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New Year's, '93

GREETING TO THE NEW YEAR.

Your hand, New Year, since we must comrades be
Through the strange circles of the seasons four!
Plodding in lonely paths 'mid drifting snow,
When days are dark and whirling tempests roar,
Will your strong guiding arm be round me pressed?
And when the ice bars melt and warm blue streams
Laugh in the sun and leap toward the sea,
Will you then share my happy springtime dreams—
The waking songs that birds and poets know?
And when red roses burn on bended sprays,
And lovers roam through shadowy woodland ways,
Will you keep kindly pace? And last, when brown
Lie the sweet fields, and faded leaves come down,
And we are tired both and fain to rest,
Will you be friends with me, still true and near?
Then take my hand and heart, dear comrade year.

—Chicago Leader and Herald.

AFTER MANY YEARS.

"Jane Eliza," said Jeremiah to me a-going home from the horticultural show, where, though I say it that shouldn't, our Baldwins and our Golden Majesty punkins showed out superior to all others and fetched a prize—"Jane Eliza, it is time you spoke up and told the facts in the case. Misrepresentation should not be permitted by perfessers."

"Jeremiah, my dear," says I, "your words express the thoughts that air in my mind. I'll up and do it."

We warn't a-speaking of the Baldwins nor the Golden Majesties, as you may suppose—it was the case between Tobias Starch and Rosy Wood that was in our minds. How it may be in New York I do not pertend to know. I should suppose folkses' minds was too well occipied in them haunts of vice and terror with savin themselves from bein run over or electrocuted to death by busted light wires, or bein smashed by new houses comin down onto 'em as they walked onconscious by—which is, accordin to the papers, the reg'lar thing there—on account of builders trying to save in mortar, or being pickpocketed or sandbagged in the streets, or murdered by burglars into their beds, to care enough about scandal to salt it up twenty years and then fetch it out again with alterations. I hope they don't do it anyway, but they do in villages like Soapstone, where everything goes on regular and even for the most part, and the majority lives till eighty and dies because they air tired of hevin to get up and put on their shoes and stockings only to take 'em off again at 9 o'clock and lay down.

"Twenty years ago it happened," says I to Jeremiah. "It warn't sensible of Rosy, but she was a gal then, and it was New Year's time."

Now that again may not be understandable by city folkses, but in Soapstone New Year's day is the day for doin all sorts of queer things; playin all sorts of tricks—a kind of April Fool's Day comin on the fust of January. And anybody that is tricked at that time is bound to be forgiving, and it didn't seem to me to be fair for old Mrs. Perket and Maria Beckworth and Miss Maberly, all of 'em to speak to strangers of Rosy Wood as "the person that proposed to the Rev. Tobias Starch in her younger days and was rejected." Rosy hadn't ever married, and a spinsterhood of thirty-seven feels such slanders kinder heavy. An old lady could laugh it off, but when a person ain't neither young or old it's harder for 'em to bear. Mrs. Wood had said she couldn't stand to see Rosy so cut up, and there seemed no provin facts, unless I up and proved 'em, and proved 'em before all Soapstone, too, in a kind of public way.

"It had ought," said Jeremiah, "to be writ down and read as a paper. Jane Eliza, you air talented and hev the pen of a ready writer; then why not give it in a literary form?"

"Jeremiah," says I, "I will; you inspire me. I will write it, and I will read it at the minister's donation party ef I am spared. Only, Jeremiah, you must go to the store and fetch hum a bottle of ink, six pens and a quire of paper."

I said this in such a solemn manner that Jeremiah replied:

"Amen," quite unconscious, instead of sayin "I will," as he orter.

