

### Ted's Account of New Year's.

A Good Story Well Told.

"BY-THE-WAY," said Mr. Samuel Gloss, "I have a letter from little Ted. It's quite a heavy one, you see, for a chap of ten; but I can't make out such a mass of scrawl. Here mamma, suppose you read it."

Before Mrs. Gloss could reach out her hand, Uncle Joe, Mr. Gloss' bachelor brother, interfered with. "Let me have the boy's letter; I always did like that young scamp of yours."

After smiling at the down hill tendency of the superscription, Uncle Joe soon became absorbed over the pages that began in text hand, continued in spider tracks, and at last rose to the dignity of hieroglyphics.

The Gloss family, tired out after the holiday season, were having a domestic evening in the dining room. The library, artistically hung in old Spanish leather, lacked the embellishments that grow out of daily use; and oppressed one like a great bronze extinguisher; the long drawing-room, the conventional New York parlor, was too like a mammoth and splendid hearse to admit even of its proprietors feeling at home in it. So about the dining table were gathered Papa and Mamma Gloss, the Misses Lou and Rosie Gloss, Mr. Sorghum, a gentleman of many smiles and compliments, of many suits of fine clothing, of a dog cart, and a gorgeous living generally, and Uncle Joe, unmarried, crusty and rich. There was also a young fellow named Fred Tremaine, but he was only a chap in papa's office at a small salary. Though he had six good feet of uncommonly good looks, still he was very modest. "And no wonder," as Lou whispered to Rosie. "He ought to be. Twelve hundred a year, indeed!"

Sorghum remarked in his sweetest tones, "How seldom a poor dog of a bachelor like me has the chance of enjoying a happy family gathering!"

A sigh, carefully given out for only Rosie to hear, was a graceful hint of his dissatisfaction with a bachelor's existence.

Mamma Gloss clapped her plump hands in a little ecstasy, and answered: "No one can have any idea of the peace and content of family life." A smile both maternal and encouraging showed that Mr. Sorghum was an approved candidate for the position of son-in-law.

Lou, who was clever, and had a lofty bearing, a marble-white skin, and wonderful rows of coal-black scallops on her pretty forehead, made a properly innocent and girlish comment on the bachelor remark; but Rosie, who was a confiding blonde, with big gray eyes, said nothing, and kept on with her crochet work. Sorghum used inwardly a warm emollient of Wall street investive, and wished himself the Afghan stripe that could so hold her attention.

Just then Charlie Hedge (of the young stock brokerage firm of Hedge & Sorghum) dropped in, and nodding familiarly to his partner, joined the family circle by taking a place at Lou's side. He exclaimed:

"How jolly! A regular boom in domestic evenings, eh, Miss Lou?"

Now Uncle Joe was sixty at least, tall, grizzled, clean shaved, heavy browed, with a cast iron look that seemed expressly made to withstand humbug, and a steel cold, sharp eye that could pierce the nearest coating of sham. Having at last finished his reading, he sat a while shading his face with his hand; then looked up suddenly, as if he had made up his mind to something, cast a searching and discomfiting glance around the table, and asked:

"Who would like to hear Teddy's letter?"

"I," said Sorghum, with the liveliest interest. "Ted must be a capital boy. He is your brother." (This last in an aside to Rosie.)

"Fine boy," confirmed Hedge. "Saw him here New Year's. So cheeky. Cheek is business capital. Ted will succeed. Let's have the letter."

"I think my Teddy is very bright," remarked Mrs. Gloss, "and so I always keep him away at school, where he has the best advantages."

"Yes," answered Uncle Joe, with an inscrutable intonation, "boarding school is such an advantage to a child of ten."

"Oh, yes, undoubtedly," sighed mamma, with a pensive look at the diamonds on her nice fat fingers; "and we mothers sacrifice everything to the good of our dear children."

Uncle Joe coughed noisily, and then asked:

"Are you all sure you want to hear the letter, and that you'll sit still until the end?"

