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## Poetical.

**What is a Year?**  
What is a year? 'Tis but a wave  
On life's dark rolling stream,  
Which is so quickly gone that we  
Account it but a dream,  
'Tis but a single earnest thro'p  
Of time's old iron wheel;  
Which first a now, and strong as when  
It first with life did start.  
  
What is a year? 'Tis but a turn  
Of time's old iron wheel;  
Or but a page upon the book  
Which time must shortly seal,  
'Tis but a step upon the road  
Which we must travel o'er,  
A few more steps and we shall walk  
Life's weary road no more.  
  
What is a year? 'Tis but a breath  
From time's old iron wheel,  
As rushing onward o'er the earth,  
We hark at his weary moon,  
'Tis like the bubble on the wave,  
Or dew upon the lawn—  
As transient as the mist of morn  
Beneath the summer's sun.  
  
What is a year? 'Tis but a type  
Of life's old changing scene,  
Youth's happy morn comes gaily on  
With lull and valleys green;  
Next summer's prime succeeds the spring  
Then Autumn with a tear,  
When comes old Winter—death, and all  
Must find a level here.

## Song for the New Year.

BY ELIAN.

"A happy New Year for the loved ones at home."  
The choicest wish of my spirit to-day,  
As around the bright hearth-stone together we come,  
To gladden the hours as they hasten away,  
Oh! joyful the time when our love-liest song  
Rejoices the heart with its echoing cheer,  
And we are the happiest people through  
That ever delighted to hail the New Year.  
Oh! my heart-wish shall be, wherever I roam,  
"A happy New Year for the loved ones at home!"  
  
But partings will come to the children of earth,  
And the eye be moistened with many a tear,  
As one bids adieu to the place of his birth,  
With its beautiful scenes and loved ones so dear!  
And sadly that sorrow my spirit has known,  
For I look for those loved ones, but they are not here.  
Yet in spirit I'm with them, and gladly I own  
Their influence with every returning New Year,  
And my heart-wish shall be, wherever I roam,  
"A happy New Year for the loved ones at home!"  
  
The cares of life's journey my pathway may throng,  
Dark shades of gloom o'er my spirit may steal,  
But memory shall breathe on my sadness a song,  
The sunlight of glory again to reveal;  
Or if sighs o'er breathe on the ocean of life,  
And never awaken its hilly foam,  
Or flow's always gladden the field of strife,  
For my heart-wish shall be, wherever I roam,  
"A happy New Year for the loved ones at home!"

## A Good Story.

### How I Came to be Married.

I promised William Hepburne to tell him how I came to be married, and as it was rather an odd way, perhaps it will amuse the public: so here it goes! My name is Thomas Petition Stevens; I was born and bred in Connecticut, taught my letters, and the "three Rs, Reading, Riting, and Rithmetic" in a district school-house; learned Latin, Greek, and algebra of old Parson Field; and grew tobacco enough on my father's farm, before I was twenty, to help me squeeze through the college course at old Yale. There I found myself one Commencement day, having delivered the third oration to a blooming audience in the galleries, and a grim crowd below, the happy possessor of a sheep-skin, a blue ribbon, a wooden spoon, two dollars and fifty-six cents, and two suits of clothes, one very shabby, and one pie-new. "The world was all before me where to choose," as it says in the primer; and I decided to go up into Colebrook, and see if my maternal uncle, Seth Downes, wanted a man to help get in his rowan. I paid two dollars and fifty cents to get there, and landed on the door-step with nothing but my own personal attractions to commend me. However, Uncle Downes was as glad to see me as if I had six dollars instead of six cents in my left hand waistcoat pocket, and hired me for the late haying on the spot, and I set up a singing-school in the red school-house the next Sunday night. When the haying was over, I staid a few weeks to see what I could turn my head to, and Uncle Downes being on the school-committee, through his influence I was made principal of Colebrook Academy when the winter term began, and having a very pretty set of girls to teach, I made myself and my services so acceptable to parents and guardians, that I hold the place to this day, three years from then.  
One day last spring, I sat on the stoop of Uncle Downes's house, thinking of nothing in a very