Bright and early he got the literary fixin's, includin a wafer, for we had remarked that legal afferdavids always had wafers onto 'em, likewise postage stamps, and day and night I sat before the succertary into the best parlor while things went to rack and ruin. The turkeys ran away, Jeremiah's stockings got holes into 'em, and Jeremiah's buttons came off and were not sewed on ag'in. I began my labors in the latter end of October. November passed, December came in, and still I writ, fur what with wishing fur to have a good style, and hevin considerbul to say, and remarks of my own to add, and poetry to quote, and getting it copied off neat, and hevin to refer to Webster's Unabridged continual, the work was slow, and every few days Jeremiah had to buy me another quire of paper and more ink. However, it was finished at last, and the appropriate time for readin it—the New Year's eve donationparty—had e'en a'most arrove when I put my MS. into Jeremiah's hands and said:

"Jeremiah, my work air accomplished. I return to my proper spear, and never will I leave it again, for writin one konsize statement is more labor than houseceleanin kept up remitless fur a year. Ef this had not been my duty as a perfesser I should hev fallen by the way. Read it loud, so that I shell know how it sounds before I read it myself," I says, sinkin into the largest rockin chair and foldin my weary hands.

Jeremiah took the passel and reviewed it with a kinder sublime expression onto his countenance.

"Jane Eliza," says he, "when I view this here noble work I feel proud of you. Your thoughts and feelin's must hev poured from your brain like it was a fountain. But, Jane Eliza, I hev read papers before the public and you hev not. Ten minutes is considered considerbul time for a paper, and fifteen is the limit of patience, unless it air a lecture with tickets paid for and people anxious for the worth of their money, when circumstances alters cases. This noble work, ef you was to begin to read it at the donation party at about 8 o'clock, would take you until that evenin next week, allowin time fur meals. It would be profitable fur them to hear it there ain't no doubts. But do you think the mass of the population of Soapstone is capable of riveting their attention on anything fur that there length of time?"

Jeremiah's words was uttered with a solemnitude that proved they were true. I looked at him speechless a minute, and says I:

"Land sakes alive! I see it all! My mental powers has got ahead of my common sense. What be I to do?"

Sez he:

"Before I speak you'll hev thought it out, Jane Eliza. Reduce it to fax. Read them to the donation party, and publish the rest on't in the shape of a book hereafter."

"Pardner of my life!" sez I. "A woman that has no husband to ask advise of is a poor, forlorn critter. I will expungh the ideas and confine myself to the fax, and read them to the meetin."

But Jeremiah saved me the toil of this ruther menial labor by gettin a copybook and expunghing the facts into that in his best handwritin, while I washed up some flannels, and on New Year's eve I took my production in a neat, compact form to the party.

It takes a lot of time for folks to get together and say their how-d'ye-do's and get their hats off, and the appropriate time didn't come for me to read until it was half past 9; then I riz up. I was glad Rosy Wood was there, and I was glad so many folks were out; but I was kinder sorry to see a stranger—a middlin aged man, pretty bald atop—apparently some one visitin our dominie; but it couldn't be helped, and everybody was lookin at me, and I was obliged to start.

"Bretheren and sistern,' sez I, "I hev somethin here I wish to read to you. It is a statement of the facts of the case betwixt Tobias Starch and Miss Rosy Wood. You may say inwardly, 'Why rake 'em up after twenty years of silence?' Bretheren and sistern, it was others that raked 'em up and gave 'em a wrong coloring. I stand here for to state the truth on my solemn Bible oath, with a wafer and a stamp at the bottom, and the names of witnesses attached. Some on 'em is dead and buried, but I wrote 'em down all the same. It is tryin me to stand here as I do, but the martyrs died for the truth, and I'm ready to suffer for it!"

Here the strange gentleman with the bald head said: "Good! Good! Right!" and gave me courage, and I began to read:

"My friends," sez I, "New Year's day, as we all know, is a day here for fun and frolicks and trick playin. They do say that Soapstone was fust settled by folks from Sweden, and that they had them habits and customs and handed 'em down to their ancestors. Perhaps it is so. Any way we do it, and we did it more twenty years ago, when those of us that was born was all younger than what we be this New Year's eve. At that there time Miss Rosy Wood, a lady we all know well, was jest seventeen, and full of fun as an egg is of meat, and being her ma had departed this life, and she didn't get on with her stepma, who is now in glory, she boarded to my house for a spell.

