

A New Year's Call

By Manda L. Crocker.

"THINGS are seldom, if ever, just what they seem," modified Belle Farnsworth after her favorite author, "and people, never!"

Turning slowly around before the long mirror she noted the faultless reflection of the new tailor-made suit, but her thoughts were otherwise occupied.

"One must be positively hypocritical sometimes, I find," she continued, more leniently. "Now, for instance, I am to circulate, as the politician says, among the people of Hanover Square this afternoon, wishing them the joys of the New Year as if life was simply reflected Paradise. But the truth is, the cobwebs are thick in my sky and I have not the ambition to emulate the example of the old woman who went heavenward with her broom."

"O, if it were only cobwebs," she added, bitterly, "that obscured my sun, I would not hesitate to try the sweeping process; but—it's more!"

Miss Farnsworth had been delegated by her society to make New Year calls in her neighborhood and she had consented.

Anything was preferable to mop at home with Aunt Roxy on this special day; the day she died—not the prosaic old auntie, but she, Miss Isabelle Farnsworth—for ever since she and Allan Druer had broken faith three years ago, she had considered herself "dead."

And he might as well be, for had he not left Cliff Point that very day, "forever," he vowed? And so far he had grimly kept his word.

With a sympathetic glance at the suspiciously solemn face in the glass, Miss Farnsworth adjusted the badge of the King's Daughters on the gray lappel and went thoughtfully downstairs. The blithe young year reflected his joyousness on all the faces she met and, in spite of herself Belle began to speculate happily. But the anniversary which "followed" came suddenly abreast of her as she mounted the steps of a pretentious brown stone cottage on the corner, for the fifth and last call.

Lost for the moment in the unusually pleasant musing, her fingers sought the bell-pull unconsciously.

Her first call had been on "snobs," as Aunt Roxy would have said. They had bowed her in and bowed her out in dressed-up-ice fashion, with a patronizing smirk that would have done credit to the king's fool.

Another call revealed a fat roly-poly lady who giggled continuously while she displayed her cheap diamonds and entertained the plain tailor-made gown condescendingly.

But the fourth call: Well! it would always be a bright spot on the anniversary. A little old lady in soft, velvety costume drew her to a sunny corner where an invalid daughter lay smiling a genuine "Happy New Year" in her welcome. As the thin fingers closed over the caller's hand a long silent chord somewhere in the dead heart vibrated in harmony with the greeting; and Miss Farnsworth concluded that she was not a walking mummy after all.

Far from it; the King's Daughter felt like shutting herself in with these other

dow in the brown stone cottage as Miss Farnsworth fairly flew out into the street; carelessly glancing at first, then scrutinizing the supple figure in gray.

The next minute he was out on the pavement, but the tailor-made gown had vanished around the corner.

Quickening his pace he saw the girl ascending the steps of a humble cottage, third from the angle.

"Making New Year calls?" he cogitated, "but she did not ring at the Druers'. No wonder; poor little girl!"

Instead of waiting to be received, however, he noticed that she went right in and closed the door behind her unceremoniously. Miss Farnsworth was at home.

Aunt Roxy was snoozing in her easy chair near the fire, when Belle peeped into the parlor, so retreating on tiptoe she went upstairs with a far-away look in her shining eyes.

"I believe I am alive!" she exclaimed, triumphantly, to the dimples in the mirror, "and I am sure he has the image still intact."

Removing her wraps the new old Miss Farnsworth settled herself before

the cheery grate in a contented little heap to dream over again those first treasured chapters before the misunderstanding folded them in.

"Turn backward, turn backward, O, Time, in your flight!"

Writing material and a heap of unanswered greetings lay on the desk at her elbow, and the pen bristled in its rack with impatient waiting; still Miss Belle dreamed on.

"Here's a letter for you, Niece Farnsworth." Aunt Roxy had toiled upstairs and pushed open the door as she spoke. There were no preliminaries with the blunt old lady and she omitted the common courtesy of tapping on the panel, as useless, "seeing it was only Belle."