resolute way, with discursive seasons of listening to a brown thrush that was hid in some neighboring tree, thence giving out all manner of comic illustrations of every other bird's musical powers; hitting off, with gay sarcasm, the robin, oriole, and whippoorwill; even giving the faint peep of a dew-wet chicken lost in the grass, the warning cry of a hawk, or the love-lorn thrill of a song-sparrow, with here and there a pewit, blackbird, or the liquid frolic of a bobolink's song, mimicked, exaggerated, and interspersed with his own delirious warble, full of spring and its sweet exultation. I was lapsing out of the thrush's concert into nothingness again, when a quick, light pattering, like a hailstorm coming down stairs, woke me up, and at my elbow stood the light shape of Lizzy Downes, my special cousin, and a peculiar bit of womanhood as one might see in a life-time. "Get up Tom!" quoth the green sun-bonnet—"I want you to take a walk with me." I was rather in a quiet state just then, but who ever thought of resisting that clear voice, with such a decisive tone and flawless ring?

"Where are you going, Lizzy?" said I after we had travelled silently and swiftly, like people in fairy stories, half through Uncle Downes's farm. "Oh!" said she, recollecting herself, or rather me, "I'm going to Asa Burt's lot, after some columbine plants, and you may carry the basket." "Gracious princess!" retorted I, "accept my devours, and put your foot upon my neck, if it please you." "It doesn't," said the princess; "I only want you to behave like a man, and not wait next time for a lady's request, before you offer to help her." At this I whistled slightly, and rubbed my hands; Lizzy had a way of speaking truth that was well-plain! but she knew it, and turned her rosy face round to me with the divinest smile of intelligence and sweetness. "Don't mind it, Tom, it is all for your good, and you can't get angry with me, you know." Of course I couldn't, such a face as that was talismanic; besides, she was my cousin; and it is a singular fact in the natural history of man, that though there are no people on earth one gets so entirely and utterly disgusted and out of temper with as disagreeable and intrusive cousins, it is yet quite out of the nature of things to be disturbed by a young, pretty, smiling cousin, however saucy. It demonstrates most convincingly the old Scotch proverb, "Bluid's thicker than water." All the affluities of ancestry, all the tender associations of childhood, all the nameless sympathies that are only existent between relatives, spring up to harmonize cousins; and our blood beats more warmly toward its severed tide in the pulse of a relation—except, as I said before, the disagreeable ones.—So I not only refrained from getting vexed at Lizzy's reproof, but submitted with a sweet humility, and would have kissed the rod, had it been permitted or required.

"Do you hear that thrush, Tom?" broke in the lady, upon my meditation. "Yes, ma'am, I've been listening to it this hour, from the east-stoop." "What a lazy creature you are! spending a whole hour in mortal idleness, this lovely day." "Not a bit of it, mademoiselle; my meditations in that stoop were of the most useful character; nothing less than a skillful analysis (mental, of course,) of the vibratory power of air, and its probable capabilities in mechanics." "Oh! Tom! Tom! can't you let school-mastering alone, on Saturdays? and such a celestial Saturday as this; look there, if you want a better meditation than your analysis!"

I did look up through the dim, gray branches of the wood we were skirting, and there, on the leafless bough of a tall hickory tree, sat two wild pigeons, eyeing us with soft, shy glances, stooping their graceful, shining necks, and drawing them up again, with a naive pride, not unlike that of my companion, though I acquit her of being anything dore-like! A few steps on the dead leaves startled the pretty creatures from their perch, the dull blue plumes shot suddenly in white, and black, and gray, and slowly they lit, some few rods off, on a fir tree, while we went on our way.

"Do you know, Tom," said Lizzy, "I have a theory about birds, and people. I think every one is like some bird. Could you guess, now, who a wood-pigeon always makes me think of?" "I know who has that same way of drawing up her head, Miss Lizzy; no other than your fair self." "Nonsense! I am no more like that pigeon than I am like a turkey; nor as much, for I can gobble imitatively, to the intense rage of all the turkeys in our barnyard. No, indeed, I am much more like an oriole; look at that one, how it dashes aslant the elm boughs, and makes a descent into the hollow below, like a flake of fire; that's the way I drop into our sewing societies here, and make the old ladies' hair stand on end with my absurdities. No! if you do not recognize our Colebrook wood-pigeon, I shall not help you."

