



New Year's Duck.

"Oh! Nellie, you should see the lovely duck I got as a present this morning—it's a perfect beauty—I am going to have it for our New Year's dinner," said Mrs. English to her friend Mrs. Lane, who had come in to see her during the afternoon and talk over the Christmas celebration of a few days before.

"Is your duck dressed or alive, Kate?" asked Nellie in some haste.

"Oh! it's alive, I am going to dress it myself," answered Kate, "it's not much trouble to dress a duck—do you think it would be?"

"Well, Kate, I really pity you. I must tell you what a dreadful time I had with the one we killed last week, it yet makes me shiver all over only to think of it, it was such a terrible day the memory of it will never fade away! I really think my back has not once stopped aching since I picked that duck."

"Do tell me, Nellie, won't their feathers come out, or what was the trouble?" asked Kate. "I am beginning to feel alarmed."

"I'll begin by telling you how we got the duck," began Nellie. "One night after I had gone up stairs with the baby, and John was smoking his pipe—it must have been after 12 o'clock—there was a faint knock at the kitchen door. I heard John going to the door and speaking to some one, and then he and the some one went into the garden to the chicken coop, and presently I heard a loud noise and fuss among the hens. It was Jim Peters. He had won a duck at a raffle at a tavern and asked John to let him put it in our hen coop until further notice."

"Now, either the duck did not feel very comfortable or the hens did not feel as much at ease as formerly, I don't know what caused it, but there was a constant war going on among them. Why, I didn't get one egg while that fowl was in there. So I told John to tell Jim to remove it or we would kill it. At last John brought it from Jim and killed it, and said I should roast it for dinner."

"Now, John killed it before he went to work, but I thought if I would bring to dress it after 9 o'clock I could soon get it in the oven. Then I knew nothing about ducks; now I am much wiser. I asked ma—you know ma just came the day before from the west; it's the first time she had been to see us since we were keeping house. I asked ma whether I should scald the duck or pick it dry. She said she had always picked hers dry and had saved the down for feather beds. So I began to pick it dry."

"With this prospect in view I went to work more cheerfully, yet not very satisfied, I fear. In order to have the duck well done I put it in the oven soon after dinner, and was surprised to see how small it got—the longer it roasted the smaller it grew, and it looked so funny, something like a skinned cat; when in comes John, bringing a friend with him to help eat the duck!"

"Well, no one can imagine my feelings. When they sat down to the table I noticed John looking around for something, and finally when he saw the horrid little shriveled-up thing he burst out into a hearty laugh, saying: 'Why, Nellie, is this all that is left of our beautiful duck?' I never before felt so mortified. John tried to find a tender piece for our guest, but it was impossible to find anything tender on that duck—it was as dry as chips, worse than the driest dried beef, and oh, so tasteless and so dark—do you think I roasted it too long, Kate?"

"I hope I may never, never again see another duck."

Some people never find out that there is joy in giving, because they never give enough.

"I think it's a shame, Cyrus, that we've let Esmeralda grow up without trying to give her some kind of musical training. She can't sing at all."

"That's true, Emily—but she knows it."—Chicago Tribune.

I don't know what all that duck didn't have to cover itself with.

"No wonder ducks never get wet when they go into the water. Why, this one's skin was one sheet of fat and feathers."

"When the clock struck 10 that duck looked perfectly dreadful. I wish you could have seen it. I felt so disgusted I almost cried. Then, when ma saw the tears in my eyes she said if I would hold the baby she would pick awhile. So I sat down to rest—why, really, I felt so faint I could scarcely stand any longer, just fussing with that horrid fowl."

"Now you know how fretful the baby is—she is teething, and it takes one of



I PUT IT IN THE OVEN.

us to entertain her all the time or she annoys the family on the other side of the house—every time she cries some one comes over to see 'what ails that baby'."

"When John moves again I am going to have him move into a single house, and then I can let the baby cry all she wants to."

"After ma had picked until she was tired a bright idea came into my head, and I told her I would skin the duck entirely—then no one would find any pin feathers and it would look smooth and sleek all over. It only provoked me that I had not thought of doing it before. I don't know why it is, but somehow my bright ideas always come too late."

"So I gave the baby to ma and told them to watch this interesting performance."

