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A NEW YEAR BALL.

BY OLIVE HARPER.

CHRISTMAS was never observed in Sullivan alley, from some occult cause, with the same vim and spirit that made New Year's so memorable a festival. Perhaps it was because there was a dim, undefined sentiment that Christmas was a holier day than New Year's; but, however it might have been, the fact remained that New Year's was the great day of the year for those who inhabited that narrow alley that extended only from one street to another through the middle of the block. There were tall tenement houses on each side of the alley, 'double deckers' some of them, and in each lived from 10 to 20 families. The people were all hard working and honest. If their hands were not white and soft, they were strong and capable.

The alley swarmed with children—little girls staggering under the load of a baby and the boys under a load of old laths or coal, gathered in their regular trips in search of such family necessities. The mothers generally toiled in their rooms with willing hearts, while the men of the household were away plying their different avocations. The young daughters of Sullivan alley were mostly employed in box factories or mills or at cigarette making, and so every morning the alley was almost depopulated, to overflow again at night when the tired workers returned.

But 'all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.' So thought these good people, and the 'residents' had all put in as much money as they could individually afford and hired a large room that had been originally intended for a saloon, and this had been fancifully decorated and was used for occasional meetings of the men and a 'grand annual New Year's ball.' It was now nearing the time for that annual ball that takes place every year, rain or shine, under the patronage of Hon. Dan Sullivan.

This prospectus would not strike the majority of us with delight, but to little Delia Kelly it promised fairylike possibilities. She had never been to a ball, for she had been too poor an

orphan to ever have a really decent suit of clothes in her life, let alone a ball gown. Delia's real name was Bridget, but for some remarkable reason Delia stands for Bridget, particularly when Bridget is in the habit of spending her every spare minute in reading the family story papers. Delia's only relation was a half blind grandmother, who wore a quilted hood and knitted coarse stockings for her living. Delia worked as buncher in a feather factory and earned as high as \$5 a week sometimes, but then other times she only got \$1.50—according to the briskness of trade—as she did piecework.

Delia was pretty, with violet eyes, half hidden by thick lashes, a delicate complexion, curling auburn hair and a dainty, curved mouth and snow white teeth, and she was naturally graceful and had a good figure for a girl who worked so hard and couldn't afford corsets. Delia, being pretty, was much admired by several of the sons of families in Sullivan alley; but, strange to say, she did not know it. Her mind was so taken up by dreams and fancies of what she would like to be that she never thought of what she was, and her love of reading kept her aloof from the chatter of other girls or the awkward attentions of the young men.

The day that Delia was 18 she noticed the great red and blue posters on the walls of the alley telling about the 'grand annual ball,' etc., and her heart gave a great thump and then stood still. She had been reading about a grand ball and how Angelia Araminta Jones had danced with a great prince who was there incognito, and how he had married her on the spot. Here was romance made real—a New Year's ball. The rest might come. Her busy brain pictured herself with blazing dark eyes, superb raven black hair and a pink dress looped with yellow flowers. She never thought of herself in these visions except as having dark eyes and hair and a dazzling complexion. The violet eyes and red hair were not the real Delia's, but the common, workday Delia's—not the dream Delia, who was to be carried off by a prince. But it was very odd that this mysterious prince who always appeared 'incog' had a remarkable resemblance to Larry Finnegan in the face, though to be sure the garments differed greatly from those Larry wore when driving his own smart little local express. The prancing horse, too, used to look a little like Billy, whose sorrel tail was just the color of Delia's own hair.

While Delia was dreamily eying the placard Larry approached and said: 'I was just in to see yer mammy, Miss Delia, and she said I could accept of your company—I mean you could accept of mine—to go to the ball together. Will ye go?' 'Would she? Was not her heart hopping up and down with joy? But she said: 'I'll let you know to-morrow.' 'I'll call to-morrow evening; but, Delia, if you don't go with me and do go with Tim Sullivan I'll lick him so that he can't dance a step.'

Delia smilingly went home. Her grandmother said sharply: 'Ye are late, Daly, and I don't want ye to get a habit o' talking in the street wid any one.' 'Larry Finnegan asked me to the grand annual ball, granny. What did you tell him?' 'Oh, faith, I said ye might go if ye want to, but I don't know what ye'll wear, wid them Mulligan girls having rale silk dresses too.'

'I've got four-ninety-nine, granny. Don't you think I could do with that if I make it myself?' 'Um-m. I've ten-forty-six myself that I can spare, for I'd like ye to look well, Daly.'

'I'll buy the stuff to-morrow, granny,' said Delia, and then she went to her story paper for a description of the resplendent gown that had captured the prince, and all night long little Delia saw herself attired in a pink gown with yellow roses, and everybody was asking her to dance, but while the music throbbed and her little feet twitched she refused them all, for there in a corner stood the prince in glittering splendor, 'incognito' but looking out of Larry's eyes.

