

THE NEW YEAR.

BY FRANCES HILDY HARVAL.

New merces, new blessings, new light on thy way; New courage, new hope, and new strength for each day; New notes of thanksgiving, new chords of delight; New songs in the morning, new songs in the night; New wine in thy chalice, new altars to adore; New fruits for thy Master, new garments of praise; New gifts from his treasure, new smiles from his face; New streams from the fountain of infinite grace; New stars for thy crown, and new tokens of love; New glories of the glory that awaits thee above; New light of his countenance, full and unpriced, All this to be thy joy - thy new life in Christ

OUR PERIODICALS:

Table listing various periodicals such as 'The best, the cheapest, the most entertaining, the most popular.' with prices for different titles like 'Christian Guardian', 'Methodist Magazine', etc.

WILLIAM BRIGGS, Methodist Book and Publishing House, Toronto. 210 O'Connell St. Montreal. 8 F. H. Mans, 216 Adelaide St. W. Halifax, N. S.

Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK Rev. W. H. Withrow, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 30, 1899.

HOW TO HELP THE TWENTIETH CENTURY FUND.

At Arthur, Ont., on October 8, the Twentieth Century Thanksgiving Fund was fully explained and earnestly presented to the congregation. Some little girls of one of our families, Evelyn, Edna and Valda Gilrue, enquired and shared the facts. They wished to know how they could earn a dollar for the fund. Their father proposed that they should gather apples and pick up potatoes, and before the next Sunday, two of them had earned their dollars. Good for the girls! If these children are a fair index of the men and women of the twentieth century, there is a bright outlook for Methodism and the world. Could not thousands of children in the Dominion earn a dollar each before October 1, 1900? Now, Mr. Editor, would it not be a good idea to start a Children's Exercise League in connection with the Twentieth Century Thanksgiving Fund, and report on the Children's Page of The Guardian from week to week, the names of children who have earned a dollar? One, however, was higher than the others, and its sides were steep and rugged. I often looked at it with longing desire to reach the top. The constant companionship of my children, however, was a different matter. Several of them were very young, and I knew it would be full of peril for them to attempt the ascent.

One bright morning, when I thought they were all busy with their games, I started on my expedition. I gently made my way up the face of the hill till I came to a point where the path forked, one path striking directly up the other ascending in a slanting direction. I hesitated for a moment as to which of the two paths I would take, and was about to take the precipitous one, when I started by the warning cry, "Be shouting, 'Father take the safest path, for I am following you!' On looking down, I saw that my little boy had discovered my absence, and, as I was already a good way up, I deemed it advisable to ascend up the hill, and had found the ascent difficult, and when he saw me hesitating as to which of the paths I should take, he revealed himself by the warning cry. I saw at a glance that he was in peril at the point he had reached, and trembled lest his little feet should slip before I could get to him. I therefore cheered him by calling to him that I was coming, and he, I saw, felt that I was soon down to him, and grasped his little warm hand with a joy that every father will understand. I saw that in attempting to follow my example to his inexcusable haste, and descended, thanking God that I had stopped in time to save my child from injury or death.

Years have passed since that, to me, memorable morning, but though the years go on, the little fellow's cry has never left me. It taught me a lesson, the full force of which I had never known before. It showed me the power of our unconsidered words, and I saw the terrible possibility of our leading those around us to ruin, without intending or knowing it; and the lesson I learned that morning I am anxious to impress upon those to whom I may come. Charles Lamb has said that the man must be a very bad man, or a very ignorant one, who does not make a good resolution on New Year's Day; and believing in the words of the latter, I would like to see you do it. I would like to see you measure our progress through time. As travellers who cross the Alps, climbing the lofty mountains' sides, gain broader, clearer vision, and a wider horizon, as they look up and down the path by which they have ascended and perceive that its devious turnings were necessary to avoid some crevasse or overcome some difficulty, and as, gaining the summit of the pass, they behold the fertile plains of Lombardy and the far-shining city of their pilgrimage; so, to us, the New Years are hills, as it were, whence we may look back on all the way by which the past has unfolded, and from which we look forward, we may get clearer views of the end of our journey, of the goal of our hopes. Our life's pathway may often seem rugged and steep, but from the vantage-ground of added years we gain wider horizons, and, at last, from the supreme vantage-ground of heaven we may discern that all life's devious ways have been part of God's great plan, that we have been led by a way that we knew not, by a way that we might not have chosen for ourselves, but by a way that has been wise and good in its end. At these memorial seasons we are especially reminded of the shortness of life and the night of time. In Holy Scripture the most fragile and ephemeral things are chosen to represent the duration of human existence. Man is as a handbreadth, and his years are as nothing in the sight of God. He is like grass that in the morning flourisheth and grows up, and in the afternoon is cut down, and withered, and as the wind blows, it is scattered, and its place is as a chaff of the wind. Like the flight of an arrow through the yielding air, or the gliding of a keel through the retreating waves, our life is like a passing shadow, a thing most evanescent—such, in the sight of God, is the life of man.