"But it was easier said than done. My, how greasy that skin was! It was almost impossible to get a good tight hold—I pulled and jerked and wished I had never had any bright ideas until it was finally skinned and the clock pointed to 10 minutes to 12 and no dinner."

"Then I had to run to the corner grocery to get some dried beef—I very well knew John detested dried beef for dinner, but they had nothing else, and when John came home he ate his dinner (?) in silence. But I promised to have the duck roasted for supper."

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RESOLUTION CUSHIONS.

HERE was an expectant smile on Grandma Bartlett's face. She pulled the shade over the lamp and drew the curtains, shutting her room in cozily. The clock on the mantel was ticking the Old Year away as fast as it could hurry him off. It was dusk and New Year's eve, and that was the time for the Pincushion Ceremony at Bartlett's. Fred met Alice on the stairs, and Belle and Arthur came along the hall. Belle carried Baby Letty in her arms, and they each bore a bristling little red tomato pincushion in their hands.

Grandma had placed five hassocks in a row.

"Come, dearies," she called out, to Arthur's subdued knock. They filed in, laughing.

"Stools of repentance," cried tall Belle, dropping into her hassock. "O grandma, my cushion is full of pins. I broke my resolution every other day. I resolved to keep my temper, you know, and I got so tired of poking in a pin for a slip, nights at bedtime."

"Look at my lazy pins," mourned Fred.

"And my behind-time stickers," chimed in Alice.

"I didn't think I did put off things so often," sighed Arthur, and then Baby Letty stuck up her cushion. It was empty.

"Now, dears," said grandma, "proceed with the ceremony."

Solemnly they each tumbled their pins into a box on the table. Another stood near it.

"Why, there's not half so many as last year, grandma!" cried Fred.

"Why, why! And we all felt so badly!"

"Clean cushions again," said grandma happily, picking up Letty to hug her. "Now for grandma's New Year's presents."

There were beautiful books and games.

"I always feel as if you paid us for being naughty," said Alice, looking up with a smile from her book. "But I wouldn't part with my Resolution Cushion for the world!"

Arthur looked at his empty cushion. "I'm glad those pins are gone," he said. "A clean start for a happy New Year. I say, grandma, how we love you!"

And four impetuous pairs of arms almost smothered dear, gentle grandma.

—Lillian L. Price.

The Julian Year.

The error of the Julian year was corrected in the Gregorian calendar by the suppression of three intercalations in 400 years. In order to restore the commencement of the year to the same place in the seasons that it had occupied at the time of the Council of Nice, Gregory directed the day following the feast of St. Francis, that is to say, the 5th of October, to be reckoned the 15th of that month. By this regulation the vernal equinox which then happened on the 11th of March was restored to the 21st. From 1582 to 1700 the difference between the old and new style continued to be ten days; but 1700 being a leap year in the Julian calendar, and a common year in the Gregorian, the difference of the styles during the 18th century was eleven days. The year 1800 was also common in the new calendar, and, consequently, the difference in the present century is twelve days. From 1900 to 2100 inclusive it will be thirteen days.

Three Events of 1896.

Eighteen hundred and ninety-six will always be memorable in literary annals as ending the lives of three great female writers—Harriet Beecher Stowe, the novelist, Kate Field, the journalist, and Gail Hamilton, the versatile authoress. The latter's signature was a non de plume, composed of the second syllable in her Christian name and of Hamilton, the village of her birth-place. Few identified her spinster appellation of Mary Abigail Dodge.



NEW YEARS PRAYER.

KNOW a little temple,
Its walls are dim and low,
Yet up and down its darkened aisles
The blessed angels go.

And he who keeps the temple
Should pray to God to-night,
That Faith may light the altar flame,
And Hope may keep it bright.

That Love may bring the sacrifice
Which Love delights to give,
And all the angels innocent
May tarry there to live.

And may no evil spirit
Have in its place or part,
What is this temple beautiful?
The temple of the heart.

—Ola Moore.

THE INTELLIGENT JURY.

Even the Court Himself Got Up and Swore.

