

The New Leaf.

turned eagerly to his companion, he saw a tear, a real, swelling, boyish tear, trickling down the young man's cheek.

'O Cliff!' was all the poor fellow could say, his voice was so choked by rising sobs. How different it all looked to him now! What an ingrate he had been, to think for a moment of being ashamed of his dear old, devoted father, and putting him aside in selfish contempt! What a contrast between the filial picture Clifford Hill had drawn, out of his loving, sincere heart, and the picture Percy had imagined, of his disappointed, grieved father kept in the background, or conducted to the exercises by another student, while the unworthy son took his pleasure in the society of a comparative stranger, and strove by pitiful subterfuges to avoid confessing the family relationship!

Clifford Hill accompanied his friend across the campus, wisely saying nothing, but keeping his sympathetic arm across Percy's heaving shoulders.

'God bless you, Cliff!' said Percy, tremulously, as they parted. 'You have preached me a living sermon that I'll never forget!'

He went up to his room, and found his tired father asleep in the luxurious easy chair, the very chair he had given Percy on the young man's last birthday. Reverently and tenderly the son touched his lips to the old man's thin white hair. Then he slipped away and went over to Miss Brown's.

'I tell you I never had such a good time in my life!' declared Mr. Tuttle on his return home. 'Percy just laid himself out to make me proud and happy,—introduced me to the president, took me to all the goings-on, brought his friends in to see me, had me eat with his chums at the club-house, and almost cried when I told him he was the best and faithfulest boy a father ever had. You were always right about Percy, ma. He's bound to be something extra,—either president of the United States, or president of the University and State Agricultural College, I don't know which.'

A Psalm for New Year's Eve.

Oh, New Year, teach us faith!
The record of life is hard;
When our feet bleed, and scourging winds
us scathe,
Point thou to Him whose visage was
more marred
Than any man's; who saith, 'Make straight
paths for your feet,' and to the
oppressed,
'Come to me, and I will give you rest.'

Yet hang some lamp-like hope
Above this unknown way,
Kind year, to give our spirits freer scope,
And our hands strength to work while it
is day.
But if that way must slope
Tombward, oh, bring before our fading
eyes
The lamp of life, the hope that never
dies.

Comfort our souls with love—
Love of all human kind;
Love, special, close, in which like sheltered
dove
Each weary heart its own safe nest may
find;
And love that turns above
Adoringly; contented to resign
All loves, if need be, for the love divine,
Friend, come thou like a friend,
And whether bright thy face
Or dim with clouds we cannot comprehend,
We'll hold our patient hands, each in his
place,
And trust thee to the end,
Knowing thou leadest onward to those
spheres
Where there are neither days nor months
nor years.

—Dinah Maria Mulock.

'Oh, yes, I know the New Year. I'll tell you all about it. It's a good time to "turn over a new leaf," dear children.' I'll just tell you what I think, fellows. This anniversary business is a clear humbug! If you have a birthday or any other special day, it's a good time to turn over a new leaf. I'm sick of that new leaf. They began about it when we were little kids, and have kept it up ever since. It's a plain piece of paper just like the old leaf, and you'll write on it just what you've learned to write on anything.'

They were five boys on a street corner after Sunday-school. The voluble and energetic speaker was perhaps sixteen years old. The others, somewhat younger, were standing in various attitudes, every one of them with the comfortable atmosphere of home and care about him.

'How old must a "kid" be before he ceases to improve in writing?' asked a quiet voice behind them. 'It was their pastor; but they loved him, and were not afraid of him.'

'Fellows get tired of the same thing year after year, sir,' said Carl, the spokesman.

'Food, for instance? or, perhaps, clothes.'

'Well, of course, you know I mean exhortations and—and—nagging.'

The pastor planted his back against the lamp-post, and looked at them with the earnest, kindly eyes they all knew so well.

'I heard one of you say that before another year he would conquer those parallel bars.'

The pastor looked nowhere in particular, so he did not see Carl's quick color.

