AMENT OF THE OLDYEAR.



And sad and sour, and cross and glum,
And the world looks dark and drear; I'm short of breath, so I pant and wheeze, And shiver and shake, and cough and

Twelve months ago I was young and fair; I ruled the world with a regal air,
And every one welcomed me, here and
there,
Without a frown or a tear.
The boys and girls hurrahed for me,
And I was as happy as happy could be;
The world around was fair to see—
For I was the glad New Year.

The merry thrush and the bold cuckoo Gave me a song and a welcome true;
The white puccoon and the violet blue Peeped slyly into my face;
The tulip gave her rich perfume,
The larkspur waved her azure plume,
The red rose opened her velvet bloom,
My royal court to grace.

The brooklet burst its icy bond

To give me welcome meet;
And summer brought her glowing days,
Her bearded wheat and golden maize;
The wild bee hummed a song of praise,
And sipped the clover's sweet.

Then autumn poured her ruddy wine,
And shook the cluster from the vine,
And dropped the needles from the pine,
To scatter in my path;
The milk-weed burst her silky pod,
The partridge piped from the turfy sod,
And queen-of-the-meadow and golden-rod,
Bloomed gay in the aftermath.

But now, alas! my time has come But now, alas! my time has come;
I'm weak and weary, and cold and numb,
And sour and sad, and cross and glum,
And the world is dark and drear;
No blossoms spring as I pass along,
No warbler sings me a welcome song;
But the bells ring out a merry ding-dong
To welcome another year.

—Helen Whitney Clark, in Golden Days.

AHAPPY E WERE always getting out of wood at Maple Knoll. It was the big fireplace in the sitting-room that ate up all the fuel we could get. I never saw such an

insatiable monster. Yet we couldn't make up our minds to close it up and put up a stove instead, because of its radiant cheerfulness. How jolly it was, just when the first touch of a winter's twilight stole on, to pile fresh hickory logs on the old andirons and watch the flames dash up the chimney's throat and light the whole room with a mellow crimson flame.

But the wood! Of course, we three women couldn't very well go out and chop and haul it, and our funds did not always warrant hiring large quantinot always warrant hiring large quanti-ties laid in, besides which the neigh-boring help we could get was not very dependable on at all times.

Maple Knoll was a lovely place, but didn't bring in much revenue, worked, as we were obliged to have it done, by any Tom, Dick or Harry we could pick up; and the old house was picturesque -but leaky as a sieve. Still, we managed very well about everything else but for fuel we were obliged to depend on getting a load hauled now and then when some neighbor had the time and inclination to undertake it.

December though it was, we had had a streak of regular Indian-summery weather-a mild atmosphere interwith a soft smokiness. Our stove wood had run out, and the neighbors had all been too busy hauling cordwood to attend to our needs. Our chip yard was in good condition, however, and we had been levying on it for cooking purposes, using what little wood we had for the fireplace, as we didn't need much, and had gone jogging along in an easy, grasshoppery way, as if the pleasant weather were going to last all

We woke up the morning of December 30 to find the world nearly lost in a most beautiful blizzard of whirling snow. Not only was the outward world a white desolation, but there were lit tle drifts all over the inside of the

"Dora," I shouted, bouncing out of bed and landing with one foot in a snow bank, "how many chips did we bring in last night?"

About enough to cook breakfast with," Dora answered, with the calmness of despair, as she shool a little puff of snow out of her shoe. I hopped out of my drift and rushed to the window.

Meantime, let's go down and make a fire and get a good warm-up if we do perish afterward."

We'd better save the sitting-room wood until after breakfast," counseled Dora, "and just have a fire in the cook stove till then, and eat in the kitchen."
"Sure," said I, "that'll be a lark."

In spite of the dismal outlook we had a cheerful fire and a cozy kitchen when Aunt Laura came down, and then while she began to prepare breakfast Dora and I did ourselves up like Laplanders and plunged out into the blizzard to fee? and milk the cows, after which we braced the winter's blast long enough to transport my treasure stump to the house, which we did partly by lugging ceeded upon his errand soon after din-

ing our impending doom, we fell upon the ham and fried potatoes and pan-

cakes, and enjoyed our meal immensely. "Girls," said auntie, when the last potato and the last crimpy brown batter-cake had vanished, "I don't want to dampen your spirits, but there isn't a chip left, and how we're going to cook dinner I don't see."