"I don't believe everything I hear about the ignorance of the average jury," said an old lawyer in reminiscent mood, relates the Detroit Free Press, "but once, when I visited a backwoods court in the mountains of North Carolina, I did happen on an incident that shook my faith for a time. The case was before a squire and the prisoner was up for hog stealing. It was the rudest court and surroundings I ever got into and I should not have been surprised at anything, but I was. After a couple of jack-leg lawyers had got in what they had to say the court turned the case over to a jury and it adjourned to a barn to decide the innocence or guilt of the prisoner. And such a jury! I can never forget what a motley gang that jury was. In half an hour it came back and resumed its place in court.

"Have you found a verdict?" asked the squire.

"What's that?" responded the foreman.

"Have you found a verdict? That's what," replied the squire.

"Why, squire," hesitated the foreman, with a foolish grin, "we didn't know thar wuz one lost; did we, boys?" And even that court couldn't stand it, but got up and swore."

He Stopped the Car.

He was young and neatly dressed, but he retained the biggest half of a last night's jag. Making his way up the Bowery as steadily as he could, he suddenly decided to take a cable car. Unfortunately, he was in the middle of the block, and cable cars stop only at corners, but the gentleman was too much absorbed in whisky and thought to realize the fact. The first car refused to stop, of course. So the gentleman retired to the sidewalk, and entered the car's number with great care and deliberation in a memorandum book. Then he essayed a second car (about four cars had passed while he had been putting down the number), but the second and equally a third car likewise did not stop. In each case he entered the number of the sinning car in his book. Finally, with an expression that said, "I'll make this car stop," he clutched the hand rail on the rear platform of a fourth car and pulled back as if stopping a team of horses.

The car went on.

So did the gentleman with the jag, a sort of human pennant to the car. A passenger on the rear platform rang the bell wildly to stop the car. After the car came to a standstill the pennant climbed aboard and calmly put down in his notebook the number of the conductor, gripman and car, then he dropped asleep triumphantly.

The man next to him saw the number of the car, as he had written it down. This was it: "Car number 321,147,776,811."—New York Sun.

Fun at the White House.

The humors of the White House, it is the testimony of everyone who has resided there, would fill many volumes. Many of them are found in the daily mail bag. At a dinner the other day Mrs. McKee told of a letter Mrs. Harrison received while first lady of the land. It ran:

"Dear Madam—I would like a present from Washington City, and so I will locate on you for it. Please send me a dress pattern and (here followed a list of several other things) please pay the express, as I have made a vow never to pay anything on an express package, as I never know what it is until I have opened it." Mrs. Harrison, according to the relator, was much amused at this missive, and "I'll locate on you for that" became a standing phrase in the family ever after when some object was coveted.

Another letter received by Mrs. Harrison ran:

"Dear Madam—Please send me some sheet music, as I have a daughter that has some talents."—Ohio State Journal.

Ever Popular.

Shaded chrysanthemums, yellow and brown, have been used at one or two autumn weddings as bridal bouquets.

JOSH BILLINGS' PHILOSOPHY.

A gentleman iz the party who iz all-wuss honest, and allwuss polite, and keeps his boots shined up, and his finger nails clean.

Mi dear fellow, yu kan't git ennything out ov this world unless yu ask for it, and yu ain't a going to git much ennyhow, unless yu insist upon it.

When yu settle with yurself, insist upon 109 cents on the dollar; when yu settle with the world, take half price if yu kan't git enny more.

Mi dear boy, don't let enny man git the drop on yu. This iz a vulgar saying, but if yu have got branes enuff, yu will use it for a moral purpose.

There are no doubt plenty ov people in the world who are abuv sushpun, but I never hav known enny one (not myself) whom it wasn't safe to watch.

There iz a mighty sight ov odds between knowing everybuddy, and having everybuddy kno yu; but thare iz lots ov folks who never diskover the difference.

There iz sumthing funny about this, but I have noticed that yu could sell a man a kake ov sweet scented sops, at the same price, with less talk, than yu could a kopy of the nu testament.

The odds iz just what makes the difference—to wit: What yu learn by yur own experience allwuss kosts al iz worth, and sometimes a grate deal more; but what yu learn bi the experience ov others don't kost nothing, and iz worth just as much.

The Success of Henry G. Thorell.

