

THE OLD YEAR'S BLESSING.

AM fading from you.  
But one draweth near,  
Called the Angel guardian  
Of the coming year.

If my gifts and graces  
Coldly you forget,  
Let the New Year's angel  
Bless and crown them yet.

For we work together ;  
He and I are one ;  
Let him end and perfect  
All I have undone.

I brought good desires,  
Though as yet but seeds ;  
Let the New Year make them  
Blossom into deeds ;

If I gave you sickness,  
If I brought you care,  
Let him make one Patience  
And the other Prayer.

Where I brought you sorrow,  
Through his care, at length,  
It may rise triumphant  
Into future strength.

If I broke your idols,  
Showed you they were dust,  
Let him turn the knowledge  
Into heavenly trust.

If I brought temptation,  
Let sin die away  
Into boundless pity  
For all hearts that stray.

If your list of errors,  
Dark and long appears,  
Let this new-born monarch  
Melt them into tears.

May you hold this angel  
Dearer than the last—  
So I bless his future,  
While he crowns my past.

TAKING THEM HOME.

He chuckled as he harnessed the horse, and was so happy over his own thoughts that he did not feel the cold. "Stand over!" he said to old Ned. "If you knew what you was going on, and was a horse of sense, you'd stand on two legs. It is the nicest job you've done this many a day. Oh, yes, pretty doves, you may well coo. You will have a friend to pet you, now. Ned, stand still! I'm in a hurry, and you mustn't fidget around so. Never mind if it is cold. Whoa, I say! It is New Year's, and you shall have an extra peck of oats to celebrate on as soon as we get home. There now, we're ready. Go ahead!"

It was Ezra Thompson, the hired boy at Mr. Preston's, who was so full of talk this New Year morning. Something had happened that filled him with delight. To think, too, that it had all grown out of a remark that he made one morning when the family all came out to see the new kitchen and milk-room, and Mrs. Preston had said: "I wonder what we can do with that old milk-house now. It seems like a friend, it has served us so many years."

Ezra had served them for several years, and felt very much at home, so he spoke his thoughts. "It would make a nice little house for somebody. Wish the widow Jones had it instead of that old shell she lives in."

That had actually been the beginning of it. He did not know Mrs. Preston heard him, for she turned toward the little house at the foot of the snowy lawn, and said not a word for at least five minutes; then she said, "I don't know but that is a good idea of yours, Ezra; I'll think about it."

Now, Mrs. Preston was one of those

blessed women who always think to some purpose. That was three weeks ago. You should see the old house now! A partition has been made in it, making two of the cunningest rooms! The plain board walls had been covered all over with thick paper, and then with pretty wall paper of a delicate tint. The floors had been covered with soft green and brown carpeting. In one corner stood a mite of a cook stove, shining brightly, both with polish and the bright fire that glowed in it. A bit of a table was set for two, and Ezra knew, whether any one else did or not, that a lovely New Year's dinner was sizzling in the oven. The other side of that partition was a bedstead and a bed, spread in white, such as Ezra knew the widow Jones had never slept on in her life. An easy chair sat by the bed, and another larger one occupied the warmest corner of the other room.

These were only a few of the cheery and pretty things that had found their way from the Preston garret into the old milk-room. Besides, Ezra had amused himself evenings in putting all sorts of conveniences in the shape of cupboards and shelves and hooks and nails. He never had enjoyed anything in his life as much as he did the fixing up of the house. All the Prestons had become interested, and helped as hard as they could. Bridget in the Preston kitchen was cooking the little turkey that was to furnish the widow Jones and her grand-daughter with their first dinner in their new home. Now the crowning joy was coming. Ezra and Ned were going after the victims of all this fun, and they knew nothing about it. Who was widow Jones? Well, she was just the nicest, neatest, most cheery old lady who was ever bent up with rheumatism in this world. The Prestons knew her well; she had been a nurse in their family years before, and had come back after long absence, very poor, to suffer in the town where she used to be young and happy. If you could have seen the horrid little wretch of a stove over which the bent old lady crouched, and the bright-eyed grand-daughter scolded, you would have chuckled, I think, as Ezra did when he drew up before the door and tied Ned, and came bustling in. "Out to dinner," the old lady repeated thoughtfully as Ezra gave his invitation: "I don't know about it. We ain't a mite of anything in the house, to be sure, and Mrs. Preston is good, just as she always was; but if she wouldn't a-minded sending us a bite of something here, I don't know but it would be better. You see, Jennie dear, it is so dreadful cold, and this will be such a freezing place to come back to, and the snow will drift in and give you lots of work. Yes, I know the old stove smokes, poor thing! it's worn out; but it's a good deal better than none."

But the bright-eyed Jennie was bent on going out to dinner, no matter how much trouble it gave her afterward. "And you'll help me, won't you, Ezra, if the snow has drifted in bad!"

"Yes," answered Ezra, chuckling again; "if the snow drifts into your house to-night, I'll sweep it all out for you." And he told Ned, as he untied him, that he would like to see any snow drift into their house: he just would.