"At that time there was a young man that was studying for the ministry a-boardin with me. Most of you remember him. His name was Tobias Starch. He was jest twenty, but stiffer than a poker. Laugh was not in him, nor was he ever seen to smile, and he had been told by his ma that girls always set their caps for young ministers, and that he must beware. Therefore he was always bewarin plain to behold, and the one he bewared of most was Rosy Wood. She was a girl that laughed considerable, and she had a way of touchin folks on the arm when she spoke with her nice little hand, and all this scared Tobias Starch and made him think she wanted fur to marry him when she wouldn't hev done it ef he'd groveled onto his bended knees before her. However, Tobias went around tellin the other students how hard it was for him to get rid of her attentions, and they came and told her, and her spirit kinder riz, and she vowed and declared that come New Year's eve she would play him such a trick as would stop his braggin about bein made love to by the gals for good and all. Kin you blame her?"

"It served him right, ma'am!" says the strange gentleman in a loud voice, and everybody else said, "So it does!"

Sich is the power of popular opinion.

"Rosy Wood said this," I read on, "and what is more, she meant it, and when New Year's eve came she was ready. Mr. Starch always shut himself into his room to study after tea, and he never heard the little knocks on the door and the little giggles when we opened it. About twenty friends arrove, and as they came they sot down on chairs placed as for a meetin and kept mum as mice. Lights was all ready to light, but none was lit. Pretty soon the hull twenty we'd asked was present, and then Rosy Wood came in, whispered, 'All keep quiet,' and knocked on Tobias Starch's door.

"'Well,' says Tobias from inside.

"'Tobias,' says Rosy from outside the door, 'are you very busy?'

"'Yes,' said Tobias.

"'Too busy to come and spark a little?' said Rosy. 'Just a little. I'll have a lamp in the front parlor, and just you and me. Won't it be lovely, Toby, dear?'

"'I beg to be excused,' says Tobias.

"'I've sot so on it,' says Rosy, whimpering.

"'Kindly go away,' says Tobias from inside.

"'You are very cruel, Toby,' says Rosy, 'when you know how fond I be of you, Toby, darling.'

"'Miss Wood,' says Tobias Starch, 'I have never given you the privilege to call me Toby. Stop doing it. Go away.'

"'Toby, you can't mean it,' says Rosy.

"'I mean it!' called Tobias, very snappish.

"'Tobias,' says Rosy, as nat'ral as ever you heard, while we all choked ourselves with our han'kerch'efs, 'Tobias, I hev concealed my feelin's very keerful, but they can't be retained no more. Hear me, cruel being!'

"'I will not,' says Tobias. 'Go away, or I'll tell everybody. I know how I ought to behave, and I'm always particular. I promised ma I would be. Go away!'

"Then Rosy Wood did go too fur. My cheeks mantles with blushes as I read this here; but she was wild with fun and hearing us giggle and choke all about her.

"'Tobias,' says she, 'my intentions is honorable. I offer marriage. On my bended knees, Tobias, I beg you to be mine. Surely you will not refuse me.'

"'I am obliged to decline your offer, ma'am,' says Tobias Starch. 'I should choose a more retiring and proper behaved person. Go away!'

"As soon as he said them words Rosy began to weep. She wep' and sobbed and got highstrikes in a most nat'ral way. Finally she says faintly:

"'Tobias Starch, ajoo; your cruelty has killed me. Ajoo—ajoo!'

"Then she made a great noise fallin onto the floor, and Tobias opened the door. There warn't no light in our room, and his shaded lamp didn't reveal nothin.

"'Where are you, poor girl?' says he.

"'Here,' says Rosy. 'Embrace me once before I die.'

"'No,' says Tobias Starch, 'I will not embrace you. You air not dyin; your hands air warm; but I am very sorry for you. You will get over this ill fated attachment in time, and take a lesson from this affair, and remember that boldness in a lady is abhorrent to a man of principle Go to your room, Miss Wood, and pray to be comforted. I will pray for you.'