Henry G. Thorell, whose postoffice address is Holdrege, Neb., was at one time a carriage maker in Chicago. He removed to Nebraska in 1877. That he has reason to be satisfied is proven by the fact that he is today worth \$30,000, every cent of it made on his farm. Last year (1896) he had 250 acres in corn, 250 acres in small grain, 20 horses, 50 head of cattle and 150 hogs.

In our "NEBRASKA BOOK" (40 pages with maps and illustrations), are dozens of statements like that of Mr. Thorell. They are made by farmers who have made a success of farming. They show that Nebraska is as good a state as any in the Union.

The book in which they appear is as different from the ordinary agricultural pamphlet as day is from night. It is interesting, practical and truthful. In a straightforward, simple fashion, it tells you everything you need to know about Nebraska—its climate, people, schools, churches, railroads, markets, soil and crops. It explains why the Nebraska farmer makes money in spite of low prices and hard times. Why land is cheap. And how it is as easy for an intelligent and industrious man to BUY a Nebraska farm as it is to rent one in any state east of the Missouri river.

Every farm renter who wants to become a farm owner; every farm owner who is tired of trying to make money off high-priced land; every father who wants to give his sons a start on the high road to independence, should write for a copy. Free.

J. FRANCIS,
Gen'l Pass'r Agt., Burlington Route,
Omaha, Neb.

A woman can pick out a bride as far as she can see her.

Lions and tigers are too weak lunged to run more than half a mile.

Piso's Cure for Consumption has saved me large doctor bills.—C. L. Baker, 428 Regent St., Philadelphia, Pa., Dec. 8, 1895.

The fatter a woman is the less hair she has.

The best time for exercise is about two hours after a meal.

Syrup of Figs



Gladness Comes

With a better understanding of the transient nature of the many physical ills, which vanish before proper efforts—gentle efforts—pleasant efforts—rightly directed. There is comfort in the knowledge, that so many forms of sickness are not due to any actual disease, but simply to a constipated condition of the system, which the pleasant family laxative, Syrup of Figs, promptly removes. That is why it is the only remedy with millions of families, and is everywhere esteemed so highly by all who value good health. Its beneficial effects are due to the fact, that it is the one remedy which promotes internal cleanliness without debilitating the organs on which it acts. It is therefore all important, in order to get its beneficial effects, to note when you purchase, that you have the genuine article, which is manufactured by the California Fig Syrup Co. only and sold by all reputable druggists.

If in the enjoyment of good health, and the system is regular, laxatives or other remedies are then not needed. If afflicted with any actual disease, one may be commended to the most skillful physicians, but if in need of a laxative, one should have the best, and with the well-informed everywhere, Syrup of Figs stands highest and is most largely used and gives most general satisfaction.

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FAY'S MANILLA ROOFING

CHEAP WATER PROOF. Not affected by gases. No rot, no decay, no fire or frost. A durable substitute for plaster on walls. Water proof sheeting of same material, the best in the market. The FAY MANILLA ROOFING CO., CAMDEN, N.J.

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Teaches business by doing business. Also thorough instruction in all branches by mail. Life scholarship \$45, six months course \$30. Corner 16th and Capitol Avenue, Omaha, Nebraska.

LADY Manager and Agents wanted for Dr. Kay's Lung Balm. No money required until goods are sold. "Womanhood," a valuable booklet on female diseases, free. Dr. B. J. Kay Medical Co., Omaha, Neb.

OMAHA STOVE REPAIR WORKS
Repairs for any kind of stove made. 1207 DOUGLAS ST., OMAHA, NEB.

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Are to be had on the Frisco Line in Missouri, Arkansas and Kansas. The best route from St. Louis to Texas and all points west and southwest. For maps, time tables, pamphlets, etc., call upon or address any agent of the company, or, D. Wishart, Gen'l Passenger Agent, St. Louis, Mo.

Dr. Kay's Lung Balm is the safest, surest and pleasantest cure for all coughs.

Naturalists say that a healthy swallow will consume at once 6,000 swallows a day.

FITS stopped free and permanently cured. No fee after first day's use of Dr. Kline's Great Urinary Restorer. Free trial bottle and treatise. Send to Dr. J. C. Kline, 301 Arch St., Philadelphia, Pa.

It is youth, not learning, that makes young people smart.

Hogeman's Camphor Ice with Glycerine. The original and only genuine. Cures Chapped Hands and Face, Cold Sores, Ac. C. G. Clark & Co., St. Louis, Mo.