Quite an amiable clamor of voices assented, so he began the epistle, which ran in this wise:

DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER:—Professor Whacker gave us a subject for our first composition when we came after the holidays. He said we must write

an account of New Year's, and put into it all we saw and heard while we were at home at New Year time. So I wrote mine, and yesterday he gave it back to me with "very good" marked on it, and he said for me not to leave it lying around loose, so I guess he thought it was pretty good, and I guess I will send it to you, so as you can see I make some progress. I brush my teeth very carefully every night, and I am entirely out of pocket money. Your aff. son,  
TEDDY.

A murmur of amused admiration went around, and every one composed himself, with a smile, for further listening.

AN ACCOUNT OF NEW YEAR'S.

"Boys and girls have fun at Christmas, and have presents in their stockings, etc., but New Year's time is for grown folks. Christmas Eve children have lots of fun; so I think grown folks ought to have fun New Year's Eve. I don't want to be mean about anything, so I didn't answer back anything to my sister Lou when she called me a horrid, troublesome boy, for sitting down in her room after dinner."

"New Year's Eve she was scolding a little woman, who was a dressmaker, and had brought a long-trailed pink dress home somehow fixed up wrong, and she had her hair all in little iron gridirons to make it 'skullup' nice the next day."

Miss Lou flushed, then laughed aloud nervously, to show that she enjoyed the joke. Uncle Joe, without so much as a quiver of his bushy eyebrows, went on:

"Rosie was sitting with her feet curled up under her, eating candy and reading a story book, in her room. She said, 'Go away, Teddy,' and ma, she was in her room having a row with Camil, the maid, about her clothes, and she said, 'Go away, Teddy,' then, too. I said, 'Where shall I go?' and she said, 'You may go to the club and find your father.' I know where Phoenix Club is—just round the corner—but father was busy playing cards with some men, and he said, 'Go sit down, my son.'"

"So I sat down and looked at some pictures; there were two men talking, and I guess they didn't know me, but they knew my sisters good, 'cause one says, 'Charlie you go in for Lou if you can stand her temper, and I'll go in for the blondy, then we will make old man Gloss settle our bills.' I'll brake her temper if I get her," says Charlie, 'and I will get more capital for the firm.'—'Blondy is meek and will stay at home and not interfere with me, I guess,' says the other fellow: 'any way, we will share the profits.'"

A funeral silence fell upon the room. Hedge looked unnaturally child-like and unconscious. Sorghum pulled his moustache over a bad imitation of a smile.

"Then father he after a while he got up and put on his coat to go home, and just outside the door of the club house a man said something to father and father he said lots of swear words that ain't allowed boys in Professor Whacker's school, and it was all about a settlement."

"And father said he hadn't got the money for it, so I thought it was a New Year's present that man wanted pa to buy him."

"Then we went home. Mother says to pa, 'The girls will look elegant tomorrow, and they will be sure to catch something worth while at last.'"

"Father says they had better catch it pretty quick then, for things is coming to an end. Then all of a sudden pa pounced on me and sent me to bed."

"The next day, which was New Year's, nobody eat breakfast down stairs but me and father. Father looked splendid, and so did I. We had on our best clothes and the carriage was ready to take us calling. When ma and the girls came down they were beautiful, especially Lu, though I like Rosie best."

"Ma said, 'What do you think of our chickabiddies,' and then kissed him."

"Pa said, 'Humph!' And we went out and he banged the door."

Mr. Gloss used every wile to turn Uncle Joe's attention; but he went on mercilessly:

"Some of the ladies we called on were old and some were young. The old ones, mostly, had no necks to their dresses and a good many had awful pink cheeks, and had dirty eyes with black smudge under them."

"But pa said the same thing everywhere."

"How charming you are to-day," pa said to all of them, and he bowed and bowed. And he laughed and bobbed around and looked silly. Then he came out and jumped into the carriage and said swear words again."

"Said I, 'Is it fun to make calls, pa?'"

