

The Coming Year.

What will the New Year bring?
Here at the open door,
That leads from paths our feet have trod
To one that lies before,
Vainly we ask and yearn;
No answer greets the ear;
We cannot lift the veil that shrouls
In gloom the coming year.

What will the New Year bring?
Only one thing we know.
Shadow and sun must still be met
As through the world we go;
Joy with its undertone,
Its tender, sad refrain.
For human gladness is ever joined
To the mystery of pain.

What will the New Year bring?
The inward sight alone
Can penetrate the secrets hid
Within the vague unknown:
With God-anointed eyes,
And spirit-vision keen,
We look far down the year, and gaze
Upon the things unseen.

What will the New Year bring?
Our hearts make glad reply:
"All fullness for life's utmost need
When earthly springs are dry;
Omniscience to guide,
Whatever may befall,
And sweet assurance that the love
Of God is over all."

What will the New Year bring?
In gratitude we raise
Our joyful hearts to him, who thus
Reveals the coming days;
So whether dark or bright
Our future skies appear,
We know that God will make of this
A happy, glad New Year.

For Mother's Sake.

A STORY FROM REAL LIFE FOR THE NEW YEAR.

The last sun of the year set over Stony River's gory field, strewn with the dead and dying. At dusk the smoke of battle cleared away, but all the long dreary night, on the frozen ground, under the silent stars, brave souls were passing home to God.

As if loath to defile the New Year with blood, the contending armies rested quietly, awaiting the rising of another sun to renew hostilities. Bragg still held the field and had telegraphed Richmond that a great victory had been won; but Rosecrans, as the sequel proved, had only fallen back to a more secure position. Among those who came at early dawn in search of wounded friends was Mrs. Bateman, one of the many women whom the war had widowed. Her eldest son, wounded unto death, had been carried back into a rude hut, and only a few feet from him, on the hard floor, lay a pale-faced, blue-eyed boy, dressed in the uniform of the despised Yankees. As the mother ministered to the wants of her own dear one, and at great expense prepared him savory morsels to tempt his appetite, she watched with a secret throb of joy the hungry eyes of the hated enemy, whose mother, in her far away New England home, could only weep and pray. Was he not one of the cruel horde that had pillaged her home and devastated the sunny South? How did she know but that his hands had been imbued with the blood of her boy? No, she could not, even when witnessing his anguish, so far forget all that the war had caused her to suffer, as to cool his burning brow with a gentle pressure of her loving hand.

As the day advanced, the fever ran higher and higher, and the friendless stranger in his wild delirium moaned piteously of his precious mother and far-away home. "Poor fellow! He will see his mother no more until he meets her in heaven," said the kind surgeon, as he turned away to hide his tears.

Mrs. Bateman started quickly. A great throb of pain for that Northern mother, who could not even look upon the face of her dying boy, caused her heart to vibrate strangely.

"For her sake, I'll do it," she said, with a firm voice, as stooping over him she pushed back his tangled hair from his smooth, high forehead.

"Mother, dear! O how glad I am to feel your touch and hear your voice again. Now I can sleep," he murmured, softly.

That magic word, "mother," opened the avenues to Mrs. Bateman's heart, and the white upturned face was bathed in the tears of the enemy—an enemy made dear by the blessed bond of motherhood.

For this northern soldier, the mother prepared a comfortable bed by the side of her own precious boy, the same hand that before had refused even a drop of cold water to moisten his parched lips, now ministered alike to the suffering blue and gray. That sad New Year's eve, the battle went on waxing hotter and hotter, till the night closed in which Bragg was fleeing before the triumphant hosts of the enemy. The field had again changed hands and Arthur Melrose would not be carried to a southern prison to languish and die.

On the night of the second of January Mrs. Bateman's boy died, and early

the next morning she pressed a farewell kiss upon the brow of the lad she had befriended for his mother's sake, and started with her precious charge on her mournful journey.

Years passed, the war closed, and Arthur Melrose lived to return to the home of his boyhood, and to engage in the active duties of life, while Mrs. Bateman, with her husband and son sleeping on the hillside, her home desolated, her health shattered, sighed with her people over the destruction wrought by the cruel hand of war.

Eighteen years after peace had been proclaimed, Arthur Melrose, then an influential lawyer, was called to New Orleans to assist in the defence of an important case. It was among the last days of the year, while waiting for his case to be called, that he became much interested in the trial of a young man, who, in some vague way, reminded him of some one he had met before.

