

# MANY SIDES OF NEW YEAR'S



His custom of celebrating the New Year by leaving behind, in theory at least, one's past misdeeds, or, better still, one's past sins, may be back-ward, but it is certainly not entirely foreign to the limbo of things forgotten or outgrown. Some time New Year's day, when a quiet moment in the day's swirl offers time for thought, there will be a hasty taking stock of the year that is gone, a recounting of errors and failures, a silent promise that this or that will not occur again.

And what does it all amount to, after all, this old custom of re-arranging resolutions or re-arranging new ones? The cynic will smile and say that it is all a waste of effort, a flash in the pan, a half-hearted glossing over of mistakes by words, and none too sincere promises of reform. The humorist will have his little fling in cartoon and witty quip and jest. He will grieve over the wretchedness of Robin Goodfellow over the folly of mortals and find in every resolve new subject for laughter. From the pulpit on Sunday will come the admonition of the minister and the moralist. They will take good resolutions seriously, and set upon them the stamp of divine approval. And whether the wry sneer of the cynic, the mocking grin of the humorist, or the approving smile of the moralist prophesy the fate of the resolutions and their maker, it will be true that even the most momentary impulses toward better things will not be entirely wasted.

There was a time when, in the simple faith of childhood, you set down in black and white your promises to do better. On the first page of your new diary, a yearly Christmas present, you wrote to your best Spencerian hand—we knew none better in those days—something like this: "During this year I resolve not to lose my temper; not to be envious at home; not to put off doing the things I dislike; to read my Bible every day." Direct, commanding blows were these on the chain mail of your besetting sins of a quick temper, a wickedly sharp little tongue, procrastination, and childish iridolatrie. Behind closed doors, but any one who knew you in so much a moment, Brother Dick was watching earnestly: "I promise myself not to be late for dinner, not to forget to wash my face and ears, not to go to bed to father for my allowance, and not to play hooky a single day." Of course you failed, both you and Dick, before the little diary had its new little dimmed or the soft pencil of the letter had blurred itself into unrecognizable illegibility. But the effort wasn't altogether wasted, and there were fewer fits of temper and clearer work and ears than would otherwise have been.

We grow-ups miss, as we get older, some of the past and gone aside to New Year's resolves. The day was once upon a time more marked by pleasant social customs. Only in childhood is New Year's now a state of day of ceremonial, but it is not hard to recall that a decade or two ago there still survived some of the dignified good cheer that had attacked itself to the day. Before the Christmas fruit cake had all been devoured, or the small cakes of small cakes suffered too severely from the insatiable rapacious children, preparations for New Year's day were well under way.

Children were not included in this celebration. This was essentially the festival of their elders. Orders to keep from under foot were rigidly enforced, and did you wish to see the sea as place remained but the recordatory leading, which gave somewhat inconspicuously upon the hall below, with a strained view of the big parlor, and none of the dining room beyond. That it was there and in full working order was evidenced by a keen sense of smell.

It was always great fun to wander up and down the principal residence streets as noon drew near, to find out who were to be at home and who were not. A basket tied to the door knob with gay red ribbons said, for all the world to hear: "We are not receiving today." If you were a boy and during, later in the afternoon you stole up on the step to peep in and discover, by the number of cards within, the respective popularity of village maids and matrons. Whenever the door lacked the faded, you knew that behind the drawn shades there was the soft glow of candles or the yellow glare of gas, poor substitute for sunlight on snow, but presumably kinder to complexion and gowns just a trifle, passed, and you knew that in each house, subject only to trifling variations of background, there would be enacted the same scenes.

Into the front door that opened at the first knock of the bell passed a fluctuating stream of men in holiday attire. There were elderly beards a plenty in broadcloth that was brushed, as the point of perfection, smart young dandies, sporting the newest fashion in ties; awkward beginners not quite used to the length of their frock coats—we called them "Prince Alberts" in the days when New Year's calls were in vogue—and a sprinkling of substantial-looking business men paying homage to the established custom of society. Everybody who was anybody in "our town" paid his respects to the incoming year by making the rounds of his friends' homes.

Once inside, there was the neat maid or waiting butler to receive the caller's card and take him with overcoat, hat and cane, and then a dash for his hostess and her daughters and friends under the chandeliers with the prism



A FLUCTUATING STREAM OF MEN IN HOLIDAY ATTIRE

GREAT FUN TO WANDER UP AND DOWN THE PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE STREETS

guiled until six, when twinkling street lights warned the callers to retreat.

Not a serious way to start the New Year! No, but a friendly one, that left hostesses and callers with a glow of human friendliness to last as warmth for many a day. And if seriousness were lacking, the same decade that enjoyed New Year's calling found itself also at one with the custom of watch-night service. For, in "our town," as in yours, mayhap, it was the thing to spend the closing hours of the old year in the quiet seriousness of prayer and sacred song. Children had their share in this, for fathers and mothers had not in that simpler time learned to fear the giving of definite religious instruction to their sons and daughters. It was clear and plain that a child must be trained in the way he should go, and watch night was a part of that training.

