

"May this new year be better than the last
 And we be better with it. God bless all,
 And may we live to see next New Year's day."
 And then the worthy parson called a toast,
 With some kind words that wet the women's eyes,
 And with a full glass gave: "The absent!" meaning
 The brother in our empire of the Ind,
 A competition wallah, who had been
 Sent to some dusky rajah by the crown,
 With not unselfish kindness,—and who wrote
 From a hill fortress in the Himalayas
 A monthly letter home, which told such tales
 Of tiger hunts and feats of sticking pigs,
 Of elephants, and gems and Cashmere shawls
 As made the astonished girls ope their eyes.

With tale and song, with mirth and social games,
 Unheeded flew the young and rosy hours
 Till chanticleer had sounded the reveille
 To tell the sky was greying with the dawn,
 When out the steppers came with jingling bells
 And shook their harness and impatient pawed,
 As forest deer, the crisp but feathery snow.
 Then was the bundling up! the gallant swains
 With clumsy service helping mantles on
 And tying fleecy scarfs beneath the chin,
 And squeezing hands they squeezed into the gloves,
 Till all the mothers first, and then the maids
 Were packed away, like precious babes, in tiers,
 With joyous shouts of hearty-voiced adieus
 And promise sought and given to meet again,—
 Right cheery,—for each sound was sharp and clear
 In the rare morning air all hushed and still
 With the great woods great stillness, save in
 The patches of the never silent pines
 Where sad and low breathed Mother Nature's voice
 That sings a hushaby the whole night long.
 Then crack of whips and swish of cutters' steel,
 And ring of hoofs, as rythmical as rhyme,
 With snatches of light laughter in duets,
 Men's voice and women's mingling, growing faint
 And fainter till the whole sound died away,
 And the now rising morning faintly threw
 Faint bars of shadow in the avenue.

Now *when* was this? and *where*?
 It was yestre'en
 In many places of Canadian land.

Such homes are many and such men not few,
 And may they aye be legion in the land.
 In some such home resides the Coming Man,
 And there are being trained the hands shall guide
 The reins of empire in the coming time
 When Canada shall rank among the powers.

God save such citizens. And save the land.

HUNTER DUVAR.