

FAREWELL



O! TWELVE" comes throbbing on the midnight air. A requiem—yes, the dying year is dead; its records written, be they foul or fair; its mysteries solved and all its riddles read. The New Year came with swift yet stealthy tread; No footfall reached the anxious, listening ear As through the portals he so swiftly sped; But now his firm, majestic tread we hear.

And so the years go, ever speeding by. And changes come, more strange than lapse of years. The past is gone: Why comes the deep-drawn sigh? Why is the eye bedimmed with unshed tears? It once was ours; we drank, aye, drained the cup. Quaffing with eager lips its happiness, Nor even dreamed so soon we must give up Those joys that came our daily life to bless. Shall all the ties be severed that have bound Friend unto friend, and very soul to soul? Shall some Lethæan waters there be found That o'er torn and wounded hearts shall roll. In deep forgetfulness assuaging pain, Healing all wounds, and leaving not a scar? Or shall the ties, the wounds, the scars remain? Shall pain be there our future bliss to mar?

"The Oracles are dumb;" with bated breath We silent stand, awaiting some reply; It comes not, nor can come until kind death Shall touch our hearts and bid the clouds roll by. Enough—for when life's fateful strife is o'er, When earthly joys and pains are laid aside, When we look back from yonder distant shore And understand, we shall be satisfied. —Charles H. Allen, in Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly.

BACHELOR'S NEW YEAR.

GIVEN a semi-blizzard and a somewhat pretentious sod house or a western prairie—pretentious because it contained two rooms instead of one, and each room had two windows of glass—and you have the setting of a rather interesting New Year celebration. Nor was the inside view of this sod house at all disappointing to expectations fired by the sight of those real windows of glass, for there was furniture more than the actual needs of the occupant demanded. To be sure, it was nearly all of home manufacture, but it was evidently the work of one who might have earned a living as a cabinet maker, and some of it was upholstered.

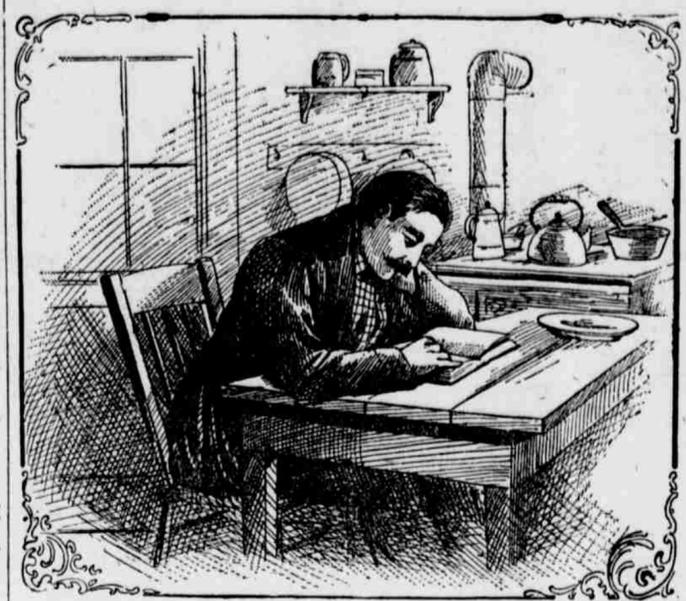
The owner of this house, Jack Walworth by name, sat poring over a cook-book. He was a merry-eyed young fellow of 25, tall, athletic, and in every way good to look at. Although many miles from any human being, so far as he knew, his hands were clean and his hair carefully brushed—two characteristics not very pronounced in the make-up of individuals in that part of the world, for they were nearly all men, and they needed the spur of a woman's approval to give them a proper regard for their personal appearance. "These are mighty good recipes," murmured Jack, as he slowly turned the leaves of his book, "but they do require such an ocean of stuff! Why don't they write some especially for bachelors on prairie farms—lonely old bachelors who have a hankering for a holiday dinner like mother used to make?"

This was said half whimsically and half sadly, for to-morrow a new year was to begin, and Jack was homesick. There had been a time when he was quite sure that the opening day of this new year would see the beginning of a new life for him—a life in which Nellie Rogers would be the central figure. Jack turned to the fly leaf of his cook-book and re-read the words he had written there. "My first New Year resolution," he proclaimed, in a tone that ought to have frightened away the most persistent attack of the blues, "and I'm bound to live up to it. 'I, Jack Walworth, being of sound mind, etc., have resolved that my life shall not be spoiled by—Pshaw!' He threw the book on the table almost viciously. There was no fun in acting without an audience, and he must try in some other way to convince himself that he was not so very unhappy after all.

