

A Priceless Pearl.

What if this year should be my last?
That or another year shall come
My pilgrimage on earth be past
And I asleep within the tomb!

It may be so, I can not tell,
The future gives no secret out
What is to be she guards full well
And leaves the searcher still in doubt.

But as I know not, therefore, I
Will act as though this year should be
The last beneath the sunny sky
That kind heaven shall give to me

With sympathy my heart shall beat
For every creature God has made
And love to man, divinely sweet
Each moment shall my breast pervade

Revenge or hatred shall not find
Within my being room to hide
And malice, poison of the mind,
Condemned with serpents to abide

Each day shall see some duty done,
Some act of pure unselfishness,
And everywhere my feet shall run
To help a brother in distress

Tho' many years may come to me,
Like those now numbered with the past
A priceless pearl this one shall be
As tho' indeed it were my last

Grandfather's Gift.

The last night of the old year Jessie sat on her grandfather's knee, with her curly head resting on his shoulder and her chubby hands swinging her grandfather's watch gently backward and forward.

"What are you going to give me to-morrow, grandpa?"

"Give you to-morrow? Kisses, of course," said grandpa.

"No, I mean what are you going to give me for a New Year's gift?"

"Such a big New Year's gift ought to be contended with itself," said grandfather. "I shan't need to give you anything."

"Oh, yes, you will!" and Jessie let the watch slide into her grandfather's pocket, and framing his face in her little hands, looked reproachfully and entreatingly into his face.

"Must I?" asked grandfather, regarding that same little face with very kind eyes.

"Yes, you must," said Jessie imperiously.

"What shall I give you, then?" he asked.

Jessie thought a moment.

"A pocket full of money."

"A pocket full of money? What could you do with a pocket full of money?"

"Walk out," said Jessie.

"And lose it all."

"No, grandpa, of course not—give it away."

"Oh-h!" said grandfather, "that's the idea."

"Yes," said Jessie. "Last New Year's I met ever so many poor little girls and boys that said 'Please give me a penny?' and Jessie said the words thickly and fast, as she remembered to have heard them, "and it went to my heart, grandfather, to pass them by dressed in my ermine cloak and velvet hat."

"Grandfather's smiling eyes grow serious.

"Supposing, Jessie," he said, "I should fill your pockets with the money which I intended to buy you a pony with next summer, do you think you would be willing to go without the pony when summer came?"

"Oh, yes, grandpa," said Jessie, eagerly. "I am sure I should, and that would be lots of money, wouldn't it?"

"I should only put part in your pocket and the rest in the bank for mamma to help you spend."

"Spoud? For poor little girls and boys?"

"Yes, dear."

"You're a beautiful grandpa!"

Grandfather did not say anything, but he thought in his heart that Jessie was a New Year's gift invaluable.

"Did you hear the child?" he asked of Jessie's mother, after Jessie had gone to bed.

"Why, yes," said Jessie's mother. "It is no more than she ought to do. I should be very sorry if she did not think of others, with all the comforts that she has."

That same night another little girl of Jessie's age lay weeping silently in the corner of a desolate room where a feeble fire burned in a broken grate, and every other sign of poverty prevailed.

Upon a narrow bedstead lay the little girl's mother, too sick to rise, sleeping now, after a day of weary pain.

Presently there came a knock outside the door, at the sound of which the little girl rose, and, brushing the tears from

her eyes, went softly and opened the door.

"Rob!" she exclaimed, gladly, "is that you?"

"Yes, Agnes; but it's no use—"

"Hush!" said Agnes, shutting the door very gently and drawing her brother into the adjoining room. "Oh, Rob, you don't mean they didn't want you?"

"Yes, I do, and we may as well die and be done with it. Never mind, Aggie, don't cry—notice your sister's distress—perhaps something will turn up."

And, striving to comfort his sister, Rob almost deceived himself as to the hopelessness of things.

"People are always kinder at New Year's. I may beg a job somewhere, as long as the Sharples's don't want me. They didn't pay me well, as it was, and if it hadn't been for mother being sick—"

"They've got so much money, too," sobbed Agnes. "Oh, I know if I was a rich man I'd look out for poor people!"

"I think I should, too," said Rob.

"At least I wouldn't cheat them out of what really did belong to them."

A faint call from the sick room reached Agnes' ear, and both she and her brother hastened to the bedside of their mother, where they remained most of the night, sleeping and watching turns, hoping that the morning would find her better, yet fearing it would find her worse.

