

something about their straitened finances, probably. 'Come here, Dick; I want to show you something.'

He followed his sister somewhat reluctantly to the parlor. Mary dived down under the centre table, and brought out a square pasteboard box in which were kept photographs. Reaching down under the cabinet photographs she fished out of the box a square tintype, and held it before Dick's gaze.

As he looked at it a deeper flush came over his face than any that had yet mantled it. It was the picture of a very young baby—probably not more than a month old. The artist had taken a great deal of pains with it to make it lifelike by going over it and coloring it by hand. Dick wished now that the fellow hadn't been so conscientious. It represented a flabby-cheeked, red-faced baby, with weak, watery, blinking eyes, devoid of any vestige of eyebrows, and surmounted by a crown which was equally bald of every semblance of hair. The nose was pudgy, and about as unprepossessing as a new-born baby's nose could be. The mouth was sprawling and decidedly ungraceful in its outline, while the features were contorted into a grimace, which was undoubtedly the only method, except a wailing cry, the owner had at the time of expressing his approbation. Taken altogether, it was about as unattractive a countenance and as little calculated to provoke pride in the heart of any one as could be conceived.

The red of Dick's flush grew deeper and deeper as he gazed upon it, until at last, with an impatient movement of his hand, he pushed it aside, demanding of Mary, 'What did you get that thing out for?'

'Just to let you see it, and ask you the question,' she replied, 'If you don't think mother had as good a right to be ashamed of your appearance then as you have of hers now?'

'I suppose she had,' Dick admitted, somewhat ungraciously.

'But I want to tell you that she wasn't in the least,' replied Mary. 'She was as proud of you as if you were the most beautiful cherub in existence. She called you her dear, sweet, beautiful baby, and uncovered your face to exhibit you to everybody who came to the house with all the pride imaginable.'

'That was just a mother's folly,' growled Dick.

'It was a mother's intuition, I think,' replied Mary. 'In that little dough face, with a complexion like a boiled lobster she saw the boy and the man that was to be. And I think if we look beyond mother's dress sleeves and bonnet, we shall always be able to see a nature that is so sweet and lovely that we shall never think of being ashamed of our mother, no matter how much like a dowdy she looks outwardly.'

'Yes, you are right, Mary,' said Dick in a low tone 'you always are. Put that thing away, and let's get up some sort of a pleasant surprise for mother, and make her enjoy the picnic to-morrow.'—J. F. Cowan, in N. Y. 'Observer.'

The Old Year and the New.

(Lucy Bennet.)

The Old Year taketh down her tent,
Beneath the midnight sky,

For many a stormy wind hath rent
The canvas stretched on high.

But lo, New Year, with silent tread
Her snow white canopy doth spread.

Meet shelter for the heaven-bound traveler's head!

—'The Christian.'

Baby Bess and the Missionary Collection.

There was a great stir in the Livingston household during that week in December. Every one of the five older members felt that honor had been thrust upon them, when Baby Bess, the little four-year-old sister, had been specially invited by the Ladies' Missionary Society to sing at their social. Now, I should explain that a social, or, in fact, an entertainment of any kind, was an almost unheard of thing in the little town of Minersburg; for it was such a small place, and the people were so hard-working that they had little time for anything but bread-winning.

This year, however, a foreign missionary had come into their midst, and stirred their hearts with his story of the sin and suffering in heathen lands, so that the fourteen women who composed the society in the only church in Minersburg, resolved that they would help on the good work. Although the number was small, their hearts were warm, and you know that is what helps the cause of missions.

Much money had come from the mines in this place, but it had been carried off by capitalists to the large city forty miles distant, so that Minersburg had no rich families, but many poor. The Livingstons were perhaps the best off, and Tom, the ten-year-old son, used to think, when he looked at Baby Bess, that no one in the world had so much to be thankful for as they. I regret to say that Thomas sometimes indulged in very opposite feelings when he was not looking at Baby Bess.

