

one know it, and those who passed him in the street saw, if anything, only the white, resolute face of a young man poorly dressed; but heaven's recording angel wrote it with glad joy in the book that is golden with just such victories—silent, unseen, waiting to make the soul of the victor rejoice some day. And that mother far away in her quiet home performing its humble duties, knew not that she had saved her boy.

* * * * *

Again it is New Year's. Many have come and gone in their swift course since Josey Reynolds said goodbye to his mother and turned his face resolutely and hopefully toward a new, strange life. Many hardships, too, have come to him, and many temptations, but the lessons of his early life have never been forgotten, and slowly but surely he has conquered difficulties and discouragements.

A strong, fine-looking, finely-dressed man stepped from the car as it stopped in the Rockton station, and after giving directions in regard to his baggage, he walked briskly up the village street. Just in his way stood a drinking saloon; not a palatial affair at all, but dingy and tumble-down. A familiar face drew him inside by a sudden and resistless impulse.

"Harry Jones, this is not a good place in which to spend New Year's. Excuse my plain speaking, I am interested in every one that, when a boy, I used to know in this village."

"It's you, is it, Mr. Reynolds? Glad to see you! What you say is true enough, but I can't very well help being here, as this is my business."

"You don't say you keep this saloon, Mr. Jones?"

"That's just how the matter stands. It's poor business, I admit, but I've never been lucky like you, Mr. Reynolds. The place here opened, and it was this or nothing. You had a better start than I, with all my father's money. You see, I sort of thought it would last always, and I could do about as I had a mind to. You'd ought to be mighty thankful to that mother of yours that she started you right. Going up to see her now, I reckon. Well, I'm glad one of our Rockton boys has turned out well. Most of them have had poor luck enough."

"I must hurry along, for my mother is expecting me, but I hope you'll find something better to do soon. Good-day."

On a quiet, sunny corner stood a pleasant, white cottage with friendly, protecting evergreen trees about the ample yard. This was the home Joseph Reynolds had provided for his mother. Notwithstanding his many business cares and large social duties, he managed to spend each New Year's evening with her.

As they sit together before the cheery open fire, the old smile comes into the placid face, though it has many lines of sorrow and care, and the tender eyes rest fondly on the strong, manly form of her son, who carries with him the old air of quiet earnestness. They talk of other days, and find comfort in the thought that even the hardships and trial they brought helped prepare them for the better and brighter New Years that the future held in store.

THE GLAD NEW YEAR.

RING, ring, ye gladsome bells,
From yonder bellies high!
Ring out your joyful strains
From earth to sky!
For, lo, a stranger comes
Kingly and proud.
Upon the blast
He rideth fast,
Peal out your welcome loud!
Ring merrily,
Ring cheerily,
To the great, the coming year,
The glad New Year.

We'll lift with braver heart
Life's burden once again,
We'll act a nobler part
Among our fellow-men:
Hope's flowers again shall bloom,
Along life's dusty ways
And murmurings and sighs
Shall change to prayer and praise.
Faith shall with clearer vision
Look toward the coming days,
When peace shall o'er division
Reign with benignant rays;
When man to man as brother
Shall lend a helping hand
And God's best benediction
Rest on our smiling land!

Ring, ring, ye bells!
Ring loud, ring high!
Peal out your merry cheer
From earth to sky,
To greet the glad New Year,
That ever glad New Year!

HOLIDAY BOOKS.

WE have seen no more attractive holiday present than the bound volume of *Harper's Young People* for 1884.

It is a thick quarto of 332 large, splendidly illustrated and strongly bound. It hits, we think, the happy medium between the prosy and didactic and the light and frivolous. There are tales of stirring adventure for active boys; quieter stories for thoughtful girls; rhymes and simple pictures for the little folk; descriptions of sports and games; of foreign countries, and curious things; choice music and sketches of great musicians, natural history; how to do things; Christmas stories and poetry; instructive biography, etc. But the best feature of all is the copious illustrations. There are over 600 pictures, many of them superb examples of the engraver's art. J. G. Brown's pictures of the irrepressible, unchristian boys of the period have never been excelled. Even better than buying these volumes all at once we think is to take the numbers of *Harper's Young People* week by week. It costs \$2 a year, and we can club it with *PLEASANT HOURS* so that any reader of this paper can receive *Harper's Young People* for 1885 by sending \$1.75 to Rev. W. H. Withrow, Toronto.

THE FAR NORTH.

Stories of arctic exploration and discovery have a strange fascination for young and old, and no more heroic story was ever told than the simple record of those stout-hearted sailors

Who braved the perils of the wintry sea
To pluck its secret from the boreal pole.

In "the Voyage of the Vivian to the North Pole and Beyond," Colonel Knox, author of these fascinating books, "The Boy Travellers in the Far East," gives, in the form of an exceedingly interesting and instructive story, an account of pretty much all that is known about those far northern regions, which have kept for ages their secret locked in their icy breast. The results of previous voyages from the time of Berhing to that of Lieut. Greely are

summarized. To young readers the personal interest in the young tourists whose adventures are described will be an additional attraction; and, like the man who spoke prose all his life without knowing it, they will be learning geography, science, and history, without the consciousness of any irksome task. The nearly two hundred engravings that illustrate the book are selected from the copious resources of the great house by which it is published. (Harper Bros., New York. Price \$2.50)

FAIRY LORE.

