

The Year Is Old—So Old!

The year is old—so old!
The nights are long and dark and dreary;
The fretting winds are never weary:
They fret against my window pane,
The burden of their sad refrain.

The year is old—so old!

The year is old—so old!
The mountains tell it to the river,
Their sides deep rent by seam and shiver;
The rivers sobbing as they flow,
Repeat it in the vale below.
The wild sea waves take up the strain,
And ocean bears it back again.
The year is old—so old!

The year is old—so old!
O voices of the dreary night!
O sleepless watchers for the light!
O hills that lift your hoary heads
Above the ice-bound river beds!
O winds that wail round nameless graves!
O sobbing, sighing, wild sea waves!
The year is old—so old!

The year is old—so old,
O hearts that breathe and eyes that weep
O'er buried hopes that treasures keep!
Prepare the shroud and winding sheet,
And softly walk with reverent feet.
The year is old—so old!

An Old Maid's New Year Party.

MYRA GOODWIN PLANTZ.

I just wish there was some way
Of keeping old maids out of the
League, said pretty Nellie Thomas;
and Elith King joined in: And so
do I; while Horace Watters said
Amen, with mock solemnity.

When I get to be fifty and up-
wards, I shall stop trying to be
young, said one young girl.

I admit that we young people feel
freer when we have our prayer-
meetings alone, for we are less timid
about speaking and praying; but in
our social gatherings I can't see
why a bright, sweet woman like
Miss Hannah should not come, if
she enjoys seeing young people have
a good time. She is left out by
the mothers, and if we young girls
drop her, she will have a lonely
time, said Florence Watters. I am
sure Miss Hannah is always wel-
come when we get up a supper or
a picnic, for then she does the drudg-
ery and lets us girls have the fun.

She is an angel in the sick room,
especially in cases where others are
afraid to go; and what would the
poor do without her? I should say
we not only ought to invite her to
our sleighing party, but get it up in
her honor.

A kind of New Year's benefit in
return for her helping pay off our
debts and being most of our Mercy
and Help, suggested Horace.

Just the thing! said the elder
Mr. Watters, coming in. I advise
you young ladies to give those young
men the most encouragement who
are the most attentive to the women
who are no longer young, for then
you will be more certain of good
care after you have lost your youth
and beauty. You young men will
be repaid for sacrificing the girls a
little, for some of the most charming
and helpful women are these very
same old maids the girls are now
sighting. But let me tell you the
history of one I happen to know.

Just thirty years ago this very
month I was wounded on a Southern
battle-field and taken to a hospital
hastily fixed up in a church. I was
supposed to be dying, and the
surgeon said there was but one
chance, and that to have some one
bathe my terrible wound until all
danger of inflammation had passed
and to keep ice on my head until
the fever cooled. There were not
enough nurses for one man to have
so much attention, but one of my
friends, a captain in another com-
pany, happened to mention my case
to the young lady who was soon to
be his bride. She had come down
to nurse her father, and now that
he was able to travel, she expected
to start home with him as soon as
she could be gotten safely through
the lines. She came to me when
she heard I needed great care, and
for thirty six hours she stood over
my wounded arm, without food or
sleep—for every one was too busy
to think of the nurses among the
dead and dying. But for her I
should have died; and you may
imagine I thought her as beautiful
as an angel when I became conscious
of what had happened. She went
North with her father, and in the
spring Captain Long was to have a
furlough, as he had not been home
since enlisting, and they were to be
married. His leave of absence had
begun, but just as he was starting
the enemy came suddenly upon us.

The new captain was not there, and
the old one sprang to the front and
with his gallant men saved our
regiment; but at a terrible cost, for
the brave, noble fellow was among
the slain. He sent for me when he
was dying, and handed me his
pocket Testament and a locket, say-
ing, Give the Book to my brave
darling, and tell her to live to do
good. Keep the picture of her
sweet face yourself. I had left a
bride at home when I put on the
blue, and I knew how she would
have felt. Well, the girl's heart
was almost broken. Then she went

down again to the soldiers, and was
one of the hospital nurses at Wash-
ington. While there, nursing a
poor fellow through smallpox, she
lost her beautiful complexion, though
I have always thought her face one
that nothing could spoil.

Here Mr. Watters took out an
old-fashioned locket and laid it on
the table, and the little group
around it took up the picture one
by one, exclaiming, How lovely!

I can see it was really our own
dear Miss Hannah, and you never
told us children before who saved
your life, said Florence tearfully.

She wished it so; and I might
add that while other maiden ladies
may not have so romantic a history
as this one, all have had their dis-
appointments, and often are alone
because of sacrificing themselves for
others, and should be treated with
special kindness by their younger
sisters.