THE NEW YEAR.

The close of the old year and the beginning of the new is a most fitting time for reflection. The resolutions we make, if ever, should even the most frivolous bestow a moment's earnest thought upon the past, and seek divine aid to essay the duties of the future. Standing as we do in a "bright and happy time," let us confound of eternities, "all things conspire to make us feel that our lives are rapidly sliding away, that they shall soon have passed forever. The successive New Years, by their constant return, seem to measure our progress through time. As travellers who cross the Alps, climbing the lofty mountains' sides, gain broader, clearer vision, and a wider horizon, as they look up and down the path by which they have ascended and perceive that its devious turnings were necessary to avoid some crevasse or overcome some difficulty, and as, gaining the summit of the pass, they behold the fertile plains of Lombardy and the far-shining city of their pilgrimage; so, to us, the New Years are hills, as it were, whence we may look back on all the way by which the past has unfolded, and from which we look forward, we may get clearer views of the end of our journey, of the goal of our hopes. Our life's pathway may often seem rugged and steep, but from the vantage-ground of added years we gain wider horizons, and, at last, from the supreme vantage-ground of heaven we may discern that all life's devious ways have been part of God's great plan, that we have been led by a way that we knew not, by a way that we might not have chosen for ourselves, but by a way that has been wise and good in its end.

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But though life be short, it is of infinite importance. Though time be fleeting, on it our most momentous issues hang. It is the seed-time of eternity. It is the probation of an endless future. The good we sow in this world which shall spring a harvest of everlasting joy, or the hateful seeds of sin from which shall grow a bitter cup of unending remorse and shame.

"Oh, 'tis solemn living, When we know each hour is giving Radiance or night of darkness, to the soul's eternal yearning."

A NEW YEAR.

"It's coming, boys It's almost here; It's coming, girls, The grand New Year! A year to be glad in, Not to be had in. A year to live in, to gain and give in; A year for trying, and not for sighing; A bright New Year! Oh, hold it dear! For God who sendeth, he only leaveth."

This is what some one wrote just before a New Year celebration. It is a good one, and very appropriate to the season. Whether this new year will be a "grand" one or not depends on ourselves. We can make it what we please. We shall certainly have grand opportunities if we improve the new year will be to us "happy" all the way through. If we slight them we cannot expect either happiness or success. It is astonishing how many good resolutions are made at the beginning of every new year. There was Jack Jones, for instance, who had been very negligent of his lessons for a long time. He was content to shirk school, and he readily could get through his examinations by "a tight squeeze," as he called it. Just before the Christmas holidays Jack's teacher had a plain talk with him about his neglect, and he received, so kindly, and promised to "turn over a new leaf" as soon as he came back to school. The first day after the vacation Jack's teacher reminded him of his promise, and he vowed that he would fully intend to carry it out. And so, no doubt, he did; but unfortunately he lacked firmness and decision; and thus, when his cousin Will asked him after school to go skating, he readily consented, satisfying himself that there would be time enough for study after the fun was over. But he became so interested in his play that it was dark when he reached home, and he was obliged to study much after supper. He went to bed early, resolved to get up unusually early, and study hard. But he slept unusually late, and went to school unprepared.

What was the matter with Jack? His intentions were good, but he lacked that noble self-denial without which no one can hope to succeed. The new year of 1899 will be a happy one, if we are ready to do our very best every day, whether the year is new or old, and then we shall not feel called upon to make good resolutions only to be broken. The resolutions we have made are noted above deserves to be remembered. Our time is lent to us by God for a good and a wise purpose. It is not to be trifled away, but to be diligently improved. God, who lends it to us, will one day call us to give account of it. We ought, therefore, so to improve it that when this account is rendered, it shall be found that we have been wise, and good, and useful in the world.—Angelus.