"Not by the postman," queried the girl, a rose color suffusing her anxious face; but luckily the old auntie did not notice the signal of the heart.

"No; a boy brought it a moment ago. Some business of the society, I presume," and Aunt Roxy waddled downstairs to her cozy corner again without even a suspicion of the purport of the message that could not wait to put in its appearance in the conventional way.

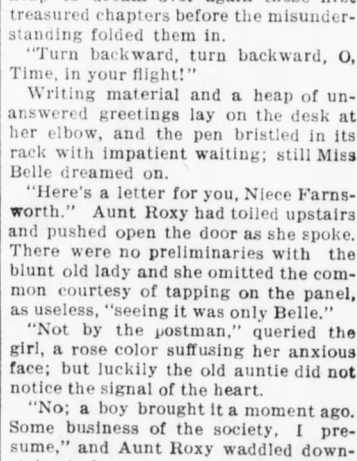
Hurriedly opening the cream-tinted envelope with its gold and blue monogram on the corner, Belle thanked Heaven for once that her aunt's eyesight was none of the best; then she read: "Dearest, I saw you to-day. The old love is warm in my heart; and I want your forgiveness, and the old-time confidence. Am hungry for your presence—would have starved to death long ago had it not been for the image. Am coming to see you this evening; going to make a New Year's call. Allan."



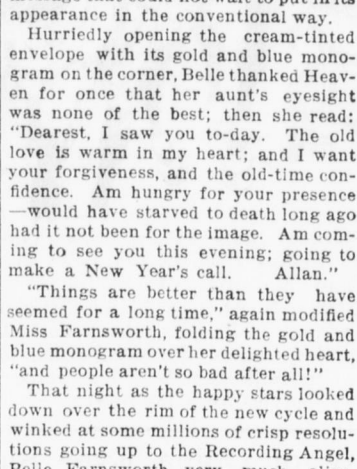
TURNING SLOWLY BEFORE THE LONG MIRROR.



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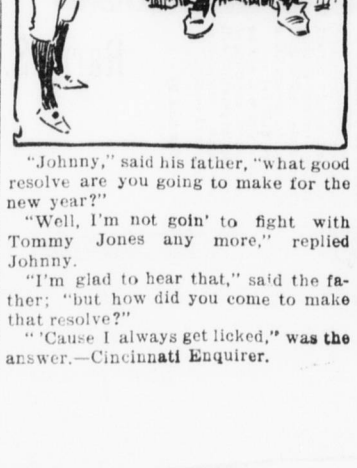
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The Morning of the Year

By C. C. Harbaugh

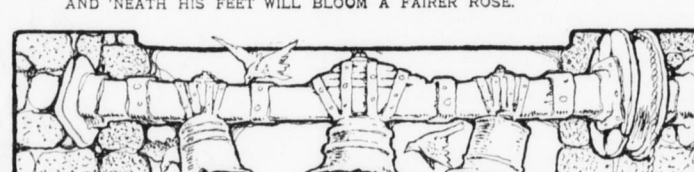
TO THE EAGER, WAITING NATIONS COMES THE MORNING OF THE YEAR FROM THE GLORY OF THE ORIENT AFAR. WITH GLAD BELLS ALL A-RINGING OUT THE SORROW AND THE TEAR, AND IN THE HALLOWED LIKENESS OF A STAR: WITH ONE-HALF THE OLD WORLD SLEEPING 'NEATH ITS COVERING OF WHITE, IN THE STARLIGHT OF THE MORNING ON THE MOOR, HIS LITTLE HANDS HAVE BACKWARD ROLLED THE SHADOWS OF THE NIGHT AND HE STANDS, A CHILD OF WELCOME, AT THE DOOR.

YOU CAN HEAR THE BELLS A-RINGING IN EARTH'S NEWEST JUBILEE WHERE THE ORANGE TREES ARE WAVING IN THE SUN, FOR THE NEW YEAR THROWS HIS SMILES UPON THE MOUNTAIN AND THE SEA AND UPON THE GOLDEN RIVERS AS THEY RUN; THE LILY BLOOMS IN BEAUTY IN THE EVER SHADELESS CLIME, BY THE NEW YEAR'S HANDS UNFOLDED IN THE MORN, AND ACROSS THE TOSSEING OCEAN YOU CAN HEAR THE SWEET BELLS CHIME AS FOR EVERY HEART AN ERA NEW IS BORN.