"'Assist me to rise,' says Rosy.

"There was a kind of bumping sound, and we knowed it was time to light up. In a minute a blaze of brilliance from half a dozen kerysene ile lamps and as many taller candles flooded the room, and Mr. Tobias Starch, settin onto the floor, looked around and saw the company, and heard 'em, too, for we laughed until we had to stop for breath. At last Jeremiah riz up and says he:

"'Come, Mr. Starch, don't feel mad. Rosy heard tell how't you said she was settin her cap for you, and this is only tit for tat.'

"But Tobias Starch never smiled. He riz up from the floor, walked into his room, come out with his bag in his hand and his hat on and walked out of the house, and next week left Soapstone for good.

"That night we jest larfed over our nuts and gingerbread and cider; but purty soon it got to be no laughin matter for Rosy Wood. Some wicked critter spread the report that she had actilly proposed to Mr. Starch, meanin it, and she was worrid sick by it.

"That," says I, closin my book, "was twenty years ago; but only this October the report was riz again, and spiteful things has been said in my hearin ag'in a lady that does not deserve it. So, unaccustomed as I am to public speakin, I hev riz up to tell the truth on my Bible oath over a seal and postage stamp, and let everybody ever after hold their tongue."

There was a kinder solemn silence. I dunno what may hev been comin, but jest then up riz the strange gentleman with the bald head and gives me a beamin smile, and says he:

"I should like to add my testimony to that of the sister that has just finished. I am a witness she has forgotten. I am Tobias Starch himself, grown considerably older, and I solemnly attest to the statement you have just heard. I was a little prig in those days, brothers and sisters, very conceited and very anxious to do right, too solemn and pokey, and not able to see a joke, and spoiled at home by my dear old mother, who spoils me still; but I was not bad enough to tell a falsehood. I never misrepresented Miss Wood, whose New Year's eve joke gave me a good lesson. I regret others have done it. I think I see Miss Wood yonder. Will she shake hands with me?"

I remember his very words, and how noble he looked standin there. And Rosy Wood came out of her corner, laughing and blushing and holding out her hand.

"I'm glad to ask your forgiveness, Mr. Starch," says she. "I was young and too full of fun in those old days. I've certainly got bravely over the first of those things anyhow."

"And my conceit has dropped away with my hair," says he.

But they didn't look either old or ugly, for all, as they stood there shakin hands, first with each other and then with me, and I felt proud of what I'd went and did.

That evening Mr. Starch devoted his attention most peticketer to Rosy Wood, and she didn't seem to hev no objections. He took her down to supper and pulled snapcrackers with her, and gave her mottoes, and eat a philopene with her, and he beaued her hum. He was a bachelor and had been goin west, and it seemed kinder providential that he should hev been visitin our dominie that very New Year's eve when I made up my mind to give the facts of Rosy Wood's case and stop the slander. And it seemed more so jest a few days before the next New Year's came round, when Rosy, with her eyes gleaming and her cheeks as red as lady slippers, put her arm through mine comin from church and said:

"Aunty, Tobias Starch and I are going to be married New Year's eve, and I am going with him on his mission. This time he proposed!"—Mary Kyle Dallas in Fireside Companion.

How Germany Celebrates.

The Germans begin to celebrate the first day of the new year on the last day of the old. The 31st of December, the day dedicated in the calendar of the church to St. Sylvester, pope and martyr, is with the vast majority of the people of northern Germany the great festive day, or rather festive evening, of the winter. Masquerades, private and public balls, and other festive gatherings are the order of the night. No private house, no restaurant or drinking place is without a huge Sylvester bowl of steaming punch, which has to be replenished again and again for the toasts drank to health and welfare of everybody and everything in the coming new year.