"Then I shall never know," rejoined I, in a tone of mock lamentation. "Oh! yes you'll discover for yourself, some time," laughed Lizzy, quietly climbing a fence between the

home-farm and Uncle Asa's lot. "Why, Lizzy, you are too quick! I was just offering to help you, and you are over." "I never will have any help, sir, over a fence; what is the use of being a country girl, if you cannot cross a fence without help?" "Not much, indeed, in this New England, where every acre field is fenced; but, Lizzy, look! here are columbines enough for you."

As I spoke, we had reached the centre of the little meadow through which crept a slow, bright stream, keeping the grass about it greener than the sea, and set thick with the blue violets and golden cowslips; while on the drier banks of moss and turf that skirted the marshy borders of the brook, hundreds of sunny aders—tongues flouted their yellow turbans, all dropped with garnet, in the spring-winds, and still further back, among budded lupines and sweet fern, myriads of anemones, fair and frail, bent languidly to the warm breath of the south, seeming just ready, so aerial were their shapes, to take flight from their rest upon earth. On the inner edge of the meadow a great gray rock abutted from the hill-side right on the green sward; but its base clustered a quaint crowd of brown flowered trilliums, and the delicate straw-bells of May—while on its ledges, from every crack and shelf where a grain of earth could harbor, sprung innumerable columbines of the brightest scarlet and gold, swaying, and dancing; and tossing their jewelled heads like variable fairy princesses, so full of laughter and delight, that you waited involuntarily to hear the gay peal of musical mirth from their tiny bells, and fancied, on each new sigh of the fragrant air, a far-off echo from their tinkling in some distant field. Here my task began, and in a few minutes Lizzy's basket was filled to the brim with roots, and her hands with the blossoms—fit representatives of her gay, brilliant, graceful self, as she stood poised on the edge of the rock—her sun-bonnet hanging by one string, her face burning with the warm flush of youth and health, her blue eyes glowing deeply in the sun-light, and her soft chestnut hair coiling in lustrous rings about her throat, lifted by the light wind, and melted to living gold wherever a sunbeam kissed it.

I know I stood there with mouth and eyes wide open, like the sun-struck fool I was, "glowering" at Lizzy, who must have had some idea of my condition, for suddenly she began to descend the rock with free, firm steps, like a chamois (at least, I suppose so, vide Buffon,) and I remembered afterward, so one does remember things seen and not perceived, that there was a furtive smile glittering in the corner of her eye. As for me I was altogether in a maze, for the idea had suddenly taken possession of me that I was in love, actually, in good earnest, in love with my cousin Lizzy!—Everything I had the presence of mind to recollect, favored that idea. Did I not obey her like a bond-slave? was I not always so lonely at Uncle Downes's when she went away?—I admired her beauty more than that of any other woman. I admired her mind in its active, earnest, and noble development.

Her character had faults, to be sure, a need of some small feminine virtues, but love would teach her those. Ah! did she love me?—"Tom! are you asleep?" pealed from the lips of which I had been dreaming. "N—o, Lizzy, I was thinking." "Come a few steps further, then, and I will find you a better place to think, for if you had eyes to see, there is a hornet's nest visible about a foot from your head, in that maple sapling, and you are in what the newspapers call a precarious situation." "So I am!" thought I to myself, adding aloud, "I am bound to follow you, mademoiselle; only lead me."

A brief walk over the green field brought us to its upper corner, where the brook leaped and chattered over a stony bed, before it sunk itself to sleep in the silent channel below. Over this little nook stood two great apple-trees, rosy with bloom, filling the air with their delicate and peculiar odor, and all murmurous with honey-bees, whose loving labor-song only heightened the cool silence of the shadow and the perfume; while the little brook's laugh toned itself to a bobolink's voice, that echoed its mad mirth back again from the nearest fence post. "Sit down," said my liege lady, "It is too pleasant to be not enjoyed."

