

THE OLD YEAR



LING open wide the door!
A guest goes forth to-night,
Returning never more,
Yet not forgotten quite.

He brought us much of good
Which we mistook for ill
Because misunderstood
God's purposes and will.

So with no unkind thought
We see the Old Year go.
Content with what it brought
Of whether weal or woe,
We could not if we would
Detain these flying years,
We would not if we could
Exchange for joys their tears.

God knoweth all our needs
Far better than we do.
Our thoughts, intents and deeds
Lie open to His view.
The record of the past
Has many a blotted page,
With markings overcast
That darker lines presage.

The record, closed and sealed,
Awaits us till that day
When it shall be revealed
In all its dread array.
Lord, help us read aright:
The lessons of the years,
To see light in Thy light
Through all our doubts and fears.
—William G. Haesselbarth, in Christian Work.

DOROTHY HUNTER'S CALLER.

BY ANDICE ADELE BRAMBLE

IT WAS early morning of the Saturday before New Year's day and Dorothy Hunter was washing the breakfast dishes at the sink in the farmhouse kitchen, when her mother came hurriedly in from the sitting-room, with a flushed, anxious face.

"Oh, Dorothy, dear," she said, "do you think you could stay alone and take care of baby all day and, per-



"HERE, TAKE THIS," SHE SAID.

haps, all night? Deacon Parsons just stopped to tell us that Aunt Kate has fallen and broken her arm, and she wants us to come over as quickly as possible."

"Why, yes, of course I can," Dorothy replied promptly. "You hurry right along and get ready; I'll heat the soapstone and help you get started, and after you're gone I'll finish the work."

"I hate to leave you, daughter. It will be a lonely day for you, and, though we shall try to come, of course, it may be just possible that we cannot get home to-night; it is nine miles to Dunbar, you know, and I'm afraid there is a storm coming on. You are sure you are not afraid, Dorothy?"

"Afraid? Why, of course not. You forget that I was 14 last month, and what in the world should I be afraid of, anyway?" and Dorothy laughed at the thought.

A few moments later she stood at the window with two-year-old Nellie, the baby of the family, in her arms, and watched her father and mother drive away down the snow-drifted road. She smiled brightly as long as they remained in sight, but when a turn in the road hid the sleigh she felt just a bit lonely after all, and it was not surprising that she did. There were no other houses within sight, their nearest neighbor lived a mile away, and, standing as it did upon a seldom-traveled road, the Hunter homestead was a dreary place.

However, Dorothy did not spend much time meditating. She paused just long enough at the window to note the few, big, slow-falling flakes, advance messengers of the coming storm, and then went about the belated household tasks. So much was there to be done that not until the old clock upon the mantel twanged

the hour of three, did Dorothy pause for more than the short rest which she took while eating her simple dinner; then, with Nellie in her arms, she sank gratefully into the old-fashioned rocker by the sitting-room window, and as she glanced out was surprised to see how fast and furious the storm had grown. The snow was falling so heavily that she could not even see the barnyard fence, and she remembered with a sigh of relief that her father had said the chores were all done, so that the stock would need no further attention until morning if he should not return that night.

As she sat and hummed a drowsy little tune to the baby, Dorothy thought she heard the gate latch click, and a moment later some one knocked loudly at the door. She hastily laid Nellie in her crib and went to open it, and there, to her surprise, stood a great, bearded, rough-looking stranger. A tramp! thought the girl in dismay that was not lessened by the man's request, made in a hoarse voice, to be allowed to come in and get warm before going farther in the storm. Dorothy had been taught that hospitality is a most gracious virtue, so she assented to the stranger's plea, and drew a chair for him close to the roaring fire.

"Isn't this the Hunter farm?" inquired the unwelcome guest, after a moment or two, as he spread out his brown hands to the grateful blaze.

"Yes, sir. That is my father's name," replied Dorothy quietly, resuming her seat by the window.

"Where is he? The folks haven't all gone away and left you alone, have they?"

For a moment Dorothy hesitated, and then she told him the story of her aunt's misfortune and how her parents had gone to render her whatever assistance they could. For a long time then the silence was unbroken, and Dorothy began to think it high time that her guest was taking his departure, when he suddenly said: "You couldn't make up your mind to let me stop for the night, could you, sis? I've come a long way to-day and am tired enough. I'd be right glad if you could let me stay."

