

Poetry.

THE CHRISTMAS BELLS.

Ring, Christmas bells, ring loud and clear,
Proclaim the joyful news to men,
That Jesus Christ, the Saviour dear,
Is born this day in Bethlehem.

Ring, Christmas bells, softly, and low,
Nor let your sweetest music cease,
Till every where the people know
This newborn babe the Prince of peace.

Ring, Christmas bells, in tender tones
Proclaim again God's wondrous love;
The tidings lead to distant zones,
"Good will to men" from Heaven above.

Ring, Christmas bells, your cheerful notes
Again awake our songs of praise;
While over the earth your music floats,
Our hearts in thankfulness we'll raise.

Ring fast, ring slow, ring loud,
Ring, Christmas bells, ring everywhere,
Calling all to the house of God,
To bow their hearts in humble prayer;

And there in reverence gladly give
Thanks to the Lord, his praises sing;
Twas he who died that we may live,
Then let us Crown him Saviour—King.

THE MAIDEN AND THE YEAR.

A funny little maiden, who had heard her mother say
That in the night, at twelve o'clock, the Old Year
Went away,
Concluded not to go to sleep, and she perhaps might be
The very first in all the world the baby year to see!

She laid a plan out in her mind, what would be best to do,
And thought she'd try and count the stars that lined
The whole sky through,
And that would keep her broad awake, for fear of
skipping some.

And then, when she had finished quite, the little
year might come.
She watched them twinkling as they shone, through
window near her bed,
And wondered how God's arms could reach to light
them all overhead.

And if the moon their mother was, and when she
went away,
If some of them (the tiniest) were not afraid to stay,
It hurt her head to count and count and count so
many things.

The while she listened breathlessly for voices in the
air;
But not a sound disturbed the night, no pinnies
floated by
And yet (how strange it was so still!) the glad New
Year was nigh.

"Good-night, dear year," the darling said, "(O
happy year, good-night!"
I think I'll close my eyes just once, to rest them for
the light."

And then, if some one breathed a sigh, so softly
sleeping here,
Perhaps it was the little maid, perhaps it was the
Year.

By Cass, in December Wide Awake.

The Fireside.

NEW YEAR'S DAY.

Day was breaking, and the bells were ringing
most merrily when Arthur opened his eyes.
"New Year's Day, I do believe!" It is jolly;
here goes to be first."

That was what he thought; and he sprang out of
bed, and only staying partially to dress himself, he
ran across the passage and knocked at his mother's
door.

"Maama, maama, I wish you a happy New Year.
And, papa, the same to you. A happy
New Year and many of them."

Then he listened for the answer, and it came
through the door.
"Thank you, Art. I hope it will be very happy
to you also," said his father.

But his mother said something that brought the
color to the boy's face.
"Thank you, Arthur, dear, for your kind
wishes. My New Year will be very much what my
boy makes it for me."

Now perhaps no one would quite like to be told
such a thing as that. It is putting too great a
responsibility upon him for his comfort, and yet it
is quite true. The years are to our friends and
parents very much what we make them; and if we
choose to be careless, selfish, and forgetful, they
will be sad; while, on the other hand if we are
loving, kind, and thoughtful, they will be much more
happy than they would be otherwise. With Arthur,
however, this was especially the case, and he knew it.

His mother loved him most fondly, and had
shown her love in all possible ways since he was a
little baby, and she carried him in her arms about
the house. He could remember it still, for he used
to like it very much. It was so splendid to sit on
her shoulder and ride there as if he was a king,
and know, if he thought of it at all, that she would
not let him fall for all the world. Those days had
passed now, and he was a big boy, too big by half
to ride on his mother's shoulder, or to be carried in
her arms. But she loved him just the same as ever,
and if there was one thing which more certainly
than another could make his mother sad it was for
him to do wrong and show himself other than kind
and good. And unfortunately this happened rather
often. He was not, as he felt this morning more
strongly than ever, all that he ought to be, nor all
that he meant to be.

He had made good resolutions, like many other
boys. This morning when his mother spoke he
especially remembered one. She had taken him to
the service in the cathedral, and there something
that the minister said made him think over his own
conduct. Perhaps it was the music and the singing
that touched him, but whatever it was the boy
could not keep the tears out of his eyes, nor prevent
his heart from beating quickly. His emotion,
however, took a practical form.

"I will be a better boy to my mother," he said,
and at the time I am sure that he meant it.

But the resolution had been broken. Arthur
knew that if it had not been, his mother would not
have said as she did. "My New Year will be very
much what my boy makes it for me." That remark
assured him that ever since the time he had
meant to be better he had often grieved his mother.