"I moped all day on both Thanksgiving and Christmas," he said, resolutely drawing the cook-book toward him again, "and I'm going to begin the New Year in a manly fashion! I'll stick to my resolution."

Early that morning Jack had decided to cook a grand New Year dinner for himself, and the fine wild goose, shot for that purpose, now hung in the outer room all ready for the oven. But roast goose and baked potatoes, while good in their way, did not seem sufficiently festive to the fastidious Jack, whose New England mother had made a reputation for herself on her holiday dinners. His soul longed for something in the way of "goodies," and that is why he happened to be poring over a cook-book at an hour when he was usually sound asleep in his comfortable bed. "Mince pie is what I want," he

called his folly, and this was the first time he had broken down. But he had built so many air castles about this first day of the new year—the first holiday which he and Nellie would spend in their new home—that it was rather difficult to celebrate the day alone, and as cheerfully as if nothing had happened to disturb his plans. "If there were any hope that it might be different next year," he moaned; but Nellie's answer had been final. Next year, and all the years to come must be spent without her if he remained on the farm. "And it may be years before I can sell, and even then I must begin at the beginning and make another home. A girl would have to love a man very dearly to wait so long, and



JACK TURNED THE LEAVES OF HIS COOK-BOOK.

said, "but my cupboard is against it. I've got the meat and vinegar and sugar, but there are no spices, and I'd have to use dried apple, and I'm not sure I know how the crust is made. I wonder if I could use cranberries and dried blackberries instead of raisins and currants? I have half a mind to try it, anyhow." Suiting the action to the word, Jack donned his oil cloth apron, and was soon at work. There was plenty of meat and dried apples which he had cooked that day, and he was quite sure that he remembered to what degree of minuteness he used to chop such things for his mother. "If Nellie were here now," he thought, regretfully, "she would have had everything ready for our first holiday dinner together, and New Year is such a suitable day upon which to begin married life."

With this thought, the cheerful tune Jack was whistling came to an abrupt close, and an expression of sadness crept into his face; then the chopping bowl was pushed aside, and he buried his face in his hands. "It is useless," he groaned, "I can never get over it; I cannot be brave. Oh, Nellie, Nellie, I cannot live my life without you, and—I won't!"

Jack had decided to be a farmer without consulting the girl he loved, principally because he had never told her he loved her, and so had no claim upon her. He had believed that a man had no right to propose marriage to a girl until he had a home to offer her, and so he had gone alone into the prairie wilderness and taken up his battle against poverty single-handed. He had been unusually successful, and in three years he had secured the little home in which we find him, and he owed no man a penny. Then he had gone back to the old home, to find Nellie Rogers and ask her to be his wife. He had thought of her so long as a mistress of that little sod house on the prairie that he could not believe her answer would be disappointing, and when it came it almost crushed him.

"I do care for you, Jack, but not enough to live on a farm, and in such a wilderness. I want to live in the city. If you loved me, why did you not ask me where I want to live? Should a woman not have a choice in the matter? If you still love me, Jack, why not sell the farm now?"

"It is my home, Nellie. I have worked three years to get it. I could not sell it now for what it is worth to me, and I have nothing else. Do you understand, dear? It is all the home I have to offer you." It seemed to Jack that such an explanation ought to satisfy any girl, and when Nellie persistently refused to live on a farm, he could only conclude that she did not love him well enough to be his wife. He bade her a formal farewell and went back to his farm, angrily telling himself that the girl was not worth a second thought, and that any self-respecting man could make himself happy without her. That was in November, and Jack had kept himself very busy ever since, in order to forget what

if she loved him like that she would go to the home he had provided."

The clock on the pretty little mantel chimed the midnight hour, and Jack raised his head wearily. "I won't be a coward," he said. "I don't feel, just now, as if I cared much about a swell dinner, but I may have more courage a few hours later, and then I can make that pie."

Then he fixed the fire, and before preparing for bed went to the door and looked out into the night. It is a habit shared by all who live in lonely places, for there is always the feeling that some one may be abroad who needs help.

The snow had ceased falling, and the stars twinkled overhead, but the wind still blew in gusts that kept blinding eddies in the frosty air.