There was but half a day at the factory the next day, and Delia went to buy her ball gown. She hunted and searched in dozens of stores before she found what she wanted in color. It was cheap and wide, so that she could get enough to make a double skirt to loop up with yellow roses, and then there was another long search for roses to loop it up with that were of a rich and deep enough tint to satisfy the demands of the gown to capture the prince. These cost so much that she could not buy gloves or slippers, if

indeed she felt the need of them, for Araminta apparently had not worn any, as they had not been mentioned. Larry called, and granny told him that Daly would be ready for the grand, etc., on New Year's eve, and he was obliged to go without having seen Delia. She was in such a fever of delight that she was afraid he would see it, and that would never do. Besides, she was sewing on her dress. Poor child! She worked hard all day and sewed on that gown by the light of a little lamp, and the rosy sunset clouds never looked lovelier to her than the deep pink folds of her dress. The waist did not fit very well, but there was a great bunch of yellow roses on the front. The skirt hung unequally, and the gathers were fuller in the front than back, but the overskirt was looped in two places with enormous sprays of roses and foliage. Her best white petticoat had been starched as stiff as it would hold by granny, and the whole outfit lay spread on Delia's bed—a thing of ravishing beauty to her and granny's eyes.

Delia could scarcely eat or sleep during that last week, and now the eventful night had come. The alley was ablaze with lights, and these fell on the white surface of the softly falling snow with a grand effect. Men bustled about, and from her window Delia could see the brilliant hall, and then she put on her first ball gown. The light brought out the color of the roses in full effect against the deepening pink of the tarlatan, but Delia's plump white neck and arms, her glowing eyes, and the roseleaf color coming and going on her cheeks, and the glints of gold in the curling hair made one forget the rest. She had no gloves, and she wore her best buttoned boots, but they looked coarse to dance in. Still she did not know it.

She was ready, with granny's shawl to throw around her, when Larry made his appearance. He had been shaved and had his brown mustache curled and his hair plastered down to his eyebrows in two stiff scallops. He had a blue necktie and a diamond pin that must have cost at least \$1.25 in it. His vest was black, his coat gray and his pants brown, but that was the fashion in Sullivan alley. He bowed and scraped and got red in the face as he saw Delia in all her beauty and magnificence, and asked if he had the honor of seeing her well, and could he beg her to allow him the honor of escorting her to the ball, and it was nearly 8 and quite time to go, so that they could be in the opening march, which always began at 8 sharp.

Delia bowed as if to a stranger and then took his arm in a happy trance, and saying, 'Good night, granny,' they went down the five flights of stairs and across the street to the hall. The dressing room was full, but emptied almost instantly as the first notes of the music sounded, and all the gentlemen were waiting for their ladies, and as each couple met they fell into line and marched around. Tim Sullivan was there with Kitty Mulligan, looking very gloomy as he saw Delia marching with Larry.

The Mulligan girls in their real silk gowns were nowhere by the side of Delia, and she was besieged with requests to dance, all of which were granted or refused by Larry. She was living her dream now, and whether Kitty or the haughty Lady Hortense was her rival she knew not nor cared. The music was like that in heaven. The lights, the guests, the supper, the cool drinks and Larry all belonged to the same enchanted vision. She swam in a sea of delight. That her dress was sneered at, torn or crushed she did not know. It was all so beautiful.

At last the gray light of morning appeared, and there was just one more dance, and everybody got ready to go home and sleep all New Year's day or to go about their business or to 'call' or 'receive.'

Delia threw the shawl over her shoulders, and Larry offered his strong right arm, as if to a princess, and 'escorted' her home, and on the top landing he caught one of the little bare hands in both of his and said, softly: 'Shall we be cried in church Sunday, Delia, dear?' 'Not till the Sunday after, Larry,' she replied.

China is the most ancient empire in the world, and contains one-fifth of the human race.

When Baby was sick, we gave her Castoria.

When she was a Child, she cried for Castoria.

When she became Miss, she clung to Castoria.

When she had Children, she gave them Castoria.

A NEW YEAR'S SERMON.

THE INFINITY OF GOD'S GOSPEL AS REVEALED IN THE SAVIOUR.

A little planet; brief its life; no more than a marble twinkling on the vast floor of heaven; and yet something in its history, in its destiny, in its development, to make at least plain God's unspeakable purpose to all ranks of being! This, and nothing less than this, is a far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves and which, again and again, the inspired minds of the Apostles seemed clearly to grasp.

We see in our present inadequate apprehensions of God's relationship to men, how vast a growth there is over previous conceptions. We know God will save every being who is savable, forgive every intelligence that is forgivable, and that nothing can plunge any being, however small or however great, in everlasting darkness, but an everlasting hatred of the good and of the right.

Now, we are beginning to see that our God, is greater than any age's devil, that righteousness is more permanent even than sin, that where sin once abounded, that light must at last overcome darkness, and life everlasting swallow up death.

And so, "They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." His kingdom must come—no more the saving of a few, God at last exalted to be all in all.

How blind and blind we are in our apprehension of this, and how patiently the truth of God waits on us and attends our staggering progress. For still His Gospel is like the sea; in its quiet corners and nooks, on its warm sands, you can bathe a babe; beyond its created waves and breaking billows the strong man may venture out to swim. When the first Christian conception became incarnated to men it was something like their conception of the sea.

