

Lehigh



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Poetical Department.

New Year's Day.

There is no change upon the air,
 No record in the sky;
 No pall-like storm comes forth to shroud
 The year about to die.

A few light clouds are on the heaven,
 A few far stars are bright;
 And the pale moon shines as she shines
 On many a common night.

Ah, not in heaven, but upon earth,
 Are signs of change express'd;
 The closing year has left its mark
 On human brow and breast.

How much goes with it to the grave
 Of life's most precious things;
 Methinks each year dies on a pyre,
 Like the Assyrian kings.

Affection, friendship, confidence,—
 There's not a year hath died
 But all these treasures of the heart,
 Lie with it side by side.

The wheels of life work heavily
 We marvel day by day
 To see how from the chain of life
 The gliding years away.

Sad the mere change of fortune's chance,
 And sad the friend unkind;
 But what sad friend like the change
 That in ourselves we find!

I've wept my castle in the dust,
 Wept o'er an altar'd brow;
 'Tis far worse marring o'er those tears,
 'Would, I could weep them now!"

O, for mine early confidence,
 Which like that graceful tree,
 Bent cordial, as if each approach
 Could but in kindness be!

Then was the time the fairy Hope
 My future fortune told,
 Or Youth, the alchemist, that turn'd
 What'er he touch'd to gold.

But Hopes sweet words can never be
 What they have been of yore;
 I am grown wiser, and believe
 In fairy tales no more.

'And youth has spent his wealth, and bought
 The knowledge he would fain
 Change for forgetfulness, and live
 His dreaming life again.

I'm weary, weary: day-dreams, years,
 I've seen alike depart,
 And sullen Care and Discontent
 Hang brooding o'er my heart.

Another year, another year—
 Alas! it must be
 That time's most dark and weary wheel
 Must turn again for me.

In vain I seek from out the past
 Some cherish'd work to save;
 Affection, feeling, hope are dead—
 My heart is its own grave!

The Family Circle.

Adventures of a New Year's Eve.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN.
 Old Mother Kate, the watchman's wife, threw up the window, and poked her head out into the dark night. It was 9 o'clock on New Year's eve—the snow was fast falling in large flakes, reddened by the light from the windows in the streets of the city. She gazed for a long time at the merry groups of people hurrying to and fro, thronging the doors of the brilliantly lighted shops in search of New Year presents—entering the coffee-houses and wine-cellars, or hastening to private parties and public balls, to celebrate the marriage of the old year to the new, amid the joys and pleasures of every variety of amusement.
 But some of the large cold flakes having dropped on old mother Kate's nose, she quickly drew in her head, and, shutting the window, said to her husband,
 "Dear Gottlieb, stay at home to night, and let Phillip go out in your place, for it is snowing as fast as it can, and you know the snow does not agree with your old limbs."

It looks as if there was a feast or a ball in every house, and Phillip will be delighted with the many fine things he will see."
 Old Gottlieb nodded, and said, "I would be very glad of that. My barometer, the old shot-wound in my knee, has warned me these two days that the weather was going to change. It is but just that the son should help his father in the duties which he is about to inherit."

Old Gottlieb has been in his younger days a sergeant in one of the regiments of his King, until in storming a battery, in which he was the foremost, he was crippled by a shot. His Captain for his gallant and successful charge, received a decoration and promotion, but the poor sergeant had to congratulate himself with having escaped with his life and a broken leg. He was, however, appointed to the office of watchman with his son for an assistant. The small salary of the two would not, however have sufficed for the family, had not Mother Kate been an excellent house-keeper and very economical. Old Gottlieb was besides a real philosopher who could be happy on the scanty income of his public salary and the scanty pitance Phillip earned in the employ of the public gardener, sufficed to render him comfortable also.

Phillip was a fine looking young man of twenty-one, and when sent to take home bunches of flowers to the ladies, would often receive from them a liberal present.

Mother Kate had already thrown her shawls from her shoulders and was about to step to the garden to call her son when Phillip came in.