On the day itself—on the 1st of January—the majority of the male population of northern Germany suffer from headache in consequence of toasting too freely their friends and acquaintances during the previous night. Calls are made on the day among relatives and intimate friends only, except that in the ponderous bureaucratic system of Germany every government officer is expected to call on somebody above him in rank. How it is managed that all these state employees receive calls of their subordinates, and in their turn make calls on their superiors is a mystery to outsiders.—Hartford Times.

A Japanese New Year Breakfast.

The breakfast, or first meal of the New Year, is "something unique," and includes the toso and tea for drink, and for food the mochi, potatoes, fish, turnips, greens, soup, each of which may be served separately or all may be combined into a kind of stew, called zoni ("mix boil"). Among the well to do classes a large fish named buri, a kind of tunny fish, which has been salted, forms an important part of the New Year's feast. On that occasion the ordinary crockery of daily use will be laid aside, and wooden bowls, lacquered "red inside and jet black outside," with the family crest in gold, are brought out to grace the festal board. The children's bowls "are rendered more attractive with the pictures of flying cranes on the covers and tortoises with wide fringed tails among the waves on the exterior of the bowls, all in gold."—Chicago Tribune.

The New Year—An Invocation.

Oh, bright New Year with joyous mien,
With heart unknown to piercing woe,
Scatter abroad the gold of peace,
And bid the waves of pleasure flow!
With rhythmic sound and trembling sheen,
Through the channels of each soul,
Command War's thundering voice to cease;
Bid strong armed Plenty freely dole
Comforts to man; make Sol increase
The useful products of the green.
Hush Discord's voice that bringest forth
From fierce Pandora's box the ills
Unnumbered, that with lightning speed
Keep rack the bosom of the earth,
Depopulate its habitable hills,
Poison its soothing streams and rills,
And to a desert change the mead.
Strike, too, the heart, deep, down, within,
O'erwhelm it with disgust for Sin.
Cause Charity and Love to reign
Triumphant o'er each hill and plain.
Crush Mammon's head; to God alone
Let adoration true be shown.
Then loudly do we shout to thee:
Welcome! welcome!

—San Francisco Monitor.

New Year Superstitions.

The following superstitions in connection with New Year are still firmly believed in various parts of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales:

On New Year's morning go to a well or fountain and leave an apple and a nosegay, and the water will keep fresh and be more wholesome all the year.

It is bad luck to lend money on New Year's day.

Don't pay money out on New Year's day.
Put money away on New Year's day,
And all the year you will have money to pay.

Before locking the door for the night on New Year's eve place a gold coin near it, and let it remain there until the church bells ring the next morning, and you will have plenty of money all that year.

If you wash clothes on New Year's day, one of the family will be washed out of existence before the year is out.

It is unlucky to have a woman to be your first visitor on New Year's day.

If a dark complexioned man crosses your threshold first on New Year's day, you will be prosperous; if a blond, unlucky, and if a redheaded man, dire disaster will surely follow.

So strong is the belief in this last adage in some places that dark complexioned men are paid a small gratuity to call early and walk through the first floor of the house, entering by the back door and leaving by the front.—Exchange.

An Ancient Custom.

It seems that in the olden time it was customary to give gloves as presents on New Year's day. As they were very expensive, quite often a sum of money, called glove money, was given instead. Sometimes parents and official persons were presented with gloves by those who wished to conciliate or find favor with them. There is an anecdote about Sir Thomas Moore, who, having decided a case favorably for a lady client, received from her on New Year's day a pair of gloves containing forty gold coins called angels. He could not refuse the gloves, but sent back the coins with this note: "Mistress—Since it were against good manners to refuse your New Year's gift, I am content to take your gloves, but as for the lining I utterly refuse it."—Philadelphia Record.

Why Johnny Was Thankful.

Teacher—Johnny, can you tell me anything you have to be thankful for in the past year?

Johnny (without hesitation)—Yessur.

Teacher—Well, Johnny, what is it?

Johnny—Why, when you broke your arm you couldn't lick us for two months.—Life.

A Tiresome Task.

Clarence—Done anything lately, Cholly?

Cholly—Yaas; bought a diawy for 1893 last week and am waiting for New Year's to come to begin it. Awfully tiresome work waiting, awfully!