"Nett," said Dora (who was just three months older than I), "we'll cook dinner by the fireplace."

"Dora," I said, "you're gifted. That's what we will, and imagine we're our own great-grandmothers and greataunts-how lovely!"

"Well, you'll have to help, miss, and I doubt if you think it so lovely before you get through," returned Dora. "You'll be baked a beautiful brown."

We took an inventory of our stores to see what there was we could cook by the fireplace.

"There's a sparerib, for one thing," announced Dora. "We'll hang it up by a string in front of the fire."

"Potatoes we can boil by hanging the kettle on the hook and chain," said Aunt

"And the sweet potatoes we can roast

in the ashes," I added.
"And bake corn in a skillet in the hot

coals," finished Dora.
"Goody," said I, "that's a fine enough dinner for a blizzardy day like this. Of course, nobody'll come."

But somebody did come, as they usually do when you think they won't; and who of all persons but Rev. Gyrus Melton! Dora fairly squirmed when Aunt Laura brought him right into the sitting-room, for, of course, she couldn't take him anywhere else, unless she wanted to freeze him. So in he came, smiling placidly, and there was and there was Dora with her face like t mattered much about me; but some folks were beginning to observe that Rev. Cyrus was a trifle more attentive to Dora than the fact of her being one

Uncle Jink, a dilapidated old colored man, appeared with a yoke of steers, which he left in the lane while he came plodding through the snow to

"Heerd y'all was out o' wood," he cook'n' stove.'

"It's very kind of you, indeed," said Aunt Laura, "for we are in great need of wood-only I'm afraid I can't pay for it to-day, Uncle-

"Dass all right-dass all right," in terrupted Uncle Jink; "don't y'all boddah 'bout dat—dass all right," and he scuffed away, leaving us a little mystified, for it was not quite like Uncle Jink to be so indifferent about ompensation for his good deeds

"Of course Mr. Melton went and told him to come, and either paid him or agreed to if we didn't," expounded Dora, and looked as if she were ready to fall in a heap.
"It was very good of him if he did,"

said Aunt Laura.

"Good—yes; but who wants to be an object of charity," groaned Dora, "es-

pecially--"
"Oh, well, I don't suppose he'll preach about it next Sunday," I said, onsolingly; but Dora wouldn't cheer up very much. Still, it was very comfortable to have plenty of wood, and I felt grateful to the good man for instigating Uncle Jink to come to our assistance.

Of all the 365 days of that year the three hundred and sixty-fifth was the most dismal at Maple Knoll. It opened with a drizzling, soaking rain, much more depressing than the blizzard from which it evoluted; the kind that the rib cooking in front of the fire with dampens your spirits in spite of all a skillet set under to catch the grays, the philosophy you can bring to bear against it. The sky was a dismal gray waste without a slit of light. Aunt an hollyhoek, turning a great hoccake waste without a slit of light. Aunt in another skillet, and there was I Laura had a racking neuralgia in her prodding in the ashes with a long fork face. Dora had been dreaming about to dig out the sweet potatoes! Not that charity and wood all night. As for me, I had a little trouble of my own which popped up just now more aggressively than ever. I never had but one lover (I never wanted but one), of his flock warranted, and I knew that and he was a poor young man who had gone to the frozen of perfection as a mortal man needed gions with the avowed intention of to be.

He was just riding out, he explained, to see old Mrs. Hankins, who was sick, and had been delayed a little by the blizzard and been on the road quite awhile; he had brought a been gathered into the family when



THERE WAS DORA WITH HER FACE LIKE A HOLLYHOCK.

himself ran in to see how we all fared this inclement day, etc., etc. I slid out white he was thus discoursing and rushed to the parlor with a very forlorn hope of finding a stray stick or snowslide. And this dreadful rainy two left over there, making a fire day I couldn't even have the satisfacas I poked my head into the arctic desolation of our best room. It was on the east side, where the spiteful wind had been battering at it all night, searching out a hundred crevices about windows and door to hurl the fine, powdery snow through. There were drifts, varying in size, on the piano, on the chairs, and a dainty white powdering all over the carpet, the wind had puffed in under the door. You would fairly feel the gale whisk ing about your ears. There wasn't scrap of wood nor a chip in the vood box. Relinquishing a wild idea of chopping up a parlor chair or two to make a fire of, I scooted back to the sitting-room chilled to the bone.