"Father," said he, shaking his hands with his parents "it is snowing, and the snow you know makes you suffer. Let me take your place to-night and you go to your bed."
 "You're a good boy," said old Gottlieb.
 "And then, I've been thinking," continued Phillip, that to-morrow is New Year, and I should like to be with you and have a real treat. Dear Mother, but you have not got a roast in the kitchen— Well, not exactly, interrupted Mother Kate, "but we have a pound and a half of beef, with potatoes and rice, and laurel leaves for soup; besides some bottles of beer. Come, Phillip, we shall live well to-morrow. Next week the watchmen will divide their New Year's presents, and then we shall have good living."
 "So much the better for you. But have you your rent yet?" anxiously enquired Phillip.

Old Gottlieb shrugged his shoulders.
 Phillip then placed a sum of money on the table, saying, "here are twenty-two florins, which you may take for your New Year's present. Let us all three commence the New Year cheerfully and happy."
 Mother Kate's eyes were filled with tears but she was speechless. Old Gottlieb, choking with gratitude, said: "You are indeed, my boy, the consolation of your parents in their old age. I wish you nothing for your new year, but that you may keep your heart pure and good, for that will be a heaven in your bosom."

After a pause, the old man resumed, "We have now received as much in all as three hundred and seventeen florins."
 "Dear child, I pity you," said Mother Kate, "if you had been able to keep that sum yourself, you might now buy a piece of land, establish yourself as a gardener on your own account, and marry the good Rosa. Now that is impossible. But we are old, and you shall not have very long to support us."

"Mother," answered Phillip, "how you do talk! I like Rosa as I do my own life; yet I would give a hundred Rosas for you and father. I cannot get other parents in this world, but I could find another Rosa, though not like Rosa Bitner."
 "You are right, Phillip," said the old man, "there is no merit in making love and marrying; but honor and support aged parents is a noble duty and one of the highest of virtues."

"But," said the mother, "the girl may get tired of waiting, and change her mind; for Rosa is a beautiful girl, and though poor, she would not lack lovers."
 "Be not afraid, mother," replied Phillip, "Rosa has vowed that she would not marry any one but me, and that is enough. Nor has her old mother any objection to our union. But if I could to-day exercise my trade on my own account and support a wife, to-morrow I would lead her to the altar. I only regret that her old mother does not allow us to see each other as often as we please. She says that would not do any good; while, both Rosa and myself find that it does us a great deal of good; and so we have agreed to meet to-night at twelve, at the door of the Church."

While this conversation was going on Phillip was preparing himself to take his father's place on the watch. He went out and entered on his duties with cheerfulness, for he knew that his Rosa was with her friends.

"Now she hears me," he thought, "now she thinks of me and will not forget to beat the Church door at twelve o'clock!"
 After having gone his rounds on the watch, he repaired to the house of his beloved

Rosa, and from the street gazed upon its walls. Now and then he saw female figures fitting behind the windows, and his heart beat quickly as he thought he saw Rosa. When the figures disappeared he studied their gigantic shadows on the wall, hoping to discern which was Rosa, and what she was doing. To be sure it was not very pleasant to be standing there in the cold storm; but what does a lover care for frost and snow. Now-a-days watchmen are as romantic lovers as were formerly the gallant knights in romances and ballads. He did not feel the cold until the clock struck eleven, when he again commenced his rounds on the watch. His teeth were then chattering with cold. He was scarcely able to call out the hour of the night and his horn.

As he was going through a lonely street, he met with a singular figure. It was a man in a black half-mask, wrapped up in a fine red silk cloak, and wearing on his head a round hat with one side of the brim turned up, and fantastically ornamented with a profusion of waving feathers.

Phillip was about to avoid the mask, when the latter stopped him and said: "You are a most lovely fellow, you! Where are you going? Tell me!"

Phillip answered: "To Maria street."
 "I must then go with you," exclaimed the mask. "But tell me, my lad, can you sing a song?"

Phillip, seeing that the gentleman was a gay companion, answered: "Sir, better with a glass of wine in a warm room than in the cold street where one's heart freezes in the body."

As Phillip pursued his beat, the mask accompanied him, and would insist on blowing the watchman's horn at the various stations, and giving some merry songs. Phillip supposing him to be some gentleman who had got overheated by wine, let him have his own way.

"Mark ye, young man!" said the mask, "I should like to be a watchman for a few hours. Give me your cloak and broad-brimmed hat, and take my domino; then go to the ale-house and warm yourself by the fire and wine at my expense. What say you?"

Phillip at last consented, changed costumes, and appointed to meet the stranger at the Church-door, at twelve o'clock.