Then the sea meant for them the blue inland lake, and their voyages were but from shore to shore, and their Sea of Galilee not so big, perhaps as our Lake Champlain.

Then the blue inland sea of the Mediterranean bounded all their hopes and fears; the voyages of the world were made on its land-locked waters, earth's battles fought there and the navies of civilization traded.

Then, as man grew, the mystery of the Atlantic amazed him. Vikings and discoverers were not found bold enough to sail into its unknown region.

At last, a sea king rose and laid his hand on its secret, and came back to tell of a wilder India beyond its waves; and still men went westward till another larger ocean lay before their eyes.

So with God's truth. It is first lake-like, then it spreads for us to the Mediterranean, then we pass beyond the Pillar of Hercules, and far to westward still there lies the unknown Pacific.

But we only skim its surface anywhere. It is still the bath for a babe, or the overwhelming power for a navy. We swim it, we love in it, but we cannot wade it; for God did not make it to be waded.

So with God's truth revealed in Jesus Christ. For the weary sinner, tired and burdened with the chain of his sins, it is, to-day, as of old, a gospel, firstly of pardon. Pardon to him means salvation; as yet he knows but little else. For the student, it is a gospel of everlasting knowledge; that knowledge which he has sought so patiently and so earnestly shall at last be his own.

For the philosopher, blue-eyed with earnest looking into deep abysses of thought, it is a gospel of coming good, greater, grander than he had dared to dream of. For the sorrowing it is a gospel of infinite comfort. For the defeated, a gospel of lasting refuge. For the lonely a gospel of the Perfect Friend.

And as, with the ages, man's ideas of pardon, of knowledge, of wisdom, of comfort, of refuge, of friendship, grow with his growth, we learn to know that it is the nature of God's Gospel to hold in its divine possibility all our lesser gospels, all our partial hopes, to satisfy our longings, to complete our incompleteness; just as the ocean receives without change the rivers that hurry to lose themselves on its breast. —Wm. S. Rainsford, formerly of St. James' Cathedral, Toronto.

The public should bear in mind that Dr. THOMAS' EUCHEMATIC OIL has nothing in common with the impure, deteriorating so-called medical oils. It is eminently pure and really efficacious—relieving pain and lameness, stiffness of the joints and muscles, and sores or hurts, besides being an excellent specific for rheumatism, coughs and bronchial complaints.

Six Reasons Why Women Work.

"Why do women work?" asks Walter Beant, and then he replies that there are six principal reasons.

- 1. Because their intellectual activity will not allow them to rest at home. Such a woman, for instance, was George Eliot. There are intellectual openings for them in every direction. A woman of this kind may study medicine, science, history; she may become a journalist, or an editor; she may lecture. Any of these lives are better to such a brain than the old fashioned social and domestic duties, the embroidery, the piano-playing, and the small arts; these are the happy workers; but these are not the average.
2. Because they must earn money somehow. Among these are the unhappy workers, the unwilling workers, who, so long as they have to work for a living, miss the life they would prefer.
3. Because they want to make a little more money for dresses or for spending. A very considerable class.
4. Because they have taken up a cause, and feel called upon to speak, act, write, and work for it.
5. Because they have become "advanced" women, and they want, above all things, to show that they are as good as the men.
6. Because their home lives are so dead, dull and unsocial, and lonely and vacuous, that they want a change.

Worth its Weight in Gold.

DEAR SIRS.—I can truly say that Haggard's Pectoral Balm is the best remedy ever made for coughs and colds. It is worth its weight in gold.—HARRY PALMER, Lorneville, Ont.

Extraordinary Relationship.

Thompson Chandelier a Lyons, (N.J.) farmer, is the proud father of two "boys," the oldest being 60 years of age and the youngest 8. His eldest son has a son 40 years old. In turn is the father of a boy 16 years old. The latter is twice the age of his grandnephew. While Father Chandelier's 5-year-old son is going to school at Lyons his 60-year-old boy is a prosperous business man of Vineland, N. J., and the latter's 40-year-old son is a bank director. Farmer Chandelier has been a careful liver and can do as big a day's work as he could 50 years ago.—New York Herald.

A HIGH VALUATION.

"If there was only one bottle of Haggard's Yellow Oil in Manitoba I would give one hundred dollars for it," writes Philip H. Brand, of Monteville, Manitoba, after having used it for a severe wound and for frozen fingers, with, as he says, astonishing good results.

A Busy Family.

"All your boys turned out well did they?" "Yes, I reckon they did." "What's the John doing?" "He's a-courin' of fever in Texas." "And Dick?" "He's enlargin' of a country newspaper an' a collectin' of subscriptions." "And William—what's he doing?" "He's a-preachin' of the gospel an' splittin' rails for a livin'." "And what are you doing?" "Well, I'm a supportin' of John an' Dick an' William."

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who will guarantee that you will be pleased with his work. Decorating in all its branches and in the latest style of the art. Charges within the reach of all. No botch work. See him before you give your order.

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