Dera, putting as bold a face upon the situation as possible, was bringing in dishes from the dining-room and etting the table right under the eyes of the minister, who was chatting away as serenely as if he hadn't driven us all frantic by his ill-timed Aunt Laura had levied on her cellar goodies and produced preserved quinces, apple jelly, pickled peaches ing u and chow-chow, so the dinner wasn't fairly and chow-chow, so the dinner wasn't fairly got back from the slumber so frightful. The only thing I was ashamed of was the corn cakes; they singing "Lightly Row" over the biswere so big and clumsy, and Dora had crumbled the edges in turning them. that good man seemed to think eyes.

ament as we told him how it happened, and he joked about it, too, but shook his head a little, and said it ly, soft snow in the night; not a blizand partly by rolling it over and over. | ner, and we went about our work with | gentle, fine, thick powder. It had coming year?-L. A. W. Bulletin.

bag of oats for his horse, and had I was left a small orphan, in Uncle come up through the side lane and John's time, and he and Aunt Laura taken the liberty to put the animal had not made an atom of difference in our barn to eat his oats, while he between Dora and me in their love and getting him into the parlor while tion of going or sending to town for we finished the dinner. The hope died the mail, if there should possibly be any news.

Dora and I had an unwritten law that the more downcast we felt the jollier we should force ourselves to be To-day I think we degenerated into silliness in our efforts to be cheer-But a lot of smaller trouble followed each other so persistentlysuch as the refusal of the cook to draw, the falling of the light bread in consequence, a slip in the mud on Dora's part, etc., etc.—that when, to cap the climax that evening, our be loved fireplace smoked sulkily and re-lentlessly, we felt that we might as well wind up the year by going to bed at eight o'clock.

When we were all snuggled down and the lights were out I could have cried just out of low spirits, but I wouldn't. I knew God could see farther ahead than we could, and I put everything into His hands and went hadn't to sleep.

I slept so soundly that I was greeted the next morning by a savory. sagey scent of frying sausages com-ing up the little back stairs before I And the stove was we had a banquet, and even the corn cakes didn't go begging so far as he was concerned.

We all made merry over our predictive was drawing down without a speck of neuralgia and feeling as spry as a girl, to finish breakfast, while Dora and I went forth

Breakfast was ready when we got it safely under cover, and notwithstand- than two hours after he left that crispy and bracing. The sun wasn't crispy and bracing. The sun wasn't shining yet, but there was a mellow

vogue in our rural district; still, it was Aunt Laura's way to make a red-letter grinned, "so I 'lowed I'd come an' snake up a few logs 'n' split fer de fi'place 'n' whack up some fer de ealer who might chance to appear. She ad a cheerful fire in the parlor, a plentiful supply of coffee and cake on hand, and we all put on our pretty house dresses and prepared to be happy

whether anyone came or not.

At half past nine a pleasant melody of sleigh bells jingled along, and the cutest little cutter stopped at our gate, and here came Rev. Cyrus Melton smiling up the walk. We were mighty thankful for the contrast between this call and his last one; but such is the perversity of man. I imagined he looked a little disappointed at not being ushered into the cooking regions ngain. Still, he smiled very good-na-turedly, with those jolly brown eyes of his, as he fished something out of his pocket and handed it to me.
"Miss Nettie," he said, "I felt it in my

bones that you couldn't get any mail up here on the hill all yesterday, and I dropped in at the post office as I came by this morning, and found you this."

Maybe I didn't know what it was, even before I saw the handwriting on it, and perhaps I didn't fly to get it and scamper out to the big fireplace and curl down beside it on a little wooden stool to read my letter all alone. Frank hadn't made a fortune, he wrote me, and he didn't know as we could have a big mansion built, but he had dug enough gold to repair the old house and make us all comfortable, and he was on his way home that blessed minute to metamorphose Maple Knoll into finest little farm in the county, take care of aunt and Dora and (incidentally) marry me.