Rob had wished to call a physician, but as there was nothing to pay one with, and no immediate prospect of any means to do so, he had not gone, but in the morning he started out for that purpose, and Agnes, cheering the fire into its warmest blaze, sought to keep up a brave heart, while the patient in valid lay as silent and uncomplaining as it was possible for her, suffering and weak as she was.

The hours stole slowly by towards noon, and Rob did not return, neither did the physician appear, and little Agnes at last decided to go for the latter, while with an anxious heart she wondered where her brother could be.

As she hurried along the street, so intent upon her purpose, eager only to get a physician, and hasten back to her mother, she stumbled awkwardly against a little girl who was walking with one hand in her grandfather's and one hand in her pocket.

"Oh!" exclaimed Jessie, as she put her jaunty hat back on its proper place, and regarded the frightened Agnes. "Oh, did I hurt you, little girl?"

"Oh, no," said Agnes. "I was afraid I hurt you. I'm very sorry—I wasn't looking," and she was hastening on, when Jessie caught hold of her shawl, which felt very thin, and drew her back.

"I want to wish you a happy New Year," she said, "and give you something to buy you a new shawl," and she eagerly pressed a handful of coin into Agnes' hand.

"Do you mean to give this all to me?" asked Agnes, bewildered.

"Oh, yes," said Jessie, "and more, too, if you want it. That's my New Year's, isn't it, grandpa?"

"It will more than pay Dr. Westtan," said Agnes, speaking to herself, as she eagerly counted the money. "Oh, how kind of you! The money'll make mother better fast in itself."

"Is your mother sick?" asked Jessie, compassionately.

"Yes," answered Agnes, her eyes filling with tears; "and I must not stop to talk, although I thank you so very much."

"Just a moment longer!" said Jessie's grandfather. "Where do you live? We may be able to be of use to your mother. Dr. Westtan and I are old friends. Does he think your mother so very sick?"

"He hasn't seen her yet," faltered Agnes; "we did not like to call him until we had to, as we were afraid we could not pay him; but now—now I must hurry, for mother is alone."

"Go back to her," said Jessie's grandfather, "I will go for Dr. Westtan myself."

"Oh, thank you!" said Agnes, "then he will be sure to come."

"Yes, and we'll come back with him," said Jessie, shouting after her as she hastened away. "Let us hurry, grandpa. I hope Dr. Westtan will be at home."

They found him just returning, and making preparation to call on the sick woman, as Rob had left word for him to do in the morning.

He took Jessie and her grandfather with him in his chaise and in a few minutes they stopped before the shabby

habitation which Agnes was just entering.

She uttered a glad exclamation at beholding them, and showed the doctor at once to her mother's bedside.

"I am glad," he said to Jessie's grandfather after prescribing for his patient, "to meet you here, for here you will find an opportunity to exercise the charity for which you have acquired a reputation. These are worthy people and your kindness will not be lost upon them."

Meanwhile, Jessie had been explaining to Agnes about her pocketful of money, and Agnes had been telling her of other little boys and girls who, she supposed, would be as glad of the money as she had been.

"Oh, I hope Rob will come soon," she said, "everything is so nice. Rob said people would be kinder to-day because it is New Year's and he was right."

"Is Rob your brother?" asked Jessie.

"Yes," and Agnes drew such a glowing picture of him that Jessie wanted to wait and see him, but grandfather warned her that their dinner hour was near at hand and that they must be going.

"You will hear from us again," he said to Agnes, while Jessie insisted upon putting more money into her hand.

"For Rob," she said, laughing.

Doctor Westtan remained a while longer, as he was in truth more anxious about his patient than he really cared to show.

She was, however, sleeping quietly, when, with a few kind words to Agnes, he withdrew.

"I need not be quite so afraid to put my last shovelful of coal on," said she, meditatively, as she renewed the fire, and settled herself to recount her money and consider what of all their needs it should buy for them.

While thus occupied she fell asleep. Jessie was eating her New Year's dinner, and between the mouthfuls, recounting the adventures of the morning.

"You'll go there, mamma, won't you?"

"Certainly, my dear, this very afternoon."

"And, mamma, I shall give them all the money I was going to put in the bank, shall I not?"

"We will consider it, my dear. We will learn first what their needs are."

"Most everything, I should think, shouldn't you, grandpa?"

"Pretty nearly, from what I saw and from what Dr. Westtan tells me."

"Oh, mamma, why didn't I think to ask you to send that little girl a dinner?"

"I thought of it," said grandfather, "and your mother has sent it."

So when Agnes woke with a start from her sleep it was to find by her side a basket of provisions which some one had left there.