Ah, what do you think they said or did or thought, as they slipped into the Preston yard around the snowy car-

riage-drive, away out past the carriage-house, and Jennie, tucked among the robes, laughed a silvery laugh and said, "Why, Ezra Thompson, are you taking us to the barn?"

But Ezra made no answer just then only to jump out and take the wizened-up widow Jones in his strong arms, and carry her into the little new room, the door of which opened by some magic that young Harry Preston understands, and set her down in her own cushioned rocker; then he answered the bewildered Jennie who had clambered out after him—"No, Miss Jennie Jones, I'm taking you home!" —Pansy.

THE LUCKIEST FELLOW.

"Fred Dixon is the luckiest fellow in town; everything he wants he gets; everything he undertakes prospers. Did you hear he has the place at Kelly's, that so many have been trying to get?"

"You don't say so! Why, he is a very young man to fill so responsible a position."

"Yes," added the first speaker, "he always would stand on the top of the ladder in school. Though not the brightest scholar, he managed to carry off the honours upon quitting school, which he did at an earlier age than most of his classmates, because he had to help support a widowed mother and younger brothers and sisters. He only had to ask for a situation, and lo! all other applicants were ruled out, and Fred had the preference."

Boys, "Our Boys," do you know any Fred Dixons? If you do, don't think it is luck that helps him along, gives him the laurels at school, aids him to obtain first class situations, put him in places of trust and honour, where a good name or untarnished character is required. Look back in the pages of his life. See if he was not studious at school, fair and square in all his boyish games, gentlemanly and obliging, honest in all his dealings. Ask his friends if truthfulness, faithfulness to his duty, steadfastness of purpose are not his characteristics. Find out whether he has ever been known to frequent tippling shops, gambling dens and kindred places of vice; whether he spends his spare time in filling his mind with trashy literature, such as is thrown broadcast over our land, in the shape of dime novels. Depend upon it, boys, you will never be "the luckiest fellow in town," unless you earn it by honesty and integrity of character, and fidelity to all your undertakings.—*Christian at Work.*

EVEN in Canada, says the *Hamilton Spectator*, we are accustomed to speak of the Canadian Pacific railway as Canada's greatest work. But a correspondent of the *London Echo* calls attention to the fact that this is very far short of the truth. "Let me tell you," he says, "that it is not alone Canada's great work, but the greatest work ever done under the British flag, or any other flag, or by any other people in any time, unless perchance the Chinese wall might be held to vie with it. Whether it be considered from an engineering, military, or political point of view, it is at least three times as important as any other work in the British empire, or in the United States."

THE BABY'S FIRST WORD.

In a heathen land many thousand miles from America a young Hindu and his bride had just come to know the dear Saviour who died for the sins of the world. Their hearts were full of love, and they could talk of nothing but their new-found Friend. They had one child, a babe just old enough to begin to talk, and in the earnestness of their love to the Redeemer they desired that the first word this little one should utter should be his name—Jesus Christ.

"Not 'father' or 'mother,'" they said, "but 'Jesus.' It is the dearest name on earth. May it be the first word our baby shall speak!"

In a dark heathen country—O, far, far away—Where the servants of Jesus for love of him stay  
To tell the poor people God's wonderful love,  
And point them the pathway to heaven above,

A youth and the wife he had chosen had heard  
And received in their hearts the life-giving word,  
Then went on their way their neighbours to tell  
Of him who had died to redeem them from hell.

They could think, they could talk, of nothing beside,  
But the great love of Jesus, who for them had died;  
The story so wondrous, so new, and so sweet  
From morning till evening they fain would repeat.

A bright welcome gift with their new life had come,  
A fair little flower had bloomed in their home—  
A babe to be cherished, and nurtured with care;  
For God, not for idols, their child they would rear.

The treasure unfolded in beauty each day;  
With cooings and lisps the tiny lips play;  
Shall "papa" and "mamma" the little tongue frame?  
"No, no! It shall speak first the heavenly name—"

"'Jesus,' dear 'Jesus,' the best name on earth,  
The name from us hidden until our new birth;  
He came to redeem us, he on us has smiled:  
His name shall be first on the lips of our child."

—Selected

LOVE.

In Chicago, a few years ago, there was a little boy who went to one of the mission Sunday-schools. His father moved to another part of the city, about five miles away, and every Sunday that boy came past thirty or forty Sunday-schools to the one he attended. One day a lady who was out collecting scholars for a Sunday-school met him and asked him why he went so far, past so many schools. "There are plenty of others just as good," said she.

"They may be as good, but they are not so good for me," he said.

"Why not?" she asked.

"Because they love a fellow over there," he answered.

Ah! love won him. "Because they love a fellow over there!" How easy it is to reach people through love! Sunday-school teachers should win the affections of their scholars if they wish to lead them to Christ.—*D. L. Moody.*

JUMBO used to eat every day, a barrel of potatoes, a bushel of onions, and 400 pounds of hay.