

Toronto Topics

THE New Year has begun, and by the time UPS AND DOWNS reaches its readers one month will have passed. May each month as it comes bring happiness and more brightness into all our lives!

It seems such a little time since our last talk together, and yet each day has brought its own share of responsibilities and new experiences; and although there is always a certain amount of sameness about our lives, at times some very funny things happen, and at others trying ones; but they all go to form our different characters, and the way we meet them tends to make these characters good and strong or weak and of no account. Let us all set before us the highest standard, and try earnestly and patiently to reach up to it, and mould our lives and characters after the pattern our Divine Master gave us.

As for news, we have our little share, of course. And, first of all, I am sure all our girls will want to know how Lizzie Steele is, so I must take this opportunity of thanking all the girls who have enquired for her so kindly both by letter and at the house, and tell them all that she is still in the hospital, resting; but we hope she is recovering strength and her lost energy. She has had a good deal of rheumatism, and several of us know what a terrible, gnawing, tiring pain that is, and can sympathize with her. We have another hospital patient on our books as well as Lizzie. Gertrude Storr has managed to pick up scarlet fever somewhere. I do not know if Santa Claus found it left over after dispensing his other gifts and so gave it to her; but it is, fortunately, only a slight attack, and we hope she will soon be well again and safe company and be able to take a place and keep it.

Harriet Dace is out of hospital, and obliged to take light work. Gladys Parsons is still in hospital, and Charlotte Wilson once under the same heading; and we can truly be very sympathetic and anxious and welling, and other good words, for all the girls who can wonder how long it will take to recover

ages from fifteen to twenty even come out visiting on a cold evening, with snow on the ground and the thermometer between freezing and zero, with nothing on their feet but just the light slippers they wear round the house? I wonder if a few words from our friend, Dick Whittington, or our kind doctor, would have any better effect than my lectures, which seem to have got so stale as to be quite ineffectual.

We have to stretch our arms still wider to receive new sisters. Lucy Hayward comes to us from Burlington, and already seems very happy in her place, and we hope she will continue so and do well in it.

Lily Fitzgerald is trying her hand at city life and city ways, which latter are not like the country ones; but she will very quickly learn that chickens are just as good cooked without water in the pan as they are with it. Lily had a visit from her brother, whom she has not seen for three years, and we are glad she should have had this pleasure, and can realize what happiness it must have given her to be with him again.

Then comes Marah Neale. How many can remember her? Of course, the writer is quite "out of it" on the remembering question, although she was first in the field to welcome her among us. Marah came to Canada in 1884 with one of the earliest parties; still she is not too old to come and claim sisterhood with us here in Toronto, and we are very glad to welcome her among us. Then we had two more strangers with us on the 26th—Marie Garbe and Ruth Graham, both of them quite "grown up," but none the less welcome, and we hope they will come again and see us and join our Sunday gatherings occasionally.

Alice Cornish lives a long way out in Etobicoke, but has managed to be with us two or three times, and we hope the society of other girls will cheer her up and in it help her to fresh efforts to do well and give satisfaction. And we have no gaps! Not one of our number has left us yet, and I hope we shall not see any breaks in our circle this