When I got back to earth again Mr. Melton had taken Dora off in his sleigh for a ride, so auntie and I had a little jollification of our own, and I forgot all about lunch time. It didn't matter. though, for when the sleighing couple came back they didn't seem to know much of anything. I fell on Dora in the hall and told all about Frank's letter and she hugged me black in the face and said she was tremendously pleased. but he wouldn't have to take care of her because that was going to be attended to by Rev. Cyrus, who was the dearest man in the world, but crazy as because he confessed that he had fallen more in love with her than ever the day he came and found her baking hoecak in the fireplace.

We celebrated that night by having the biggest fire of the season in the old fireplace, which behaved splendidly and we sat up till all kind of hours Aunt Laura, Dora and I, with no but the mellow crimson and gold bril liance of that big old black cavern, roasting nuts and red apples, talking about the new paths opening before us, and telling each other how grateful and thankful we ought to be for this happy opening day of the new year.—Hattie Whitney, in Farm and Fireside.

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS.

If Sincerely Made They Are a Help to Right Character, Although Sometimes Broken.

New Year's resolutions are so often made the target for cheap jokes by cheap critics as to create the impression that such resolutions are never kept and never ought to be made. The criticism is unjust, its logic is false, its effect pernicious. A recent preacher brought out the true idea in a sermon upon Peter's pledge of devotion to his master, even though all others should desert Him. Simon did not yield to temptation because of his carnest assurance, but in spite of it. It had been said that hell was paved with good resolutions. If that was true it was certainly the best thing about that place We must resolve before we do. Right resolutions sincerely made are a help to right character, even if by distress of opposing forces some of them are not kept. Peter's faith did not finally fail, and very likely he had more faith and more strength because he failed once and so learned his weak point. good thing, then, with the thoughtfulness belonging to the outlook of a new year, to desire and decide and declare that we will live truer, nobler lives Making the resolve, not lightly or boastfully, but seriously and expecting the Divine help, we shall succeed in part if not in full. He whom we call Master and Lord is praying for us that our faith fail not. The man who resolved and failed and tried again became a strong man. What he wrote to his brethren in the first century was doubtless an echo of his own experience, and it will be fulfilled even to the twen tieth century: "After we have sus-fered awhile, God will make you perfeet, stablish, strengthen, settle you."-Congregationalist.

DID HE MEAN IT?

Honest Injun! Do you really mean it when you say you'll do better the





where in its majestic course.

Man, though, for his convenience or pleas-Man, though, for his convenience or pleasure, or profit, establishes times and seasons. Thus he says the first day of January shall be termed the beginning of a New Year, The Romans, with an acute poetic sense that pervaded all their work, elected to have the dawn of the year show in March—the first spring month, when nature kisses new life into everything and robes the earth in garments of many colors.

Man must have his pauses and starting

Man must have his pauses and starting points. It is not so much a question of sentiment as of necessity that dates and seasons be fixed. The success of business life depends upon it, and a nation without a chronology is a people without a history. Each year must hold its own events, nor may one trench upon the other.

Leaving this line of suggestion, one is led to the thought that these year posts of man's time offer opportunity for reflection upon what has been and what may be. Each New Year day tells not only of the new birth, but also of the year that is sepultured. Here are presented in brave contrast life and death. As the old passes out the new comes in. So with man and all other animate things. "The king is dead; live the king."

So one lesson after another may be leaved if one heat or will reserved.

live the king."

So one lesson after another may be learned, if one be but a willing pupil. What the memories of the just dead year? What the sins, the errors, the follies? What the good one did, and what progress in the knowledge that is lasting? Ah! the year is gone, gone to one and all of us; but the impression remains. These years one by one are character builders, each adding to the other until the mortal charges to the junction. other until the mortal changes to the im-

other until the mortal changes to the immortal!

Looking backward, what is the reckoning? Whatever most of good, or of ill, the New Year is at hand. Let the accounting be just, that one may be abler to meet justly and righteously the things that are before. One should recall the errors of the past, not that he may mourn over them, but that he may gain strength for future struggles. struggles.

One need not give the whole of New Year's day to the forming of good resolutions. Alas! there be many who do yow overmuch at such times. The hallway of the New Year, like that of hell, is payed with good inten-One may resolve and resolve again, and swear lustily in confirmation of such purpose; yet all unavailingly, because of the frailty of his being. He acts the better part who reflects, and is not rash in promises.