"O, no, I couldn't do it! I am sure father and mother would not wish me to. You must go on, and don't you think it is time you started? It is getting dark, you see," and Dorothy half rose from her chair in her eagerness to urge the departure of this man, of whom she was growing more and more afraid.

tonished to find her tramp visitor in the sitting-room, with baby Nellie perched comfortably upon his knee.

"What does it mean?" she asked, turning from the stranger's laughing face to her mother.

"It means," replied the deep voice that Dorothy remembered so well, "that I am your Uncle Harry, just back from the Klondike with a pocket lined with gold, and willing and anxious to divide with the generous little girl who would give almost her only cent to a poor, miserable tramp."

And then he told how he had hastened straight to his sister's home, upon his arrival from the far north, and finding her away, and being obliged to go to a town 20 miles distant, upon a business matter, had decided to keep the secret until his return.

"And I'll always be glad that I did," he said, holding out his hand to Dorothy, "because, by this means, I found out what a dear, kind-hearted little girl I have for a niece."

Dorothy has grown very well acquainted with Uncle Harry since that stormy Saturday, and many delightful things have come to her through his kindness; and she wonders now how she could ever have thought his voice rough and harsh, or ever have taken her splendid, big-hearted uncle for a tramp.—Detroit Free Press.

THE NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

We Look at the Future Through a Reflection of Our Own Souls.

"Happy New Year," "Happy New Year!" rings from merry voices and chiming bells everywhere, startling the echoes in response, "Happy New Year!" Whoever knew of a note of gladness, says the Union Signal, that did not go reverberating through all space, and repeating itself on the harp strings of every human life it touched?

"But who knows it will be a happy new year?" asks the would-be-wise, quizzically. "Who expects it?" growls the cynic. "Who hopes for it?" sneers the man whom life has defeated. "It cannot be happy," says the sorrowful, and the world is full of the sorrowful. "It will not be happy," say the soured and embittered, and the world is full of the disappointed. "It could not be happy, with all the misery and poverty in it," says the pessimist. "It shall not be happy," says the enthusiast, "until it is rid of its sin and selfishness." "Happiness," says the philosopher, "is not the object of life, but usefulness."

"Such a happy new year!" says the young mother, clasping her winsome, dimpled darling to her heart; and "It shall be a happy new year," says the Christian optimist, standing with bared head in the halo of light that comes streaming down the vistas of the future, seeing far into the circles. "When light shall spread and man be like a man, Through all the seasons of the golden year."

Would you be a cynic or a philosopher? The sorrowing and disappointed who are without hope, or the sorrowing who feels that "tears are for the night, and joy cometh in the morning?" Would you be a pessimist, seeing only the mists, or an optimist, looking beyond the narrowed horizon of to-day? Would you see fate in the world, blind, inexorable and hard, or God in the world working out the destiny of human souls? The new year is a new outlook. You look at it through the reflection of your own soul. If you have made it broad, and deep, and shining in the light of God's face, it will shine on. If it is troubled and turbid it will only give a flash here and there on its surface.

We know that sorrow and disappointment must come. The travail of pain is the birth of righteousness always. We know that temptation will assail virtue, that we must struggle with intemperance to the bitter end; we know that the strong will oppress the weak as long as they can and dare, but we know also that the process of education is, if slow, absolutely sure, and that in great crises, public opinion sometimes turns with the force of a whirlwind and sweeps away every barrier. The most potent forces of the universe are the silent ones: the voice of God is the still small voice; truth is universal, and we are teaching men and women, and better yet, children to see it.

We know not how the better time is coming, nor when, but we know why, and so we echo "Happy New Year!" and look forward joyously to the day when

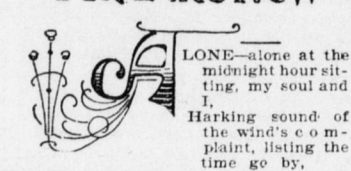
All men's good Be each man's rule, and universal peace Lie like a shaft of light across the land And like a lane of beams athwart the sea, Through all the circle of the golden year, And feeling sure That unto him who works and feels he works The same grand year is ever at the doors.