"It is an ugly night," said Jack, "and I pity anyone who is not safely housed. I wonder if—good Lord!"

"Hello, there! Hello!" came a man's voice through the whirling snow. "Help! help! help!" The last word ended in a quaver that told of helplessness and exhaustion.

"Whoop-e-e-e!" returned Jack, in a voice that rang like a clarion call across the prairie. "Where are you? Sing out again! I'm coming!" The snow was drifted into fantastically-shaped hills of varying height, but between them the ground lay bare and brown, as it usually did in that locality, when the first heavy snowstorm of the season was accompanied by a strong wind. It was possible to walk around the high drifts with comparative ease, but, on a stormy night, even one acquainted with the country was in danger of losing his way and perishing of exposure.

Jack hung a lighted lantern under the roof of his porch, then sallied forth on his errand of mercy, calling lustily and cheerfully at every step, and soon he was standing beside an old man who was bending over the form of a girl lying limply against a huge snow drift.

"I don't think she is dead," faltered the man, whose teeth were chattering almost too much for speech.

"We'll soon know," replied Jack, lifting the slight form into his arms and leading the way to the cabin. "Let me know if I walk too fast for you."

Jack placed his burden on the bed and pulled the frozen veil from her face, and then fell on his knees beside her.

"Nellie!" he exclaimed. "My God, my God, it is Nellie!"

"And are you Jack Walworth?" asked the man; but Jack did not hear. He had recovered his self-possession and was using all his knowledge to restore Nellie to consciousness, and as he worked he called her all the pretty loverlike names that she had ever heard from his lips—and they were many, for his was an exceedingly affectionate nature. His method of treatment proved most effective, for in a remarkably short period of time Nellie was able to drink the coffee he made for her, and to explain her presence in his home. "We started out to find you, Jack,"

she said, "for I had made up my mind to spend New Year with you. This is my Uncle Ben, and he is a minister, and when he saw I was determined to come, of course, he decided to come, too!"

"What else could I do?" murmured the old man, deprecatorily; "Nellie is so headstrong, and so—so very unconventional!"

"And as soon as I can stand, Jack," continued Nellie, paying no attention to the interruption, "he will marry us—that is, if you have no other sweetheart."

"I told her," interrupted Uncle Ben, "that it looked exactly as if she were throwing herself at you." "And I told him," answered Nellie, with a happy little laugh, "that that was exactly what I meant to do. I said you had once thrown yourself at me, and that this was the only way I could get even."

What Jack said in reply would look very silly on paper, but Nellie liked it, and Uncle Ben pretended not to hear. The good old man was relieved, however, when the lovemaking was interrupted by a shout from outside, accompanied by a vigorous demand for assistance, that sent Jack hurrying out once again into the whirling snow.

A neighbor had found a runaway team that he wished to leave in Jack's barn, for it was too much trouble to lead it through the storm.

"It is our team," exclaimed Uncle Ben. "We got out to walk, for Nellie feared her feet were freezing, and the team got away from us. We tried to find it, but the storm increased so furiously we couldn't see."

The neighbor and his companion were easily induced to come in and remain until daylight, which was now close at hand. They were needed as witnesses to the marriage ceremony, and even had the weather made driving a pleasure they could not have resisted so interesting an experience.

Four men and one woman sat down to the wedding breakfast, which consisted of baked beans, corn bread and coffee, and it is safe to say that never a wedding breakfast was eaten by a jollier company.

"And thus," said Jack, melodramatically, "eth a happy bachelor's New Year celebration."

Uncle Ben went back to his work in the city that day, for the hired team must be returned to its owners, and his poor people could not be neglected. But there were tears in his eyes as he thought of the little world of happiness he was leaving behind him—tears shed in self-pity—for Uncle Ben had never had a home. He smiled, however, when he recalled Jack's account of his search for recipes suited to a bachelor's holiday dinner, and Nellie's reassuring reply that there was sufficient material in the house for a plum pudding and a mince pie, too.

"I am happy enough," Jack had replied, "to dine like a king on cornmeal pancakes; perhaps Nellie's swell dinner would be more than this feeble heart of mine could bear."

"Don't take it to your heart, then," was Nellie's saucy response; "I want that place myself."

"Verily," said Uncle Ben, as he urged the horses into a trot, "verily, a dinner of herbs where love is—bless my soul, nags! can't you understand that I have a New Year sermon to preach to-day?"—Sidney Sleyes, in Minneapolis Housekeeper.