Then next day the postman stopped
at Widow's Clark's door, and Miss
Hannah was in quite a flutter over
the unusual event of receiving a
letter.

Listen, mother, she cried as she
read it. Is not this just lovely in
our young people? I have worried
for fear they considered me in the
way, yet felt I could hardly give up
the little bit of rest and brightness
I get with them. Dear Miss
Hannah, it says, the League de-
sires the pleasure of your company
New Year's evening. An escort
will call for you at seven o'clock.

The old lady was as delighted as
her daughter, and the anticipation
of some pleasure for Hannah made
her plain New Year's dinner seem
better than usual, and kept a happy
smile on the daughter's face all day.

About seven there was a great
clatter of bells in the street, and
Miss Hannah said with a smile:
Those bells carry me back to my
own happy girlhood. I hope the
young folks are having a good time.
Then she could not help wishing
she was young again, for the
sleighing was perfect and the moon
full of New Year's cheer, or some-
thing equally bright.

Just then the bells stopped at
her gate and a brisk step sounded
on the walk. Miss Hannah opened
the door to find the president of the
League waiting for her.

Wrap up warm, Miss Hannah,
for we are going to take you to the
North Pole, where you can make
saunshine whether the sun gets up
or not, Mr. Porter said, gallantly.

There were only twenty who
could go to-night, but they make up
in noise for numbers, Mr. Watters
said, as he tucked Miss Hannah
down in the straw under the warm
rugs with the other girls.

The town was soon left behind,
and the country was as lovely as a
fair scene, with every twig glisten-
ing in the moonlight and every
fence and stump draped in sparkling
white. There were singing and
laughter, but this all came to a
sudden stop as one of the spirited
horses gave a jump and the heavily-
laden sleigh turned over an em-
bankment. Every one went into a
bank of soft snow, but nobody was
hurt, it was found, as one by one
the boys helped the girls out of the
drift. It did not take long to right
the sleigh, but the driver informed
the young people that the harness
was so badly broken that it would
be better to tie it together and all
return to the city as soon as
possible.

No! no! was the cry. We are
going to a New Year's dinner in
honor of one of our number.

It is less than a mile from Grand-
ma's, spoke up Mr. Tucker. We
can walk on, if you can stand it,
Miss Hannah.

We will see who can get to the
bottom of this hill first, she replied;
and instantly she was off, with the
merry crowd after her, while the
astonished driver saw that all he
could do was to fix up his harness
and follow.

Well, I call this nice! cried
Thomas Tucker, as they reached
the farm-house, panting for breath,
but all in good spirits. Grandma
promised a hot supper, but every-
thing is dark, and they have gone
to bed.

We are not to be cheated that
way, said one young man, who had
dined on an antiquated boarding-
house chicken. We will shout
Happy New Year until we are ad-
mitted.

It was not long after that chorus
started before the old gentleman
appeared, showing signs of a hasty
toilet.

Come in! come in! We thought
you had given it up, and had just
gone to bed, but ma and Sally will
have the turkey hot in no time.

The young people rushed in out
of the cold without any ceremony;
the boys helped the old farmer
throw on more firewood where the
back log had been covered up for
the night, and the blaze of the open
fire almost made the lamps unwe-
lcome.

While Grandma and her sleepy
maid were putting the dinner on the
stove again, Miss Hannah proposed
a fogot party. Each took a lighted
stick, and had to finish his or her

story before it went out. Grand-
father had to stop in his Indian
story just as a painted savage had
raised his scalping knife over his
head, and his audience had to take
his escape for granted. Nellie's
light went out just as her lover pro-
posed, and the young people and
lover were left in doubt as to the
answer. Miss Hannah's stick
burned slowly while she told a
thrilling little story of the war; and
then Thomas Tucker came in with
the big horn that had once been
used to call the men from the field,
and the party went to the dining-
room to the music of its clarion
call.

Miss Hannah found a bunch of
white chrysanthemums at her plate,
and as she raised them up out fell a
gold pin in the shape of the badge
of the society. Miss Hannah would
have taken the occasion then and
there for a good cry—for this was
the first recognition the lonely
woman had had that her labors for
others were appreciated—but at this
moment the black pussy-cat jumped
into her lap and deftly took the
turkey from her plate, and in the
laugh that followed Miss Hannah
recovered herself and was the life
of the party. With her sweet, pale
face flushed and radiant with happi-
ness, several were surprised that
they had considered this woman old
and homely. Her bright sayings
and sweet wisdom were recognized
as never before by her young
friends, and they wondered if it had
not been a mistake for young people
to think they must be by themselves
in order to have a good time.

There was not so much merriment
on the homeward ride, which the
rested horses made as short as
possible, for it was past the bed-
time hour laid down in the consti-
tution when the sleigh stopped at
Miss Hannah's door.