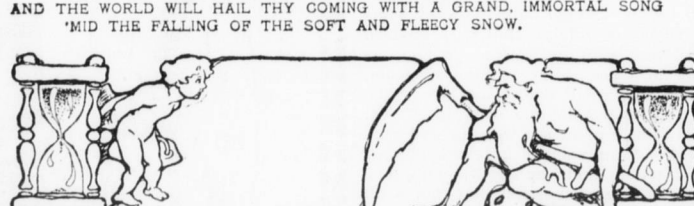
HAIL THE GUEST THAT COMES A-SMILING DOWN THE PATHWAY OF THE STARS, IN THE HEAVEN-GIRDLED BEAUTY OF HIS BIRTH, NOT A JOY AMONG THE PEOPLE NOW HIS HAPPY COMING MARS, FOR HE BRINGETH LOVE AND PEACE TO ALL THE EARTH: THE OLD YEAR, BENT AND HOARY, SLOWLY FLITS ACROSS THE SNOW, WITH A WISTFUL LOOK BEHIND HIM EVEN NOW, AND HE SIGHS TO SEE THE NEW YEAR IN HIS BEAUTY AND HIS GLOW WITH THE HOLY BEAMS OF MORNING ON HIS BROW.

OPEN THROWN BE EVERY PORTAL TO THE YEAR'S INITIAL GUEST, FOR TO US HE GENTLY COMES TO BIDE A-WEEK; WELCOME HIM AMONG THE VALLEYS, GREET HIM ON THE MOUNTAIN CREST, RING THE FAIR BELLS FOR HIS COMING ON THE SEA: HIS HANDS ARE FILLED WITH BLESSINGS FOR THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH NOT A CARE AND NOT A TROUBLE YET HE KNOWS, WHERE SORROW SEEMS TO LINGER HE WILL SET THE SEAL OF MIRTH, AND 'NEATH HIS FEET WILL BLOOM A FAIRER ROSE.



LOUDER SOUND THE BELLS OF WELCOME, LET THE ANTHEMS FLOAT AFAR TILL THE HEARTS OF ALL THE PEOPLE LIFT THE STRAIN, LET THE MUSIC OF HIS COMING REACH THE LOVE-LAND OF THE STAR AND BE ECHOED ON THE FAR CELESTIAL PLAIN; HE COMES, THE BABY NEW YEAR, IN HABILIMENTS OF WHITE, FAIR AND FRESH AS NATURE'S EVER DEWY MORN, WITH THE WORLD'S BELLS RINGING CLEARLY IN THE SOFT AND SACRED NIGHT THAT USHERS IN TIME'S NEWEST, FAIREST BORN.

BIDE WITH US, O DAINY COMER, TILL THE SNOW IS ON THY HAIR AND A STAFF IS IN THY HAND FOR JOURNEY FAR— TILL AGAIN WE WAIT TO WELCOME FROM THE EAST ANOTHER YEAR AND NO LONGER GLOWS FOR THEE THE MORNING STAR: COME INTO THE HEARTS OF GLADNESS THAT HAVE WAITED FOR THEE LONG, BRING THE HAPPINESS AND PEACE THAT ALL SHOULD KNOW, AND THE WORLD WILL HAIL THY COMING WITH A GRAND, IMMORTAL SONG 'MID THE FALLING OF THE SOFT AND FLEECY SNOW.



