge comes to him who tries— Whose endeavor Ceases never.

Everybody would be wise As his neighbor, Were it not that they who labor For the trophy creep, creep, creep, While the others lag or sleep; And the sun comes up some day To behold one on his way Past the goal Which the soul Of another has desired, But whose motto was: "I'm tired."

When the task of keeping guard Of your heart— Keeping weary watch and ward Of the part You are called upon to play Every day— Is becoming dry and hard— Conscience languid, virtue irksome, Good behavior growing worksome— Think this thought: Doubtless, everybody could, Doubtless everybody would, Be superlatively good, Were it not That it's harder keeping straight Than to deviate; And to keep the way of right, You must have the pluck to fight. —St. Nicholas.

FOR TOMMY.

IT WAS New Year's eve, but the tramp did not know that. He was tired and hungry. He had been walking all day and had not been well treated. At many houses he had been turned away without ceremony; at others work had been offered. Only one woman had taken him in and fed him for nothing, and she had given him soda bread which always disagreed with him, and cold tea. The profession was not what it had been cracked up to be, thought the tramp, and he began to think that the burglar had the best of it after all. He had always called himself an honest man, and he now and then split wood, when he could not get food without, but, after all, was honesty the best policy? He knew burglars who had their little houses as neat and pretty as anyone would ask to see. Texts round the walls, too, "God bless our Home," and all that. The tramp liked a pretty text. This very afternoon he had been walking with a burglar—they separated when they came to the village in mutual though friendly distrust—who was going home with a New Year's present for his little boy—a gold watch it was. He had taken it from an old curmudgeon who kept it locked in a box, doing no good to anybody. That burglar was going home to have a cozy time with his wife and child, and here was he, a tramp, an honest man, and not able to get a bite of supper. Decidedly, tramping was not what he had been led to believe it. He thought he should try stealing, after all; he stopped, full of thought, and looked around him.

A bright light shone from the window of a cottage hard by; the blind was up; the tramp stepped to the window and looked in. A neat, bright, cozy kitchen, a little old woman busy over the stove. No sign of masculine presence anywhere.

"I'll try here!" said the tramp. He opened the door without knocking and went in. The little woman looked up. "Good evenin'!" she said. "I didn't hear ye knock. What can I do for ye?"

"I want some money," said the tramp hoarsely, for he had made up his mind now.

"Well, I haven't got a cent!" said the little woman, "and if I had I wouldn't be fool enough to give it to you. So there it is, ye see! But you can do something for me!" she added, brightly. "You've come just in the nick of time. I want this soup taken to a sick boy round in the next street. His mother is sick, too, and can't cook things nice as he ought to have 'em; hasn't means to get 'em, neither, I expect; and I set out that he should have something good and hot to go to sleep on and begin the new year with nourishment inside him."

All the time she was talking the little woman was busy getting out a bowl and cover and finding a clean napkin.

"Here!" she said, and she poured some of the steaming broth into a small cup. "See if that ain't good! I guess likely 'tis."

The tramp glowered at her, but drank the broth and said it was good. "Then you take this!" said the little woman. "Go round the corner to the fourth white house and say it's for Tommy. What ye waitin' for?" "I didn't come here to do errands!" said the tramp.

"Yes, you did!" said the little woman, sharply. "That's just what you come for. I've been waitin' the past half hour for the Lord to send some one—I can't go out at night myself, fear of the asthma—and He's sent you. Reckon He knows what He's about!"

She pushed the tramp out gently but decidedly and shut the door on him.

"Well, I swan!" said the tramp. He carried the bowl safely to the fourth white house from the corner. Once, indeed, he stopped on the way and muttered to himself.

"Tommy!" he said, and his tone expressed deep injury. "You'd think they might have called him William, or something else. There's names enough, you'd think, without hittin' on Tommy. But that's the way! A man don't have no chance!"

A horse and buggy stood before the white house, and when he knocked the door was opened by a short, square man with "doctor" written all over him.

"What's this?" asked the doctor. "Soup!" said the tramp, "for Tommy!"

"Who sent you?" asked the doctor. "Old woman, brown house round the corner? All right! If she sent you I suppose you are a respectable fellow. Just jump into my buggy and drive to 140 Gage street! Give this note to my wife—Mrs. Jones—and bring back the medicine she will give you. Hurry, now! I can't leave this boy, and I've been waiting half an hour for somebody to come along."

