

Don't wait until you are down to your last crust in order to share it with a friend.

The Top o' the Mornin'. By W. D. Nesbit.

Inducing a man to make New Year's resolutions is like marrying him to reform him.

AN ALPHABET OF HISTORY



SHAKSPEARE

Shakspeare, as all of us have read, Once asked: "What's in a name?" An alias for the rose, he said, Would make it smell the same. But Shakspeare was so frivolous— Excuse us if we say That it has always seemed to us His work was mostly play.

As "Shakpere," "Shakpere," "Shalk-speere," too, His signature is found; His autographs are much too few To be passed all around. This shows the cumulative worth Of honest, solid fame; The bidders come from all the earth To buy his misspelled name.

He dramatized the thrilling scene Where Caesar met his end, Where Casca, hungry, lank and lean, And Brutus, Caesar's friend, Stabbed swiftly with their daggers bright When Julius came in reach— Then Antony, thrilled at the sight, Arose and made a speech.

No chorus girls were in his shows; In them no "social accents" were Given princely wage to pose And dignify the scenes. But there he those who say there are Odd facts that can't be passed: For instance, off we see a star With ciphers in the cast—

And this leads many to declare That Bacon wrote the shows; A cryptic secret hidden there They say they will disclose. It may be that each drama boards A Bacon cryptogram. For often, proud upon the boards There struts and strides a ham.

A CUSTOM WITH THIS CALLER.

"Ah, the doorbell," says Mr. Slopoy on the first of January. "S' a one nae—clung to the good old custom of making New Year's calls. I shall answer the bell myself." Going to the door he says: "Happy New Year!" but is checked by the remark of the man who extends to him a narrow slip of paper. "Mr. Slopoy," asks the man, "can't you settle this bill? It's been running for a year, and I've got in the habit of calling for the payment the first of every month. I want to drop the habit."

He Swears Off.



"How swiftly this old earth revolves," He says, with husky cough, "I think I'm full of good resolves Or something! I'll swear off."

PROOF.

"I knew right away that she was an inexperienced cook," said the woman who was discussing the servant question. "How could you tell?" asks the caller. "Why, she hadn't even had sufficient experience to know enough not to acknowledge that she was inexperienced."

Human Nature.



"Ah, how sad it is to look back down the trodden path of the old year and contemplate the wasted opportunities and the unwitting mistakes that line it." "Yes, and how sad it is to think that the opportunities were wasted and the mistakes made by our friends—never by ourselves."

Another year has passed into historical novel material.

It is easy to find a friend whom the New Year's joke fits.

There is just one thing we should like to see sworn off permanently and that is the pancake cap affected by the high school boys.

SUPERLATIVE DEGREE.

"Make this a happy New Year for me," pleads the enamored swain. "Marry me, and I promise you I shall be a better man." The beautiful damsel regards him with kindly eyes for a moment.

"I want you to be a better man," she hesitates, "but—" "But you cannot trust me? Say not so, fairer of you—" "Not that, exactly. But, you see— Well, I'll tell you what I can do. I can ask Harry to let you be the best man. You see, Harry and I are to be—"

But one more unhappy wretch had hastened out into the wide, wide, waiting world.

While a man need not swear off drinking unless he feels so inclined there should be some way of compelling him to stop telling the next day about what a time he has been on.

A casual glance over the 1904 almanac does not discover any new symptoms for the reader to think he feels.

Now is the time when the coy young damsel throws a piece of withered mistletoe away and reflectively twists a new ring on the third finger of her left hand.

Nothing spoils a good wish so much as to couple it with a few remarks on how to do better.

Where a man can find one reason for stopping a bad habit he has friends who will furnish a dozen excuses for continuing it.

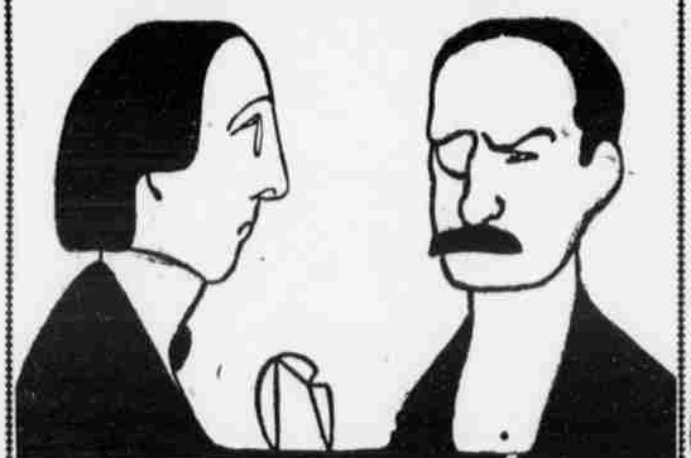
About 10 o'clock this morning it may be well for you to hold a little soul communion with yourself—using as an inspiration the little savings bank you began filling a year ago today.