I seated myself on a turf, still in a dream, while Lizzy bathed her hands and face in the cool water, and anchored her flowers to a stone on the edge of the stream to keep them from fading, she came back to me looking as fresh and lovely as the spray of pink apple-blossoms she held in her hand, and, seating herself beside me, began to talk about them. Her entirely unembarrassed air gave me a sort of shiver, but I listened. "Aren't these blossoms very pretty, Tom? There is something specially fascinating to me in 'apple-blows,' as Uncle Asa calls them; they are so refined, so gracious, so home-like; withal softly and warmly tinted, and of such delicate scent, a like bitterness about it, just enough to make it piquant, not

insipidly a sort of common sense, do you understand? And then they are so full of promise for future winter froresides; I have a vision of a whole cider barrel and ten apple pies in the very cluster I hold! but really I am serious about their beauty and expression, my flowers will do well to mate the wild pigeons, won't they?"

As she spoke an oriole flashed across the meadow, and her own comparison for herself made a like flash across my thoughts; how beautiful, how piquant she was! Thomas Petition Stevens, what a fool you were! dyed in the grain! I lumbered on to my knees before her, I don't remember how, and without one word of warning gasped out:—"Oh Lizzy! I love you to distraction, can't you love me?"

Her face was absolutely pale with surprise, then a wild and fitting fear swept over it, I could see she thought me suddenly crazy, and the hot tears began to fill my eyes, man that I was! I suppose she saw, then, I was in earnest; for she flushed most beautifully, then bent her face down in both her little hands, and began—oh reader! pity me!—actually to laugh:—laugh till the red blush spread to the very parting of her hair, colored the slender throat, the small ear, and at length the white fingers. It was too much: I could not bear it: I became a man again, and something very like a thrill of anger brought me to my feet. At this Lizzy looked up, her eyes full of tears from long laughing, and her face radiant with dimpling mirth, and yet a sweet shadow of pity and surprise upon it. She held out her hand to me—how could I help taking it? or sitting quietly down beside her, very much in the state of a water-cure patient after his first douche? "Dear Tom," said she, in the gentlest, laughter-weaned voice, "do forgive me, but really I could not help it: what does all you this morning?" "Nothing but what I just told you," said I, in a sauky, dignified manner, that was too much for Lizzy's seriousness; a little shock of laughter shook her again, and brought out new tears, which she wiped away soberly, and clasping her hands over her handkerchief looked around at me with a grave face, through which the comic air still flickered, and discomposed me. "Tom, you are very queer; I cannot believe you really thought you were in earnest!" "But I was," said I, having by this time become disposed to high tragedy; "I love you desperately, devotedly, and if you choose to laugh at the life-long misery of a fellow-being I can only hope you may never know by experience how to sympathize with such misery!" Poor Lizzy! she had to bite her scarlet lips full a minute before she could speak—"Really, Tom, I do not think you know either me or yourself, or you would not have fancied—that you seem to have. May I ask how long you have been in this desperate state?" "O, the wicked little witch! that question was uttered in the simplest, gravest tone, but I felt the satire to its full extent. I grew—all-over-ish, no other phrase expresses it. "Why—" said I, "I did not know it, certainly, till this morning, but I have felt it, unconsciously, this long time." "Tom, Tom, don't be metaphysically absurd! if you must be absurd keep this side of terms. Now I can tell you something that you have been 'feeling unconsciously' this long time,—you not only do not love me but you do love somebody else!" I drew a long breath. "Be so good as to explain!" "I mean to," replied Lizzy; "only turn round so I can see you, for I must catechise a little; I never can harangue without interludes for ten minutes together. First, I am to prove you don't love me. You admire, I dare say, but that is nothing, not even the first step, for you would admire a prettier picture more. When I first knew you, you did not like me, your instincts rebelled against my character, I saw it before I had known you a month; is it not so?" "Do you think this is fair, Lizzy? I did not know you then—I could not judge."

"That is not my answer, Tom!" "Well, if you will have it, I confess I felt a little—afraid of you, perhaps; not sure that you might not hurt me any moment."

"That will pass, and you may answer my next question to yourself, whether these very instincts have ever ceased to keep a witness among them against me, or my nature as you see it. If I had loved you, I should have lost all these traits towards you, I should have ceased to rule, to criticize, to condemn."