And, indeed, no youngster ever tried to beg off. There was first of all the joy of doing the unusual and the fun of sitting up past his bedtime. So you hid yourself to the nursery couch or the sitting-room lounge, after a hot supper, an old-fashioned winter supper of sausage and fried potatoes or scalloped oysters and muffs, and took a long, long nap. At half-past ten, father waked you, tucked you into cap and overcoat, and the family party started out under the cold stars, snow crunching under foot, to the nearby church.

Not so very long ago the writer came across an old chromo, of the sort that looks, in a dim and favorable light, like a fairly decent oil painting. In its day it had doubtless been the chief ornament of a well-furnished, comfortable parlor. Now it cluttered the window of a second-hand shop, dinky and out of sorts with fate. But even in the unflattering light of a dusty show window, it had a certain charm for the one who found it. It was the picture of a watch-night service, such as she had once known so well. Bright moonlight flooded the scene, bringing out in sharpened detail the snow-laden boughs of drooping elms and the Gothic spire of a small stone church. From stained-glass windows and opened doors came streaming the warm glow of shaded gas jets. From village streets flocked men and women and children, stopping to say a word of greeting as they passed into the vestibule. The spell of the picture took her, with the speed of the magic carpet or of the seven-league boots, back to the New Year's eves of her girlhood.

So she had walked with father and mother and a sleepy small brother. Just so the trees had looked in the frosty moonlight. And just as warm and softly glowing had been the stone church, through whose open doors came the resonant strains of the great organ. She remembered with aching vividness the faces

of those who had filled the pews, especially that of one man, the governor of the state, whose aquiline profile, flashing eyes and straight, glossy black hair formed a never-to-be-forgotten personality.

Watch-night hymns have a personality of their own, as those of Christmas or Easter, if not so widely known. They are naturally serious and a bit foreboding, with a touch of the melancholy that is associated with the rapid flight of time.

The year is gone, beyond recall With all its hopes and fears, With all its bright and gladdening smiles, With all its mournful tears.

is an old Latin hymn to a common meter tune that illustrates the tendency of this branch of hymnology. Charles Wesley has been most prolific in voicing this thought.

Wisdom ascribe, and might, and praise, To God who leathens out our days; Who spares us yet another year, And makes us see his goodness here.

is an old favorite. Often just on the stroke of midnight another of his voiced the feelings of the congregation, that beginning:

Join, all ye ransomed sons of grace, The holy joy prolong, And shout to the Redeemer's praise, A solemn midnight song.



A bit more joyful is the splendid, quantity irregular.

Come, let us anew our journey pursue, Roll round with the year, And never stand still till the Master appear.

It was easy after this to go home filled with loftiest aspirations, ready to begin the new diary with ambitious resolves that were bound to overleap themselves because of their very loftiness. There was one watch night when there drifted into the ken of the child the poem that has since meant to her, as it does to many, the very spirit of this day. From the choir gallery, just before the midnight hour, came the softened chorus of a strange melody. Then into the silence of the vaulted church rose a wonderful message in a voice that bore conviction to the listeners. It sang to the organ and the hushed accompaniment of the choir:

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild skies, The flying cloud, the frosty light; The year is dying, in the night; Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Through the whole of the splendid poem it swept, on to the triumphant conclusion:

"Ring in the Christ that is to be."

To the child the most dramatic moment of the evening came just on the stroke of the incoming year. While outside whistles blew and giant crackers exploded, bells clashed and clanged, inside hands clasped hands while to gather they sang the good old standby, "Bless be the tie that binds," before the hush of the benediction and the glad chorus of "Happy New Years" that concluded the service.

There is another sort of quiet ushering in of the baby year that is conducive to the good resolve that counts so easily under favorable conditions. There were those in the old days, as there are in these, who felt that after the gala afternoon the happiest way of all was to sit quietly about the fire, chatting with half a dozen congenial spirits, singing a bit if the spirit moved, reminiscing as old times came back in the hush, and ending with the silent toast and the dash of sentiment that makes "Auld Lang Syne" the fitting song for such a moment.

That some such happy hour may begin little 1911's first appearance is the best wish one can offer to friends.

Let the auspicious morning be expressed With a white stone distinguished from the rest.

So the stately Dryden has put the same thought. May it be true of us all.

# Her Mother's Economy

By CLARA INEZ DEACON

Eunice always dreaded the coming of spring because there was always the distressing thought that just when all the living world was putting on its bravest and best she must go forth as usual wearing that old black leg-horn hat.

