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E variis sumendum est optimum.—Cic.

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THE GOLDEN COIN;
OR THE LITTLE STREET BEGGAR.

A Story of "Happy New Year."

BY GEORGE C. HILL.

It was the morning of a bright new year that had just set in, bright, golden, and beautiful. The snow glittered like jewelled raiments in the cloudless sun. The chiming of the silvery sounds of the bells struck joyfully upon the listener in every street. The air was cold, though not piercing: bracing, though not biting—just cold enough, in truth, to infuse life and elasticity into one that moved.

There was a little girl, a child of poverty, on that beautiful New Year's morning, walking the streets with gay crowds that swept past her. Her little feet had grown so numb, encased only in thin shoes, and those badly worn, that she could but with difficulty move one before the other. Her cheeks shook at every step she took, and her lips looked truly purple. Alas! poor Elsie Gray! She was a *little beggar*.

Just like the old year was the new year to her. Just like the last year's wants and sufferings were the wants and sufferings of this! The change of the year brought no change in her condition with it. She was poor; her mother was a widow and an invalid, and the child was a poor beggar.

In the old and cheerless room gleamed no bright fires of anniversary. No evergreens, no flowers, save a few withered ones, decked her time stained walls. There was no sound of merry voices within the door to say, to the Widow Gray, 'A happy New Year to you, Mrs. Gray!' Heaven seemed to have called her and her abode out from the happiness that was all the world's on that festive day of the year. It had provided, to all appearances, no joys, no congratulations, no laughter, no flowers, for them. Why? Were they outcasts? Had they outraged their claims on the wide world's charities? Had they voluntarily shut themselves out from the sunlight of the living creatures around them?—No! a *shame* take the world that it must be answered for them. Mrs. Gray was poor!

Little Elsie stopped at times and breathed her hot breath upon her blue and benumbed fingers, and stamping her tiny feet in their easements with all the force left in them; and then big tears stood trembling in her large blue eyes for a moment and rolled down her purple cheeks, as if they would freeze to them. She had left her mother in bed, sick, exhausted, and famishing! What wonder that she cried; even though those hot tears only dropped on the icy pavement. They might as well fall there as elsewhere; the many human hearts that passed her were full as icy and hardened.

She would have turned back to go home, but she thought again of her poor mother and went on, though where to go she knew not. She was to become a street beggar! Where would street beggars go? What streets are laid out and named and numbered for *them*? Surely, if not home, then where should they go? It was this thought that brought those crystal tears—that started those deep and impressible sobs that choked her infant utterance.

A young boy—a bright looking little fellow—chanced to pass her as she wept and stopped. He caught the glitter of those tears in the sunshine, and the sight smote his angel heart. He knew not what want and suffering were. He had never known them himself—never once heard of them—knew not what a real beggar was. He stopped suddenly before Elsie, and asked her the cause of those tears. She could make him no reply—her heart was too full.

'Has any body hurt you?' asked the feeling little fellow.

She shook her head negatively.

'Have you lost your way?' he persisted.

'No,' answered the child quite audibly.

'What is the matter, then?' he asked.

'Mother is poor and sick, and I am cold and hungry. We have nothing to eat. Our room is quite cold, and there is no wood for us. Oh you do not know all—you *cannot* know all.

'But I *will*,' replied the boy manly. 'Where do you live?'

'Will you go with me?' asked Elsie, her face brightening.

'Yes; let me go with you' said he; 'show me the way.'

Through street, lane and alley, she guided him. They reached the door of her hovel.—The cold breaths of the wind whistled in at the cracks and crevices and key-hole before them, as if inviting them in. They entered. A sick woman feebly raised her head from the pillow and gave her a sweet smile. 'Elsie have you come?' she faintly said.

'Yes, mother,' answered the child; 'and I have brought this boy with me. I do not know who he is, but he said he wanted to come and see where we lived. Did I do wrong to bring him, mother?'