When the Year Begins

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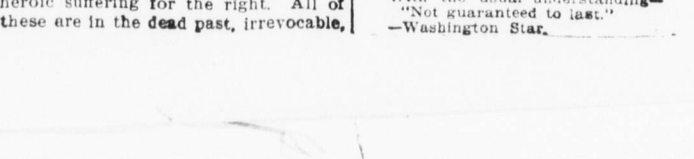
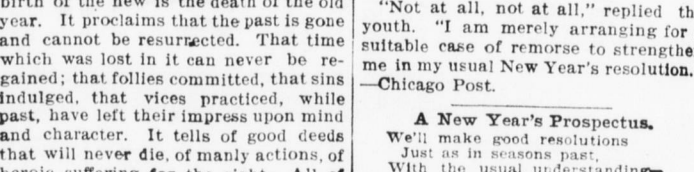
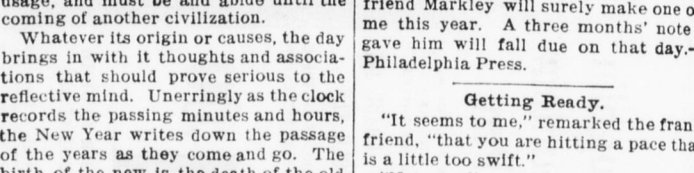
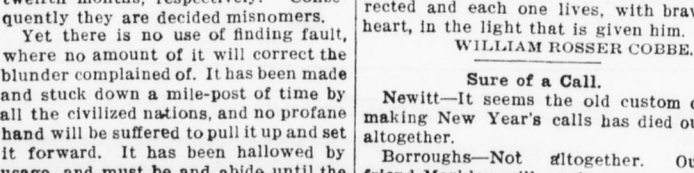
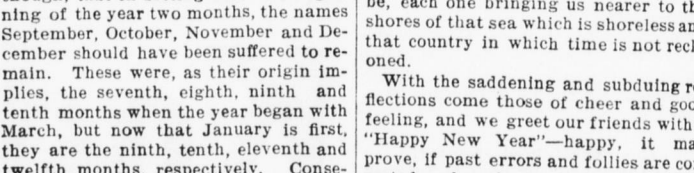
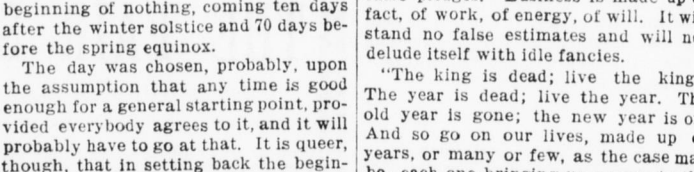
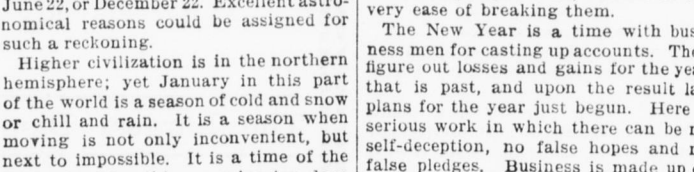
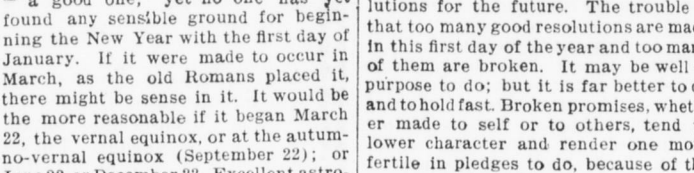