Clarence—Don't see how you stand the strain weally!—New York Herald.

Begins the New Year Earnestly.

Sunday School Teacher—Yes, children, the New Year should be full of bright hopes and aspirations for all of us.

Bright Boy—That's what my pa says.

Sunday School Teacher—Does he indeed?

Bright Boy—Yes, ma'am, and he always starts in by getting full of 'em too.—Rochester Post-Express.

A New Year's Thought.

Rocking in the firelight's glow
In this dreary land of snow,
Yearningly I dream
Of the sun's warm gleam,
Down where the orange blossoms grow.

I see a sky of sapphire hue—
So deeply, darkly, densely blue—
With the Southern Cross ablaze
In a tangled silver maze,
And a host of star eyes peeping through.

I smell the roses red and white,
Full blossomed in the warm moist night;
And the stately jasmine flower,
With all her subtle power,
Pouring out her soul's delight.

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Another year has come and gone,
And yet I struggle on alone!
What are fame and "career?"
There is nothing half so dear
As the few in life who really are our own!

—New York World.

NEW YEAR'S IN 1864.

INCIDENTS IN THE ESCAPE OF NORTHERN SOLDIERS FROM PRISON.

How Patriotic Will Denny Sang "The Star Spangled Banner" on the Tennessee Mountains—Weird Music from the Echoes in the Valley.

In the early part of 1863 three Federal soldiers found themselves in captivity in Columbia, S. C., in the stockaded prison best known as "Camp Sorghum." A long course of raw cornmeal and sorghum molasses, without salt or any means of cooking, had made the men desperate, and they resolved at all risks to break away and start for the north. James Dean and John Brady were from the Third Indiana infantry, while Francis Charcot was lieutenant in the First Tennessee. At this time there was a well understood route to freedom known to the prisoners, crossing the Saluda and Broad rivers into western North Carolina, and once in the Alleghanies it was not difficult to find guides and friends. So on the night of Nov. 8 the attempt was made. Charcot and Brady succeeded in crossing the dead line safely, but poor Dean was shot dead.

The survivors at once started on a run through the open pine woods. They did their best, for the cry of the dogs kept to pursue runaways from the stockade was plainly heard, but they finally baffled them by walking about 200 yards down a small stream, and in the early morning they saw the men and dogs hunting their lost trail.

Another start was made, and a long, weary walk through the rain, when they saw a small cabin ahead. Cautiously reconnoitering, an old negro came to the door, and at once asked them in. "I'ze heard of ye; de boss told me to keep my eye open and give an alarm," and the old fellow gave a hearty chuckle.

A baked coon and corn bread made the party a hearty supper, and a long and refreshing sleep followed.

And now for thirty-two weary days they kept on to the north, the face of the country becoming more and more mountainous, for they had reached the foothills of the Alleghanies.

Late at night they reached the home of "Shooting John Rogers," to whom they were directed. Carefully looking through the chinks, they saw one man sitting in front of the fire, while a tall woman was moving about the loom that took up half the room. A low whistle and the man sprung to his feet.

"Come on," said Charcot; "we're two to one and it's all right," and they entered.

The man said at once:

"Prisoners, where from? Why, I'm from Florence myself, and I've been forty days on the road."

Mrs. Rogers was reserved, but friendly, and the new companion was found to be a Vermonter named Denny, who was taken at Chattanooga, out of an Ohio regiment. He was certainly a character, as will appear further on. "Shooting John" was away, but expected home. After a supper of chicken and corn bread all hands lay on the floor and slept until midnight, when they were rudely awakened and found the room full of men in butternut suits and well armed. Their leader was a tall captain of the home guard, and inclined to be jolly. He asked for our adventurers and placed them under arrest, at which he laughed heartily. Guards were set, and all went to sleep again, and in the morning the fugitives found all the Confederates gone but three men, who were supposed to guard the prisoners, which they did in a very easy going manner, leaving their guns in the chimney while they went outside to divide a pint of applejack. With a rush the guns were taken, and, bidding the astonished "rebs" goodby, the "Yanks" marched up the road. The guards were only raw country boys and were, in fact, badly scared.