"Mother," she said, softly, "but her mother was still sleeping." "I ought to have locked the door," said Agnes, "but I did not think of going to sleep. That dear little girl must have sent this. I will put it by until Rob comes, and then we will enjoy it together. I wish mother could eat some of it."

Jessie was much displeased when, later in the afternoon, she and her mother made their proposed visit, to find that the dinner was untouched.

"Didn't eat even a piece of pie?" she asked.

Agnes shook her head.

"Then you must eat it now," said Jessie, "for mother is going to send you as many pies as you want, and everything else."

Which was, Agnes thought, quiet true, when that night the narrow bedstead had given way to a more commodious one, and the scanty bedclothes were replaced by warm, soft blankets and a downy spread.

Every comfort that the invalid could desire was placed at her disposal, with the promise of the constant attention of Dr. Westtan until health should return to her.

A happy New Year it proved in this home from the first day 'til the end.

With rope and comfort, health and happiness returned, for that night when Rob came back to find the joyous change the day had wrought, he had his own happy story to add to the general rejoicing.

He had aided a lady to cross a crowded street, and picked her little boy out almost from under the horses' hoofs, and she, in turn, had taken him home with her, and recommended him to one of her gentleman boarders who had need of a boy in his business, and who at once engaged Rob, and as he was only too willing to begin his labors then and there had kept him busy till night, for before

his father died Rob had been in school.

"A happy New Year," said she and Rob watched the smile on mother's pale face that night sleeping.

"A happy New Year," said with her curly head nestled on grandfather's chin. "It was present you gave me grandpa, is it?"

"It was a wise little brain that thought of it," said grandfather, "wait till the summer comes, a pony, and then so."

"Grandpa!" and Jessie's eyes quite silenced him. *New York Weekly.*

A Mistake Somewhere

"Miss Gracie," he said, with a engaging smile, "did you ever see a hand at one of these progressive games?"

"What is a progressive game, Mr. Spoonamore?" inquired the lady.

"Haven't you heard of them? It is one. Why is a ball of yarn a letter 'C'? Because a ball of yarn is circular, a circular is a sheet, a sheet is flat, a flat is forty-five dollars a month, forty-five dollars a month is dear, but is swift, a swift is a swallow, a swallow is a taste, a taste is an inclination, an inclination is an angle, an angle is a point, a point is an object aimed at, an object aimed at is a target, a target is a mark, a mark is an impression, an impression is a stamp, a stamp is a thing stuck on, a thing stuck on is a young man in love, and a young man in love is like the letter 'C' because he stands before his Miss Gracie."

"I don't think you have the answer quite right," said the young lady. "A ball of yarn is round, a round is a steak, a steak is a coat, a thing a woman thing is a young man in love, and a young man in love is like the letter 'C' because, Mr. Spoonamore," and she spoke clearly and lastly, "because he is often crossed."

The young man understood. He took his hat and his progressive card, and vanished from Miss Gracie's parlour, leaving her to read the *Tribune*.

Met His Match.

Certainly the gilded youth of today has not the chivalry of his ancient prototype. Perhaps the new woman has something to do with the bad manners and ill concealed indifference which he assumes at whatever function he honors with his presence. If this is the case, however, it will be diamond cut diamond for the girl of the period is far more with her tongue, and can be just as independent and independent as her own-line contemporary.

"Jack," said a lady to one of her guests, "come and be introduced to Miss—"

"She is charming!"

"Thanks, awfully; but I'd rather talk to you," was the answer overheard by the sharp ears of the young lady in question, who could see her hostess laughingly expostulating.

Finally the youth, apparently yawned, lounged towards her with, "Well, then, up, then," and the next instant Miss B. and her victim stood before her. "Miss dear," she whispered, "Mr.— is so anxious to be presented to you, may I?" and then aloud, "Miss S.—, I want to introduce my great friend, Mr. A.—"

The girl gave a little nod and looked at him critically, as if to take in all his points. "Yes," she said, simply, "he's very nice and now trot him back again," and turning her back, she continued her interrupted conversation with her companion. *New York Tribune.*

A well-known dry goods store recently displayed the following placard on the stock of kids. Assorted colors and sizes. Step in and examine them. If it happened no one knows, but the morning the sign was seen fastened to the entrance of the Orphan Asylum around the corner. *Truth.*

Lewis, Md., has a horseless car. The vehicle is of the ordinary type, the motor power being in front and placed between the shafts as usual. Two guide lines connect with the axle of the machine to direct the car. Connection is also made to the rear by leather straps. Speed is regulated by the driver, 8 to 10 miles an hour on ordinary roads being made. The car is a gray mule.