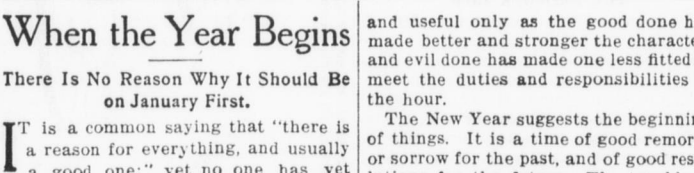
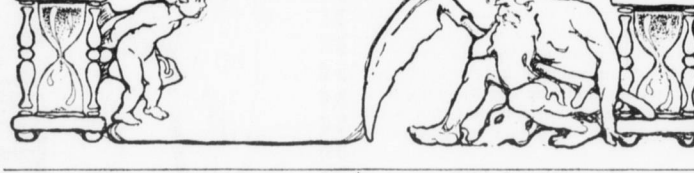
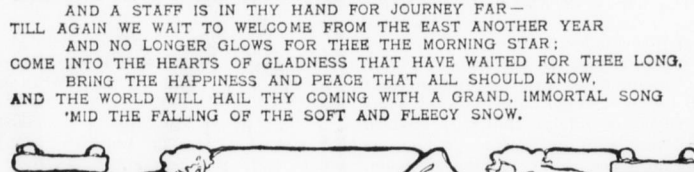
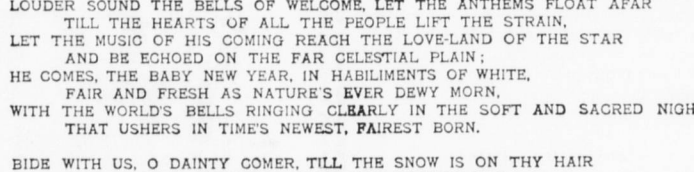
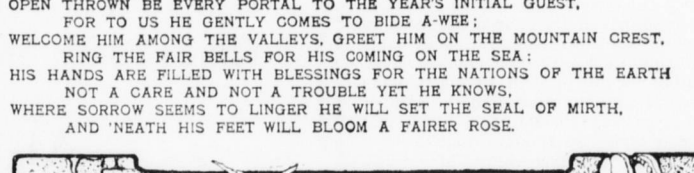
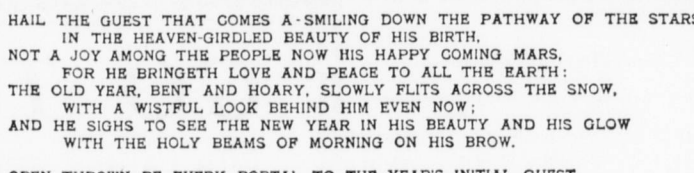
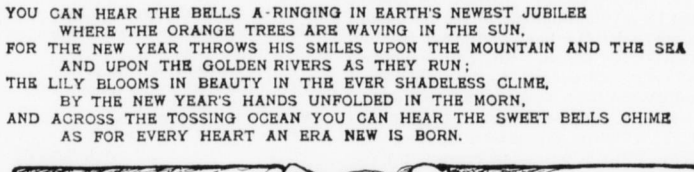
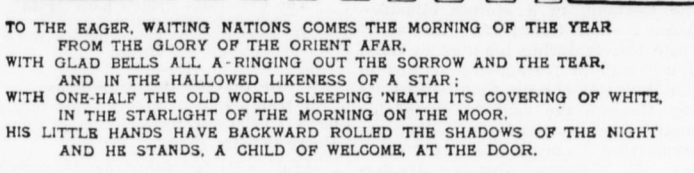
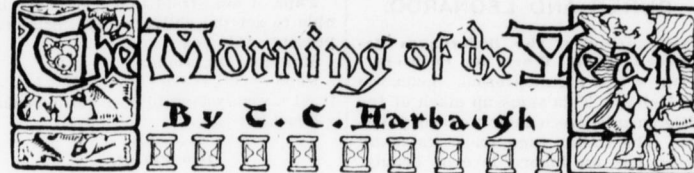
There Is No Reason Why It Should Be on January First.

