

A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

I send to you a greeting,
Dear, unknown friends, to-day,
Wherever you may journey
God speed you on your way;
God's smile be on you, every one,
And make the time that comes to us
A happy, happy year.

I have not seen the faces
That many of you wear,
But I know they oft are shaded
By sorrow and by care;
I cannot hear the voices
That sing the songs of earth,
But I know that sometimes there are sighs
To check the joyous mirth.

We often kneel together
Before our Father's feet,
Perhaps we pass each other
Along the crowded street.
We shall go home together,
And know as we are known,
Within our Father's house above
When He shall call His own.

And so I send my wishes
To you across the snow,
My heart longs for the blessings
Which you desire to know;
God make, if it be best for you,
The trouble-storm to cease,
And give to you true riches,
And fill you with His peace.

May winter days grow cheery
With love for warmth and light,
May summer's joy last all the year,
To make your spirits bright,
May labour have its guerdon
Of good reward and rest,
And with the holiest benison
May each of you be blest.

May this new year be better
Than any gone before,
Filled with devoted service,
And crowned with Plenty's store;
God cheer it with His presence,
And, if it be the last,
Grant an eternity of bliss
When the fleeting years are past.

—Marianne Farningham.

Our Serial.

MURIEL'S KEY-NOTE.

BY AGNES GIBBERNE.

CHAPTER I.

TWILIGHT.

Muriel Bertram had come to a standstill on her way home. She was rather given to doing so at this particular spot. The Claverton Road, winding round the hill half-way up its side, was lonely, and twilight had set in; but Muriel could not resist the temptation to linger. "Just for a minute," she said to herself. Of course the minute lengthened.

Something in the influences of that February afternoon held her spell-bound. Earth, air, and sky were alike in their stillness. Across the road at her back was a wood, cut across by divers paths, and clothing the hill to its summit. The low parapet in her front went deep into a sharply descending field and a wide stretch of country lay beyond.

It was a grey sort of day, but the grey, Quaker-like in softness, had a beauty of its own. Blue mists gathered in hollows, or circled clumps of trees, and a silver brook wound through the broad pasture-lands. Outlines of hills stood in purple clearness against a yellow-white horizon, which caught a pinkish hue toward the west. Slight glimmers of green near at hand gave promise of spring.

Muriel, with her head thrown backwards, and her hand on the ivy-clad wall, took in the picture dreamily. There was something un-English and out of the common about her; and about the curve of her mouth, and the fall of her eyelids, a touch of repression and sadness.

Knowing she ought to hasten on, she yet delayed. The extreme quiet of all around infected her with a curious disinclination to move. Few people passed along this upper road at any time, and in winter it was especially lonely. Muriel had met none, and did not expect to meet any. She was in a mood for solitude, and had become so much wrapped up in her own thoughts as to be quite unaware of a break in her solitude.

For she was no longer alone. In the road, at a short distance, stood a gentleman, holding somewhat aloof; and a small maiden of eight years—a brown-eyed child of delicate make, with hair in a flaxen cloud falling below her waist—had crept stealthily to her side.

"Cousin Muriel,"
The touch on her sealskin jacket made Muriel start.

"I thought it was you," said the child.

"Why, Connie?"
Muriel caught the little figure in her arms, and held it fast. A passion of pain and pleasure went into the clasp, mingled with a guilty feeling; for this was against orders.

"O cousin Muriel, you never come to see us now."

"No, Connie, I can't," said Muriel, standing upright again, with the two small hands between her own. "You must not ask me why."

"I know why—partly," nodded Constance. "And I think somebody is very naughty; I do, cousin Muriel."

"Little girls are no judges," said Muriel.

"Ah, but I am perfectly sure mamma thinks the same."

"Connie, how do you come to be here? You cannot have walked."

"Oh no, Mr. Fortescue drove us in, and we are going to meet him at the mile-stone. Papa could have walked it, but I couldn't."

Muriel became suddenly conscious of the figure waiting in the background. "John!" she cried eagerly, and the two came together.

"I was not sure if I might venture," said John Rivers.

He was vicar in the neighboring town, four miles distant, and in addition to being Muriel's first-cousin he had been brought up as her brother. The half-light showed him to be an Englishman of the refined type, without her foreign coloring, having a certain compact energy in each step and motion, and yet a touch of his little daughter's delicate look.