Thank you, my dear young
friends, she said. This has been the
happiest evening I've had in thirty
years.

And Florence Watters replied:
You have added more to our good
times than we can say.

There was a chorus of Good-night,
Miss Hannah and while Mr.
Tucker went up to the door to wish
their friend, those waiting in the
sleigh sang softly, God be with you
till we meet again.—Z Herald.

A Bad Beginning.

A good start is half the race,
Bad beginnings often make bad end-
ings. A little sin at sixteen is a
great sorrow at sixty. If the sap-
ling gets twisted, who will be able
to straighten the tree? Lord, start
us right, prayed an old Methodist,
for once we get wrong, thou knows
we are hard to turn.

Start the New Year well. Begin
it with prayer, and it is likely you
will end it with praise. The great-
est book in the world commences
with the words, In the beginning,
God. Let all our new beginnings
commence in the same way: God-
less beginnings mean failure at the
finish. If a man starts building
his house on the sands, no matter
how good the material he uses, it
will come down about his head.

The Scots say, Better keep the
devil out than turn him out, and it
is a proverb worthy of the land of
cakes, where shrewd men are as
plentiful as bawbees at a collection.
Once let him get in and he will be
as hard to turn out as a bum bailiff.
Let him get in his nose, and his
tail will soon follow.

Jim Wright's lad was standing
one night holding himself up by the
railings of the front garden, and he
looked as though he had just been
passing through a storm at sea, and
was very white in the face. He
had not seen a ghost, he had just
smoked his first pipe of tobacco. It
was a bad beginning. But now he
smokes like a furnace and drinks
like a fish and it is his mother's
face that is white, not his. Pipe
and glass for a youth mean rags and
wretchedness for the man. With a
pack of cards for a Bible, and We
went go home till morning, for a
song, it needs no prophet to tell
what the end will be.

It's a bad beginning when a young
couple commence wedded life in
debt. One of the privileges of
those who are married is to give
advice to those who are going to be,
and most folks try to live up to it.
Punch's advice was, Don't, but that
must have been after a visit from
his mother-in-law, or Judy had
given him cold mutton for dinner
served up with sauce. He will,
however, have the consolation in his
brighter moments of knowing that
his advice has never been taken by
a single couple. Perhaps the same
fate will befall the advice Robin
now offers. To all young men he
says, when you have a home of your
own, let it be your own. Don't set
your wife to dust the cabinet-
maker's furniture, nor to wash the
draper's blankets, nor to clean the
ironmonger's fire-irons. Don't ring
the bell till you can pay the ringers.

It is a bad beginning when the
tradesman commences business on
the principle of make money; make
it honestly if you can, but make

it if you cannot succeed without
cheating, clear out and try stone-
breaking. You had better bend
your back than your conscience, and
have horny hands than a stony
conscience. Put the Bible on the
top of the ledger and then trust in
God and use your common-sense.

It is a bad beginning when a
young preacher begins to give other
men's sermons instead of his own—
when he can see the rich man's pew
but not the poor man's seat; when
he is often seen in the drawing
room, but seldom in the cottage,
and when he prays for other folks
in public, but not for himself in
private.

It is a bad beginning when the
child says from home what it would
not say at home; when it disobeys
with impunity and gets all it wants
and wants everything it sees. Grumpy
Jack says his wife is a most obedi-
ent mother, for the children give the
orders and she obeys them. She, poor
woman, cannot see their faults, and
says they are sweet little ducks. The
neighbours, however, declare she is
an old goose and the goslings know
it.

It is a bad beginning when the
day commences without a prayer
for help and guidance. The wheels
of life run smoothly when they are
lubricated with prayer. The new-
born day is ever God's invitation to
make a new beginning, leaving the
foibles and sins of the past behind.
Begin on your knees. The altar
should always come before the
cylinder, the office desk, or the store.
Start with God, and he will go with
you right through.—Onward.

Labour is Honourable.

The following from the pen of
the late J. G. Holland possesses the
essential elements of pathos and
truth: Labour is the honourable
thing among men. There is not a
neatly-graded lawn, a pretty garden,
or a well trained tree that does not
tell of it. It builds magnificent
cities, and creates navies, and
bridges rivers, and lays railroad
tracks, and infuses every part of the
flying locomotive. Wherever a
steamer plows the waves or the long
canal bears the nation's inland
wealth; wherever the wheat fields
wave and the mill wheels turn,
there labour is the conqueror and
the king. The newspaper, wherever
it spreads its wings, bears the im-
press of toilers' hands. Should not
the labourer be well housed? Should
he not have the best wife, and the
prettiest children in the world? Should
not the man who produces
all that he can eat and wear be
honoured? To us there is more
true poetry about the labourer's life
and lot than any other man's under
heaven. It matters not in what
calling a man toils, if he toils man-
fully, honestly, and contentedly.
The little tin pail should be a badge
of nobility everywhere, and in the
good time coming, boys, it will be.