IT is a common saying that "there is a reason for everything, and usually a good one;" yet no one has yet found any sensible ground for beginning the New Year with the first day of January. If it were made to occur in March, as the old Romans placed it, there might be sense in it. It would be the more reasonable if it began March 22, the vernal equinox, or at the autumnal equinox (September 22); or June 22, or December 22. Excellent astronomical reasons could be assigned for such a reckoning.

Higher civilization is in the northern hemisphere; yet January in this part of the world is a season of cold and snow or chill and rain. It is a season when moving is not only inconvenient, but next to impossible. It is a time of the beginning of nothing, coming ten days after the winter solstice and 70 days before the spring equinox.

The day was chosen, probably, upon the assumption that any time is good enough for a general starting point, provided everybody agrees to it, and it will probably have to go at that. It is queer, though, that in setting back the beginning of the year two months, the names September, October, November and December should have been suffered to remain. These were, as their origin implies, the seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth months when the year began with March, but now that January is first, they are the ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth months, respectively. Consequently they are decided misnomers.

Yet there is no use of finding fault, where no amount of it will correct the blunder complained of. It has been made and stuck down a mile-post of time by all the civilized nations, and no profane hand will be suffered to pull it up and set it forward. It has been hallowed by usage, and must be and abide until the coming of another civilization.



One New Year's Day

By Elisa Armstrong Bengough.

"GOOD morning, Mrs. Smithson. Did you have a pleasant New Year's day?"

"Well, No, Mrs. Nayber, to tell the truth, I didn't. You see, Mr. Smithson and I concluded we would not spend the day with his family, as usual. We thought we would remain cozily at home and have a nice long talk. Since he has been kept so close at the office and I have been out so much, we don't seem to see nearly as much of each other as we used, and New Year's day seemed just the time to get acquainted all over again."

"Well, after breakfast, we sat cozily by the fire to have a nice long talk about our plans for the coming year. I just took up the paper to glance at the advertisements for the next day, and he went looking for his pipe—you know he is miserable without it—and he couldn't remember where he had left it the night before. Suddenly an idea came to me. New Year's day is the time to give up bad habits; now, isn't it? At any rate, I felt it ought to be, and I told Mr. Smithson he smoked too much; he admitted that he did. 'It is a bad habit,' I told him, 'dirty, expensive and injurious to health.' He admitted that it was. 'Then, why not give it up, to-day, and



GAVE ME TWENTY DOLLARS.

make a good beginning for the year?' He refused at first to listen, but finally said he'd do it. It would be a good chance, he said, to show his strength of will, and, anyhow, it was only an ideal!"

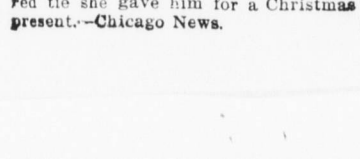
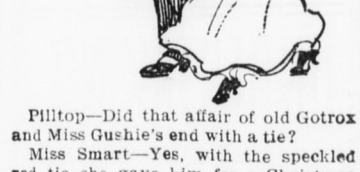
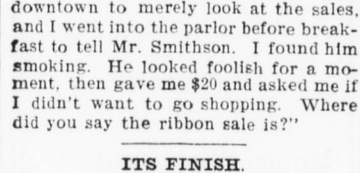
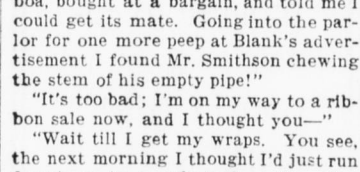
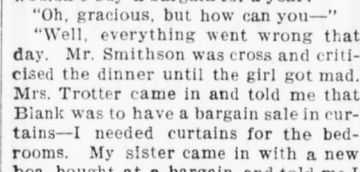
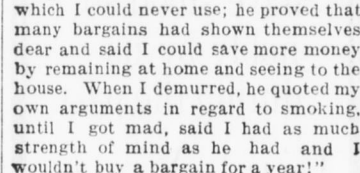
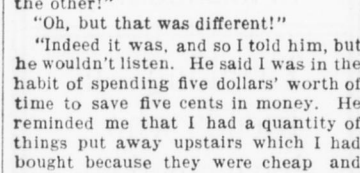
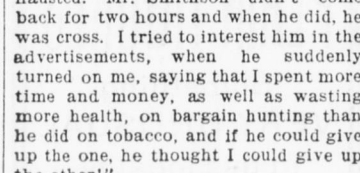
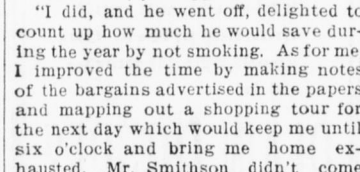
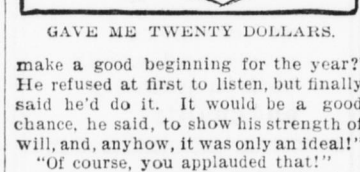
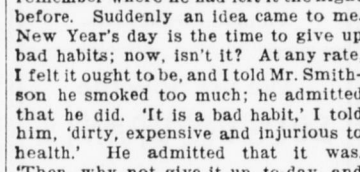
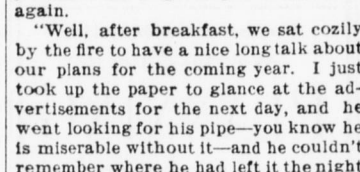
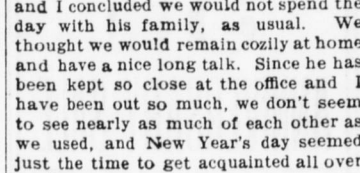
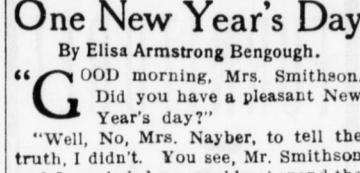
"Of course, you applauded that!"