"It's a nuisance," answered pa. So I said, 'Well, why do you do it, pa?'"

"Society," returned pa. Then I asked who society was, and pa said 'Nuisance' again, and told me to hold my tongue."

"Then we went to see an ugly old woman with lots of diamonds. She wanted to kiss me and I wouldn't let her. Afterward pa scolded me and said

she was Miss Koooons and that I must always kiss such a rich old lady. I then asked pa if he was sick, and when he said he wasn't, I told him I heard Miss Koooons call him a sick orphan."

"And father said more swear words and told the coachman to drive me home. Ma and the girls, and two men were in the parlor. The two men were the same that talked about Lu and Rosy at the club. The big feller with the moustache told Rosy she was a 'cruel darling,' and she turned her back to him."

"Then ma pinched Rosy's arm and said she was a little fool and had no feeling for her family. Rosy cried softly right down on the macaroons. I was eating all the cake I wanted and nobody took notice of me."

"Charlie forgot all about Lu's temper, I suppose, because he said to her, 'My beautiful queen, I will be a good and obedient husband.' Lu laughed and hit him with her fan. Then lots more came in and they all looked silly like father. All the old men told ma she looked like Rosy's sister, but that ain't so, because ma is awful fat."

"By this time the whole company had risen and were trying to interrupt the reading; when Uncle Joe, in a voice of thunder, commanded attention. They all fell back into their seats, and remained, with many curious changes of countenance, silent to the end."

"Then night came on and Lu and Rosy went up stairs and put more white powder on their faces, and looked into the glass at their back hair. Lu said Rosy ought to marry Mr. Foregum because he was rich, and Lu said she was going to marry Mr. Hedge as he was rich, and she said he was an old fool, and then they went down stairs."

"A big, tall young man came into the library, where I had my candles, and Rosy said out loud, 'I want to show you this nice room.' They were behind the door and he said, 'Haven't you got any New Year's for me, Rosy?' And she said, 'Yes, Fred,' and she gave him a kiss behind the door. He said, 'Oh, Rosy, if I were only rich!' Then ma came into the hall and they ran out and looked silly too."

"Then I went to sleep sitting on my bundle of candles and when ma woke me up everybody had gone away and ma said she hated New Years, and Lu said the men were all monkeys, and Rosy had a headache. Then I went to bed but something had made me awful sick, though I don't believe it was cake, and I went to Rosy's room softly. She was crying and sitting on the floor by the fire; then I went into ma's room and she was crying, too, and pa was saying, 'We are living on a volcano I tell you.'"

"I was a little scared because volcanoes burn you all up and are very dangerous. Ma says, 'Samuel, I can't help it, the girls must dress, and we must keep up appearances,' says I, 'Ma, why can't we move off the volcano and buy a new house up to Central Park.'"

"Pa says, 'Where did that young scamp come from,' and then the floor jumped up and hit me, and ma said it was because I had ate too much terrash."

"And I was awful sick all night. The next morning Camil, the maid, helped me get up and said I was to go right off to school again and the coachman was to take care of me. I went to say goodby to Lu; she was in bed with gridirons in her hair, eating lots of breakfast. Rosy kissed me; her eyes were all red, and she said, 'Teddy dear, they are breaking my heart,' and I promised her when I grew up I would lick them all."

"I like Rosy pretty well considering she is my sister. Pa and ma were shut up in the library and pa had lots of little papers on the table."

"He said look at them."

"Dresses, bonnets, finery, jewelry, I can't pay them, I tell you we are living beyond our means. So everybody is, says ma, but the girls will marry well. Says pa, look at Rosy, she is in love with that good looking rascal on twelve hundred a year."

"She shan't have him, says ma, now don't be a brute and cut down expenses, perhaps Joe will help you out.' My brother Joe is a stingy old cur,' says pa. 'And if he knows we are head and ears over in debt he would not leave Ted a cent.'"