The charge preferred was a serious one, and the manner in which the prosecutors attempted to dispose of it convinced Mr. Melrose that something was wrong. However, he had no thought of interfering, until the name of "Russell Bateman" caught his ear. He could trace the likeness now, for the dark, searching eyes of that youth who had died by his side, on that memorable New Year's eighteen years before, had never been forgotten, and during all this changing time, no name had been oftener upon his lips than that of "Captain Russell Bateman's" widow—the noble woman to whom he owed his life. Time and again he had sought to find her that he might express again his gratitude, and render her assistance should she stand in need of help. Surely his time had now arrived, for this boy, so like the dead one, must be her son. He looked around to find some one resembling her, but even if the veil had been lifted from the face of that slight figure crouched in the corner, in the faded, white-headed old woman before him, he would have failed to recognize the fiery, high-spirited matron, who once stood between him and death.

Satisfying himself as to the identity of the prisoner, he proposed to his counsel to assist him in unravelling the case, and trying it all over again.

"The boy is poor, Mr. Melrose," replied the attorney, "and things seem to be much against him, and the court will compensate me, but where will your reward come from?"

"From heaven," was the answer. "Take me to your client, and after a few minutes' conversation with him I will advise you concerning my decision." Without making himself known Mr. Melrose, by adroit questioning, succeeded in learning the history of the case. It was the old story of missing funds, with the crime fastened on one who would scorn to touch what did not belong to him.

Holding back his business that had called him south, Mr. Melrose insisted on finishing the work in hand, and to his intense satisfaction, after two days' hard labor, he listened to the unanimous verdict of the jury—"Not guilty!"

It was not until the boy stood before him—free—and the mother over and over again had expressed her gratitude for the timely deliverance wrought, that the strong man made himself known, and insisted that he was only settling off old scores.

"This is a happy New Year to me, Mr. Melrose, and it serves to convince me more and more, that a good action always brings its blessing," said Mrs. Bateman.

"If you had left me to my fate on that other New Year's Day, I could have rendered you no service to-day," was the lawyer's reply.

Through the influence of Mr. Melrose, now Judge Melrose, Russell Bateman now occupies a lucrative position, and his old mother presides over his home within a stone's throw of the residence of the man she saved for his mother's sake.—*Christian at Work.*

A Boy's Religion.

If a boy is a lover of the Lord Jesus Christ, though he can't lead a prayer-meeting or be a church officer, or a preacher, he can be a godly boy, in a boy's way and in a boy's place. He need not cease to be a boy because he is a Christian. He ought to run, jump, climb and yell like a real boy. But in all he ought to be free from vulgarity and profanity. He ought to eschew tobacco in every form, and have a horror of intoxicating drinks. He ought to be peaceable, gentle, merciful, generous. He ought to take the part of small boys against the larger ones. He ought to discourage fighting. He ought to refuse to be a party to mischief, to persecution or deceit. And above all things, he ought now and then to show his colours. He need not always be interrupting a game to say he is a Christian, but he ought not to be ashamed to say that he refuses to do something because he fears God.

or is a Christian. He ought to take no part in the ridicule of sacred things, but meet the ridicule of others with a bold statement, that for the things of God he feels the deepest reverence.

Queer People.

The Chinese do everything backward. Their compass points to the south instead of the north. The men wear shirts and the women trousers; while the men wear their hair long, the women coil theirs in a knot. The dressmakers are men; the women carry burdens. The spoken language is not written, and the written language is not spoken. Books are read backward, and any notes are inserted at the top. White is used for mourning; and the bridesmaids wear black, and instead of being maidens the functionaries are women. The Chinese surname comes first, and they shake their own hands instead of the hands of one whom they greet. Vessels are launched sideways, and horses are mounted from the off side. They commence their dinner with desert, and end up with soup and fish. In shaving, the barber operates on the head, cutting the hair upward, then downward, and then polishes it off with a small knife, which is passed over the eyebrows and into the nose to remove any superfluous hairs; and the performance is concluded by removing the wax from the ears with a bit of cotton-wool on a wire.—*New York Times.*

Sure Signs.