What was to be done now? As he went back to
his room, rather sorrowfully and thoughtfully than
he had left it, he wondered if it would always be
so. His mother would suffer through him. Some
mothers he knew, were made unhappy by their
boys all their lives long. He remembered hearing
one lady say that she had shed bottles of tears over
her boy; and another that her hair had been turned
grey because her son was not a good man; and
Arthur thought he never could forgive himself if it
were so he was in his case.

What could he do? He knew that the first thing
of all was to kneel down and ask God's help, and
blaming on his endeavors. He was not afraid to
do this, for he knew that his Father in Heaven
loved him, and wished to see all his little boys
happy.

And then he thought of the things in himself
that ought to be mended. These were not difficult
to find. The worst thing about him he knew was
his temper, and the next was his selfishness. He
had a bad temper, and was very easily offended.
He often felt ashamed of himself, but he generally
tried to believe that it was not his fault, but that
he could not help it. This morning he saw it in

another light, however. "I must help it," he said.
"I have determined that I will not spoil this year
for my mother, but will make her happy, and so I
must conquer my faults."

When his mother appeared at breakfast time
Arthur went forward for his morning kiss.
"Mother, I do mean to be better this year," he
said. "Please help me all that you can. Indeed I
will not let your New Year be spoiled by me."

"I believe you are a boy of your word, Art,"
she said. "And I have every confidence in you."
That very morning, however, his good resolu-
tions were put to the test. Arthur wanted some
meat-pie for breakfast, and his mother thought it
was not good for him.

"I would rather you had an egg, Arthur," she
said.
The color flushed up into his face, and he almost
said a cross word. "I am never allowed to have
what I like."

He did not say it, but that was what he was
going to say, when he stopped and thought of the
promise he had made. Then his face cleared and
a better feeling came into his heart.

It does not matter, he thought to himself.
"It will be all the same in half an hour's time
whether I have an egg or meat pie. I will not
mind so much about things."

Now Arthur had just touched upon that which
was at the bottom of his faults. He minded too
much about having all the best things himself; and
about being treated well by other people. From
that morning whenever he felt hurt or disappointed,
he said to himself, "I can bear it, it does not really
matter," and he kept quiet until the feeling of
anger had quite passed away. And his mother
had what she wished; her New Year was thorough-
ly happy; for her boy was really good, since he
learned self-control and became less selfish than he
had formerly been.

THE GOLD DOLLAR.

A secretary of the American Board was visiting
a town in Maine; and as he was sitting by the fire
one day, a little boy in the family came to him and
said—

"I want a gold dollar."
The gentleman looked at him, but didn't say any-
thing; and he said a little louder, "I want a gold
dollar."

"Yes," was the answer. "My boys are fond of
gold."
"I would like one very much," said the boy.
"Johnny has got one, and Charley; but I haven't
any."

The secretary thought the little fellow was trying
to beg a shod out of him, or the money to buy one.
He saw that his little girl was clutching it, and he
did not know what he was going to do. By and by
he opened his hand, and there was a gold dollar in it.
Said he—

"I was going to buy you a sled with this dollar;
but I will give it to you to help those who are in
Africa." He did his best. He gave all he had,
and gave it heartily.

Before Mr. W. left the city, he walked out,
and met the three little boys riding, three
boys and two sleds. They darted down by him,
"Charlie on his sled 'Rover,' and Johnny on his
sled 'Racer.' They smiled at the gentleman as they
passed. But where was Jimmy, the gold-doll-
ar boy? He was on behind Johnny, holding tight
upon his coat, just able to keep his seat. He, too,
turned his face with a smile; and his was the best
that face and the pleasant smile of the whole.
Why not? He had planted the smile in his heart
by the good deed.—*Twelve Years with the Children.*

NO STOCKING.

Peter is a pale little fellow with blue eyes,
which look as if full of tears ready to drop at any
moment. When a baby he had a fall which hurt
his spine, and now he is a hunchback. He does
errands for the fishman before and after school; his
poor mother works hard to keep him at school.

She says, "He'll never be any good for hard
work, and I'm just sure that fine hand write of his
will make him a clerk, yet."

The great trouble at our happy home on Chris-
mas Eve was to find stockings large enough to hang
for Santa Claus; and the sweet mother says she
will get some poor woman to knit some big enough
for a giant, before next winter!

Last Friday, when poor little Peter brought his
can of oysters, one of the children said to him.
"You must tell me where you live, Peter; and
be sure to hang up a very big stocking Christmas
Eve."