MAKING MONEY.

"My wife," says the first man, "thinks that the application of a business system to household affairs is a great help." "She does?" politely inquires the second man. "Yes. She got a new expense book the first of the year, started in with a cash capital of \$50, and at the end of a week showed me that she ought to have a balance of \$3,678." "She must be a female Napoleon of finance." "Yes. But she had counted up all the yards of dress goods, pounds of meats and groceries, as well as the numerals indicating the year, in the total sum."

However, good resolutions are cheap, and they last longer than most expensive Christmas gifts.

LUCKY MAN.



"My brother Sam is just half way around the world from us." "How fortunate you are, for you get your New Year's good wishes half a day ahead of him." "Yes, but his December bills fall due half a day later than mine."

OFTEN.

"I can put two and two together." "Is what we hear so often stated. A risky thing—we don't know whether 'Twill bring results uncalculated."

What They Were For.

"You should not be loitering around the streets," we say to the man who tells us that he has closed his store for the day because business is dull. "It is not 2 o'clock yet. You ought to be pushing your stock and making trade lively."

"Pushing my stock?" he inquires. "Why, that's what my customers must do. I sell wheelbarrows."

AN EXAMPLE.

"The good die young," says the Sunday school teacher. "Now, can any little boy or girl give an example of the meaning of this saying?" None answer for a moment, but at length little Johnny Skinnem, the son of the market man, lifts his hand.

"You may give us an example of the good dying young, Johnny," says the teacher. "Turkeys, mum. Nobody won't buy de tough ones."

MISLED.

"They say that war correspondent who was wounded before Port Arthur struck a really heroic attitude when he realized the guns were trained upon him." "Humph! He heard the triggers clicking, and thought the sound was from kodaks, and threw himself into his usual pose for being photographed."

It is hard to be economical when you have a new expense book and are proud of your ability as a bookkeeper.

One Excuse Good as Another.



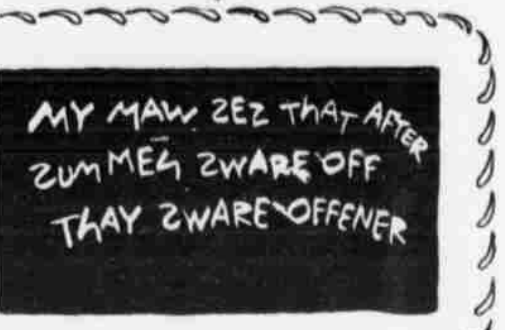
"Yes, my dear," said the fond husband, carefully observing the wrapper of the cigar from the beautifully labeled box she had given him on Christmas Day. "I have been thinking over the list of my bad habits, and have decided that the first day of the new year is the time to abandon some of them."

"O, how noble!" exclaimed the trusting wife. "Thank you. And I think I shall begin my reformation by giving up tobacco in every form."

Tempus Mutatur.

He used to breathe soft nothings in her ear, But now in harsher accents will he hawl— The change which comes on men from year to year Now makes the brute breathe nothing soft at all.

Little Henry's Slate.



How, Indeed?

He wires me "Happy New Year!" But how does he expect It to be so, when he has sent The telegram collect!

HOW ABOUT THAT?



"Freddy told me he was going to swear off proposing to the girls the first of the year." "Did he? I think he will. I accepted him the day before Christmas." "Well, I told him at the time that many a man put off his reform until too late a date."

Warmed Up.

"There goes Bligly across the street," says the man with the incandescent whiskers. "He looks pretty seedy. Didn't he fall heir to a cool million the first of last year?" "Yes," replies the man with the ingrowing mustache, "but it was so hot it burnt in his pockets."

What She Wanted.

"And I suppose you will want it to be a course dinner?" asks the caterer of Mrs. Justgottit, who is planning to entertain a company of friends. "Course dinner?" she cries, mistaking her forgetful for her scent bottle. "Course dinner? No, sir. I want a fine dinner. I've got the money to pay for the finest dinner you can fix up. Course, indeed!" Humbled, the caterer promises to respect her wishes.

