

I can chat with you about old times? Oh, Oscar, this very Tom Dolser beat these very same chimes on our wedding-day—didn't you, Tom?"

"Yes," in a very small word, but Tom had great difficulty in uttering it. He asked himself what he was to do, in these unforeseen and embarrassing circumstances. Mrs. Arthray answered the question by taking one or his arms and telling her husband to take the other and hurry along.

"Else the year will be there before us," she exclaimed. Then, after a little pause, she continued: "You don't seem overjoyed at meeting us, Tom?"

"Then my manners don't tell the truth," said Tom, getting possession of the tongue at last; "but I've been too much astonished to speak. I'll walk a little way with you, but I must hurry away then." ("Curse that schoolhouse bell!" thought he to himself; "I'd cut the job if 'twasn't for the pint that's waiting for me. I hope Arthray won't get his lantern in my face.")

"Hurry home to your wife and family?" asked Mrs. Arthray. "How many children have you? We have four."

"I'm not married," said Tom, and as he said it through his teeth, Mrs. Arthray blamed herself for not having kept herself well enough informed about her old friends to avoid distressing topics. She hurried back to the subject of the chimes.

"Oh, I forgot to tell you this is an entirely new set of chimes, so you must come and try them. One of the old bells, or gongs, as Oscar persists in calling them, was cracked, you know, and my husband got the vestry's permission to replace them all, and he thinks the new set will be sweeter than the old that you and I heard so often when we were children. You will come just for a few moments, won't you?"

"Do, Mr. Dolser," said Arthray, and help us to double the meaning of

"Ring out the old, ring in the new."

"With the greatest pleasure," said Tom. He felt that he was under false colors, but he believed they would protect him if only that dreadful lantern would be merciful. He would plead neuralgia, tooth-ache, anything to keep his face hidden by the ulster's collar; he would enjoy honorable company for a little while; the school-house bell could wait—no one would miss it while all the other bells are ringing.

Then he slowly learned that he could chat, for Mrs. Arthray talked cheerily of old times, and aroused memories which unloosed his tongue, so that by the time the old church-tower was reached, Tom had entirely forgotten his task for the night and his remuneration that was to last for a week.

Arthray set his lantern in a window-ledge behind him, to Tom's great relief, took the two little mallets, and rang out "Old Hundred" with great precision and force; no other bells had yet begun, for the hour had not struck. Then, like a great patriot, he rang "Yankee Doodle." The clock bell below then struck twelve and the general jangle began. The delicate notes of the chimes would be lost in such clamor, so the trio stood and chatted. Arthray, who was as curious and ignorant about local affairs as active business men usually are, asked numerous questions, to all of which Tom made prompt reply, although frequently compelled to throw himself upon imagination—he would commit any crime rather than have Mrs. Arthray suspect that he was not what she seemed to believe him.

One by one the bells grew silent, and again Arthray rang the chimes; when he rang "Adeste Fiddles," Tom broke down: he had heard his mother sing it thousands of times. He turned abruptly to Mrs. Arthray, and said:

"I must go now—this moment."

"You won't fail to call, to-day," said the lady. "You received my card, I suppose?"

"Alice," said Tom in low, quick tones, "you don't know me. I'm the worst drunkard, the lowest tramp in all Thornton. I couldn't help being overcome by your kindness to-night, but I've insulted you by even standing near you and speaking to you. I'm ruined, ragged, vile, worthless—I've not felt like a gentleman in ten years until to-night. Now, if I do not call, you'll not tell anything that will make other people make fun of me?"

"Not call?" said Mrs. Arthray, as her husband turned away from the bells. "Certainly you will call—I insist upon it. Oscar, Mr. Dolser must hurry away to look after a reforming drunkard who needs everything. I want you to help in the good work; have you any money in your pocket?"

Arthray handed his wife a small roll of bank-notes; the lady went to the lantern and counted a hundred dollars from it, and handed them to Tom.

"Now, ring just one time before you go," said she. "You used to do it so well."

"I can't; I've entirely forgotten the bells," said Tom.

"I'll help you—you can do it with a single mallet—here." As she spoke she placed a mallet in his right hand, seized his wrist with her left, and guided him in playing "Auld Lang Syne," her sweet voice singing near his ear:

"Should auld acquaintance be forgot,  
And never brought to mind?  
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,  
And the days of Auld Lang Syne."

"There," said she at the end of the fourth bar, "now we won't detain you any longer, but remember, I'll be the most disappointed woman in all Thornton, if you don't call to-morrow."

Tom dashed down the narrow steep steps without saying a word. From force of habit he returned to the tavern bar, where he encountered a storm of curses. The loungers demanded that he should fulfil his promise, but he refused, and declined to explain. Then they wanted the schoolhouse keys, and he pretended to have lost them. Strange stories were told of his subsequent doings; it was said he called on a physician and then on a minister, both between midnight and daylight; that he had paid several prices, very early in the morning to overcome the fastidiousness of the owner of a barber shop and bathing establishment, and that he had persuaded the owner of a clothing store to open his place for a few moments and fit him to the best garments on the shelves. However it all may have come about, it is certain that in the afternoon of New Year's day, Tom Dolser, in the garb and bearing of a gentleman, though without much composure of countenance, called on Mrs. Arthray. He had to introduce himself again, and he feared the consequences if his hostess should have to introduce him to others. Heaven kindly arranged, however, that the only other person present was an old clergyman, who had been pastor to Mrs. Arthray and Tom a quarter of a century before. After Tom had gone, the lady made a confidant of the minister. The old man hoped, yet he feared, he had prepared dozens of pledges in twenty years, all of which Tom had signed and broken. Yet after the late drunkard had become, if not his original self, at least an industrious and respectable member of society, and Mrs. Arthray was one day piously attributing the change to heavenly influences, the old pastor looked at her significantly, and said:

"It is no wonder to me now that Jesus Christ was born of a woman."—*The Current.*

## Our Casket.

### JEWELS.

We are shaped and fashioned by what we love.

If you would not cease to love mankind, you must not cease to do them good.

Those who possess the elements of peace in their own minds will seek to promote peace among others.

Everybody, no matter how rich or how poor, needs all the kindness he can get from others.

The virtue of prosperity is temperance; the virtue of adversity is fortitude.

Sloth, like rust, consumes faster than labor wears, while the key often used is always bright.

Modesty has great advantages; it enhances beauty and serves as a veil to uncomeliness.

If we fasten our attention on what we have, rather than on what we lack, a very little wealth is sufficient.

### BITS OF TINSEL.

What spring is ever dry, yet keeps on running?—A watch spring.

Experience is an excellent schoolmaster, but he does charge such dreadful wages!

"Don't be afraid," said a snob to a German laborer, "sit down and make yourself my equal." "I would have to blow my brains out," was the reply of the Teuton.

Too much study is said to affect the mind; and we know a number of cases it would affect it very favorably too.

"Now, girls," said a Sunday-school teacher, "can you tell me what 'circular' means?" "Yeth'm!" lisped a little seven-year-old: "ith a fur-lined cloak!"

It was the newly-fledged bee that, after venturing out of the hive on a wet day, sang, on its return, "there is no place like comb."

Mother (to a five-year-old, who has sat very still for five minutes)—"What are you thinking of, Georgia?" Georgia—"Oh! 'bout old times, I dess."