No, my child, if he knows how to pity you from his little heart. But he cannot pity me yet—he is not old enough.

The bright-faced sunny-hearted boy gazed in astonishment upon the mother and child.—The scene was new to him. He wondered if this was what they called poverty. His eyes looked sadly upon the wasting mother, but they glittered with wonder when they looked upon Elsie. Suddenly they filled with tears. The, want, the woe, the barrenness, the desolation, were all too much for him. He shuddered at the cold, uncovered floor. He gazed mournfully into the empty fire-place. His eyes wandered wonderingly over the naked walls, looking so uninvitingly and cheerless. Putting his hand into his pocket, he grasped the coin that his mother had that very morning given to him, and drew it forth. You may have that! said he, holding it out to the child.

Oh, you are too good. You are too generous, I fear! broke in the mother; as if she ought not to take it from him.

Mother will give me another, if I want, said he, it will do you a great deal of good, and I know I don't need it. Take it; take it! you shall take it! and he was instantly gone.

It was a gold coin of the value of five dollars.

Mother and child wept together. Then they talked of the good boy whose heart had opened for them on this new year's-day. Then they let their fancies run and grow wild and revel as they chose. They looked at the gittering piece. There was bread and fuel, and clothing, and every other comfort in its depths. They continued to gaze upon it.—Now they saw within its rim pictures of delight and joy; visions of long rooms, all decorated with evergreens and flowers; visions of smiling faces and happy children, sights of merry sleigh rides, and the glistening of bright runners over smooth worn snow. They listened; they heard the mingled sounds of merry voices, and the chiming music bells, the accents of innocent tongues, and the laugh of gladsome hearts. Ah! what a philosopher's stone was that coin! How it turned everything first into gold, and then into happiness! How it grouped around them kind and cheerful friends, and filled their ears with kind voices. How it garlanded all hours of that day with evergreens and full-blown roses! How it spread them a laden table and crowded it with merry guests; and those guests too, all satisfied and happy! O, what bright rays shone forth from that trifling coin of gold!—Could it have been as bright in the child's or man's dark pocket? No; else it had before then burned its very way through and lent its radiance to hers. Could it have shone with such visions, the rich man's hands? No; else his avarice would have vanished at once, and his heart overflowed with generosity!—No, no; it was only to such as the widow and her child that wore such a shine, and emitted such brilliant rays, and revealed such sweet and welcome visions! Only for such as they.

That night turned this angel boy to the bleak room, the filled with happiness, and lighted with joy but he was not alone; his own mother was with him. Blessed boy!—He passed the whole of New Year's Day by, making others happy. And how much happier was he himself! How his little heart warmed and glowed to see the child uncover the basket he had bought with him, and take out one by one the gifts that were stowed there! And how rejoyed was he to see his mother offer the sick woman work and a new home, and to see the sick woman grow suddenly strong, and almost well, under the influence of their kind offers! He wondered if their happiness could possibly be as deep as his own, if their New Year's was as bright to them as his was to him. He knew not how any one could be happier than he was at that moment.

Years have rolled away into the silent past. That little girl—Elsie Gray—is a lady.—Not a lady only in *name*, but one in every deed, in heart, in conduct. She dwells in a sweet suburban cottage, and her husband is devoted only to her. The husband is no other than the generous boy who on the New Year's festival accosted her tenderly in the street, and went home with her. Her poor mother sleeps quietly in the little church-yard; yet she lived to know that God had provided for her child. She died resigned and happy.

Are there coins either of gold or silver, that must be locked away from the on this day of the new year? Are there any containing within their depths such sweet visions, such happy sights, they must lie under lock and key all this day, lest happiness and comfort may become too universal?

Here is one—where comes another?—[From the Flower Basket.