Have you ever noticed that the dealer who gets a good slice of your income is the one who is apt to talk to you in a fatherly way about the advantage of saving money?

A Mistake We All Make.



"Ah," sighed the first man, "I shall lead a different life this year." "Why, you have no bad habits," said the second man. "I know it. I'm going to get a few. Then next New Year's day there will be some reason for my friends to pat me on the back and say encouraging things to me."

MEMORY INSURED.

"George," sighed the maiden fair to see, leaning softly against George's vest, "are you sure you will not forget me?" "Perfectly, my precious," whispered George, straining his neck to pull his head back far enough to get her pompadour out of his eyes. "I know you say so now, but are you sure, ducky, that you will think often of me?" "I shall think always of you, my pigeon." "Of course you tell me this now, but—but—men are so fickle. Sometimes I fear your mind may turn to another." "Never, my heart's jewel," declared George, recollecting how the matinee heroes swear undying affection. "You make me so happy, but nevertheless, I have this haunting doubt. I wish I could feel perfectly sure and confident that you will go right on thinking of me for months and months." "My darling, if you want to be positively sure, you need only to reflect that the ring I gave you Christmas I bought at a dollar down and fifty cents a week." "Blessedly happy in the knowledge that George could not fail to have her in his mind for some time to come, the apple of his eye permitted her alabaster brow to rest against his cheek."

WILL KEEP HIS VOW.

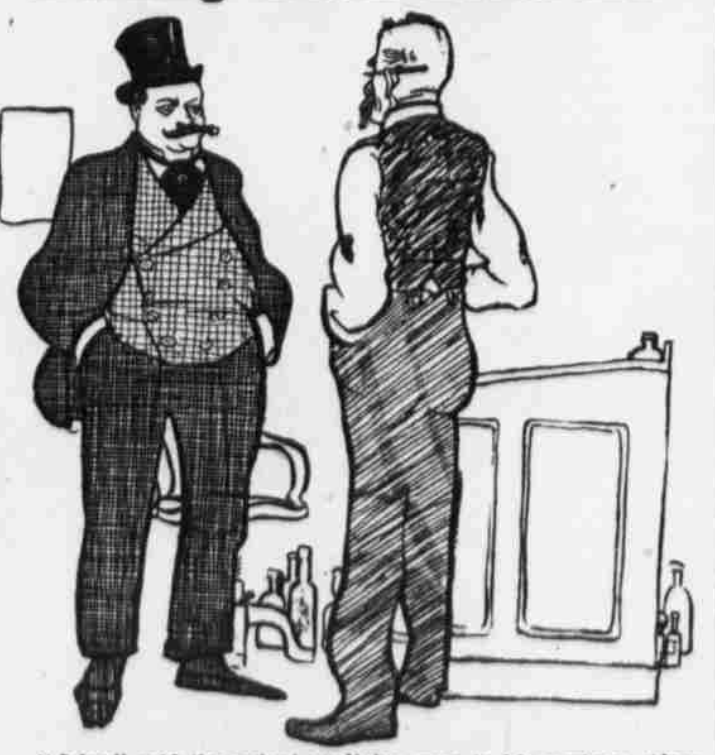
"Gawge Johnsing done p'omise de judge dat he won't steal no chickens dis year," said Uncle Zeke Snowball, returning home from the courtroom. "En I 'low dat de judge 'gree dat Gawge ain takin' a honnubble step," said Aunt Marfy. "Yas'm. De judge say he 'low dat Gawge ain' gwine steal no chickens, 'ca'se he gwine sen' Gawge up foh er yeah. Yas'm."

AS GOOD AS NEW.



The New Year and the Old Year met on the path of time. "Hello," said the Old Year. "What is that package you are carrying?" "It contains the good resolutions that signalize my coming," answered the New Year. "Huh," said the Old Year, exhibiting a similar package. "If you'd let me know I'd have lent you these. They're the ones I brought with me when I came, and nobody would keep them."

Making Them Different.



"John," said the patent medicine man to his partner, "how does the almanac for 1905 look?" "Fine," replied the partner. "I think the people will like it." "Well, you remember I told you that lots of folks had objected to our using the jokes in the same old shape all the time. Did you have any changes made in them?" "O, yes. I had the jokes printed in entirely different type."