Peter dropped his blue eyes, and said, in a very
low tone.
"O, but take both that you are wearing, if you
haven't any larger ones," said the kind child.

"But I haven't any," said the boy, at the
same time raising one leg of his thin, little pants,
and showing a bare, blue ankle!

Just think of it, you happy little ones, whose
mothers fill stockings and load trees for your pleas-
ure. Poor Peter not only had no hope of presents,
but he had no stockings to keep his feet warm, as
he ran about with his fish and his oysters!

You may be sure he has good warm ones now,
and that he had them both filled; but there are
hundreds of little boys and girls around us, who
want to bed cold on Christmas Eve, without any
stockings, either to hang for presents or to keep
them warm the next day.

In your happiness look about you, and share
your good things with the poor. That will please
Christ more than trimming churches, burning can-
dles, or ringing bells. He was once a poor child
on earth. He pities poor children now that
He is in heaven, and will bless all who for His sake
remember and try to comfort them.

DIDN'T MEAN TO.

John came home very angry. "Some one left
the bars down," he said, "and the cows are gone.
I can't find them."

So her father had a long hunt, and came home
very tired. Next day Jenny was late at school,
and had a black mark. "Why were you not in
time?" asked the teacher.

"I stopped a minute to play with Katie Brown,
and I didn't think it was so long. I didn't mean
to be late."

That same week she was playing with the kitten
one day, when the baby was sitting on the floor.
Jenny did not look where she was going, and
so, that he fell over and hurt his head very
badly. He cried so loud that his mamma came.

"How did he get this great bruise?"
"I hurt him," said Jenny; "I did not mean to
do it."

Then her mother told her that this didn't mean
it, she let it live, would grow into a great, ugly
giant habit, and make a slave of her.

So Jenny said she would try very hard to let it
while it was little; and she has grown so careful
since then that you might play with her for a year
and not find out that she was the very little girl I
have told you about.

LITTLE THINGS.—A serpent's fang is a little thing,
but death is its victory.
A baby is a little thing, but a constable was
once a baby.

A crow word is a little thing, but it is what stirs
up the elephant.
The tongue is a little thing, but fills the universe
with trouble.

An orange peel on the sidewalk is a little thing,
but it has upset many a giant.
A word is a little thing, but one word has been
many men's destiny, for good or for evil.

A spark is a little thing, but it can light a
poor man's pipe, or set the world burning.
The more a little thing, but the black bear and
his family live in the oak that springs from it.

A minute is a little thing, but it is long enough
to pull a dozen aching teeth, or to get married and
have your own mother-in-law.
Life is made up of little things. Life itself is
but a little thing; one breath less, then comes the
funeral.—*Josh Billings.*

I HEARD two little girls talking under my win-
dow. One of them said, in a voice full of indigna-
tion.—"If I were in your place, I'd never speak
to her again. I'd be angry with her as long as I
lived." I listened, feeling anxious about the re-
ply. My heart beat more lightly when it came.

"No, Lou," answered the other, in a sweet and
gentle voice; "I wouldn't do so for all the world.
I'm going to forgive and forget just as soon as I
can."

A Boy's Reasoning.—"My son," said Leigh
Richmond, "remember, you must die; and you
may die soon, very soon. If you are to die a boy,
you must look for a boy's religion, a boy's know-
ledge, a boy's faith, a boy's Saviour, a boy's sal-
vation; or else a boy's ignorance, a boy's obstinacy,
a boy's unbelief, a boy's idolatry, a boy's destruc-
tion. Remember all this, and beware of sin; dread
the sinfulness of an unchristian heart; pray for a
new one; pray for grace and pardon, and a soul
conformed to the image of Christ Jesus."

To BOSS A TURKEY.—After a fowl is drawn, take
a very sharp knife and carefully separate the flesh
from the bones, beginning at the wings, and being
very careful not to break the skin; scrape the flesh
clean from the bones, going from the wings to the
breast, then the thighs, then the legs; when all
the bones are loosened, take hold of the turkey
tightly by the neck and give it a pull, when the
bones will come out, but this requires the greatest
patience and care to do nicely, and it is far better
to send it to a professional cook to do it for you.

MYSTIX.—Mix with a pint of warm milk two
well-beaten eggs, half a teaspoonful of melted but-
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well-beaten eggs, half a teaspoonful of melted but-
ter, and half a glass of water, with a teaspoonful
of salt and a bit of saleratus the size of a large
pea (dissolved in hot water), stir in enough stiff
wheat-flour to make a thick batter, stir it in a warm
place for an hour, and give it a pull, when the
bones will come out, but this requires the greatest
patience and care to do nicely, and it is far better
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