Dancing and Prayer Don't Agree.

The worldly young men of Knob-
noster, Mo., thought it would be a
fine joke upon the Christian minis-
ters to invite them all to attend a
dance. Accordingly every preacher
in the town received an invitation.
The dance was held, and nearly all
of those invited attended. In the
midst of the revelry Rev. Frank
Russell, pastor of the Cumberland
Presbyterian church, and Rev. F.
H. Brigham, pastor of the Metho-
dist Episcopal church, entered the
hall. They said they were there by
special invitation, and asked part of
the dancers' time. Rev. Mr.
Russell then read a chapter from
the Bible and Rev. Mr. Brigham
offered a fervent prayer. All the
dancers were requested to partici-
pate in the services. Several of
them did so, and the services lasted
about forty minutes. Then dancing
was resumed, but the party was
adjourned long before the program
was completed.

The despatches do not state why
the dancers adjourned their revelry,
but the inference is easy. Dancing
and prayer don't go well together.
—The Evangelical.

Made A New Man.

"I must say Laxa Liver Pills made
a new man of me. I was troubled
with indigestion. Fluttering of the
heart and pain in the small of the
back, and after taking the Laxa-Liver
Pills for about three weeks they cured
me." Melville Miller, Bensford P.
O., Ont.

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color an even brown or black, and will
cleave and satisfy you every time, use
Buckingham's Dye for the Whiskers.

There are cases of consumption so
far advanced that Bickle's Anti-
Consumptive Syrup will not cure, but
none so bad that it will not give relief.
For coughs, colds and all affections of
the throat, lungs and chest, it is a
specific which has never been known to
fail. It promotes an easy expectora-
tion, thereby removing the phlegm,
and gives the diseased parts a chance
to heal.

Smart Boys at Their Lessons.

A gentleman going into his
stable one day found his little son
astride of one of the horses, with a
slate and pencil in his hand. Why,
Harry, he exclaimed, what are you
doing? Writing a composition,
was the reply. Well, why don't
you write it in the library? Be-
cause the teacher told me to write
a composition on a horse.—[Chicago
News.

Helen, aged four, was spending a
night away from home. At bedtime
she knelt at her hostess' knee to say
her prayers, expecting the usual
prompting. Finding her friend
unable to help her out, she conclud-
ed thus: Please God, 'scuse me. I
can't 'member my prayers, and I'm
staying with a lady that don't know
any. The rebuke struck home.

The man who can tell a filthy
anecdote without a conscious sense
of degradation, has gone a great
ways on the road to ruin.

THE WEDDING RING.

Death lurks in every place in this "vale
of tears." There is no happiness, no joy, no
gaily, no success, no sorrow and
no failure that may not
secrete him.

A favorite hiding-place
for death, where women are con-
cerned, is in the very
happiness and rapture
of widowhood and the sacred
joy of motherhood. But too fre-
quently there

is death in the embrace of love, and the
first touch of baby-fingers is succeeded by
the chilly grasp of the grim destroyer.

If wives and mothers would only resort
to the right remedy when they suffer from
weakness and disease of the delicate and
important feminine organs that are baby's
threshold to life, there would be fewer hus-
bands bereft, and fewer homes saddened by
an infant's loss. Dr. Pierce's Favorite
Prescription makes the feminine organs
strong, healthy and vigorous. It fits for
widowhood and motherhood. It banishes the
maladies of the period of suspense, and
makes baby's entry to the world easy and
comparatively painless. An honest drug-
gist will not try to induce a customer to
take an inferior substitute for this great
remedy, for the sake of extra profit.

"Mrs. Seagle was a great sufferer from a com-
bination of female diseases, a few years ago, from
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Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription," writes Geo.
A. Seagle, Esq., of Box 12, Wytheville, Va. "She
is thoroughly convinced that there is no medi-
cine on earth equal to the 'Favorite Prescription,'
and she doesn't hesitate to say so. She has recom-
mended it to her lady friends, and in all cases,
where it has been given a fair trial, it has given
entire satisfaction."

In cases of constipation and torpid liver,
no remedy is equal to Dr. Pierce's Pleasant
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stomach, liver and bowels. They never fail.
One little "Pellet" is a gentle laxative and
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take it without any fuss, and at the same
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are such that the cough is checked
before anything serious develops.

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other people are praising Dr. Wood's
Norway Pine Syrup as the best remedy for
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