He nodded, and shut the door. "Well, I swan!" said the tramp again. He pocketed the note and drove rapidly away. He did not know where Gage street was, but a few questions put him on the right track, and after a drive of some minutes he drew up before a neat white villa standing back among shrubberies.

A lady answered his ring. She began to speak before she saw him. "Why, John!" she cried. "Did you forget your key? I heard the buggy wheels—O, mercy! Who is this?"

The tramp gave her the note, which she read quickly.

"Yes," she said, "O, certainly! I will get them at once. And while you are waiting—she looked at the tramp, doubtfully. "The doctor sent you—it must be all—I wonder if you would be so very obliging as to look at the furnace for me? Our man is gone off; I don't know where he can be, and I am sure there is something wrong. The house is cold as a barn, and I can't leave the baby more than a moment, and my girl is sick. If you would be so kind!"

She showed him the cellar door and ran to get the medicine.

The tramp stumped down the cellar stairs, shook the furnace thoroughly, put coal on and shut it up.

When he went up the fire was burning well, and the doctor's wife was waiting for him with a packet and a cup of hot coffee.

"You must be cold," she said, "and I am so much obliged, I cannot imagine where Thomas can be."

"You're a lady, mum," said the tramp. On the way back he was hailed by a woman who came to her gate with a shawl over her head.

"Say, mister, was you goin' anywhere near the post office?" "Most probably I was," said the tramp. "I'm in the delivery business to-night."

"Then if you'd post this letter for me I'd be a thousand times obliged to you. It's to my son, and he'll fret if he don't hear from me New Year's day. Thank you, sir! I hope your mother feels comfortable about you this cold night."

The tramp winced at this. He said nothing, but took the letter and went. As he drove by a street lamp a rough voice called to him to stop. He checked the horse, and was aware of the burglar with whom he had walked and talked a few hours before.

"Hello, pal!" said the burglar. "You're in luck! Seems to me you was the feller that was goin' to stay an honest man, was you? And got a team a'teady! That's smart business. Gimme a lift!"

The tramp grunted and shook his head.

"I'm on an errand," he said, "for a sick child."

"Sick granny!" said the burglar. "You go shares or I'll give you up."

He grasped the horse's bridle as he spoke, and his looks were ugly enough.

"All right," said the tramp. "Jump in."

He threw back the robes and held out his hand. The burglar left the horse's head and was in the act of springing into the buggy when a well-planted blow sent him sprawling on his back in the road.

The tramp drove on rapidly. "Some folks ain't no sense of what's right and fittin'," he muttered. "There's a time for every thing. That's Scripture."

He found the doctor waiting at the door of the white cottage.

"Sharp's the word!" said the doctor. "I was getting uneasy, my man."

"So was I," said the tramp. He explained that the hired man was gone and the lady had asked him to see to the furnace.

"Gone, has he?" said the doctor, and his face darkened. "Then that's the last time. He needn't come back, the tipsy rascal."

Again he looked keenly at the tramp, who was shifting a buckle of the harness in a very knowing way.

"Know anything about horses?" he asked.

"Reckon," said the tramp. "Who are you, anyhow?" asked the doctor.

"Well, I was wonderin'," said the tramp. "I took care o' horses five years, I been sick, and since then I been trampin' a spell. To-night I started out to be a burglar, but I ain't had no chance. I might as well go back to work again and done with it."

"I think you might!" said the doctor. "Come in and help me with this boy. He's pretty sick, and his mother's not much better."

"Well, it's all in the night's work," said the tramp. "I'll be dressmakin' before I get through with this."

He stepped inside, but stopped short at the bedroom door with a white face. A child's voice was heard within, asking for water.



"SAY IT'S FOR TOMMY."

is all of a piece! I don't say what it is. You may call it the Lord if you're a mind to. I shan't say nothin'. I tell you I ain't had no chance." He put the doctor aside with one hand and slipped noiselessly into the low room.

"Tommy," he said, softly, "how's things?"

The sick boy started up on his elbow with a cry, looked, then fell back on his pillow laughing and crying. "It's all right!" he said. "Mother, it's all right! I'll get well now! Brother Jim's come!"

"Reckon," said the tramp.—Laura E. Richards, in Congregationalist.

A TOO EXPENSIVE GIFT.

He—Won't you be my New Year's gift, darling? She—Papa positively prohibits my giving expensive presents, and I'm worth a million, you know.—Detroit Free Press.

