

*Your speed on the road to success depends not so much on what you are,
as upon what you convince people you are.*



A NEW YEAR'S GREETING.



BRETHREN, we are now in 1897. A Happy New Year to us all. We need it, everyone of us. We have all had our ups and downs, during the past year, especially the downs, which were sudden with a sharp slant, while the ups were gradual and slow. In fact, being so busy preparing for the downs, the ups glided by almost unnoticed. Still, we had them; no doubt of it. Each of us is the richer for experience, and experience has a cash value if we use it right. Experience teaches us to avoid in '97 the ruts and

rocks over which we stubbed our toes in '96. Surely, now that the pain is gone, and the limp has mended, we are not to repeat the stubbing process over again? That would be just foolishness, and we have all been fools at some period of our lives. But that is no reason why we should keep at the business permanently, for a fool incorporated into an unlimited liability company, and trading as such, has no future before him except insolvency, a violent death, or a government office.

Let us all, then, learn from '96 to be wiser in '97; cease to think we can run the earth and several of the neighboring planets; stop dreaming of becoming prime ministers, gold kings, or policemen. All these lucrative offices are filled by offensive partisans, so to speak, who are no happier than the rest of us; the life insurance men decline to write their policies one per cent. lower; the bicyclist runs them down just as he does the rest of us; and the dog along the road seizes the frayed ends of their trousers with a zest equal to his enthusiasm for ours. We haven't a monopoly of the world's misfortunes, any one of us; if we think we carry a bigger load of trouble than our neighbors it is because we think so.

Old '96, then, has gone forever, and as all the good he ever did us ought to be hammered into our systems by this time, why recall him, why pull him out of his grave, dissect his bones, and snarl over his short-comings? Let us rather profit by the old man's failings; let us admit that he played the jackass several times, that he over-bought, that he cut down profits, that he drank too much, ate too much, swore too much, and worked his brain too little. He is now an Awful Example, for us all to shun. He was that much use to us, so let us thank him and begone.

So, brethren, let us not linger over the past. The past had its day. But it is dead. There is no sense in Reminiscence in a surly, ungrateful, complaining spirit. Don't let us keep whining

away about the Good 'Old Times. People died then, didn't they? The milk turned sour, didn't it? Merchants went up the spout with the same airy facility, didn't they? They landed on their necks, and as their feet waved about in the sunshine somebody's hat was knocked off, just the same as happens now?

Neither should we occupy too much of '97 with building on '98. There is something fine and stalwart about '98, we admit. He has a rosy smile, is drinking champagne when he is thirsty, and wears a gold band on his hat. At this distance from his exploits, we observe that he appears to be driving his carriage (motor) takes a trip to Europe, and wipes his mouth with a silk handkerchief. Yes, he is a fine fellow, is A Future Esq., commonly called 1898, but we cannot afford to wait for him, or lend him money, or count on his friendship, or believe his beautiful stories. He may never come back to settle, and it is his brother, 1897, we are now doing business with. He is here, at any rate, where we can get hold of him, shake his hand, or kick him on the shins if we feel bound to greet him that way.

But supposing we start in without any violent assault, assuming him to be neither Angel nor Devil, but disposed to make the best of him; resolving that if he doesn't behave well, we will, anyway. Supposing then, brethren, we begin with a little extra good humor, patience, courage, industry, and increased regard for strict integrity. We won't find it impossible, and even if we thought it were, what good would the opposite course bring us? We can smash the pump handle, but that won't bring the water through the spout; we can call a man who has annoyed us all the bad names in the daily papers, but our money or our goods won't come back, and our jacerated feelings will continue to feel the twinge; we may begin the day with a scowl and vent our temper on the office boy, but the sun won't shine the quicker for it, we may swindle our employer, our em-