Eunice's mother had bought the hat which was the best of its kind to be had because it was always her rule to get the best or go without. In vain Eunice begged for cheaper things and the privilege of having them changed occasionally.

Mrs. Lys was English and obdurate. As she had been dressed she dressed her own daughter. The leg-horn hat had been turned and twisted and coaxed into some semblance to prevailing modes until Eunice was ashamed to take it to Miss Adams, who was too conscientious to spoil it and thus make necessary the buying of new head-gear.

This season the styles were varied and bewilderingly beautiful. Day after day Eunice lingered before the enticing plate glass windows of Miss Adams' millinery parlors whence long ago the black leg-horn had come to admire and yearn and choose with that sickening sense of futility which hurts to the very soul. She knew exactly the kind of hat she wanted—a white horsehair with a froth of willow plume about the crown. Miss Adams had just such a hat and it was marked \$20. Eunice had not seen the price, but Edith Bennis had. In fact, Edith had tried on the wonderful hat.

"And, oh, it's the sweetest thing, really, Eunice!" Edith said. "And I looked—well, of course, it's out of the question for me. My mother can't afford \$20 hats, but your mother can. You ought to have it since you want it so badly. And anyway it's time you had a new hat. You must be deathly sick of that old leg-horn."

"I am," admitted Eunice, faintly, swallowing at a sob.

"Well," said Edith conclusively, "all I can say is, if you don't have one you



Desperation Had Lent Her Skill.

needn't expect Ward Royce to pay you much attention."

Eunice knew that. Her throat ached so miserably that she could not answer. "I saw him with Belle White yesterday," Edith went on with the frank cruelty of youth and personal experience. "She was dressed to kill—everything new. You know that big black hat we both liked so much—one of the first Miss Adams showed? Well, she had on that hat. And she looked stunning."

Still Eunice did not answer. She went home helplessly unhappy to find her mother sitting in the cheerful company of an overflowing work-basket.

"I'm making over the sleeves of your shirtwaists, dear," she said. "I've found that by using a smaller pattern I can cut out all the worn places. The waists will wear for a good while yet. And I find," went on Mrs. Lys brightly, as if she were imparting the most pleasing information, "that I can turn your plaid skirt. It isn't faded a particle on the under side. That comes of buying the best material. Always remember that, dear. The plaid skirt will do very nicely to wear with your shirtwaists all summer."

Eunice's lips quivered. Ward would never look at her again. Her mother thought so much of a girl's being well dressed. "I suppose," she said, making desperately one last appeal, "that if I am to wear that old skirt and all those old waists, I can have a new hat to go with them, can't I, mother?"

Mrs. Lys looked at her daughter in frank amazement. "Why, child!" she

said. "Why, I expect that hat to do you for two seasons yet."

Eunice was silent. But that night after she had gone to her room she sat a long time by the window, thinking and crying.

"I won't," said Eunice to herself, softly, for her mother slept on the other side of the wall, "but before I sleep I'll have a session with that hat. I'll never again take it to Miss Adams' to have her city trimmer alter it."

Eunice had never trimmed a hat in her life. She felt a fierce pleasure now in stripping the faded pink roses from the black leg-horn, and she wheedled the limp brim to assume stability. Then she applied some ribbon and her best belt buckle after a manner which she had observed in Miss Adams' window. She was amazed at her own achievement. Desperation had lent her skill. She tried it on before the glass. It was not unbecoming. Then she crept into bed.

She showed the hat to her mother next morning.

"It looks well," was Mrs. Lys' only comment.

"I'm sure," Eunice said, speaking of that new resolution which had come to her with her success, "I could learn to trim hats for other people. I should like to know how to earn money."

Mrs. Lys looked pained. "Why, my dear child, why should you wish to earn money?" she asked. "There is no need. You have enough of everything now."

Eunice was disappointed. She knew how her mother felt, but if only her mother had known how she felt!

That afternoon Edith Bennis came running in. "Oh, Eunice, come with us!" she said. "We're going on the river—Hal and Kitty and I, and we want you. Do hurry. They're waiting now, down on the bank."

"Put on a hat, dear," said Mrs. Lys.

Eunice put on the leg-horn. After all she felt a shy pride in the fact that she had trimmed it herself. And she wanted to hear what Edith would say. What Edith said was characteristic of her charmingly sarcastic self. "If long association is endearing you must be awfully attached to that hat," she remarked.

As for Hal Kinch, Edith's irrepressible cousin, he had an appropriate conundrum: "What member of the vegetable kingdom does Eunice's hat resemble?" The answer, of course, was "The live-forever." He also warbled a song: "Shall good old leg-horns be forgot—" to the tune of Auld Lang Syne.

"Look, Eunice!" cried Kitty. "Look, Edie! There's Royce and Elmer Brent out there in that canoe."

