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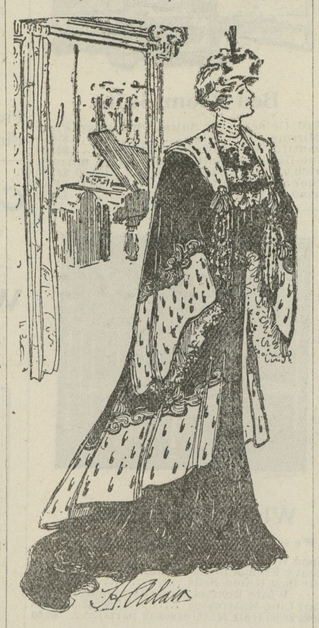
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CLIFTON L. JARRELL

Their Watch Meeting

By JOHN BARTON OXFORD

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THE clock on the mantel chimed the half hour before midnight as they came into the room. Potter threw wood on to the fire and by dint of much exertion with the bellows succeeded in raising quite a respectable blaze. From a chair near the hearth Filomena watched him indolently, and when he had hung the bellows on the little brass hook she motioned him to the chair beside her own.

For a time they watched the blaze in silence. Filomena's chin rested pensively in her upturned palm, and Potter's hands toyed idly with the tongs. The aggressive ticking of the clock, the crackle of the fire and the whistle of the wind outside were the only sounds to break the stillness.

Presently Potter put down the tongs with a great deal of unnecessary clatter and turned to the girl.

"The latest bulletin from the old year shows him to be very feeble," he



"YOUR LAST OUTBURST REACHED ME AT GENOA."

said. "Pulse weak, respiration scarcely perceptible. The poor old chap is so worn out he will last but twenty-five minutes longer. Sort of melancholy, isn't is?"

The girl was silent.

"Say, Fil," he said with sudden impulsiveness, "I shall miss these heart to heart talks before this old fireplace awfully."

"Indeed," she said rather frigidly.

"Awfully," he repeated. "A fellow gives up a lot when he marries, doesn't he?"

Her chin raised from her palm, and she looked at him with steady disapproval.

"Don't look at me like that, Fil," he said. "Between such old friends as you and me a bit of confession won't be misunderstood."

"Did you bring the letters?" she asked quietly.

"Yes," he said.

He delved into a bulging pocket and brought forth a packet of old letters that gave evidence of much handling. He laid them on his knee.

"Here they are," he said.

"Put them in the fire," she said shortly.

He looked at them tenderly.

"I shall keep them until next year, if you don't mind," he said. "It's only twenty minutes, you know," he added.

"As you like," she said.

"They are ripping old letters," he asserted. "No one could ever write a letter like you, Fil."

He untied the string that bound them and ran hastily through the envelopes.

"Here's the one you wrote me from Venice," he said. "Listen!"

Despite her look of anger he pulled the letter from the envelope and read:

Dear Old Dave—Your last outburst reached me at Genoa. "Never!" (as the persecuted heroine in the melodrama shrieks) "Never!" You'll thank me for all this some day when you meet the one and only Her for wasting all this ink and paper in writing you a refusal from every stopping place. Why will you propose in every letter, Davy? I have filled twenty-five sheets with "no's" and hereafter when you ask me again shall simply mail you one of these sheets.

He paused and looked at her.

"Well, you may thank me now," she said with a sorry attempt at levity.

"I'm not so sure I want to," he said.

"Dave!" There was sharp reproof in her voice.

"Don't misunderstand me. I'm not disloyal to—to her. Only"—

"I wouldn't explain," she said coldly.

He put the letter back in the envelope and drew out another.

"Here is one from Rome," he said. "Ah, yes! This is the one simply filled with 'no's.' Fil, you have given me more misery than any other woman ever has or ever can give me."

"You'll forget it in your new happiness," she said.

"Heaven send I do!" he said fervently.

She eyed him curiously. Then, with a sudden movement of her hand, she swept the letters from his knee into the fire.

"Exeunt omnes! They all go out!" she said, but there was a suspicion of artifice in her mocking laugh.

Potter sprang from his chair and stood moodily contemplating the burning paper.

"It's nearly 12," she said. "Let's have a toast or two before we drink to the new year."

She went to the little table in the corner and filled two cups from the punch bowl.

"I'll give you one," she said gayly. "Here's to the Mrs. David Potter that is to be! May she believe she has always been supreme in the heart of David!"

"Amen!" said he, and drained his glass.

Then he refilled the glasses at the punch bowl.

"My turn now," he said. "To Mrs. David Potter that is to be! She has always reigned supreme in the heart of David!"