HE MADE ONLY ONE.



Mr. Goodheart—Are you going to make any good resolutions?
Mr. Heartgood—Just one, and you may gamble that I'll keep it.
Goodheart—Oh, that's what they all say.
Heartgood—Yes; but mine is that I'll never make another one.

Between The Old Year And the New



LONE—alone at the midnight hour sitting, my soul and I.

Harking sound of the wind's complaint, listing the time go by.

Fronting each to the other's thought, with the moon's face, sweet and thin, A-watch at the space of the window place, waiting the year begin— Waiting us usher the Old Year out and welcome the New Year in.

Heavy my soul with grief and pain—heavy, and bowed with tears, Worn with the weight of Sorrow's hand, not with the weight of years; And 'twixt us many a thing of woe, many a thought of sin.

While the moon outside, like a pure-eyed bride, was waiting the year begin— Waiting us usher the Old Year out and welcome the New Year in.

My soul it spoke in the stilly dark—spoke, and I shrank and heard, The chords of my being pulsed and leaped, affrighted like captive bird; I heard, and I knew that such words were true—while the new moon, sweet and thin.

With sad surprise in her tender eyes was waiting the year begin— Waiting us usher the Old Year out and welcome the New Year in.

And I plead with my soul: "Judge not—judge not!" and I prayed: "New Year, bring grace!"

I fell on my knees in the hush and dark—I wept and hid my face; For out of the finite bounds of Time, from the realms of "the might have been," To sepulcher of the infinite past bearing mistakes and sin.

The Old Year stole as the church bells chimed—and the New Year entered in.—Mary Clarke Huntington, in Good House-keeping.

ANNIE'S CURLS

A NEW YEAR STORY BY ELLEN FRIZELL WYCKOFF.

DO I, if my darling could only have the wine! How hard it is to be so poor, so poor."

Annie heard her mother's words, although they were not intended for her to hear. She saw her brush away the tears from her eyes, and then go back to Teddy's room.

"What did the doctor say, mother?" asked Teddy, in a weak voice; "did he say I will get well?"

Annie heard the reply: "He says that the fever is broken, and that all you have to do now is to get well."

Teddy's voice trembled as he replied: "Oh, mother, I was afraid he would say I might die, and I wondered who would take care of you and little Annie. I am glad God is going to let me live to do it. Now I must begin to get strong! Can't you give me lots to eat?"

Annie saw her mother's lips quiver as she turned her face from Teddy.

"Yes, my son, but not too much at once, you know," she said.

Teddy looked very thoughtful.

"But is there anything in the house, mother? I have been sick a good while, and my last wages must be nearly gone, and you haven't had time to color many photos lately, have you?"

The boy's mother answered, bravely: "Sick folks mustn't bother about these things, you know." Then she left the room, and Annie saw that she did so to hide the tears which were streaming down her worn face.

"I must do something; I wonder what it will be," murmured Annie to herself, and, crushing her hat down over her curls, she slipped into the street.

Annie thought constantly of wine for poor Teddy, and wondered if she summoned courage to beg a bottle whether anyone would be kind enough to give it to her for a poor sick boy, her only brother. She knew that sometimes grocers kept wine, especially around holiday time, and felt sure if they only knew how very, very much it was needed at home by her poor sick Teddy that some one of them would surely give her a bottle. Then there were other places where they sold nothing but wine and such stuff, for she had seen big windows full of the bottles, with pictures of great bunches of beautiful grapes standing behind them.

Annie wasn't a bold, forward child; she was timid, but brave and resolute; her love for her brother, at least, made her brave for the time; so she resolved in her heart to beg for the wine which the doctor said would bring back strength to Teddy. Christmas had come and gone, but Teddy was so ill with the fever that Annie thought nothing about the absence of the gifts usual to that happy day; but now Teddy was to grow better, and she did long to be able to make his New Year's and her mother's brighter than Christmas had been. As she wandered down the streets revolving these thoughts in her mind and wondering how she might get the necessary wine she passed many a gay scene.