IN HARD LUCK.



Deadbroke—Lend me a dollar, will you?

Nojoke—I can't do it; you know I haven't even paid for my wife's New Year's present to me yet.

Give on New Year's Day.

In the Greek church New Year's takes the place of Christmas, so far as interchange of gifts is concerned. The father of a family gives to his wife and children presents of money, which are carefully put away.

The Modern Spirit.

Mistress—What makes you ask for more wages? Aren't you satisfied with what you get?
Cook—Yis, mum; but Oi thought there wud be no harum in askin' for a little more!—Brooklyn Life.

PROPAGATING GRAPES.

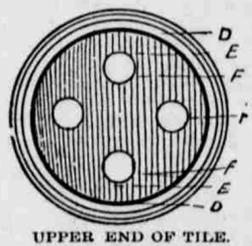
The Success of This Method of Handling Cuttings Repays for the Extra Labor Involved.

With grape cuttings some varieties are more easily propagated than others, and this partly explains the difference in the price of plants. In a favorable season, by procuring the cuttings of certain varieties in the spring, sticking them into well-prepared soil and giving them good care a fair measure of success may be obtained. There are some objections to this method, however. The vines may have been materially injured by the previous winter's cold; or after the cuttings are planted the upper buds may be warmed into life first and attempt to make vines before there are roots to sustain them, and often make a growth of an inch or two from the food stored up in themselves, and then die for want of proper connection with the earth. With me the following method has been quite successful: I use wood of the present season's growth, preparing the cuttings for the fall any time after the sap ceases to flow and before hard freezing weather. I make them six or eight inches long, with not less than two buds on each, and in cutting from the vine cut just below the lower bud, thus leaving the long end of the cutting to mark its position when planted. For convenience I tie them in bundles of 50 or 100, being careful to keep the butt ends even, and place the bundles, with butt ends up, close together in a well-drained pit, dug three or four inches deeper than the length of the cuttings. Cover this with earth until the ground is a little more than level, and as the severe weather approaches throw on straw or other litter to keep them intact from heavy frosts. Early in the spring I remove this litter and give the sun a chance to start the upper buds, the deeper buds remaining dormant awhile longer in the cold earth. As spring advances examine the cuttings occasionally, but do not transplant till the buds are swollen so as to warrant extra handling. Then set out the cuttings in a row four or five inches apart, butt end down, with the upper bud on a level with the surface of the ground, and pack the dirt around each to exclude the air. By this time the ground has warmed up enough to enable the lower buds to continue their growth, and by the time the leaves appear the roots will be ready to carry them nourishment. I have found this method has more than repaid the extra labor involved.—Prairie Farmer.

DRAINAGE FOR BARN.

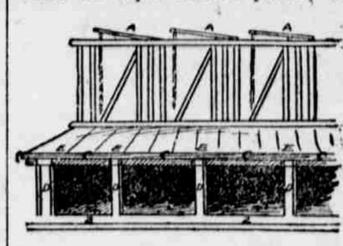
A Simple Method That Will Insure a Building Free from Odors and Clean Animals.

The plans herewith show how a barn may be drained easily by the use of sewer pipe or tile. Stanchions are shown at a a a, the stable door at b b, which can be made of any kind of heavy boards, and slopes slightly toward the



UPPER END OF TILE.

rear. The drop behind the cows is clearly shown at c c c, and four-inch sewer pipes or tile at d d d directly behind each cow. Hardwood circular blocks fitted into the top of the sewer pipe are shown at e e e. There are holes (f f) in these blocks through which the liquid manure passes. A



DRAINING A COW BARN.

drainage pipe at the bottom of the sewer pipes (d) is shown at g g, and connects with a cistern or sink. If this is not available it can act as a drain. The small cut portrays the upper end of the tile. This method of draining a cow barn will insure clean animals and a building free from odors. If the soil is very sandy, the drain pipe (g) is not absolutely essential.—J. H. Hollis, in Farm and Home.

Winter Rations for Cows.

Cows that freshen in the spring must be put on dry food during the winter, and the change usually produces a marked decrease in the milk flow, or even causes the animal to go dry entirely. The cow must be fed a reasonable allowance during the winter to keep her in reasonable condition, and she often gives absolutely no returns for this food. The young calf in early winter is also compelled to begin dry feeds immediately after weaning.