Phillip, after having obtained the solemn promise of his substitute that he would not disgrace his new calling, hurried away to the ale-house. On his way, he was touched by a masked person, who had just got out of a carriage. Phillip stopped, and inquired, in the fashion of masks, "What do you wish?"

The mask answered, "Does not your royal highness intend?"
 "What! royal highness?" said Phillip, laughing; "I am no highness. How do you get that idea into your head?"

The mask bowed most respectfully, and pointing to the diamond in Phillip's hat, said: "I beg your gracious pardon if I violate the right of masks. But in whatever garment you may wrap yourself, your noble figure will always betray you. May I ask whether your Lordship is going to dance?"

"I dance! No. You see I am in boots."
 "Then you will play?" the mask continued.
 "Still less; I have got no money with me."
 "My purse is at your lordships command, with all I am and have," the mask exclaimed, presenting, at the same time, a full purse to the embarrassed watchman.

"But do you know who I am?" asked Phillip, pushing back the mask.

"The mask replied with a graceful bow: His royal highness, Prince Julian."

At that moment Phillip heard his substitute in a neighboring street crying with a loud voice the hour of the night. He then understood the metamorphosis. Prince Julian, who was known in the city as a wild, amiable and talented young man, had exchanged parts with him. "Well," thought Phillip, "if he plays the part of a watchman with success, I will not disgrace mine of a prince, and I will show that I am capable of being a prince for half an hour."

The chamberlain obeyed; and flew up the rich marble steps. Phillip quickly followed. They entered an immense saloon, lighted up with a thousand wax candles, whose rays were reflected by the numerous mirrors which covered the walls, and beautifully refracted by the candeliers hanging from the ceilings. A gay throng of masks was moving before him—there were Tyrolean girls, Papageno's, armed knights, nuns, pedlers, cupids, monks and Jews, Presians and Medes, in a motley confusion. Phillip, felt for a while dazzled and stupefied. Never in his life had he seen such a show. It was like a dream. In the centre of the room, a hundred dancers of both sexes were swimming in the harmonious waves of music.

"How is it, Bramin, you do not dance to-night?" he asked the chamberlain.
 The Bramin sighed while shrugging his shoulders: "For me, sport and dance are over. The only one whom I should wish to lead to the dance is Countess Bonau. I

believed that she loved me—now suddenly she breaks altogether with me."
 "Indeed, that is the first I have heard of it."
 "My God! you do not know? The whole capital is full of it," the chamberlain continued with a sigh. "It is a fortnight since the rupture took place. Nor does she ever allow me to defend myself. She sent me back three letters without opening them."

"Well, Bramin, the general joy reconciles every one. Let us try the countess."
 "There she is, the Carmelite. She has taken off her mask. Speak a word in my favor."
 "My countess," stammered Phillip, much embarrassed, as she turned her full clear eyes upon him.

"Prince," said the countess, "you were an hour ago almost too waggish."
 "My fair countess, I am the more serious now."
 "So much the better, Prince; then I shall not have to run away."
 "Fair lady, allow me but one question.—Are you doing penance for your sins in that garment?"

"I have nothing to repent of."
 "You forget, countess, your cruelties your injustice towards the dear Bramin who is standing yonder alone."
 She cast down her eyes and appeared disturbed.

"Do you know, fair countess, that the chamberlain is as innocent of the occurrence at Merrywood as myself."
 "Do you, my lord," said the countess, with a slight frown, "forget what you told me an hour ago?"

"You are right, dear countess; I was too free as you say yourself. But now I assure you, the chamberlain went to Merrywood by the order of the queen mother.—He went against his will; against his will he had to escort the baroness, whom he hates."
 "Whom he hates!" the countess exclaimed, with a bitter smile.
 "Yes he hates and despises her. Believe me, he has passed almost the boundaries of good breeding towards her."
 "No more," whispered the Carmelite, with a more cheerful countenance: "We are observed. Let us go from here!" She put on her mask, and took the arm of the supposed Prince. They went up the hall and into a side-room, where they were alone. Here the countess made bitter complaints against the chamberlain; but they were only complaints of jealous love.

As she wiped a tear from her eye, the Bramin entered. A deep silence ensued, which Phillip interrupted by leading the chamberlain to the Carmelite, and placing his hand in hers, without saying a word returned to the dance.