Early evening had closed down on the city, and all the shops were aflame with light and brightness. Annie gazed wistfully at the pretty things in the great windows; she was but a little maid, and could not help wishing for pretty things for herself and for her mother and Teddy.

But the wine—she must not linger; she would only look in one more shop and then—then she would seek the great shop where wine was sold in bottles; surely the big, rosy-faced man whom she had often noticed standing in the doorway of his shop would listen to her story of poor Teddy and give her the wine.

So she stood before this last store—it was a jewelry store—and, oh, how beautiful the jewels looked—sapphires and rubies and diamonds—how they glittered. The sight was enough to fascinate older eyes than Annie's.

Presently something in one corner of the window caught her gaze—it wasn't a jewel, it was a switch of lovely hair; not one, but several, and below them in pretty, shallow, satin-lined boxes, were clusters of curls. A sudden thought came to Annie; she pressed her little hands together and held her breath, then paused a moment to gain courage, and passed resolutely into the great store. A kind-looking man came forward to meet her and said: "What can I do for you, little lady?"

"Do you buy hair?" she asked.

"Sometimes, little one; why do you ask?"

"Will you buy mine? See, I have plenty!" she answered, taking off her hat and shaking her curls down over her shoulders, and looking up with anxious eyes.

"But, my little girl, are your curls yours to sell?"

"Oh, yes, sir; if you only knew why I must sell them, I am sure you would buy them. Teddy is so ill that he needs things, and mother—" and here she choked up so she could say no more.

"And you want to sell your beautiful hair to buy things for your sick brother; is that it, little one?"

"Yes, sir."

"I wouldn't take it, but—"

"Please don't refuse me, sir; my hair will grow in again; it grows awful fast; see, it is below my waist!"

"It is beautiful, a very rare color, and so curly," said the man, stroking the rippling mass of shining hair.

"Mother's is just like mine, only it is a little fady here and there. You will take my hair, won't you? Please do; it will surely grow again, and my brother needs things so very, very much; the doctor says so!"

The man led her into a back room

and he talked to the little girl for awhile, then surprised the jeweler and little Annie by bursting into tears.

"They've told you about Uncle Luke, haven't they?" he asked.

"Oh, yes, often," replied Annie. "He is in Australia, where the bark falls off the trees and the leaves stay on, and where the birds have no wings, and everything is so queer!"

"But what if he came home?"

"Oh, he won't," she said; "mother has lost him completely."

"But he has come home. I am he."

Then there was what Annie called "a time."

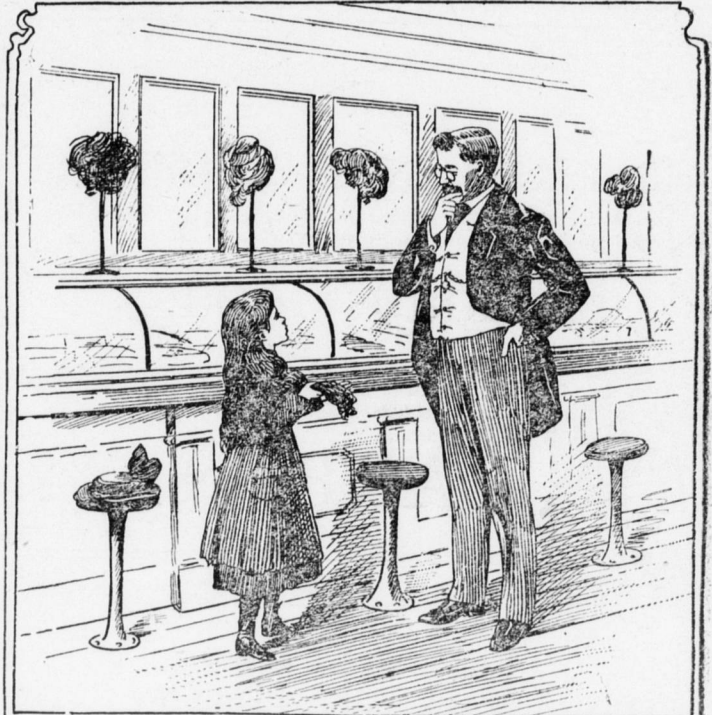
That was how it happened that just as the doctor was praising Teddy's patience, and saying how the wine had helped him, and there was a great flutter in the hall, and Annie bounced in, dragging a big man with kind eyes in a rough face by the hand.

