

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

NEW YEAR'S WISHES.

What shall I wish thee?
Treasures of earth?
Songs in the springtime,
Pleasure or mirth?
Flowers on thy pathway,
Skies over clear?
Would this ensue thee
A Happy New Year?

What shall I wish thee?
What can be found
Bringing thee sunshine
All the year round?
Where is the treasure,
Lasting and dear,
That shall ensue thee
A Happy New Year?

Faith that increaseth,
Walking in light;
Hope that aboundeth,
Happy and bright,
Love that is perfect,
Casting out fear—
These shall ensue thee
A Happy New Year.

Peace in the Saviour,
Rest at His foot;
Smile of His countenance
Radiant and sweet;
Joy in His presence,
Christ ever near—
These will ensue thee
A Happy New Year

—Francis Ridley Havergal.

THE CROOKED TREE.

Such a cross old woman as Mrs. Barnes is! I never would send her jelly or anything else again," said Molly Clapp, setting her basket hard down on the table. "She never even said 'Thank you,' but set the cup on the table, child, and don't knock over the bottles. Why don't your mother come herself instead of sending you? I'll be dead one of these days, and then she'll wish she had been a little more neighbourly." I never want to go there again, and shouldn't think you would."

"Molly! Molly; come quick and see Mr. Daws straighten the old cherry tree!" called Tom through the window, and old Mrs. Barnes was forgotten as Molly flew out over the green to the next yard.

Her mother watched with a good deal of interest the efforts of two stout men as, with stout ropes, they strove to pull the crooked tree this way and that, but it was of no use.

"It's as crooked as the letter S and has been for twenty years. You're just twenty years too late, Mr. Daws," said Joe as he dropped the rope and wiped the sweat from his face.

"Are you sure you haven't begun twenty years too late on tobacco and rum, Joe?" asked Mr. Daws.

"That's a true word, master, and it's as hard to break off with them as to make this old tree straight. But I signed the pledge last night, and with God's help, I mean to keep it."

"With God's help you may hope to keep it, Joe," responded the master. "Our religion gives every man a chance to reform. No one need despair so long as we have such promises of grace to help."

"That's my comfort, sir," said the man, humbly. "but I shall tell the boys to try and not grow crooked at the beginning."

"Mother," said Molly as she stood by the window again at her mother's side, "I know

now what is the matter with old Mrs. Barnes. She needn't try to be pleasant and kind now, for she's like the old tree: its twenty years too late."

"It's never too late, with God's help, to try to do better, but my little girl must begin now to keep back harsh words, and unkind thoughts; then she will never have to say, as Joe said about the tree, 'It is twenty years too late.'"—*Child's World*.

SHE LOVED HER NEIGHBOUR.

An example in the city of Philadelphia, showing how the "royal law" can be practised by the poor as well as the rich, is reported in one of the religious journals:

A poor woman, who was only a huckster in one of the markets, became a living commentary on the great precept of loving kindness.

"I don't know anything about the Christianity of the big churches," said a black porter on the wharf; "but I do know Ann B—, and I believe in the God that makes her what she is."

A specimen of her spirit, and the way it always made for her, is furnished in an incident of one of her street-car rides, when she was feeling sad to think how little good she could do with only ten cents in her pocket.

"I just prayed to God," said she, "to give me a chance, and in a minute I noticed the woman beside me was crying.

"She was a weak little body, and was trying to carry two children. I took one of them, and we fell to talking, and I found that her husband was a mason. He had gone to work on a hotel in Atlantic City, and she had just heard that he had fallen and broken his leg. She had not a penny to take her to him, and she was going to walk.

"I thought, 'Now my chance has come.' So I took a long breath and spoke out loud:

"Ladies and gentlemen, will you listen to this woman's story?" So I told it as she told me, and a gentleman passed around his hat, and the people in the car gave her enough to send her to her husband, and to keep her for a month."

A wealthy lady who was in the car, struck by Ann's simple earnestness, made her her almoner, and for years the good woman went up and down among the poor of Philadelphia, bringing comfort to both body and soul.

FUN THAT MAY KILL.

We want all the boys who are in the habit of smoking cigarettes or who are beginning to learn how to smoke them, to pay attention while we tell them of a sad event that recently took place in one of our Eastern cities.

Among a number of bright boys who had set out to become business men, was a lad fifteen years of age, employed in a lawyer's office. During his leisure hours and on Sabbaths he was in the habit of smoking cigarettes, the smoke of which he inhaled. From this he passed to chewing tobacco, and it is said that when he was not smoking he had tobacco in his mouth, and occasionally combined the two. His parents endeavoured to

break him of the habit, but all they could say and do had no effect. His health soon began to fail rapidly, and his family, who were not aware that tobacco would have such injurious effects, fancied that his weakness was caused by the close confinement which he had to undergo at his place of business.

He became so ill that he could not sleep at night and his appetite began to fail. His countenance was very sallow, and he had severe headaches. Finally his mother took him to see a physician, who, on examining him, thought he was suffering from want of the right kind of food, and prescribed tonics and things that are nourishing and strengthening.

But instead of improving in health the poor lad constantly grew worse, and was soon confined to his bed. The doctor then learned that the boy was addicted to tobacco in every form, and he came to the conclusion that his patient was suffering from nicotine poisoning. Nothing that could be done had any effect in restoring the suffering boy. He lingered for about a week, when congestion of the lungs set in and the heart began to fail in its functions. This was the beginning of the end. Within twenty-four hours he was dead, killed by the foolish habit he had formed of smoking cigarettes and chewing tobacco.

Such a story as this ought to be all the warning a boy could ever want against cigarette smoking.

SOLDIER AND THISTLE.

Little Minnie, in her eagerness after flowers, had wounded her hand on the sharp, prickly thistle. This made her cry with pain at first, and pout with vexation afterwards.

"I do wish there was no such a thing as a thistle in the world," she said pettishly.

"And yet the Scottish nation think so much of it that they engraved it on the national arms," said her mother.

"It is the last flower that I should pick out," said Minnie. "I am sure they might have found a great many nice ones, even among the weeds."

"But if the thistle did them some good service once," said her mother, "they learned to esteem it very highly. One time the Danes invaded Scotland, and they prepared to make a night attack on a sleeping garrison. So they crept along barefooted, as still as possible, until they were almost on the spot. Just at that moment a barefoot soldier stepped on a great thistle, and the hurt made him utter a sharp cry of pain. The sound awoke the sleepers, and each man sprang to his arms. They fought with great bravery, and the invaders were driven back with much loss. So, you see, the thistle saved Scotland, and ever since it has been placed on their seal as their national flower."

"Well, I never suspected that so small a thing could save a nation," said Minnie thoughtfully.

SUFFER not your thoughts to dwell on an injury, or provoking words spoken to you. Learn the art of neglecting them at the time. Let them grow less and less every moment until they die out of your mind.