NEW YEAR RESOLUTION AND HOW HE KEPT IT.

"This being the first day of the year A.D. 1899, it is just and right that I should make resolutions for the day. Therefore be it Resolved, that during the coming year I will strive as far as possible to do unto others as I would be done by. Signed, 'Edward, my son,' said his father, directly after breakfast, "will you clean off the walks—the first thing this morning." "Oh, dear," Ned was beginning, when he thought of his resolution and answered promptly. "Yes, father, I'll see to it at once, and started off with a merry whistle. His father looked in surprise for Ned had been much given to whining when asked to do anything. When he came in, his mother asked him to go on an errand for her, and he went at once, notwithstanding he was anxious to get to his work. "This is the best Christmas, and in which he was much interested. When he did get a chance to read he found his sister was reading the book 'Give me my book,' he cried. "I'm not right in the middle of a chapter, and it is so interesting! I might just flush this chapter!" "No," he answered crossly. "You had no right to go my book. There was no time for her respectful face, he thought. "Now, I guess that's not just as I'd be done by," and added: "Well, finish the chapter, then, Nellie." "Oh, Ned," cried his little brother, "won't you show me how to spin my new top?" "Not now, Freddie, I'm reading, don't you see?" "But I'm lonesome," pleaded the little fellow, "and I can't do it right." "Come here," said Ned, suddenly recollecting himself. And in a few moments the little fellow was as happy as could be, while Ned afterwards found that he was done by, and Ned's sled was recognized as the swiftest on the hill. It's queer how boys will tug up a long, tire-some hill just for the sport of riding down it. Ned's sled was not so work-hal as hard they would think themselves awfully abused. But they always have and they always will, I guess (and girls, too, for that matter), and Ned was no exception. No one noticed a poorly dressed lad who had no sled, and stood shivering with the cold, and wistfully watching the merry-makers. Ned saw him, and he thought, "I have no ride at all, but it's none of my business." And his sled when he reached the top went merrily down the hill again. But he was not easy as he climbed back again. "Suppose you had no sled and he had one," whispered a small voice, "what would you like him to do? Your sled is large enough for two. Why not take him on with you?" "That's no good," "Supposing it wouldn't do as you'd be done by?" By this time he reached the top of the hill. "Here, you," he called to the boy. "Wouldn't you like to ride?" "Wouldn't he? His cheeks flushed and his eyes sparkled. "Well, come, jump on then," And away they went. Not once but many times they went (for Ned never did things by halves), and he acknowledged to himself that somehow he felt less happier, and the boy was a good deal more so. "Come next Saturday and you can ride some more," he said, when he started for home, and his new friend promised as he ran joyfully off. "I'm glad that night as he thought over the day, "it may be a much harder way, but it's also much nicer, and I think I'll keep right on for the year."

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NEW BOOKS.

"The Queen's Twin, and Other Stories." By Sarah Orne Jewett. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Toronto: William Briggs. Price, \$1.25. Sarah Orne Jewett, herself a "queen" of happy, healthy story-telling, has again written a book of the same kind. It is sold in her own inimitable way. Her style is always attractive, and her characters quaint and interesting. Those who are acquainted with dear old "Fris" who are acquainted with dear old "Fris" in the pages of this volume. She is as devoted to her herbs as ever, and finds them as efficacious in the cure of every human ill as when we first found her showing them in "The Country of the Pointed Firs." Each story in the book is wrought with delicacy, and with an appreciation of character rarely found. Her stories are written by quiet, unassuming, unassuming, and the minor chord of pathos is frequently struck. Her last story is a most beautiful Thanksgiving idyll. "Dorothy and Her Friends." By Ellen Orne Kirk. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Toronto: William Briggs. Illustrated. Another story of dear little Dorothy Deane comes from the pen of Ellen Orne Kirk. It is peopled with many happy children. It treats of the marvelous influence for good that can be exerted by quiet, unassuming, unassuming, who are determined not to live for self, but to try to help others. It is a book well worth the time of boys and girls to read.