Filomena's hand trembled as she raised her glass. Potter noted this from the corner of his eye. He came close beside her.

"Filomena," he said solemnly, "before another year is finished I shall be married. I shall be very happy, and you"—

Her eyes suddenly filled with tears.

"Don't!" she said weakly.

Potter looked at her searchingly, then drew back his head and laughed. The girl's face grew bitter as she listened.

"I think you'd be happier if you knew who the lady was," he said. "You might at least ask her name."

"Who—who is she?" said Filomena.

"You, my Lady Disdain." Potter chuckled as he caught her in his arms.

Ten minutes later she was the old Filomena.

"Really, Dave, I haven't said yet I'd marry you," she said.

Potter grinned.

"There are times when words are quite superfluous," he observed.

A New Year Sermon.

There can be only one way to have a happy New Year, and this by doing good. I have often seen this recipe for happiness: "Take a lot of good nature, plenty of fun, mix well together, then once in awhile add a sweet, sunny smile. It will make sunshine in the gloomiest weather."

This is very much like telling a man who wants a fountain in his front yard to build a reservoir, fill it with water and make the proper connection with his fountain. This will do as long as the supply of water in the reservoir lasts, but what will become of the fountain when the reservoir is empty? To have a fountain one must have an inexhaustible source of water supply. So long as one has good nature and sunny smiles he may be happy, but what will he do when these things give out, as they are sure to do sooner or later? To be continually happy one must have an inexhaustible source of supply, and that can best be kept up by continually trying to help other people.—William Wirt King, D. D., St. Louis.

Ringing In the New Year.

Among the old customs we of today cling most fondly to is the one of ringing the church bells at midnight, heralding the birth of the new year.

Although the poetic figure of the gray haired sexton pulling his bell with might and main in the belfry tower has been supplanted by the fin de siecle individual who, snug and warm, sits at a keyboard and reels off the music with as much ease as though playing "Moneymusk" in the parlor, the sentiment lingers, and, listening to the mellow chimes cleaving the frosty air, one hears the singing in unison of—

Ring out the shapes of foul disease,
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

—New York Tribune.

Let the Dead Past Go.

One of the secrets of right living is letting that go which absorbs our energies and retards our progress. We should let our unfortunate past experience drop into the world of oblivion. We should never recall a disagreeable memory or mistake unless it be to arm ourselves against falling into further errors. If the past torments and haunts you cut it off sharply as if with a knife. Do not allow its shadow to darken your present or rob your future of its possibilities. Profit by the lessons it has taught, but do not morbidly brood over them.—E. S. Martin in Success.

New Year Beverage.

To make ginger punch for twenty-five people put into a preserving kettle one quart of cold water, one cupful of sugar, three-fourths of a pound of Canton ginger, chopped, and four tablespoonfuls of ginger sirup. Boil twenty minutes. Add one cup of orange juice and half a cup of lemon juice. Cool, strain and pour into the punch bowl with cracked ice and one quart of apollinaris water, adding the latter gradually.

The Tramp's New Year.

The new year comes. Alas!
Why must the old year pass?
It knows me, scorns me; still
I have no heart, no will
To meet the new year; so
Why should not I, too, go
With the old year's dying breath
Into the night of death?

Old year, I loved you not;
The path is not forgot;
The thorns, the treacherous light
That oft deceived my sight.
The way was cold, old year,
And misty, wild and drear.
'Tis well the time is nigh
When you and I may die.

Sweet memories, old year,
Of love and song and cheer
Will fondly live for you,
And songs ring through the new.
But I, unsung, shall pass
Even as withering grass,
And leave behind, old year,
A laugh, perchance a tear.

—Buffalo News.

THE CHINESE NEW YEAR.

How Uncle Sam's Celestial Children Celebrate the Day.

The Chinese residents of this country are now about the only people who really observe New Year's day, says the Washington Star, and even John Chinaman does not oil up his cue and make himself orientally attractive on the first day of January. His New Year's celebration, which is the greatest holiday of the Chinese year, falls on the 22d day of the month. This day is the only Sunday in the entire Celestial year, and the people stop work, put on their best clothes—new ones if there be any at hand—and take the only bath they indulge in during the year. They call on their friends, rejoice generally and enjoy themselves to the greatest possible degree.

Red—the most brilliant red—is over everything. The presents given are wrapped in red paper, and the signs and symbols over the little laundry and curio shops are of this bright color. Eggs are painted red and offered to the gods. At night the sky is lurid with red lights, which the Chinaman burns to scare away the devils of misfortune and any evil which might lurk around and bring bad luck.