An idea struck me at that moment, and I did not look at Lizzy, but I felt her voice was not quite steady when she began again.  
"If you had loved me, there are a thousand ways in which I should have seen and put an end to it before now. You would never have been so meek, and so easily obedient. A man who loves never loses his sense of domination; if he obeys, it is for beseeching and caresses, for love's sake, not because he recognizes a stronger nature than his own; and you know I am stronger than you in several traits,"  
"Amen," said I, rather satirically, "Now, don't be disagreeable, Tom, I am striving for

your good, as Deacon Mather says when he 'tutors' his boys. You don't love me for still another reason, that you never thought of it till this morning. Is that love! born of a spring day's idleness, the fickle caprice of sunshine and the south-wind? Nonsense! it is only an apt illustration of Dr. Watts' truism, that

"Satan finds some mischief still,  
For idle hands to do."  
"Don't wince, for it is a fact. Honestly, now, did you ever think of making love to me when you had anything else to do? I see you can't answer, and that is speech enough. Besides, if you had loved me, you never would have asked me as you did; you would have considered me before yourself, and led me carefully and tenderly toward taking the one all decisive step of a woman's life."

I gave a long sigh, I was becoming convinced, and convinced of something Lizzy did not intend to prove. "Do you acknowledge, Tom?"

"Yes, I suppose I must, but really Lizzy, I thought I loved you, and I'm not sure yet."

"I hope you do love me, after a moderate fashion, but you are not in love with me, as I intend to prove to you in the second place, because you are in love with somebody else!"

"I am resigned!" said I, inwardly, amused at her confident tone, and he it acknowledged, a little terrified also: for I began, under her minute questioning, to be partly conscious of no matter what, yet.

"Now, I expect you to be as honest as you have hitherto shown yourself, Tom, for I am going to question more closely than before. You have had dreams—all men and women have—of a home and a future; beside, I know you went not six weeks ago, to look at Deacon Mather's new houses upon the hill. Yes, don't disclaim! I know it was with an eye to your architectural sketches, but did not your dreams come back there? Was there not a figure dimly visible at the long window, a face turning to the gate expectantly, and a pair of neat and busy hands in the 'house-wife skep'? Now were they nobody's hands?"

I began to feel rather restless; how came she to know what I thought?

"Moreover, is there no lady among your acquaintances with whom you feel an entire sense of quiet, rest, and freedom: whose entrance into to ever so stiff and cold a room gives it a kindly aspect, like the sudden lighting of a wood-fire? No one of whom you think, when you are tired, or sad, as a comforting and soothing presence: no eyes to which you turn for sympathy in the expression of thought or feeling and all ways find it: no hand from which you expect and receive the thousand nameless acts of forethought and consideration that only love prompts?"

I had thought to some purpose, and was half convinced, but not fully enough to say so. "Go on Lizzy! I like to hear you," said I, affecting an incredulous laugh.

"You are not honest," replied my catechist, "your laugh was in a false key; it betrays you; but I will go on. Is there not one person whom you feel a constant wish to shelter from all the hardness of life, to protect, to guard, to strengthen? whose image connects itself in some way with every aspect of the future, without whose ever recurring idea neither present nor future enter into your imagination? in whom you unconsciously hope? Moreover, is there no one whom your heart tells you, with undeniable instinct, loves you as a man should be loved—with entire devotion and pure tenderness, a patient faith and a sorrowful constancy, that you rely on without acknowledging it? Do you not trust her as you did your mother? Is she not a part of yourself so truly, that, till some sudden light should awaken you, you could not perceive you loved her? Are not her soft dark eyes—"

"They're not dark! they are gray."

Now Lizzy laughed indeed, and I too. The sly girl! I was quite in her power.

"My dear Tom, do you suppose I have not known this three months that you were very quietly sliding (not falling) in love with Helen Stanton? Of course I saw it, and so did half the village. As for your explicit this morning, I think I have fully accounted for that; and now, having shown you to yourself, and brought you to confession, do you forgive my laughter? I own it was all unkind, but how could I help it?"

"I don't need to forgive you, Lizzy," said I. "You have done me a great service. I wonder at myself."

"Don't wonder, but act, Tom. I had no authority to say what I did about Helen's liking you, but by my own observation, and I am by no means infallible, I shall not laugh if she rejects you, I assure you."