"My curls found him. It is Uncle Luke, mother, and he has money enough to buy my curls back two or three times. I know, because he said so."

And then there was much more of "a time." And the doctor held Teddy's hand while Uncle Luke told about his long search for his sister, and mother explained about father's death and her removal to the city, and how she lost Uncle Luke's address and could not get a letter to reach him. Then they talked about Annie's curls, and the doctor blew his nose furiously and dug at his eyes, and Annie heard him say: "Old idiot that I am! I guess I'll try to see about a way of getting wine when I prescribe it again for a boy whose mother has that frightened look in her eyes."

Annie tucked her little shorn head under the doctor's arm and whispered: "But you see how it was best, don't you? My curls found so much for us—they brought us an uncle. Just look at mother; don't she look happy? Isn't a good uncle the best New Year's present in all this world?"

Wine is a good medicine when one



"DO YOU BUY HAIR?" SHE ASKED.

and himself cut the glossy locks, laying each curl carefully down. Then he called a man who wore a white apron and gave the little shorn head into his charge.

"I believe that you are prettier than before," the kind man said, when the hairdresser had finished. Then he laid a little roll of bills in the child's hand and bade her be careful not to lose it on her way home.

Annie hurried home. When she arrived mother was reading to Teddy, and Annie crept in like a little mouse. She removed her hat carefully, so as not to spoil the hairdresser's work, then dropped the bills in her mother's lap, with a "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, mamma!"

"Oh!" screamed Teddy.

"Oh!" screamed mother, as they both saw and knew all.

"How came you to think of it, my poor baby?" asked the mother.

"It's for wine—wine is better than curls any day," answered Annie; then, turning to Teddy, she hugged him in joy and said, softly: "Get well, Teddy, and pay me back some day!"

Then she told how it all happened, and how she was going in a couple of days to see her curls in their pretty satin-lined case. After they had both kissed her and thanked her over and over again she crept away.

"I'm glad I did it; but how lonesome my pretty curls will be!" said the child.

But the curls were not at all lonesome. The kind man was looking at them when one of the boys showed a gentleman in. The visitor was a big man and he had gentle eyes, though his face was somewhat rough to look at.

"I'm quite out of heart, Alfred; I can get no clew; but what's that you have there? Pretty, aren't they?"

"Yes, beautiful!"

Then the kind man told all about the little girl who sold the curls to him, so she could have money to buy things for the sick brother.

"Alfred, this hair is just the color of Ellie's; could it be? Could it be Ellie's child's hair?"

"She's coming here day after to-morrow to see her curls in their satin-lined box; then if you will be here you can find out who she is," answered the jeweler.

Sure enough, Annie came to see her curls as they looked ready for sale; she wanted to see the box. While she was admiring it and telling about Teddy, and how the wine was doing him good, the stranger with the gentle eyes ar-

needs it, and Teddy improved rapidly—so rapidly that he was almost ready to try the new sled that Uncle Luke brought home to him on New Year's eve. As for Teddy's mother, the roses began to tint her cheeks again, and Annie was sure she was the prettiest and best mother in all the world.—Ladies' World, New York.

A Good Resolution.

One of the best New Year's resolutions we have heard of anybody making is this: "Not to speak of mistakes which make no difference." How often the harmony of the home is destroyed by the persistent member of the household who will argue half an hour over the merest trifle. If one holds an erroneous opinion on a subject of any importance it should by all means be corrected. But what possible difference does it make whether Aunt Jane came to dinner on Tuesday or Wednesday? Yet we have listened to heated disputes that cast an ugly shadow over an entire meal, or spoiled an evening's enjoyment, upon subjects of no more moment than the time of a visit or the state of last week's weather. In dealing with children accuracy of statement should be carefully cultivated, lest a habit of exaggeration or untruthfulness be developed. But for adults the foregoing resolution is worthy of general adoption.—Helpful Thoughts.

THE "PHONE" WAS THE CAUSE OF IT



"Not for me!" I wouldn't swear off; "Good resolutions"—I have no desire; For it would be folly for any sane man As long as he uses the wire.