"Soon he had the pleasure of seeing the Chamberlain and the Countess all smiling joined together in the dance. Phillip laughed in his sleeve, thought of his substitute, and wondered how he got along. At this moment the Chamberlain approached him and said:
 "Prince, I can never repay the debt of gratitude I owe you. You have effected a reconciliation between me and my wife.— We have resolved to return to-night to our estate in the country. Fare-you-well, my life is at your service."
 "But this purse? What am I to do with this?" asked Phillip.
 "That is the sum, you recollect I borrowed of you last week. I had almost forgotten to return it. The draft is addressed to your Royal Highness." With these words he departed.

Phillip read it over and saw that it was for five thousand florins. He put it in his pocket, and thought what a fine thing it would be to be a Prince in reality.

Here the negro went into a detail of his difficulties, and besought the prince to save him. Phillip promised to do all in his power, and departed.

"It is high time that I should become again a watchman," thought Phillip; "I am involving myself and my substitute in difficulties out of which neither his or my wisdom can extricate either of us. What a difference between a watchman and a prince! I would not wave my hand to be a prince. Good heaven, how many things happen among the great of earth of which we do not dream among our watchman's horns, our looms, spades and lasts! We have fancied that the lords of earth were like to the angels, without sin and without cares. Yet I have had to settle here in a quarter of an hour for more villainies than I have committed during my whole life."

"All alone my Prince," whispered a voice behind him. "I congratulate myself to find your royal highness alone for a moment."
 Phillip looked round and beheld a miner dressed in silk and covered with silver, gold and jewels.
 "Who are you?" asked Phillip.
 "Count Bonattonless, the secretary of finances, your Royal Highness!" the miner answered, lifting at the same time his mask to show a face which with its small eyes and large copper nose seemed to be another mask.

"Well count, what is it your desire?" Phillip continued.
 "May I speak of the house of Abraham Levi?" the secretary asked.
 "As much as you choose," replied Phillip, indifferently.

"He has applied to me for the fifty thousand florins you owe them. They threaten to apply to the king, and you remember the promise you made the king as he ordered your last debts to be paid?"

"Cannot these people wait?" Phillip asked.
 "Not more than the brothers Goldsmith are inclined to wait for the seventy-five thousand florins you owe them."
 "Very well. If they cannot wait I shall have to—"
 "Do not take any desperate resolutions my lord. You are able to settle the whole matter if—"

"If what?" asked Phillip.
 The Secretary then explained that the house of Abraham Levi had made large purchases of grain, and if the Prince could induce the King to cause the prohibition of any import of this article, the price would thus be greatly enhanced, and this house would pay off the debts of the Prince, and give him fifty thousand florins in addition.

"I beg your gracious desire to know whether I shall thus pay your debts?" asked the obsequious secretary.
 "No, never!"—at the expense of hundreds and thousands of hungry families," said Phillip.
 "Your royal highness forgets that it is at the cost of the house of Abraham Levi; and if I forced this firm to give you fifty thousand florins cash besides the receipts of your debts, I think it might be done. The firm gains by his single business as much as that?"

"Probably yourself, count, might get a handsome douceur."
 "Your royal highness is pleased to joke. I do not gain anything by it. I am only anxious to gain your favor."
 "You are very good."
 "I may then hope, my lord?"
 "Count I shall do what is right, do your duty."

"My duty is to serve you. To-morrow I send for Levi! If I make the bargain with him, I shall have the honor of delivering to your highness the said receipts, with a draft for fifty thousand florins."
 "Leave me, I do not wish to hear of that," and your royal highness gives me his gracious support! For without being secretary of finances it would be impossible for me to persuade Abraham Levi—"
 "Thus much I tell you, if the corn trade is impeded; if the earth does not cease immediately; if your Jews do not sell immediately their store of grain at the price of cost; I go to the king, disclose to him all your rascalities, and insist on driving yourself and Abraham Levi out of the country. Rely upon what I say; I keep my word."

Phillip turned round and went into the dancing room, leaving the secretary petrified.

While Phillip was thus playing his part the Prince was doing equal credit to the character of the watchman. While passing along the street, a door opened and out came a young girl, who approached, saying, "Good evening, dear Phillip, speak low, that no one may hear. I have left the company only for a moment to see you. Are you contented?"