But I must tell you of her. She was a dear, winsome little maid, only four years old, with the most beautiful blue eyes and curly golden brown hair. Everyone who saw her remarked her beauty, but, after all, it was her sweet and kind little way that made people love her. She couldn't talk very plainly, but she could sing, and all day long her childish treble would be heard through the house, singing snatches of hymns or songs, which she learned at Sabbath-school, or her sister Belle had taught her. Baby Bess had never sung in public, and her father and mother were afraid she would be frightened, but after the first rehearsal they were satisfied that their little girl was too interested in her performance to think of herself. The hymn she was to sing was the old familiar, 'Over the Ocean Wave,' and she would repeat with startling emphasis, 'Pity them, pity them, Chris'an' at home,' till the childish pronunciation seemed a direct appeal.

Until this time the weather had been almost warm and quite damp, but before the eventful day a cold wave came and with it a heavy snow, so that by morning the drifts were so high that the committee were very low-spirited, fearing that no one could reach the church. Baby Bess was the only interested person who was not anxious or discouraged; she thought the great white world 'bootiful,' and clapped her hands at her brothers, who were kept busy shovelling walks. 'I think the poor heathen should pity us to-day,' Tom had said, disgusted at the extra work imposed upon him.

There was someone else who was disgusted at the weather, and that was Mr. Cyrus Mannington, who was domiciled at the little hotel across from the church, and who was shivering over the office stove. Mr. Cyrus Mannington was a very rich man from the city, who had come up the day before on business, and was now compelled

to stay shut up in the hotel because the train could not get through the drifts twenty miles above. He fussed and fumed, but it did no good—he could not move out of Minersburg till the next day. He was not patient, either. Although he had so much money he was a disappointed man, and had been the greater part of his life. Many years before, his beautiful wife had died, and four years later his little daughter May, whom he loved so dearly. Since then he had devoted his talents to money-making, and in that he had been very successful, but he had fallen short of many things in so doing. Having spent a very cold and miserable day, he began to wonder if there was no place in that town where he could find a good fire. Going to the window he saw the little church across the way brilliantly lighted, and looking like a gigantic firefly in the snow, and he could see the people, little and big, hurrying thither. Now, Mr. Cyrus was opposed to churches; in fact, he hadn't been in one for a number of years, and he knew almost nothing about the heathen; but, having suffered from the cold all day, he decided to go over and see if it was any warmer at the social. He bundled up, and started, smiling to himself at the idea of his going to a church social. He paid the fifteen cents necessary to get in, and quite startled the doorkeeper by telling him to keep the change from a dollar, adding 'for the cause,' as he had often heard good people say. He wasn't interested, and as the room was very warm he got drowsy, and almost fell asleep, when suddenly he heard a baby voice ringing out, 'Over the Ocean Wave, far, far away,' and looking up he saw what seemed to him almost a vision—lovely little Baby Bess in a white gown, her cheeks flushed, and her eyes shining, while she repeated,

'Pity them, pity them, Chris'an' at home!

Haste with the bread of life, hasten and come!

Mr. Cyrus Mannington had a very curious sensation, just then. Some memories were stirred, and, when the collection-basket came round he surely was dreaming, for he put in a fifty-dollar bill. The committee were astonished when they came to count, and knowing that no one in the church could have given so much, they announced that some mistake had been made, as a fifty-dollar bill was found in the basket. Then Mr. Cyrus Mannington rose in the back of the church, and said: 'My friends, there is no mistake; the money is for the heathen, and now I have the request that the little girl who has sung for us will repeat her song.'

Baby Bess, meantime, thoroughly done out, had fallen asleep, but was awakened and put on the platform almost before she knew it. Once more she started to sing, but when she came to the chorus she only got as far as 'Pity them—' when, giving a tired yawn, she stretched out her arms to be taken down. It was the millionaire, Mr. Cyrus Mannington, with a tender thought for his little May, who lifted her down, and carried her to her mother.

Before he went back to the hotel he had given the good people of Minersburg his cheque for one hundred dollars, one half for the heathen, and the other for their own church work. Two weeks later, on Christmas Eve, Baby Bess received a big box with a doll in it, which had come from Paris, and pinned on its dress was a card with these words written on it: 'From Mr. Cyrus Mannington, with love for the little girl who taught him to "Pity them."—Presbyterian Messenger.'