'I heard another say he hoped '87 would find him in college. Ah, my dear boys, it is not the anniversary, or the hopes and questions that trouble you. It is the "spiritual things." It is the unspoken wish to use the muck rake, like the man in Bunyan's 'Pilgrim's Progress,' groveling in the things about you, and never looking up. Boys, throw away that muck-rake!'

And without another word the pastor left them, and they went to their homes. Is that a muck-rake in your hand?—American Paper.

The Minister's Son.

(By the Rev. Alfred Rowland, LL.B.,
B.A., in 'Sunday Companion'.)

He was the son of a well-known minister. A black-haired, bright-faced lad—up to any sort of fun, and popular among his comrades. In business, however, where I first met him, he always kept an eye on the main chance, and, to use a more recent phrase, was decidedly 'pushful.' In our small debating society he was a leader, for he was ready of speech, while many of us floundered hopelessly through sheer nervousness.

For years I lost sight of him, and occasionally wondered what had become of him and other boy companions. My eyes were unexpectedly opened. One night at a social gathering held in connection with my church, a well-dressed, gentlemanly-looking man made his way to me through the crowd and abruptly asked me if I remembered him. I was sorry to confess that I did not.

'Why,' said he, 'don't you recollect H—M—?'

'To be sure, I do,' said I. And then, with a warm handgrip, I added: 'I'm glad indeed to meet you again, and see that you have prospered.'

'Yes, I should rather think I have; but

I don't suppose you would quite approve of my line, because you are a parson. The fact is, I'm a professional bookmaker. A few weeks ago I came to live in ——— House—mentioning one of the largest in the neighborhood. I'm afraid that I'm not quite one of your sort. I don't go to church or chapel myself, but I like my children to go, and have applied for sittings in your place because they seem to have taken a fancy for it.'

'After what you have told me I must withdraw my remark,' I said looking him straight in the eyes. 'You have not "prospered" as I hoped.'

He broke out into a merry laugh, and then told me how it was that he had taken to the turf. In brief his story was this:

When in a London warehouse a sweepstakes was got up among the young fellows there. As he did not like to be out of anything going on, he joined in it. Unfortunately for himself, he won a considerable sum of money. From that time he betted frequently, and with considerable success. He made himself familiar with the sporting papers, and with sporting men, secured tips from those 'in the know,' and again and again was put on a 'good thing.'

Then he threw up his humdrum warehouse life, went in for the chances of the turf, and soon won a reputation for smartness and success among the betting fraternity. For several years he had lived lavishly, and was evidently flush of money when I saw him.

A few months passed, and then came the inevitable crash. Luck, as he would call it, went against him. With startling suddenness his creditors were down on his furniture and belongings, and he suddenly and mysteriously disappeared.

I could find no trace of him or of his family, and those I inquired of told me, with a grim smile, that they probably had better reason for mourning his loss than I had. He had completely gone out of sight, as many another has done in the whirlpool of London life.

It was nearly a year before I heard anything more of the sequel. Unknown to me, he applied for help to certain good friends of his and of mine, and they, with a kindness which is more often displayed than pessimists believe, had raised a sum of over three hundred pounds for the benefit of his children. This they refused to make over until he had most solemnly promised that he would not risk a single penny of it on the turf.

Alas! the old habit proved too strong for a man who had spurned the grace of God, which alone could have made him victorious. He argued with himself that with his past experience and professional knowledge, he might quickly transform the hundreds into thousands, and he doubtless resolved that if he did succeed he would start in some honest business with the proceeds.

He put his money on a certain horse, and lost every penny of the sum contributed for his children in less than a fortnight after receiving it. A few weeks later, he died in an obscure lodging, utterly bare of furniture, surrounded by starving children, and before any of us heard of it he was buried in a pauper's grave. It is no wonder that some of us who have such terrible incidents brought before us, in the sphere of our own observation, should protest in desperate earnest against the gambling mania, which ruined him and threatens the ruin of thousands.