"O John!"

"This will not bring you into trouble, Muriel?"

"Let it! I don't care. I must have a few words."

"Well—even enemies may shake hands," said John quaintly.

"Strangers may not, though."

"Is that to be our role?"

"If he had his will. John, I am all in a maze," said Muriel impetuously.

"Why must I obey, and put you and myself to all this pain? Surely there are cases where one need not do all one is told. Surely the calls of brother and sister—of friends—"

"I never yet knew a tangle unravelled by disobedience," said John.

"He isn't my father."

"He has acted a father's part, and has a father's authority."

"And could nothing make it right for me to go against him?"

"If I were dying, you might come to me at all hazards, I think."

"John, don't talk of such a thing!" and tears filled her eyes. "How are Rosie and the boys?"

"The boys are blooming. Rosamund is pretty well as to health, and as bright as usual."

"I never knew Rosie anything else. John, this is disobedience," said Muriel suddenly.

"What is?"

"Standing here, talking to you."

"You think he would not like us to exchange even a few words?"

Muriel was silent. She could not make up her mind to say how strong the embargo as to intercourse had been.

"One thing is clear," John remarked, "and that is that you have no business to walk along this road in the dusk. Go home as fast as you like, but I shall not think it right to leave you till the turnpike is in sight. You may throw all blame upon me."

The last thing she was likely to do, seeing that the wish of her heart was to bridge over the chasm between her cousin and her grandfather. They set off together, however, Connie clinging to Muriel on her other side.

"How are you all at home?" asked John.

"Just as usual. Mamma seems very well, and I think Lillias is stronger than last year. Grandpapa keeps wonderfully hale."

"Does he ever speak of me?"

"Never, unless I bring up your name; but he has almost cured me of that. I can't bear to hear him say such hard things. O John, when I look back to the days when you could say and do nothing wrong, I can hardly believe in the change."

"There is a standing cause," said John briefly.

"I always feel guilty."

"You! Your affair was a mere side-incident. Never trouble yourself about that, my dear Muriel. Could you have taken any other line?"

"No, indeed. But if you had not spoken for me so strongly, he would not have thrown all blame upon you."

John shook his head. "The true grievance lies deeper," he said. "You know that as well as I. Your little matter brought things to a point, but the climax must have come. I had had the greatest difficulty in not giving a loop-hole for offence before."

"Ah, I know how careful and patient you were."

"Not always. But the things he most minds are things which I cannot alter to please him."

"I think life is very difficult altogether," sighed Muriel. "Do you remember, John, telling me of the want of harmony in my life?"

"No. Rather bold of me, was it not? What did I mean?"

"Why, you ought to know that best," said Muriel. "It was last year. We were amusing ourselves with the idea that everybody has a tune to play in life. Rosie declared some would do nothing but play polkas and waltzes, and some could not get beyond a jig, and others were so classical and high above their neighbors that nobody could understand them, or say where the melody of their tune lay. And I said I thought the greater number were painfully out of tune, which explains why so many people jar upon one's nerves. And you said the more men

played in accord with heavenly harmony, the less there would be of jarring and discord."

"I remember. Yes, we made something of the notion—to our own satisfaction at least."

"It was afterwards that you spoke to me about myself—only a few words, but I have been thinking about them lately. And I have quite come to the conclusion that my tune in life is a mere wretched scraping upon a hurdy-gurdy."

John smiled. "Self-abuse isn't always humility, Muriel," he said.

And then she knew, with shame, how she had counted on a contradiction from him. Whereas he only added—

"Too much of that in all of us, I am afraid."

Muriel felt almost inclined to defend herself, but wisely refrained from a step which would have placed her in an odd position.

"However, I would take to a harp if I were you," said John, somewhat quaintly again.

"No good, if all one's playing is to be out of tune."

"Have you found your key-note, yet?"

Muriel hesitated. "I really don't know," she said.

"You can't have your tune till you find your key-note."

"And if I have no key-note?"

"Then you don't get beyond aimless strumming—child's play, in fact—no chance of melody or harmony there."

"Practical and poetical as ever, John."

"Work-a-day middle life knocks the poetry out of a man."

"Middle-life—at thirty-one."

"Off from the point, Muriel. I was going to say that I believe you have a key-note—generally."

"What is it?"

