

A NEW YEAR'S BASKET

"Love Will Find a Way"

By ELVIRA FLOYD PROEMCKE

FROM the time I was a boy in kilts, calling on the Steeles formed part and parcel of my New Year's day...

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...

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...

Through the Steele house was stately outside, once within those hospitable doors formality was forgotten...

Mary's mother was altogether different. She was a small, fair woman, with merry little ways, a continual laugh, and the manners of a child...

Year after year passed in pleasant, even fashion, until I reached the age of 12. Mother awakened me as usual one New Year's morning...

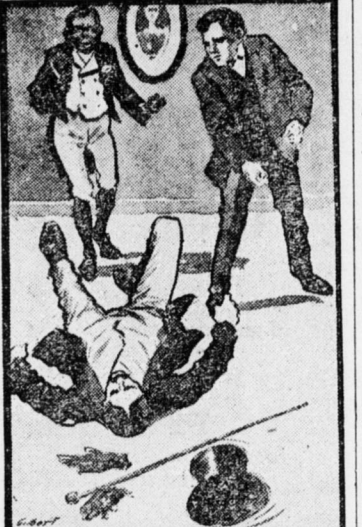
I wondered why mother was saying this to me, when tears came in her beloved eyes, and she continued:

"Up, up, Jack! My son must not be a sluggard on New Year's day."

necktie added warmth to the atmosphere; and made me accept Grandma Steele's formal kiss and Mrs. Steele's laughing greeting...

Through the long parlors, under both the big prismatic chandeliers, was spread "the table," that wonderful feature of New Year's hospitality in olden New York...

Mary and I were getting on very well. Grandma Steele had taken us to the pretty



HE LAY PROstrate.

table. We feasted, girl and boy fashion; I had proposed a philopona, and was about asking for one of those pink ribbons...

Grandma Steele drew herself up very tall, proudly so. She smiled and talked, but her smile was like the frost on a window-pane...

Mrs. Steele smiled and jested gayly, exchanging badinage in her light-hearted way, and looking very fair and pretty.

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 fashion; and it was the proud, st 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:

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.

I had been in Paris two years, and had corresponded with Mary in fraternal fashion for 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, 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 go home, or, at least, to old New York.

"Miss Mary, she'll be delighted. Disvisit's so on-reglar; jes what she likes."

"Mr. Stewart Kingsley."

"No. Only two yards," said Mary.

"Five," I protested, and then said: "Come; let's measure it."

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THE WATCH NIGHT.

'Twas like an old-time lovefeast—that watch night, for it seemed That heaven was just so near to us its light around us streamed;

We saw, as 'twere beneath a bright and all-revealing sky, That far-off land, o'er Jordan's strand, where our possessions lie.

'Twas like an old-time Lovefeast; old scenes were brought to view— We had the old-time singing, and the "old religion," too!

'Twas a glad shaking up of hearts, as well as shaking hands! And the Old Year died in music, and the New Year birthed in light.

On the following day Jimmie went down town and bought a half-dozen white shirts and as many collars.

It was evening, and Jimmie was working on a problem in interest at the time, for, say as much as they might about his not being neat in his dress or his unpleasant habit of nodding his head when he meant "yes," and shaking it when he meant "no," no one could say that he was not the leading pupil in arithmetic in Lees-town academy.

By and by the figures began to act queerly. He found himself saying "nine times eight equals fifty-six," and once he discovered that he had multiplied the interest by the principal to get the rate.

Taking advantage of the confusion, Jimmie whispered to his mother: "Come up to my room," and made his escape.

"Back here I have written my New Year's resolutions, and you know how I have broken every one of them."

"Well, here's January 1, 1898. 'Once more I firmly resolve to quit nodding my head; moreover, I resolve not to give so much attention to arithmetic

ONE NEW YEAR'S NIGHT.

A Dream That Warned This Young Man to Turn from the Path of Sin.

On a certain New Year's night, an old man stood by the window, and gazed with a long look of despair out on the immovable, forever-sparkling heavens...

He saw a star shoot from the heavens, and, shimmering in its fall, vanish in the darkness of earth.

"How like! how like my days of folly!" he cried.

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HOW JIMMIE KEPT HIS RESOLUTIONS

On the first day of January Jimmie Wilson's mother said: "Well, my son, what are your New Year's resolutions this year?"

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NEW YEAR BELLS. I HEAR the bells of midnight ringing ever sweet and clear. 'Neath the starry fields of azure while the earth is white with snow, They open to the nations all the portals of the year...