PHYSICAL BEAUTY.—I cannot understand the importance which certain people set on outward beauty or plainness. I am of opinion that all true education, such at least as has a religious foundation, must infuse a noble calm, a wholesome boldness, an indifference, or whatever people may call it, towards such-like outward gifts, or the want of them. And who has not experienced of how little consequence they are, in fact, for the weal or woe of life? Who has not experienced how, on nearer acquaintance, plainness becomes beautified, and beauty loses its charm, exactly according to the quality of the heart and mind? And from this cause I am also of opinion that the want of outward beauty never disquiets a noble nature, or will be regarded as a misfortune. It never can prevent people from being amiable and beloved in the highest degree; and we have daily proof of this.—[Frederika Bremer.

POETRY.

SONG OF THE SEASONS.

BY CHARLES MACKAY.

I heard the language of the trees,
In the noons of the early summer:
As the leaves were moved like rippling seas
By the wind—a constant comer.
It came and it went at its wanton will,
And it evermore loved to dally,
With branch and flower, from the cope of the hill
To the warm depths of the valley
The sunlight glowed; the waters flowed;
The birds their music chanted,
And the words of the trees on my senses fell—
By a spirit of Beauty haunted:—
Said each to each in mystic speech:—
"The skies our branches nourish:—
The world is good, the world is fair,
Let us enjoy and flourish!"

Again I heard the steadfast trees;
The wintry winds were blowing;
There seemed a roar as of stormy seas,
And of ships to the depths down going.
And ever a moan through the woods was blown,
As the branches snapped asunder.
And the long boughs swung like the frantic arms
Of a crowd in affright and wonder.
Heavily rattled the driving hail!
And storm and flood combining,
Laid bare the roots of mighty oaks
Under the shingle twining.
Said tree to tree, "These tempests free
Our sap and strength shall nourish;
Though the world be hard, though the air be cold,
We can endure and flourish!"

European Intelligence.

FRANCE.

The news from France is most important, the affairs of that Country have engrossed attention to the exclusion of everything else.—The long dreaded Coup de Etat has been made, and the President having seized the reins of Government, dissolved the Assembly—declared a state of siege—arrested the leading opponents of his policy, and appealed to the people! All this was done at an early hour on Tuesday, the 2d instant, preparations for it having been perfected with consummate skill and secrecy, during the preceding night, and the whole thing done and completed before any one had the least idea that it was in progress, or in contemplation.

The President's proposal is—the instant restoration of universal suffrage—the instant election by the people and the Army, of a President to hold office for ten years, supported by a Council of State, and by two Houses of Legislature; and that during the few days required to complete the elections, the Executive power shall remain in the hands of the President. The election to take place during the present month, and the President promising to bow to the will of the people, whether they elect him or any one else, and declares that he holds power only until the will of the people can be made known. Meantime he demands a preliminary vote from both the Army and the People, to declare whether they confide to him the Executive power ad interim.

The President declares himself to have been forced into this measure, and it is ascertained that Changarnier, Thiers, and others of his opponents, had decided to demand his arrest and impeachment on 2d inst., and were together in the very act of confirming this decision when they were themselves arrested and conveyed to Vincennes. Many members of Assembly have given in their adhesion to the President, it is stated as many as 300 during the first day. Reports from the departments declared the news to have been hailed with enthusiasm by the Provincial population. Barricades had been erected in some of the more turbulent quarters of Paris, but were all broken down by the troops. At one of them two members of Assembly taking prominent places were killed in the conflict. The full rigours of Martial Law had been proclaimed against all persons concerned in Barricades, and they were accordingly shot without delay. Up to the latest accounts the success of the President's movement seemed certain.

A section of the Assembly had contrived to meet at one of the Parisian Marrier on Tuesday, and had decreed the deposition of the President and his impeachment for high reason; but the meeting was dispersed by the troops and the decrees ridiculed and disused on all hands. In addition to the arrest of ex-officers of the Assembly, among others that of M. Dupin, the President of the Assembly, was occupied and himself put under a sort of durance, though he was not actually arrested. Martial law in full rigour was proclaimed against all concerned in barricades, and they were shot without delay.