"Ah! there's the question. I can't call your life aimless. I think your key-note may not be wisely chosen, and your playing may be sometimes out of tune."

"The last is certain enough. John what key-note should I have? The turnpike is very near."

"Don't pitch upon a minor key. It depresses other people."

"Do you think I am inclined to do so?"

"Rather. You change your key too often. Pitch upon a major key-note, play at a good brisk time, and keep steadily to them both."

"But, John, one must be melancholy sometimes."

"How are you going to reconcile that with the 'Always rejoicing'?"

"But, John, haven't I cause?"

"Rejoice evermore," Muriel.

"I can't. I have troubles, and you know it."

"Well, then, be 'sorrowful, but always rejoicing.' My dear Muriel, you can't get out of it. 'Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice.' St. Paul never played his life-tune in the minor key."

"But when the depressed mood comes on, everything looks dark, and I can see light nowhere. Oh, John!"

The exclamation was one of alarm this time; for a tall figure strode past, stopped, looked round, and went swiftly on—a figure so tall, slim, straight and vigorous, that nobody would have guessed it to be that of an old gentleman in his seventy-sixth year. But to Muriel these were marks not to be mistaken, even without the abundant frizzly white hair which curled down over his collar, and made a framework round his face. Features were scarcely to be distinguished in the dusk.

The figure stopped again some paces ahead, and a voice said sternly—

"Muriel!"

"Yes, grandpapa."

"Come here."

John's hand grasped hers.

"Good-bye," he said distinctly.

"All blame to you, you know." Lower he added, "You are not often out of our thoughts. Good-bye."

His lifted hat was ignored by the old gentleman. John took little Connie's hand and went quietly the other way. [To be continued.]

Nothing else is to be called the business of life at all. I am extreme you may think; but this is liberty and life to me—to know Christ.—George MacDonald.

No Christian is or can be faultless before the Lord. Blameless all may, and ought to be. The child that does its needle-work faithfully is commended though not a stitch is perfect. The child is blameless, not faultless. The Christian who lives up to his light and ability is blameless, but in God's sight faulty. He is not conscious of his defect, his eyes are not as sharp as God's; his best efforts are like the needle-work of the little girl, well done for her, but so defective in fact that every stitch must be removed.

LITTLE THINGS IN THE HOUSEHOLD.

There are no trifles in this life. To give new emphasis to this familiar truth the *Youth's Companion* brings forward the very impressive fact that the whole income of all the people of this country is an average of almost exactly fifty cents a day. This sum includes the profits of the rich and the wages of the poor. It represents not only the value of what is consumed, but the accumulation of wealth—what is left over each day as a fund to be drawn upon afterward.

When we consider this fact we cannot help thinking of the importance of one cent. It is an appreciable part of an income of one person for one day. And if it be also considered that a very large majority of the people receive less than the average, the proportion which one cent bears to the income is increased.

Probably, however, most who dip into statistics at all are much more profoundly impressed by the fact that the gross annual income of all the people is ten thousand million dollars, although practically the first-named fact is far the more important. The mind loves to dwell on great things rather than on little ones. Every one has heard that little drops of water and little grains of sand make the mighty ocean and the beautiful land; but that fact does not generally make a very deep impression.

The truth, nevertheless, is of prime importance; and nowhere does it hold more inexorably than in family life. It is the oft-recurring "trifling expenses" that consume the income. It is the negligence of the "insignificant" attentions which love or politeness should prompt that make hearts ache. It is the utterance of petty jealousies or complaints that drives love from the fireside.

Take any department of domestic economy, and see how much the "trifles" count for. The brightness and good cheer of the parlor depend on the little contrivances of the thrifty housewife. The hospitality, health, and savory attractiveness of the dining-table depends on her skill in the tedious details of culinary laws. Whatever literary charm blesses your family is the result of a few books and a few magazines.

How important, then, to heed the exhortation: Be careful about little things. Take care of the pennies. Choose your words and utter no idle or thoughtless ones. Watch the papers and pictures that are handed to the children. Notice your own attitude toward the Bible, toward your minister, toward the family altar, and be assured that it is the little actions thoughtlessly said and done that are forming your child's moral and religious character. Verily, there are no trifles in domestic life.

NOVEL KILLED.

