

**New Year's Hymn.**

"O year that lies before us,  
What shall thy record be,  
As thy short months roll o'er us,  
And swift thy moments flee?  
Now thou art fair and spotless  
As Lullaby's opening hour,  
Thy bed so pure and staidless,  
Sly what shall be thy flower?"

"Thou bring'st new hope to cheer us,  
New visions fair and bright,  
Of higher aims and conquests,  
And purer, clearer light;  
New strength for fresh endeavour,  
New purpose, firm and high,  
New dreams of holy pleasures  
Which wait us in the sky."

"So, year by year, in mercy,  
To us it hath been given,  
To climb from our past failures  
Up one step nearer heaven;  
To strive each year we journey  
Upon our pilgrim way  
That each new fair to-morrow  
Be better than to-day."

"Lord, grant us grace to serve Thee  
In serving each and all;  
Our hearts keep warm and trustful,  
Protect us lest we fall;  
And if this year's last moments  
On earth we may not see,  
We know no harm will reach us,  
For we shall be with Thee."

**Turning Over a New Leaf.**

BY M. J. B.

"WHAT do people mean when they say that they are going to turn over a new leaf?"

Hilda was so tall and fair and bright, that her sister, Rose, was sure that she could answer this or any other question. Moreover, Hilda was mother and sister in one—the real mother having gone to her home in heaven three years before.

"Hilda, please tell me," said Rose, repeating the question. "How is life like a book, and do people turn over a new leaf?"

Hilda, smiling, but evidently not giving the words much thought, replied: "I'll explain it some other time, dear: I want to finish this book to-night! See I have ever so many new leaves to turn over."

"Dear! dear!" cried Rose, "I wish that there were machines for answering questions! I wanted to know about this one, particularly, before the New Year!"

But Hilda did not give any heed to Rose's earnest enquiry. She was absorbed with her book the whole evening, stopping only once, when the children's bed-time came, to wish them good night—the last good-night of the Old Year!

"One, two, three, four, five—six," counted Hilda, as she heard the clock strike next morning. It was New Year's morning! There was to be a seven o'clock meeting in the lecture-room of the church. "Everybody" would be there! Nobody who had been once, could willingly stay away and yet feel that the year had been properly begun. Hilda rubbed her eyes and jumped up to make sure that she was really awake.

The house was very quiet. It occurred to Hilda that if any of the family were to attend the meeting she must awaken them. Putting on her dressing-wrapper and slippers, she ran along the hall knocking at the doors, exclaiming:

"Six o'clock! A Happy New Year to you!"

"Happy New Year! Happy New Year!" shouted the boys. "It's not fair, though, Hilda, to catch a fellow that way. Wait till breakfast-time,

when we can all have an even chance."

"All the same, I have said it first," said Hilda, laughing, and running back to her room to get ready.

The church was only just round the corner. Hilda went out by herself, and she ran down the front steps, she looked up at her brother's window. The glance she caught of his disconsolate face made her laugh.

"I'll be there in time," he shouted. "If you meet Tom Green, please ask him to wait."

Some of the school-girls turned the corner just then, and almost overwhelmed Hilda with New Year's congratulations and plans for the day. In five minutes they were at the lecture-room, up the aisle, and in the very same seats—that they had occupied the year before! Hilda noticed this—perhaps she could not have put into words the thought that flashed through her mind just then. She would not have acknowledged it to be a serious thought, however, though it made her look grave for a moment.

Just at seven o'clock the meeting began. There was first a hymn—something full of praise—then a prayer, with much of thanksgiving in it, then the reading of the Bible, followed by a bright little talk from the pastor. As he stood there speaking of things glad and sad, in the past, and looking forward hopefully into the future, the hearts of the people grew warm! Hilda glanced over at her little sister, and remembered the question of the evening before. For the first time life seemed to Hilda just like a great book; all the pages of the old leaves had been written on and turned over. Here, right before her, was a new blank page waiting—for what? Hilda did not like serious thoughts; she would have been glad to have been in some other place just then.

At that moment the first rays of the New Year's sun shone through a window, sending a thrill of gladness into every heart! Persons looked at each other and smiled! Hilda smiled too, and a word from the pastor fell like a seed into the heart! Quick as a flash came the thought, "I will fill the rest of my life-book with brave, beautiful deeds!"

How many more leaves was she to turn over? Who could tell? The names of the dear ones of the church who had been called away during the previous year were always read at that meeting. It was a long list that day, and tears came with the smiles! All the more earnest was Hilda in her resolve to write beautiful words on the new pages, as they came to her one by one!

Strange, wasn't it? She glanced here and there, over the room, till her eye rested on Mrs. Colton, a lady who was very much interested in work among the poor. Mrs. Colton, moreover, was looking at Hilda just then, and although they were "in meeting," they smiled, and nodded to each other! And Mrs. Colton thought: "Well, really, Hilda Dunn has often run away, or pretended not to see me, when I have wanted to ask her to go visit some poor, sick person. I'll try her again, though: I shouldn't be surprised if she had changed her mind about some things."