At half past one o'clock immense crowds of troops, numbering about 5,000, moving along the Bouvelards, were fired on from the neighbouring passages and houses close by. This they returned, and the contest lasted busily for half an hour. Both cannon shots and musketry were used. Further down the Bouvelards the firing continued brisk up to four o'clock, P. M. It had then nearly ceased in the Boulevard des Italiens but continued in other quarters. Many passers by were injured. A gentleman and his daughter reported killed. At six o'clock the firing here had almost ceased.

It is said that 700 French Refugees left London for Paris on Thursday evening. It is also said that the Government stopped the transmission of despatches by Telegraph.

THE LATE ALEXANDER LEE.—The touching incident which follows is published in the "Home Journal."

Died, in poverty and want, recently in London, the author of some of the most admired songs of the—Alexander Lee. His death, only, is mentioned in the journals, as yet, but from a private letter we learn what we have above and one or two affecting circumstances in addition. About a week before his death he called on a friend and brother pianist, Mr. Thirwall—stated his extreme destitution, and asked that a concert might be got up for his relief. This was done, generously and very promptly. The concert was advertised, Lee and Thirwall to preside at the piano. The other performances were to be by Mr. Thirwall's four daughters, and by half a dozen other friends and pupils of Lee, who offered their gratuitous services. On the day of the proposed concert, he for whose benefit it was to be given, died. It was thought best, however, to perform the concert and devote the proceeds to paying the proper honors to his memory. They did so, but most of those who tried, their voices were too much affected to sing, and the performance was at last brought to an abrupt termination by one of his pupils, who burst into a passion of tears while endeavouring to sing 'The Spirit of Good," an air by the departed master. Lee was the author of 'Come dwell with me,'—'Away to mountain's brow,' 'The Soldier's Tear,' 'Meet me in the Willow Glen,'—'Come where the Aspens quiver,' and many other delightful airs well known to musical world.

The following is an extract from the Report of the Post Master General of the United States:—

A copy of the proposition of Mr. Ambrose W. Thompson, in behalf of himself and his associates, for the establishment of a line of mail steamers between New York and Galway, is herewith submitted. This proposition was received on the 28th instant, too late for deliberate consideration. It will be seen that Mr. Thompson proposes to enter into contract to carry the mail for ten years in steamships steadily convertable into war steamers for $100,000 per annum for each ship employed; or to contract for such service, and receive therefore only the postages which shall arise from such mail matter as may be actually transmitted in the ships of the proposed line. This Department has, perhaps, no authority to make contracts giving to such a line the postages accruing thereon; and even if it has, there is a manifest propriety in submitting the matter to the Congress. There is much reason to believe that such a line would lessen the time now required for the transmission of the mails between this country and England and Ireland; and other cogent reasons not directly connected with its usefulness for mail purposes, have been strongly urged in favor of its establishment. As these reasons will, without doubt, be soon presented to Congress by those most familiar with the subject, I shall perhaps best promote the object by simply recommending it to the early and favorable consideration of that body.

Application has been made for the extension of the trips of the steamers of the New York and Havre line to Bremen. The subject is yet under advisement.

Arrangements have been made with the Lower North American British Provinces, for the reciprocal transmission of mails—the rate of single postage to be ten cents, or sixpence Canadian currency, when the transmission does not exceed 3000 miles from the boundary line, & 15 cents or 9 pence when it exceeds that distance.

Mr. Alderman Sulomons and the House of Commons.—Mr. Alderman Salomons' solicitor has lately received notice of trial, into separate actions, which will bring the question of the admission of the Jews into Parliament before the Court of Queen's Bench, in the course of a few weeks. The notices of trial are for the sitting after Michaelmas Term—consequently the case will come on early in December, as the term ends on the 25th of November. The actions are brought for "having voted in the House of Commons without having first taken the oaths required by law." The defence to the actions is being conducted by Mr. George Concanen, of Lincoln's inn-fields.