When a boy is patient and persevering and conquers difficulties, it is a sign he will make his mark in the world. If he worries and frets and stew, it is a sign he is likely to die prematurely or live to little purpose. If he is in a hurry to spend each cent as he gets it, he will never be rich, but a spendthrift. If he hoards up his pennies and will not part with one for any good cause, he is likely to be a miser. If he is careful economical and generous, he may or may not be rich, but he will have the blessing of God, and if he is a Christian he will never want. If he is obedient to his parents, he has the promise that his "days shall be long in the land." If he is lazy and indifferent and neglects his studies, he will grow up a dunce, and men cannot respect him. If he reads dime novels or low, trashy, vile, five-cent papers, instead of bright, helpful literature, he will likely end his days in a prison or upon the gallows. If he loves his Bible and his Church and his Sabbath school, he will be good and useful and occupy an honourable position among men. Are you patient, persevering, prayerful, contented, careful, generous and good? Are you trying to be?

She Liked Him.

It is a little unusual for a preacher to receive a sincere compliment for ability to do what the following incident names. But if such compliments were extended to all who have earned them few preachers would be exempt.

It was at the noonday hour on the Sabbath as the inmates of the parsonage were seated about the dinner-table discussing the forenoon service. The six-year-old son looked up at his father very earnestly and eagerly, and said:

"Papa, I just like to hear you preach."

"Why, my son?" said the father, feeling good to think that even his little boy could perceive and appreciate his excellence as a preacher.

"Why, papa, it just puts me right to sleep."

The father's countenance did not express very great pleasure at this compliment, which he still thinks one of the sincerest compliments that he ever received.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S ASTIME
Edited by C. E. BLACK,
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OUR MOTTO: ONWARD!!
—The Mystery Solved.—No. 46.—

No. 243.— B
S E A
P A T N A
M A C H I A S
B E T H L E H E M
A L G E R I A
A S H E R
T E N
M

No. 244.—"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth."
Fo 245.—Trees.

No. 246.—1. Kingston, 2. Montreal
3. New Orleans.
237.—Imperfection.
No. 248.—Lake Okechobee in Florida.
No. 249.—Clock.

—The Mystery.—No. 50.—
—HAPPY NEW YEAR!—
No. 265.—STAR PUZZLE.
(BY L. REED, St. John.)

1
2 * * 6
3 * * 7
4 * * 8
5
1-2, The Diety. 3-2, Gloomy. 3-4, A secret emissary. 4-5, Yes. 1-6, A son of Jacob. 6-7, Thirsty. 8-7, A mouth. 5-8, Of the body.

No. 266.—DROP LETTER.
—A-Y—A-P—N—W—E—
No. 267.—PI.
Neo stohunad theig dudreah nda typhine heetr.

No. 268.—ENIGMA.
In snow, not in frost;
In price, not in cost;
In new, not in old;
In yellow, not in gold;
In seek, not in hold;
In tear, not in sob;
In tire, not in hob.
To all those who live,
My whole is sure to give.

No. 269.—CHARADE.
My first you may have paid;
My second I trust you all are;
My whole we shall soon have said,
To the passing old year.

—The Mystery Solved in three weeks.—
A
HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR TO ALL
A Hint to Boys.

I stood in the store of a merchant the other day when a boy came in and applied for a situation.
"Can you write a good hand?" he asked.
"Yaas,"
"Good at figures?"
"Yaas."
"That will do, I do not want you," said the merchant.

"But," said I, when the boy had gone, "I know that lad to be an honest, industrious boy. Why don't you give him a chance?"
"Because he hasn't learnt to say 'Yes, sir,' and 'No, sir.' If he answers me as he did when applying for a situation, how will he be answer customers when he has been here a month?"

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MRS. B. TUCKER,
Toronto, Ont.

A DANGEROUS COLD.
DEAR SIRS.—My little girl last winter had a very bad cold which almost resulted in congestion of the lungs. After doctoring with her for three months without success I tried Hagar's Pectoral Balsam, and two bottles of it cured her. She is now strong and healthy.
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Becomes Luxuriant
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After Using
A number of other preparations without any satisfactory result, I find that Ayer's Hair Vigor is causing my hair to grow."—A. J. Oment, General Merchant, Indian Head, N. Y.

"Ayer's Hair Vigor is the only preparation I could ever find to remove dandruff, cure itching humors, and prevent loss of hair. I can confidently recommend it."—J. C. Butler, Spencer, Mass.

"My wife believes that the money spent for Ayer's Hair Vigor was the best investment she ever made, it has given her so much satisfaction."—James A. Adams, St. Augustine, Texas.

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