Some years ago a young lady began to visit her pastor's study as a religious inquirer. It was during a revival, and on every hand her young friends were coming to Christ. But there she stood at the very threshold of the kingdom, wistfully looking over, as if her feet were chained. She made no advance. Her pastor and her friends were equally puzzled. Prayer was offered for her, and the plainest instructions given; but she remained unmoved, excepting to regret that she could not become a Christian. At last, after three months of labor and anxiety, her pastor said: "I can do nothing with Sophia L—; she is perfectly unmanageable. I doubt if she will ever yield to the claims of the Gospel."

"What is the trouble? Can you not discover the obstacle in her way?" was asked.

"I find she is an inveterate novel-reader, and I have come to the conclusion that this will keep her out of the kingdom."

"Can she not be persuaded to give up her novels?"

"That is not the point entirely. She has wasted her sensibilities over unreal objects so long—so continually reversed right and wrong, looking at vice in the garb of virtue, and of virtue in that of unworthiness and injustice that she has destroyed her moral sense. She assents to truth, but seems to have no power to grasp it; she knows what is right, but has no energy of will to do it. Her mind is diseased and enervated, and I fear hopelessly so."

When we look at the young people daily flocking to the public library for the latest novels, or see them lounging away their best hours over the story-papers and the magazines, when we hear of this one or that who "does nothing but read novels the whole day through," we think of Sophia L—, who is "perfectly unmanageable" on points of truth and duty, and wonder if they, too, must be given over to mental and moral disease and death.

Satan always rocks the cradle when we sleep at our devotions.

SEASONABLE GOODS!

—IN—

Gents' Furnishing Department.

WARM GLOVES.

THE SANQUHAR KNIT GLOVE in great variety; warm; the most comfortable and serviceable of Winter Gloves. KID-LINED GLOVES & MITTS, Buck-Lined Gloves and Mitts; Real Plymouth Buck Gloves; Cloth, Napa Tan, etc.

WINTER SOCKS.

Cashmere, Medium and Heavy Weights; Shetland, Scotch Lambswool in very great variety.

WARM RUGS OF EVERY DESCRIPTION.

Including Fine Austrian; the New Fringed Rugs; Austrian Stripes; Yorkshire Stripes; Plush; Rubber-Lined Rugs, etc. TQUES, Sashes, and Materials for Snow-Shoeing Costumes.

HOSE, ETC.

The Genuine Shetland Lambswool Underclothing. Unshrinkable. Flannel Shirts of every Size, Ready-Made, and to Order.

MANCHESTER.

ROBERTSON & ALLISON.

oct23

Welland Canal Enlargement.

NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS.

SEALED TENDERS, addressed to the undersigned, and endorsed "Tender for the Welland Canal," will be received at this office until the arrival of the Eastern and Western mails on MONDAY, the 25th day of JANUARY next (1886), for raising the walls of the locks, weirs, &c., and increasing the height of the banks of that part of the Welland Canal between Fort Dalhousie and Thorold, and for deepening the Summit Level between Thorold and Ramey's Bend, near Humberston.

The works, throughout, will be let in Sections. Maps of the several localities, together with plans and descriptive specifications, can be seen at this office on and after MONDAY, the 11th day of JANUARY next (1886), where printed forms of tender can be obtained. A like class of information relative to the works north of Allanburg will be furnished at the Resident Engineer's Office, Thorold; and for works south of Allanburg, plans, specifications, &c., may be seen at the Resident Engineer's Office, Welland.

Contractors are requested to bear in mind that tenders will not be considered unless made strictly in accordance with the printed forms, and, in the case of firms, except there are attached the actual signatures, the nature of the occupation and place of residence of each member of the same; and the sum of Two Thousand Dollars or more—according to the extent of the respective tenders, which sum shall be forfeited if the party tendering declines entering into contract for the works, at the rates stated in the offer submitted.

The amount required in each case will be stated on the form of tender. The cheque or money thus sent in will be returned to the respective parties whose tenders are not accepted.

This Department does not, however, bind itself to accept the lowest or any tender.

By order,
A. P. BRADLEY, Secretary.

Dept. of Railways & Canals,
Ottawa, 9th Dec., 1885.

18 51

EQUITY SALE.