"This suggestion made me thoroughly unquiet. I could no longer repress an impertinence I had been trying to utter for the last fifteen minutes. "We shall see," said I, assuming a miserable caricature of confidence. "And, by the way, Lizzy, how came you to be so well read in the

statistics of the tender passion, as you have shown yourself?" I accompanied the question with a malicious stare at Lizzy, whose face was instantly double-dyed with crimson, and her hands working relentless destruction with the bough of apple-blossoms.

"Why—to be honest—I don't—oh! I meant Helen, by the wild pigeon, Tom."

"Yes, I know you did; but I am not to be blinded by that flash of the oriole. Where did your wisdom come from, Lizzy?"

"Oh!—you see—dear me! how silly I am! Tom, I am going to be married to George Stanton, and that is what I brought you out here to tell you, and then wasted two mortal hours telling you that you were in love with his sister! It is too absurd!"

Lizzy's words came like rockets, and her face drooped in her hands, as she finished—no—in one hand, for I had taken the other, and absolutely was kissing it. I was so very glad. George Stanton was the finest fellow in the county, fully worthy of Lizzy, had just finished his theological course, and was to be installed in Colebrook next month. It was exactly the best thing, and as soon as I found words, I told her so, adding, somewhat ruefully, "I hardly expected to be congratulating you on this subject, two hours ago, but I am sincerely glad, Lizzy."

She looked up, with a little, sweet laugh and thanked me; so, rising from the turf, we gathered up the basket and the columbines, and threaded our way homeward through the woods, silently enough.

"That night I went down to Mr. Stanton's, and persuaded Helen to go to singing-school with me. I don't know if they had the class without the master, or not. I never asked; for instead of being in the red school-house, Helen and I were sitting on a pine log, by the edge of the river, in the moonlight; and after a great many devices of speech, I had at last managed to ask her the same question I put to Lizzy in the morning, only in rather a different way, and much more easily.

She, too, hid her face, but tears came dropping through the slender fingers, and she did not forbid me to take away the hands or dry the tears; but looked up at me with her clear eyes, so full of unutterable love, that they seemed to have grown blue, instead of gray, and said, softly, "I wonder what I ever done to be made so happy!" Well for me that I felt, with no slight heart ache, what the tender humility of her speech implied, though she did not know it herself. If I could not now efface the past, I would try faithfully to make her future blessed.

We were married last autumn. First old Father Mather married George and Lizzy; then George did the same kind office for Helen and me. My wild pigeon still keeps that name; and Lizzy and I have once and a while a little clash that Helen cannot understand. Only yesterday, when I asked Mrs. Stanton to admire the comfortable arrangements of my new house (one of Deacon Mather's,) she informed me that she "could not sympathize with the life long misery of a fellow-creature!" I had to laugh, in spite of myself.

That patient reader, is the way I came to be married.—Putnam's Monthly.

**FRIED APPLES.**—A dish of fried apples is quickly prepared for the table, which is often a consideration of no small importance. Wash them—cut them in two, take out the stem, core calyx, and unpeeled, put them into a tin pan with butter, or the gravy of baked pork, with some water in proportion to the quantity to be fried—cover them with a lid, set them on the stove, stir them occasionally until they become soft—and be careful not to burn them. Romanitas, which are often almost worthless, baked or raw, "disappear with good gusto when fried." We may truthfully pronounce despicable penies, when fried, good, but the Porters, Belle-flowers, Tallman Sweets, and a long list which we might name, when fried are really luxury. Sour apples do not fry well—they fry to pieces too much.—Cor. Country Gentleman.

**MIXED PRES.**—Boil three pounds of lean beef till tender, and when cold chop it fine. Chop three pounds of clear beef suet, and mix the meat, sprinkling in a tablespoonful of salt. Pare, core and chop fine six pounds of good apples; stone four pounds of raisins and chop them; wash and dry two pounds of currants, and mix them well with the meat. Season with a spoonful of powdered cinnamon, a powdered nutmeg, a little mace, a few cloves, pound ed, and a quart of white sugar; add a quart of Madeira wine and a pound of citron cut into small bits. This mixture put down in a jar and closely covered will keep several weeks.

**CHRISTMAS Pudding.**—Cover the bottom of a baking dish with very thin slices of stale bread and butter, with the crust cut off, strew it over with mince meat, and so on till your dish is full; pour a thick custard over all, and bake an hour or an hour and a half according to the size.