It was, indeed, Ward and Elmer. And when they saw the quartet in the larger boat they shouted greeting and paddled toward them. At that moment Eunice thought—she was never sure—that she felt something touch her hat as if a pin was being stealthily withdrawn. But before she had time to lift her hand to her head a smart little breeze came ruffling over the water and whisked her hat from her head. She gave a little cry as she saw it go, dipping and skimming on the current in the direction of the canoe.

It was Ward Royce who rescued that hat finally at the risk of a good wetting. He handed it to Eunice dripping, a hopelessly sodden thing.

Hal was weeping elaborately, with one eye on Eunice, whose face was scarlet. She felt joy and shame and relief all at once. The hat was a wreck. Surely she could never wear it again.

Ward Royce detached Eunice from the others of the group and walked home with her that afternoon. He carried the hat and placed out Eunice's explanation of the catastrophe to her slightly surprised mother.

"You couldn't have planned it securely," Mrs. Lys said. "Well, you may go and get another hat, dear. You shall choose for yourself this time. You are quite old enough. Only get something handsome and wearable and remember I do not wish to pay more than \$15."

Eunice bought the white horsehair hat with the frothy willow plume. And then because it was such a handsome hat that it put all Eunice's other belongings quite to shame Mrs. Lys decided that she must have a dainty lingerie frock to go with it.

So it came about that Eunice was as charmingly clad that summer as even she could wish to be. And because she looked so sweet and was so sweet Ward Royce paid her that kind of extravagant attention which only ends in the one perfect way, though he maintained with the absolute conviction of the man in love that he had learned to adore her not under the willow plume, but under the old black leg-horn.

## He Didn't Say

"Gentlemen," he began as he stood on the post office steps, "you have all heard of Joseph Cannon, and it is needless to explain to you that he has been speaker of the house of representatives for many years past."

(Cheers and groans.)

"He is called the tool of trusts by some and an angel by others."

(Hurrah and hisses.)

"Just which it may be is not for me to say. Like other men, he has his good and bad points. There is an insurrection against him."

(Put him out!)

"He may prevail and it may not."

(Hurrah for Joe!)

"At the coming session of congress he may be re-elected or he may not."

(No! No! Yes. Yes.)

"Some folks think he will and some think he won't."

(No! Yes!)

"But as for me, gentlemen—as for me—"

("Let 'er go!")

"As for me, I have on this table

before me something that will cure a case of jumping toothache in two minutes or money refunded, and the price is only—"

But the two hundred had melted away.

Cherubini's Advice.

A young man with an extremely powerful voice was in doubt what branch of musical art to adopt. He went to the composer Cherubini for advice. "Suppose you sing me a few bars," said the master. The young fellow sang so loud that the walls fairly shook. "Now," said he, "what do you think I am best fitted for?" "Auctioneer," dryly said Cherubini. "Old Farmers' Almanac, 1882."

Honesty.

No man is thoroughly honest until he discovers that honesty is the best policy; that honesty is the best way to get a selfish man. Any man who believes that honesty is a burden is not honest.—Atchison (Kan.) Globe.

## Birds Build Incubator

Marvelous Intelligence Shown by the "Mound Builders" in Malaya.

Some birds even depart from the custom of their class and build incubators in order to hatch their eggs without the trouble of brooding. The "mound builders" deposit their eggs in a large pile composed of dirt, dead leaves, dry sticks and other debris

of the woods. Seeing one for the first time in a Malayan forest, the traveler takes it for a mere heap of rubbish, and is surprised when his native guide proceeds to burrow into it in quest of eggs. But when the searcher, after removing the top layers, uncovers a clutch of eggs or a lively little chick, fully feathered and able to fly, the secret is out. The

brushwood pile must surely be an incubator.

These birds have surely "built better than they knew." It is easy for us to see that the mound acts like a gardener's hotbed. The slow fermentation of the vegetable rubbish heats it from within; the tropical sun habit is equal; the difference between the night and day temperatures is small. The vaporization that follows a heavy fall of rain reduces the temperature considerably even in

the tropics. But the birds lay only in the dry season. The mound is loosely put together. Thus air is admitted to ventilate the eggs, and light enough to put the newly-born chicken on the track of the outside world. The mound is, in fact, an incubator in the rough, practically adapted to the needs of birds living in a warm climate.

Hotel Keeper and Robber. A remarkable exhibition of presence of mind stands to the credit of James Dennis, an Australian hotel keeper,

whose death was recently reported. One day he found himself behind his own counter looking down the muzzle of a revolver held by a villainous-looking fellow who was requesting him to put up his hands.

He raised them, but protested, "Surely it doesn't take two of you to bail me up." The robber, who had come alone, turned his head to see who the other man might be. In a flash Dennis's own revolver was out and the rascal's opportunity was gone.—Westminster Gazette.