Miss Rees, too, was looking at Hilda, and wondering if she could be persuaded to come occasionally, and sing, or read, to the women, at the "Mothers Meeting!"

Hilda glanced again toward her little sister, and felt a twinge of conscience for not trying to answer her question.

The meeting was over then, and everybody was wishing everybody else a "Happy New Year," till the air seemed full of congratulations. Hilda could not understand herself! She had gone there, caring only to speak with her particular friends, and receive their good wishes. But now she felt like looking up all the poor little children and the men and women who didn't have many friends, and giving them good wishes! She had never before felt so happy! And she was surprised to find how many sober-looking faces broadened into a smile when she looked into their eyes, and made them the cordial little bow that every one said Hilda Dunn kept only for her special friends.

That first day of the New Year! Would Hilda ever forget it? It seemed just hushed of kind words and sweet, sisterly deeds! Hilda fell asleep that night thinking that one had only to resolve, and the thing would be done!

She awoke early the next morning—the first Sunday in the new year. For a minute, all that happened the day before seemed like a dream. She went to breakfast, with some confused thoughts about life as a book, in which she had turned over a new leaf, so that there lay before her a page on which she wished to write only what was good and beautiful. This thought helped her to be sweet and patient at table, even when Will made a provoking remark and Rose teased her with questions.

"After all," she thought, "if I keep my resolve, there are a great many ways in which I must grow better. I mustn't be late at church, for instance! Father says tardiness is one of my faults, and there must not be a single fault on the new page."

Hilda stopped a moment, in her dressing-room, to look once again at her New Year's gifts. Among them was a copy of "Golden Grove" a cousin in New York had sent to her. Hilda had looked at it rather disdainfully the day before.

"Of course it was kind in Cousin Sue to remember me," she said, "but I don't like such old-fashioned books. I wonder what any one can see so grand in Dr. Jeremy Taylor's writings."

That morning Hilda opened the book with rather more interest. The very first words she read were: "Every day propound to yourself a rosary, or a chaplet of good works, to present to God at night." "I like that," she cried. "It fits in beautifully with all that happened yesterday."

Just then the first church bell began to ring. Hilda liked plenty of time to arrange her dress. She was often late because of the very special attention she chose to give to the tying of a ribbon or the fit of a hat. She was to wear her new olive suit for the first time that morning. Everybody knows just what the first time with a new dress means—how anxious one is to feel that it is in good taste and becoming, and how awkward one is likely to feel in the attempt to seem quite at home in it.

Hilda passed through all this experience on that Sunday of the new year. She stood before the glass at last with a feeling of satisfaction and a smile, as

she anticipated the admiration she would receive from the girls. Suddenly the second bell began to ring. Hilda remembered that she had not given a thought to Rose, or a look at the boys; and they were always sure to need some help from her!—her father, too, he was so pleased always to hear her say: "Let me see, father, doesn't your coat need a little brushing?"

"This morning, of all others, you have been so selfish," Hilda thought, with a blush and an ashamed recollection of the "new page," was its beauty marred so soon!

The fact made her so very uncomfortable that she scarcely spoke a word on the way to church. Of course, this only made matters worse, as Hilda knew when she heard Rose whisper, "What makes sister so cross? I thought she was going to be perfectly lovely all through this year?"

After that it seemed as though so many disagreeable things happened, and all on purpose to vex Hilda, as she declared. The first peaceful moment that came to her was that afternoon in her Sunday-school class. Miss Alice Rodney was her teacher, and it was enough to quiet any troubled heart not to sit next to Miss Alice. The lesson was about the burial of Jesus. The sweet story of the ministry of the women came in just there. The girls all seemed very tender that afternoon. I think had each spoken as she felt, each would have said that her wish was to minister, in some way to Jesus Christ.

This was Hilda's wish, certainly, and yet she could not, for a great deal, have had anyone suspect it. She choked down the feeling in her throat, and turned away, after school, with a light, trifling remark that puzzled Miss Alice, and sent her home with an anxious heart.

"I don't understand Hilda Dunn," she thought; "I watched her in meeting yesterday morning, and I was sure she had decided to be a Christian."

Hilda did not understand herself. She understood, however, that she had broken a good many fine resolutions within twenty-four hours! "Oh, dear!" she sighed, "why cannot people do just what they have made up their minds to do?"

There was to be "Children's church" that evening. Mr. Winthrop, the pastor, wished the children to come as a Sunday-school, each class with its teacher, and sit in the pews on either side of the middle aisle. And whatever Mr. Winthrop wished was sure to be done.

Hilda was there with the other girls of the class. She was soon as much interested as were the very little ones of the congregation. Mr. Winthrop gave as his text: "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ."

Hilda found herself repeating the text, and the two divisions of the sermon: First, "What is the gospel of Christ?" Second, "Why we should not be ashamed of it?"

Gospel means "glad-tidings," yes, Hilda knew that. But in this case, "Gospel of Christ," means Christ himself. St. Paul wrote the words, and that is what he meant by them! Hilda had not known this.

"Is a feeling of shame ever right? Yes, it is right to feel ashamed when one has done what is improper or sinful. When one has been mean, or