"I did, and he went off, delighted to count up how much he would save during the year by not smoking. As for me, I improved the time by making notes of the bargains advertised in the papers and mapping out a shopping tour for the next day which would keep me until six o'clock and bring me home exhausted. Mr. Smithson didn't come back for two hours and when he did, he was cross. I tried to interest him in the advertisements, when he suddenly turned on me, saying that I spent more time and money, as well as wasting more health, on bargain hunting than he did on tobacco, and if he could give up the one, he thought I could give up the other!"

"Oh, but that was different!"

"Indeed it was, and so I told him, but he wouldn't listen. He said I was in the habit of spending five dollars' worth of time to save five cents in money. He reminded me that I had a quantity of things put away upstairs which I had bought because they were cheap and which I could never use; he proved that many bargains had shown themselves dear and said I could save more money by remaining at home and seeing to the house. When I demurred, he quoted my own arguments in regard to smoking, until I got mad, said I had as much strength of mind as he had and I wouldn't buy a bargain for a year!"

"Oh, gracious, but how can you—"



Two Su

By Eliza B.

"THE last day makes a fel

reminiscent, the man at the roll top case of homesickness brought on by encoura

"I lived in Chicago some reason or other I old farm for five years; folks made an annual made them enjoy it. clock announced the was sitting in a hotel of traveling men. Ev had been a farmer's bo telling stories. We spol swimming, forgetting chores, and the interv we came home late for felt our hair to see if I lived over orchard rick ring to the painful mer waited in the dark, whe at the window. We r sweetness of stolen melo what happened when d complained of us next d we were all homesick."

"Then a fellow from spoke of the holidays on thought of the old folks my throat the size of a Why, I hadn't written hor and hadn't spent New Y since I came to the city. solved to go home and The man from North D. two cents he'd go with know my mother, but he and he'd risk his welcom him two cents."

"We could make it we o'clock train in the morn would bring us home wh were lit and the smell of st at the back door. The ma Dakota hoped they'd have apple sauce and hot biscu it cured his dyspepsia to "Before I slept I wired Jim, who lived three miles place, to meet us at the sta ting the old folks know."

"It was snowing when we that only made it seem mo Year's. It snowed all day a kept losing time; but I onl waiting at the station. V the home supper and ate ir car. It was nine when we the station master, a stran seen Jim! There was no traveling man offered us a cross roads. The man from kota hoped the old folks ha bed; I knew they had. It v from the cross roads than I th stopped talking, as we through the snow. But, any going home for New Year's!"

"There was no light when in, and I hoped pa had not e fire too loudly. I meant t a few things next day, but was at home! I knocked and the window to go up and to voice when I shouted, but I came. I knocked again; the turns knocking."

"It seemed an hour before voice above told us its owner w

"Do you intend to swear off this ye "No. I'm going to try a new sch I'm going to see if by attending a l more strictly to business I can't enough to afford the things I've been ing to swear off on in the past."— cago Record-Herald.

"Make New Resolves. Because resolves of other years Have fallen by the way And for the new leaf you have fearn It won't keep white till May, Don't hesitate new paths to seek. Lest you should take a fall, For if you're only good a week, Why, that beats none at all. —Chicago Daily News.