NOTICE is hereby given that on TUESDAY, THE NINETEENTH DAY OF JANUARY, A. D. 1886, at Twelve o'clock noon, at Chubb's Corner, (so called), in the City of Saint John, in the County and County of Saint John, shall be sold by Public Auction, under and by virtue of the provisions of a Decree of the Supreme Court in Equity, bearing date the 6th day of October, A. D. 1885, and made in a certain suit now depending in the said Supreme Court in Equity, wherein William J. B. Chandler is Plaintiff, and Hugh McDermott is Defendant.

ALL the right, title, interest, and term of years yet to come and unexpired in and to a certain lot of land situated in the City of Saint John, in the County of Saint John, and in the County of Saint John, in a certain lease thereof for the term of eleven years, bearing date the first day of July, A. D. 1875, and made between Sarah Elizabeth Hazen, then of the City of Saint John aforesaid, spinster, and Johanna Robinson Ritchie, then of the same place, widow, of the one part, and the above named Hugh McDermott of the other part, duly registered in the office of the Registrar of Deeds in and for the said City and County of Saint John, in Book V. of Records, at page 415, on the 27th day of February, A. D. 1882, described as follows:

"All that lot, piece and parcel of land situate in the said Town (formerly Parish) of Portland, on the northerly side of the Public Highway leading from the said City of Saint John towards Indiantown, bounded and described as follows, that is to say—Beginning on the said side of the said Highway at the south-easterly corner of a lot of land leased by the said Robert F. Hazen to Wendell Glynn, and now held by Charles McCarthy, thence, that is to say—From the said corner running easterly on the said side of the said Highway thirty-three feet, more or less, to the south-westerly corner of a lot of land heretofore leased by the said Robert F. Hazen to Edward O'Neill and now held by Felix O'Neill, thence running northerly on the western line of O'Neill's lot seventy feet, thence westerly on a line parallel to said side of the said Highway thirty-three feet, more or less, to the easterly line of the said lot of land now held by Charles McCarthy, and thence southerly on the said easterly line of McCarthy's lot seventy feet, to the place of beginning."

For Terms of Sale and other particulars apply to the above named Plaintiff.

Dated this 12th day of October, A. D. 1885.

W. A. LOCKHART, Auctioneer.

M. B. DIXON, Barrister.

oct16

FISH.

On hand, landing and due:

1200 Bbls. & Hf-Bbls. PICKLED FISH, INCLUDING

Large Shelburne Herring;
Medium Shelburne Herring;
Large Eastern Herring;
Bay Shore Herring;
Grand Manan Herring; No. 2 Mackerel;
No. 3 Mackerel; Economy Mess Shad;
Prime Shad.

700 Quintals DRY FISH.

8000 Boxes SCALED HERRING.

For Sale by

GILBERT BENT & SONS,

5 to 8 South Market Wharf.

nov6

SUN LIFE Assurance Co., OF CANADA.

UNCONDITIONAL INCONTESTABLE LIFE POLICIES.

Assets about \$1,300,000

THE objection is very often made to Life Assurance that the Companies may take advantage of some of the numerous and complicated conditions on the payment of claims, or compromise with the widow for a small sum. There is considerable force in this argument, but it cannot be urged indiscriminately against all Companies.

THE SUN LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY OF CANADA, issues absolutely unconditional policies. There is not one restriction of any kind on them. The assured may reside in any part of the world without giving notice or paying one cent of extra premium. He may travel, hunt or do anything else without any extra of any kind. The contract is as plain as the face of the sun.

As an Agent to show you one; it speaks for itself.

REMEMBER THE SUN IS THE ONLY COMPANY IN AMERICA WHICH ISSUES AN ABSOLUTELY UNCONDITIONAL POLICY.

If You Want the simplest and best form of investment policy which is issued by any company,
If You Want Term Assurance at the lowest possible rate, with an investment for your savings at compound interest,
If You Want Cheap Life Assurance while your children are young, and an endowment to yourself when they are grown up,
If You Want accumulation of Tontine profits without the risk of losing all you have paid by missing any payment,
If You Want Assurance with an unconditional policy which is sure to be paid without delay or trouble,
Then You Want a Non-Forfeiting "Semi-Endowment" Policy in the SUN LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY OF CANADA.

If you want to take an ACCIDENT policy, remember the SUN LIFE ACCIDENT ASSURANCE COMPANY OF CANADA.

Remember THE SUN IS the only Company in America which issues unconditional policy.

"SUN" ACCIDENT POLICIES. These are the most liberal in existence, having days of grace and other privileges which are given by no other company.</