Not the same to all is the history of the

past year; and not two shall find the New Year the same in experience. But each year is for all, and has in abundance riches But each year is for all, and has in abundance riches of good for every one. The year just closed was lavish in gifts; the new offers plenty as great. It is but to look for it fearlessly and the searcher will be rewarded.

The old was and is not. The new is here with its portents. A warm heart for the year just dead, and a glad hand for the one that is newly born.

WILLIAM ROSSER COBBE.

THEN THEY BOTH CASHED IN.



Coldeck-What was the difference, '99, old boy, between you and me at 11:30 las

right?

'99—Give 'tup.

Coldeck—Well, you were drawing to a close and I was drawing to a flush.—Chicago Chronicle.

A New Year Declaration. Alas, no resolutions fair Shall of the scroll appear; Fill but endeavor to repair The ones I broke last year. —Washington Star. NEW YEAR'S RETROSPECT.

It Shows That Jealousy Sometimes

"A synonym of vanity, dear. Of course, I couldn't help knowing that she cared for me when I met her in the boarding house parlor, with her eyes full of tears, on



THIS DAY ONE YEAR AGO.

the very morning after you had told Marie, her dearest friend, that we were to be mar

her dearest friend, that we were to be married in a month."
"Humph, that girl would cry about anything; I've known her to cry when the villain in the play was killed—as if a villain could expect anything else in the last act.
But as soon as I saw Dick that morning I knew that he knew it. Why, his necktie had slipped around under one ear and his voice, as he wished me a happy New Year, was so sad that I felt guilty, though my conscience told me that I had not encouraged him."
"You've forgotten how you used to praise the shape of his head."

"You've forgotten how you used to praise the shape of his head."

"As if that meant anything! A girl only praises the shape of a man's head when she cannot find anything else to flatter him about. It—it means no more than it does when she tells a small man that he resembles Napoleon. But when I remembered that you had once gone down on the floor in your new trousers to pick up Dora's handkerchief I knew that I had been cruelly deceived. So when you reproached me deceived. So when you reproached me about Dick, I—"

deceived. So when you reproached me about Dick, I—"

"I remember how badly I felt when she replied to my New Year's greeting with tha remark that happiness for her was over for ever. And before I could comfort her Mir Marie came in and I could only go sadl away without telling her that I should i ways be a brother to her."

"And poor Dick, I asked him if ther was anything I could do for him; he replied: 'Yes,' but just then the maid cam in with a note for him, and he said he mus go at once—I think he wished to be alongwith his sorrow. Then you came in, and, instead of sharing my pity for him, you accused me of flirting with him!"

"I—er—don't remember that. But wasn't it odd that before I left you forever Miss Marie should come in and tell us that Dora and Dick were engaged! I've often wondered how it happened that they decided to console each other."

"And so have I. Why here is Marie no."

console each other."
"And so have I. Why, here is Marie no thaps she can explain. Sit down, Mari. Tom and I are just going over of Do you remember last New Year

do. Tom and I are times. Do you remember last New 1 car day, and—"
"Indeed I do. I've just been to see Don
"Indeed I do. I've just been to see Don
"Indeed I do. I've just been to see Don
"Indeed I do. I've just been to see Don
"Indeed I do. I've just been to see Don
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"Indeed I do. I've just been to see Don
"Indeed I do. I've just been to see Don
"Indeed I do. I've just been to see Don
"Indeed I do. I've "Indeed I do. I've just been to see Doi and she was talking about it. She and Dick quarreled last New Year's Eve about the date of their marriage, and almost parted forever. They think you both must have guessed it. I remember that Tor was in the parlor with Dora when I ran in on New Year's morning to tell her of your engagement. She had been on the paint of action him to be her to wake we have the state of the state in on New Year's morning to tell her of your engagement. She had been on the point of asking him to help her to make up with Dick. And when she told me about it I wrote him a note telling him that I be lieved she would forgive him if he came a once. That note found him at your house Irene, where he had gone to ask your as peacemaker. Odd, wasn't it?"

ELISA ARMSTRON

ELISA ARMSTRON

Tragic.

"I shall not see you till another year o".
Has dawned," he said.
Oh, fickle maid! she turned not pale w
fear-

fear—
She laughed instead.
This seems a tragic lay, till we remember
It occurred the thirty-first day of Decem -N. Y. Truth.