"I don't want a cent pa,' says I, 'five cents ain't much and a cent ain't nothing, and Uncle Joe is an old bear,' says I. 'O, send the boy to school he makes me crazy,' says pa, and ma kissed me in a hurry and pushed me along to the door."

"Pa had his head buried in his hands and was saying, 'ruined, ruined, and all for appearances.' So I am tired of writing such a long composition, and the coachman took me back to school and that is all I know about New Years."

Uncle Joe quietly folded up the scrawl and looked out from under the thatch of his eyebrows at Hedge, who, glancing at Lou, and seeing she was dangerous, silently left the room and the house. Sorghum followed, also, politely escorted

to the door by Uncle Joe's steady gaze. The method failed with Fred Tremaine, for the look only sent him as far as Rosie's side; where he sat down with determination. Mrs. Gloss was sobbing hysterically, and her husband seemed inclined to drop down dead."

"Well," Uncle Joe began, "well, aren't you a pack of idiots to sacrifice your comforts and honesty for this wretched show of fashionable life? Now I've always disappointed you in the money way, and I'll do it still." Mr. Sam Gloss trembled. "I'll do it still; for you think I'm going to see you go to ruin, and I won't. I will look over matters with you, Sam, and find out how I can put you on your legs again. But stop this high pressure living, and give this girl, Rosie, to Tremaine, who is a good fellow, if he is poor."

Rose and Fred tried to say some words of thanks, but falling to do justice to their feelings, consoled each other by clasping hands.

"There is worse misery than poverty," Uncle Joe went on, "and Miss Lou had better cast about for some good boy at a thousand-dollar salary, for no more brokers will desire her dowry to mend their capital. As for Ted," and Uncle Joe rose to go into the library, "he's an example to all young writers—exact, truthful, impartial. I value his manuscript. I shall keep him in pocket-money, and make him my heir."

Profitable Politeness.

THE Boston Traveler, in commenting on the prevalence of rudeness, tells the following incident that happened some years ago:

There was a plainly dressed, elderly lady, who was a frequent customer at the then leading dry goods store in Boston. No one in the store knew her even by name. All the clerks but one avoided her, and gave their attention to those who were better dressed and more pretentious.

The exception was a young man who had a conscientious regard for system and duty. He never left another customer to wait on the lady, but when at liberty waited on her with as much attention as if she had been a princess.

This continued a year or two, till the young man became of age. One morning the lady approached the young man, when the following conversation took place:

"Young man, do you wish to go into business for yourself?"

"Yes, ma'am," he replied, "but I have neither money, credit nor friends, nor will any one trust me."

"Well," continued the lady, "go and select a good situation, ask what the rent is, and report to me," handing the young man her address.

The young man went, found a capital location, and a good store, but the landlord required security, which he could not give.

Mindful of the lady's request, he went to her and reported. "Well," she replied, "you go and tell Mr. — that I will be responsible."

He went and the landlord was surprised, but the bargain was closed.

The next day the lady again called to ascertain the result. The young man told her, but added: "What am I to do for goods? No one will trust me."

"You may go and see Mr. —, and Mr. —, and Mr. —, and tell them to call on me."

He did, and his store was soon stocked with the best goods in the market. There are many in that city who remember the circumstances and the man. He died many years ago and left a fortune of \$300,000. So much for politeness, so much for treating one's elders with the deference due to age, in whatever garb they are clothed.

A Long Riddle.

A young Bible-student was asked "How many boys are there in your class?"

He replied: "If you multiply the number of Jacob's sons by the number of times which the Israelites compassed Jericho, and add to the product the number of measures of barley which Boaz gave Ruth, divide this by the number of Haman's sons, subtract the number of each kind of clean beasts that went into the ark, multiply by the number of men that went to seek Elijah after he was taken to heaven; subtract from this Joseph's age at the time he stood before Pharaoh, add the number of stones in David's bag when he killed Goliath, subtract the number of furlongs that Bethany was distant from Jerusalem, divide by the number of anchors cast out when Paul was shipwrecked subtract the number of persons saved in the ark, and the remainder will be the answer."

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