The fugitives soon learned that the rebel authorities wanted "Shooting John" badly and he was now in hiding in the mountains, so that it was not until Christmas day that they met him, being fed in the meantime at a stillhouse kept by a man named Bean.

From Rogers they learned that a party of thirteen prisoners and refugees was to start north, each of the soldiers to pay fifty dollars on reaching the Federal outposts. Early in the day, guided by Cissy Headly, a stout mountain lass, the three wanderers started for the rendezvous to meet Rogers. After making their way through the lands by a cattle track, they turned a high rock. The effect was startling. Before them lay seventy miles of the valley of east Tennessee; the air clear, the blue mountains were seen until lost on the horizon, the sun glistening on the snowy ridges. Leaning against the face of the rock was a log shanty. No one was there save an old negro, who said that the others would come before morning.

The girl started for home, and the rest of the party made themselves comfortable. They had plenty of food, and Bean had given Denny a half gallon jug of very good applejack, so New Year's eve was spent hilariously. The night was lovely, the moon near the full, pouring a flood of silvery light on the snow decked pines. As the night wore away Denny grew demonstrative and intensely patriotic, and rose with the remark that he was "goin to the top of the mountain to sing the 'Star Spangled Banner.'" The others remonstrated. The negro was white with terror.

"Whoop!" There was no stopping him, and in a moment he had gained the summit of the rock above the cabin. He was a large man, but his outlined form against the sky seemed gigantic—it was near morning—and striking an attitude he began in a powerful tone:

Oh! say, can you see by the dawn's early light—

We were all startled by what followed. The position he had taken was evidently a place of echoes, as from the valley below, palisaded with pines, came thunderous reverberations. "By the dawn's early light" rolled westward until until lost in faint melody in the recesses of the hills. And so it went on. It was very grand, but it might bring the enemy. Yet Denny was beside himself with excitement, and it was only after a repetition of the chorus that he came down, "The land of the free and the home of the brave" dying away in soft bugle notes.

When Rogers came in the morning he was told, and said: "Darn the mad Yankee! Let's get away," and so we started New Year's, 1864, and after seventy miles of tramp through a primitive wilderness reached the Union lines at Loudon. Of all the adventures that befell the wanderers in their escape nothing will be, while life lasts, so well remembered as Will Denny's music on that eventful New Year's day.—P. D. Haywood in Philadelphia Press.

He and Sorrow.

Why does his step with sorrow lag?
And why his eye o'ercast with grief?
He's getting o'er an Xmas jag
And turning over a new leaf.

—Brandon Bucksaw.

Ahab, king of Israel, was wounded by an arrow in a battle at Ramoth Gilead, and "about the time of the sun going down he died."

—READ—
OUR SPECIAL
NEW YEAR MATTER.

CHILDREN'S DAY IN PARIS.

The French Santa Claus Comes at New Year's—Dancing the Farandole.

New Year's day is in Paris what Christmas day is in England—the children's day. Paris is adorable to her children, but never shows herself a kindlier mother than then.

Just as on waking on Christmas day the English child wonders what the morning shall surely bring forth in acquired possessions, so does the Parisian little one on opening its eyes look round for those long hoped for etrennes that have formed the subject of its dreams for days and nights past. It is on the bed itself, or else on the table of the nursery, that the French Santa Claus displays his guerdons. And Mars shows us such a scene, where waking, a little girl sees what a dear visitor has come in the night.

From the highest to the lowest the Parisians make a point on this day of rendering the reveille of their little ones a happy one. I can remember how grand old Victor Hugo, when Jeanne and George were still mites, was busy most of New Year's eve in laying out the surprises of the morrow. It was my good fortune to spend one such eve with him, during which the bitter satirist showed me how it was that the same pen that penned "Les Chatiments" could also have writted "L'Art d'Etre Grandpere." But I have seen the same enthusiasm everywhere, even in those on whom the veneer of Parisian cynicism is most thickly laid.