No one can fool a man as easily as he fools himself.

A Thumbscrew Torture to the BIGGEST NERVE is

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SCIATICA. St. Jacobs Oil

It turns back the screw.—It unwinds the twist.—IT SOOTHES.—IT CURES. NO FURTHER PAIN.

Get A MOVE ON

THAT Listless, Aimless, Dull, Lack-Lustre feeling of yours shows that your internal machinery is running too slowly. YOUR LIVER IS LAZY BOWELS are languid BLOOD is sluggish

Get a move on without delay, or you'll be a very sick person. Cascarets Candy Cathartic make your liver lively, your bowels regular, your blood pure, move your machinery. Buy a box to-day any drug store, 10c., 25c., 50c., or mailed for price. Write for booklet and free sample.

Life Hood's Sarsaparilla

Is misery to thousands of people who have the taints of scrofula in their blood. For this terrible affliction there is no remedy equal to Hood's Pills

The Best—in fact the One True Blood Purifier. Hood's Pills cure Liver Ills; easy to take, easy to operate. Etc.

Sharing a Log With a Bear. Incidental to the recent great storm, many stories will undoubtedly get into circulation that will exhibit heroism, romance and ludicrous incidents dovetailed with the accounts of loss of property and the wreckings of fortunes.

John Baker came down Miller river on a big fire tree. Mr. Baker seated himself at the butt end of the tree, and after going down about a half a mile he had company. A huge black bear, swimming for his life in the seething water, climbed on the tree and stationed himself about thirty feet from the man. In addition to his already precarious situation, that bear nearly frightened Mr. Baker to death. But Mr. Bear was about as badly frightened as the other fellow, and when the current finally drifted the tree to dry land, the bear took to his heels with as much alacrity as Baker.—Seattle Post.

A 50-Cent Calendar Free. Perhaps the most beautiful calendar issued for the year '97 is THE YOUTH'S COMPANION Art Calendar, which is given to each subscriber to the paper for the year '97. It is made up of four charming pictures, beautifully reproduced in twelve harmonious colors. It is in form a four-page folder, which, when extended, is 10x14 inches in size. The subjects are delightfully attractive. This calendar makes a desirable ornament for a mantle, table or writing desk. It is offered for sale only by the publishers of THE YOUTH'S COMPANION at 20 cents per copy. Only because of the enormous number published is it possible for the publishers of THE COMPANION to send it free to all COMPANION subscribers.

A Great Risk. Two impetuous Scotsmen came upon a saloon. They had only "saxpence" between them, so they ordered "one nip o' whusky." They were hesitating who should have the first drink, when an acquaintance joined them. Pretending that they had just drunk, one of them handed the whisky, requesting him to join them in a drink. He drank, and after a few minutes of painful and silent suspense, said: "Now, boys, you'll have one with me?"

"Wasna that weel managed, mon?" said one to his pal afterward.

"Ay, it was," said the other solemnly, "but it was a dreadful risk.—Argonaut.

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A Slippery Spot. A short time ago an old lady went on board Nelson's flagship, the Victory. The different objects of interest were duly shown her, and, on reaching the spot where the great naval hero was wounded (which was marked by a raised brass plate), the officer remarked to her:

"Here Nelson fell!"

"And no wonder!" exclaimed the old lady. "I nearly fell there myself!"—London Answers.

Merchants Hotel, Omaha. CORNER FIFTEENTH AND FARNAM STS. Street cars pass the door to and from both depots; in business center of city. Headquarters for state and local trade. Rates \$2 and \$3 per day.

PAXTON & DAVENPORT, Prop's.

To Keep Violets Fresh. To keep violets fresh when wearing them on the person, wrap the stems first in cotton dipped in salted water, the tops sprinkled and the whole covered closely with confectioner's paper, and put in a cool place. In this way the blossoms may be preserved for several days.—New York Tribune.

Cheap Lands and Homes. Are to be had on the Frisco Line in Missouri, Arkansas and Kansas. The best route from St. Louis to Texas and all points west and southwest. For maps, time tables, pamphlets, etc., call upon or address any agent of the company, or, D. Wishart, Gen'l Passenger Agent, St. Louis, Mo.

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