One custom the Chinese have which many members of the occidental race would find embarrassing is that of paying all debts on New Year's day.

Another peculiarity they have which we might adopt to advantage is the curiously frank one of offering their small vices for sale, so they may start the year with a clean record. One hardly believes American sins would find a purchaser even if they were put on a bargain sale counter. However, in Chinatown children are seen running through the streets crying, "I want to sell my little lies!" or "Who wants to buy my bad temper and my vanity?"

A STRANGE WATCH NIGHT.

The Most Charming of German New Year Customs.

The most charming of the German New Year's customs is one observed from time immemorial in Frankfort-on-the-Main. There at the same moment the whole city salutes itself, wishes itself a happy New Year.

On the night of Dec. 31 all the city keeps the festival, watching the old year out and the new year in. Family parties or gatherings of friends are to be found in every house.

Suddenly at the exact moment when from the great dome of the cathedral the first stroke of midnight sounds every house throws wide open its windows. Forth from the casement lean all the residents of the town, old and young together, each with glass in hand. The glass is raised on high, and the words of the toast burst on the astonished air of night in one massive tone born of more than a hundred thousand voices joined in the cry, "Prosit Neujahr!" ("Happy New Year.")

The whole city thus salutes itself, invoking a blessing for the coming year in its first moment. The sonorous majesty of the sentiment sends out its echoing clamors for a few brief moments, then ceases. Before the last clang of the twelve from the cathedral's dome has melted into silence the windows have been closed, and the hush of midnight settles once more over the deserted streets of the city.—Christian Endeavor World.

New Year's In Roumania.

On New Year's day the children of the Wallachs and the Transdanubian Roumanians take olive branches and go from house to house to compliment the neighbors with their good wishes, which are not altogether disinterested, as they expect to receive in return some little present. On the second day of the year every stranger entering a house is required to throw on the fire small quantities of salt, which are placed in cups on the table for that purpose. He must then go to the henhouse and place an egg in the nest for the hen to sit upon. If the hen consents to perform her duty the guest is considered a fortunate person and is feted in that house until evening. This custom is called "the lucky foot."—New York Tribune.

The President's New Year's.

On New Year's day the president of the United States more than earns his salary, for he often shakes hands with 6,000 or 7,000 of his curious and admiring fellow citizens. The crowd is carefully watched by secret service men in frock coats, and two or three stand near him all the time, prepared to seize any crank who approaches with murderous intent.

New Year's Greetings.

Persia.—"Mombarek bawshed!" ("May it be prosperous to you.")

Japan.—"Shinen ome deto!" ("I wish you a happy New Year") and "Banzai raku!" ("Good luck for a thousand years.")

China.—"Kung-hi! Kung-hi!" ("I respectfully wish you joy") and "Sinhi! Sinhi!" ("May the new joy be yours.")

New Year's Calls.

The custom of New Year's calls, once so prevalent in Japan, was introduced into Holland, it is said, by the Dutch merchantmen who traded with Japan early in the fifteenth century.

For a New Year Dinner.

Consomme.
Baked Fish with Sauce Piquant.
Roast Duck with Oyster or Celery Sauce.
Currant Jelly. Pickled Peaches.
Grape Fruit.
Boiled Turkey or Roast Pig.
Crab Apple Jelly. Mixed Pickles.
Chopped Cabbage Garnished with Fried Oysters.
Asparagus—White and Sweet.
Potatoes. Turnips. Onions.
Celery. Apple Salad. Apple Pie.
Mince Pie. Plum Pudding.
Ices and Creams. Fruit. Nuts.
Figs. Raisins. Crackers and Cheese.
Coffee.

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The Kind You Have Always Bought

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"I find Thedford's Black-Draught a good medicine for liver disease. It cured my son after he had spent $100 with doctors. It is all the medicine I take."—MRS. CAROLINE MARTIN, Parkersburg, W. Va.

If your liver does not act regularly go to your druggist and secure a package of Thedford's Black-Draught and take a dose tonight. This great family medicine frees the constipated bowels, stirs up the torpid liver and causes a healthy secretion of bile.

Thedford's Black-Draught will cleanse the bowels of impurities and strengthen the kidneys. A torpid liver invites colds, biliousness, chills and fever and all manner of sickness and contagion. Weak kidneys result in Bright's disease which claims as many victims as consumption. A 25-cent package of Thedford's Black-Draught should always be kept in the house.

"I used Thedford's Black-Draught for liver and kidney complaints and found nothing to excel it."—WILLIAM COFFMAN, Marblehead, Ill.

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Makes Kidneys and Bladder Right

To Cure a Cold in One Day

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