One might call New Year's day in Paris the children's day, for on this day it is certainly the little ones who are most considered. Mars gives us several scenes that may be witnessed on such a day, and in each scene it will be noticed the little ones play the foremost parts. Here it is the visit paid by the proud mother to her friend, where little Rene or Paulot is taken out in his best attire to wish with his pretty little lisp the good and happy year to his mother's old schoolmate. There it is the visit to the boulevard fair which the children would not miss, poor though the show is. Yet the long lines of booths, surrounded by animated crowds, are on a fine afternoon a pretty sight enough—a sight at any rate which delights children, even where their parents buy them nothing.

I have seen pilgrimages of little ragged ones from Belleville and Montrouge descending like a flock of tattered sparrows on the unfamiliar boulevards on such a day, just for the pleasure of seeing. And doubtless toys thus exposed in the open air—indeed the whole unconventionality of it all—appeal to that instinct of bohemianism which is in the nature of all little children till the schoolroom and long years of discipline have destroyed it. Here we have the children, surfeited with presents from their parents, showing gratitude and filial affection, besides other virtues which they have been taught to admire, in their turn affording their parents an agreeable surprise. What a pretty comedy the parents will play when the little ones come in, each with his "compliment" in his hand, fairly copied out and bound with gayest ribbons!

Then, as handing over these letters patent of affection, the little ones drawl forth with blushing hesitations the lines of the verse they have learned, the affected pleasure of the parents must come to be really felt. How well Jeanne speaks her lines; what pretty gestures Jean has got! In the evening, in most Parisian houses, after the dinner at which all members of the family have been present, a children's party is held. In some houses, in the houses of the rich and the fashionable, may be the farandole will be danced by the little ones, as Mars shows us. But where even the name of the farandole was never known there will be gladness and childish happiness. And it cannot be denied that a city which begins a new year of life amid the joyous laughter and merry games of its little ones makes no such bad beginning.—R. H. Sherard in London Graphic.

A Scottish Custom.

"Dipping" is another practice followed on New Year's day, but it has nothing to do with snuff. A Bible is opened haphazard, and the first verse that catches your eyes tells your fate for the ensuing year. In Scotland friends are entertained on the last night of the year, and as the clock strikes midnight every one exchanges kisses—men and all.

In some parts of England a band plays religious music in the main street for an hour before midnight, but as soon as the New Year arrives loyal tunes and merry airs are substituted, and a procession is formed and the citizens march through the town. Another old custom is to open the doors and windows at midnight to welcome the New Year. In Ireland boys run about on New Year's day with little twisted wisps of straw, which they hand you as an omen of prosperity, and expect an acknowledgment in return.—Selected.

The Roman Calends.

In the earliest calendars of the Jewish nation, as well as in those of the Egyptians, Greeks and Romans, no mention is made of the 1st of January. The year did not begin with that month, but with March; but when Numa Pompilius became emperor he added January and February. The first month he named in honor of the god Janus, the deity who was supposed to preside over doors and gates and might be inferred to have something to do with the opening of the year. The Romans dedicated the whole month to their god because at that time the husbandmen in southern Italy began their labors in the fields and vineyards. The emperor also decreed that henceforth the first day, or the "calends" of January, should be celebrated as New Year's day.—Exchange.

NEW YEAR MASQUERADES.

Like Many Other Customs They Are Reminders of Paganism.

The custom of masquerading at New Year dates back to pagan times, long before the commencement of the Christian era. The practice embraced two principles, homage and indulgence, and also included the making of friendly calls and the presentation of gifts, and in spite of all opposition this form of celebrating New Year has, with some modifications, continued to the present day.

In the Fifth century the church began an energetic crusade against this "pagan practice." St. Maximus, of Turin, raised his voice against "the superstitious folly of the 1st of January, when Christians put on habits of intemperance and seek to forestall their friends with