BUFFALO, Dec. 17.—GREAT STORM ON THE LAKES.—The storm which commenced here on Monday night, still rages, and is the worst ever experienced here. The snow is drifting in vast hills, and all the mails are delayed. The propeller Oneida has been driven ashore at Fairport. On lake Erie the gale has been dreadful. Nothing like it has been known for years. We learn by a telegraphic despatch from Girard, Penn. that the steamer May Flower, which left here a few hours before the gale commenced, and about which much anxiety was felt, was driven ashore last night five miles below Conneaut, and is a perfect wreck. The crew and passengers were saved, through the skill and coolness of the officers. The captain reports that they saw nothing from Monday evening until they struck the shore last night.

Contributions to the Hungarian Fund.—In addition to the $1000 given by Mead, of Cincinnati, and the $1000 announced by Mr. Draper, $1000 has been sent in by Mr. J. N. Genin, the hatter, and $100 from Mr. E. M. Paterson, of New Brunswick, N. J.

It is proposed in Philadelphia to give up the idea of having a dinner on reception of Kossuth there, and to appropriate the money it would cost in aid of Hungary.

L. Kossuth has issued the following address:—

To the People of the United States.

Having come to the conclusion to avail myself, for the cause of my country, of the sympathy which I had reason to believe existed in the heart of the nation, I found it my duty to declare, on the first moments of my arrival, that it is my mission to plead the independence of Hungary, and the liberty of the European continent, before the great republic of the United States. My principle in this respect is, that every man has the sovereign right to dispose of its own domestic affairs without any foreign interference; I, therefore, shall not meddle with any, but that concerns of the United States, and that I expect it from all the friends of my cause not to do anything in respect to myself that could throw difficulties in my way, and, while expressing sympathy for the cause, would injure it.

It is with regret that I must feel the necessity of again making that appeal to the public opinion of this country, and particularly to those who profess themselves to be the friends of my cause, to give one proof of their sympathy by avoiding every step which might entangle me into difficulties in respect to that rule which I have adopted, and which I again declare to be my leading principle, viz: not to mix, and not to be mixed up whatever with domestic concerns or party questions.

L. KOSSUTH.

New York, Dec. 12th, 1851.

NEAPOLITAN CRUELTY.—A gentleman residing at the Island of Capri, communicates the following tragic event, which occurred a few days since: "We have 120 political exiles on the island of Capri. They stroll about during the day, and are obliged to be put in their houses by Ave Maria. The government pays them 4d. per day. One of these unfortunate men was condemned to be lashed in the Piazza of our little village for some trifling offence. During the night he nailed up his prison door. The ordinary Urban guard the next morning were sent to bring him to the flogging post, but finding they could not get at the prisoner, the civil authorities called in a picquet of soldiers. The prisoner from within prayed for trial, saying he was unjustly condemned to be flogged. At last the soldiers broke open the door, and he was laid on a bench to be lashed. The unhappy man tried to escape, the soldiers then struck him with the butt ends of their guns upon the lips, head, and belly, accompanied by sabre wounds. Thus bleeding and exhausted, he was again placed on the bench to be flogged, but being supposed to be dying, he was carried off to prison, where he expired in a few hours."

USES OF IRON.—Iron, in some of its innumerable forms, ministers to the benefit of all. The implements of the miner, the farmer, the carpenter, the mason, the smith, the shipwright, are made *of* iron, and *with* iron.—Roads of iron, travelled by "iron steeds," which drag whole townships after them, and outstrip the birds, have become our commonest highways. Ponderous iron ships are afloat upon the ocean, with massive iron engines to propel them; iron anchors to stay them in storms; iron needles to guide them; and springs of iron in chronometers by which they measure the time. Ink, pens, and printing presses, by which knowledge is scattered over the world, are alike made of iron. It warms us in our apartments; relieves our jolts in the carriage; ministers to our ailments in the chalybeate mineral waters, or the medical dose: it gives a variety of color to rock and soils, nourishment to vegetation, and vigor to the blood of man.

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