"As contented as an angel," said Julian.
 "Phillip, I have good news to tell you. You are going to eat with us to-morrow evening. Mother allowed it. Will you come?"
 "Every evening, every evening," Julian cried, "and as long as you choose. I wish you could always be with me, or I with you, until the end of the world. That would be a goodlike night."

"Listen, Phillip, in half an hour I shall see you again at Gregory Church."

"She was going away, but Julian pulled her back and embraced her. 'Are you going to send me away so coldly?' he asked, kissing her at the same time on her lips. Rosa did not know what to say to the boldness of Phillip; for Phillip had always been so modest and affectionate, that he had dared for the utmost to kiss her hand, with the exception of a single instance, when her mother wanted to interdict all intercourse between them.

"Alas!" sighed Rosa; "but it is not right. But why not, you little fool? is kissing forbidden in the ten commandments?"
 "Yes," said Rosa. "If we could have each other, it were very different."
 "Have? If it is only that, you can have me every day, if you choose."

"Phillip, how strangely you talk to-day! You know that we cannot begin to think of it."
 "On the contrary; I think of it most seriously."
 "Phillip, are you tipsy? Whether I will I go, you grieve me. Listen, Phillip, I dream of you last night."
 "Was it something pleasant?"
 "You had won in the lottery Phillip. We were both in the greatest joy. You had bought a splendid garden—we had here every thing in abundance. Tell me, Phillip, did you buy a lottery ticket. You have, perhaps, won something; to-day the lottery was drawn."

"If I should win the great lot with you, my fair child, who knows what would happen! How much would you like me to have won?"
 "If you were only so lucky as to win a thousand florins, with that you might buy a fine garden."
 "A thousand florins! What if it were more?"
 "O Phillip, what say you? Is it true? No, do not deceive me like my dream. You had a ticket—you did win—acknowledge."

"As much as you want."
 "O my God!" Rosa cried, and clasping her arm around his neck, drunk with happiness, she kissed him with warm joy.—"More than a thousand florins. But will they pay you all that money?"
 "While she was kissing him, the Prince forgot to answer. He experienced a very strange feeling in holding on his arm the slender and noble figure, whose caresses were not meant for him, much as he should have liked to take them on his own account.

"How, Phillip, have you got it with you?"
 The Prince took a purse full of gold, which he had put in his pocket to make use of at the game table. "Take and weigh, girl," he said, and put it in Rosa's hand, while he kissed her small delicate lips, "will you continue to love me for it?"

"No, Phillip, not indeed, for all your money, if you were not my Phillip?"
 "And what would you do if I did give you twice as much and were not your Phillip?"
 "I would throw your treasures at your feet and make you a polite reverence," answered Rosa.
 At this moment a door opened, and she was called into the house.

Phillip had just seen by his watch, that it was time to leave the ball-room and betake himself to the rendezvous, before St. Gregory's. He was anxious to return the purple garment and the fancy hat to his substitute, for he did not feel quite at his ease behind the mask.

Just as he was trying to find the door, to glide away unperceived, the negro came after him, and whispered in his ear, "My gracious Lord Duke Herrmann is looking for you everywhere."
 Phillip shook his head, to show his displeasure, and went out; the negro followed him. As they stepped both into the anti-chamber, the negro stopped and said in a low voice—
 "By Heaven, there is the Duke!"
 And he hastened immediately back into the ball-room.

A tall mask walked quietly up to Phillip, and cried, "Please stop one moment; I have a few words to settle with you, I have been seeking you for some time."
 "Be quick," Phillip replied, "for I have no time to lose."
 "I wish I had not to lose any with you. I have been seeking you for some time. You owe me a satisfaction. You have fulfilled me in terrible manner!"
 "Not that I know of."

"You do not know me? I am the Duke," said he, taking off his mask at the same time.—"Now you know who I am, and your bad conscience must tell you the rest. I ask satisfaction. Yourself and the accursed Talmoni deceived me."
 "I do not know anything of that," answered Phillip, abruptly, breaking away.

Phillip, as soon as he was free, hurried to the open air, duffed the custom of the Prince, and repaired to the Church; where he met his beloved Rosa. A few moments' conversation served to explain to Phillip, that she had met the Prince, under the belief that he was Phillip; and while he was recounting his adventures, the Prince himself came up to them.
 "Run, watchman," said the Prince, "it is not safe for you here!"