The time was when reading fairy tales was thought a very silly, if not wicked, thing. It has been found, however, that they often embody the wisdom of the ancients, and have a profound inner meaning. In "Last Fairy Tales" (Harper Brothers. Pp. 382. Price \$2), M. Edouard Laboulaye, a distinguished French Statesman, and Professor of the Institute of France, has collected the fairy lore of many lands and many tongues. We have here Esthonian, Servian, Turkish, Dalmatian, Croatian, Neapolitan, Russian, Finnish, Icelandic, Norwegian, Nubian, Greek, Hebrew, Spanish, French, and German fairy tales. While fascinating for children, their elders will find here much of interest. We are told that the Vice-President of the United States, and the President of one of its largest banks, sat up nearly all night to finish a former volume of fairy lore by M. Laboulaye. The book has nearly 300 quaint and curious engravings by leading French artists.

POPULAR SCIENCE.

More fascinating, however, than any fairy folk-lore are the fairy tales of science. As Mrs. Browning says:

"God is far the truest poet,
And the real is his song."

In "Country Cousins," (Harper Brothers. Small 4to. Pp. 250. Price \$2.50),* Mr. Ernest Ingersoll gives a series of short studies of Natural History. He tells us of the curious ways of birds, and bees, and butterflies; of sea urchins, star-fish, and oysters; sponges, hydroids, and worms; of seals and sea-fishing; of squids, cuttles, and devil-fish—*et hoc genus omne*. The book is copiously illustrated. Gibson's engravings of forest life in winter, and the like, are exquisite. We hope that many young people will be led by this book to begin those studies which Longfellow so beautifully describes in the case of his friend, the great naturalist, Agassiz:

And Nature, the dear old nurse,
Took the child upon her knee,
Saying: "Here is a story book
Thy Father has written for thee."

"Come, wander with me," she said,
"Into regions yet untrod;
And read what is still unread
In the manuscripts of God."

And he wandered away, away,
With Nature, the dear old nurse,
Who sang to him, night and day,
The rhymes of the universe.

And whenever the way seemed long,
Or his heart began to fail,
She would sing a more wonderful song,
Or tell a more marvellous tale.

*Any of the above mentioned books may be ordered through the Methodist Book Rooms at Toronto, Montreal, and Halifax.

A FAREWELL TO THE OLD YEAR.

COME, gather round the glowing hearth,
While swift the moments fly,
The hour which gives the New Year birth
On Time's swift wing, draws nigh;
So gather here with song and cheer,
To bid the dear, the grey Old Year
A long and last goodbye.

What though he touched some hearts with grief,
If others he made strong?
Bid him farewell, the night grows brief,
He must be gone ere long.
The hale Old Year, now blanched and sere,
Whose hour draws near, forgive him here,
Whatever is of wrong.

Hark! heavy o'er the frozen snow
The bell's pealing toll;
O sexton, toll it soft and slow,
It is his funeral knell;
Goodbye Old Year, to memory dear,
God rest thy Bier! with many a tear
We give thee our farewell.

NEW YEAR'S DAY CUSTOMS.

RINGING out the Old and ringing in the New Year with "A merry New Year! a happy New Year to you!" on New Year's Day, were greetings that moved sceptered pride and humble labour to smiles and kind feelings in the former times; and why should they be unfashionable in our own?

Dr. Drake observes, in "Shakespeare and his Times," that the ushering in of the new year, or New Year's tide, with rejoicings, presents and good wishes, was a custom observed during the sixteenth century with great regularity and parade, and was as cordially celebrated in the court of the prince as in the cottage of the peasant.

Among the Saxons of the North the festival of the New Year was observed with more than ordinary jollity and feasting, and by sending New Year's gifts to one another.

The next to this is New Year's day,
Whereon to every tittle,
They costly presents in do bring,
And New Year's gifts do sende.

These gifts the husband gives his wife,
And father eke the child,
And maister on his men bestowes
The like, with favour milde.

Honest old Latimer, instead of presenting Henry VIII. with a purse of gold, as was customary for a New Year's gift, put into the king's hand a New Testament. Dr. Drake is of opinion that the wardrobe and jewelry of Queen Elizabeth were principally supported by the annual contributions on New Year's Day. He cites lists of the New Year's gifts presented to her from the original rolls published in her "Progresses" by Mr. Nicholas; and from these it appears that the greatest part, if not all the peers and peeresses of the realm, all the bishops, the chief officers of state, and several of the queen's household servants, even down to her apothecaries, master cook, serjeant of the pantry, etc., gave a New Year's gift to her majesty; consisting, in general, either of a sum of money, or jewels, or trinkets, or wearing apparel. Dr. Drake says that though Elizabeth made returns to the New Year's gifts in plate and other articles, yet she took sufficient care that the balance should be in her own favour.

GRATITUDE is a duty which ought to be paid, but which none have the right to expect.