

OUR HOME CIRCLE.
FOR NEW YEAR'S EVE.

Oh New Year, teach us faith!
The road of life is hard;
When our feet bleed and scouring winds
Us scour,
Point thou to him whose vi-age was
More marred
Than any man's who saith,
"Make straight paths for your feet," and to
"Come to me, all ye that are weary,
And I will give you rest."
Y'et hang some lamp-like hope
Above this unknown way,
Kind year, to give our spirits freer scope
And our hands strength to work while
It is day,
But if that way must slope
Toward, oh, long betwix our failing eyes
The lamp of life, the hope that never dies.
Comfort our souls with love—
Love of him whom we adore;
Love that doth cheer, in which like sheltered
Dove
Each weary heart its own safe nest may
Find,
And love that turns above
Adoringly, contented to be sign
All loves, if love be, for the love divine.
From love that like a friend,
And whether bright the face
O'er which clouds we cannot apprehend,
We'll hold out patient hands, each in
His place,
And trust that to the end,
Knowing him least onwards to these
Spines
Where there are neither days, nor months,
Nor years.
Dinah Maria Mulock.

THE "NEW YEAR CALL."

Little did we think when Miss
Brown offered a prize for Bible
verses, that it would end in a New
Year call. Hattie learned the
most—200 verses. When Miss
Brown asked her what she would
like to have, she answered, "I
don't care for anything, please."
One teacher looked rather puzzle-
led, but only said, "Think it over,
Hattie, and let me know next
Sunday."
Hattie did think it over, and
the next Sunday asked Miss
Brown to please take the money
and buy—"but I guess I'll let you
hear the story from our teacher,
just as she told it to Mrs. McKie
whom we favored with a call."
We met in the pastor's study,
and had a grand time in getting
off. "Are you all ready?" asked
Miss Brown with a smile. We
answered with a merry "yes,"
and stepped out into the bright
sunshine, although I don't think
it was any brighter than the
bright sunshine in our hearts.
We were quite a procession, as we
walked along. Our bundles gave
us no end of trouble for they
would keep coming undone; and
two or three times we came to a
halt—fearing their contents would
be scattered on the street. "I
really can't carry mine much fur-
ther," at last exclaimed Carrie
from behind the biggest bundle of
all.
Miss Brown laughed, and we
stopped again,—but this time to
enter a store, and while the refrac-
tory bundle was being tied up
more securely, we purchased, oh,
such a pretty blue hood, and the
most cunning little dress that ever
you saw. Again we started out,
and down into a dingy, dirty
street, we wended our way.
"Here we are!" said Miss
Brown, as she pushed open a door
of a large tenement house. How
dark it looked up those stairs! We
all held our breath, and little
Belie exclaimed, "Oh my! as we
followed closely the steps of our
teacher. Up, up we climbed to the
very highest story, and then
waited in silence, as Miss Brown
tapped gently at a door.
"Come in," a voice said. But
such a small room! We filled it
compactly as we walked in with
our bundles; while a woman with
a baby in her arms, and three
children, stared at us in amaze-
ment. I'm sure I don't wonder
that they did—for we were rather
a big New Year's call. "This is
my Sunday-school class," kindly
explained our teacher, shaking
hands with Mrs. McKie, and "we
have all come to make you a New
Year's call." "I'm sure I'm very
glad to see you all," said the poor
woman; and then she put the baby
down, and got out an old rickety
rocking chair for Miss Brown,
while the little boy tried to find
something for us girls to sit upon.
The room was small, and there
didn't seem to be much in it. The
floor was bare, an old stove stood
in the middle of the room, and
there were no pictures on the
walls. A door led into a small,
dark bedroom; and though the bed
was made up on two old boxes,
yet everything looked neat and
clean.
"Last Christmas," she went on
to say, as we all seated ourselves,
"I got a prize to the scholar in
my class who should in three
months learn the greatest number
of Bible verses. The little girl
who won the prize, instead of ac-
cepting it, asked me to take the
money and expend it on materia-

with which to clothe a needy
child. My class then proposed to
make up the article; so last sum-
mer they finished ten little gar-
ments, and we are here to-day to
ask you to accept them for your
little children.
I wondered afterward, how
Mrs. McKie felt at that moment,
for there she stood, with the baby
in her arms, not saying a word,
and just looking at us. We were
all a little embarrassed; but just
then, the old rocking chair gave a
solemn warning, and our teacher
as suddenly arose,—just in time
to escape a fall. We had to laugh
then; and that seemed "to break
the ice"; for while Mrs. McKie
carried the broken chair away,
we girls, with quick fingers, were
undoing our gifts. No wonder
our bundles were big. We had:

For the oldest boy, a nice warm suit,
Stockings for feet, and a pair of boots;
For Lillie and Freddie, our fingers had
made
Warm clothing complete; while Carrie—
she gave
To the mother an apron, and Hattie be-
stowed
Books, tops, games and candies, the rest of
our load.
It was just like what you read
of in story books; we never
thought they were so real before.
Mrs. McKie thanked us again and
again; the little girl, Lillie, fairly
jumped up and down for joy, the
boys were jubilant; and even the
baby did its best to thank us, by
joining in with its little voice.
And how pleased the poor sick
father was? He could scarcely
hear our teacher, as she stood by
the bedside speaking to him
words of sympathy and encourage-
ment; but his eyes brightened, as
the little ones ran to him in their
happiness.

Somehow, as we stepped out
into the bustle of the street,
our hands were lightened, a shad-
ow from that home of poverty
and suffering seemed to rest upon
us. It was a new experience,
and we walked very quietly be-
side our teacher on the way home-
ward. But the mother had
promised to send all the little
ones to Sunday school on the mor-
row, and we felt sure she would
keep her word. "I never thought,"
said little Belle, "that people lived
so poor; it makes me feel real sad;"
and this feeling was in all our
hearts.
God was leading us out of self
and into His love.

NEW YEAR'S DAY CUS-
TOMS.

Ring out the Old and ring
in the New Year with
"A merry New Year! a happy
New Year to you!" on New Year's
Day, were greetings that moved
sceptered pride and humble labor
to smiles and kind feelings in the
former times; and why should they
be unfashionable in our own?
Dr. Drake observes, in "Shakes-
peare and his Times," that the
ushering in of the new year, or
New Year's tide, with rejoicings,
presents and good wishes, was a
custom observed during the six-
teenth century with great regular-
ity and parade, and was as cordi-
ally celebrated in the court of the
prince as in the cottage of the
peasant.
The Rev. T. D. Fosbroke, in his
valuable "Encyclopædia of Anti-
quities," adduces various authori-
ties to show that congratulations,
presents and visits were made by
the Romans on this day. The
origin, he says, is ascribed to Ro-
mulus and Titus, and that the
usual pre-ents were figs and dates,
covered with leaf-gold, and sent
by clients to patrons, accompan-
ied with a piece of money, which
was expended to purchase the sta-
tues of deities. He mentions an
amphora (a jar) which still ex-
ists, with an inscription denoting
that it was a New Year's present
from the potters to their patron-
ess. He also instances from
Count Caylus a piece of Roman
pottery, with an inscription wish-
ing a "happy New Year to you";
another, where a person wishes it
to himself and his son; and three
medallions with the laurel leaf,
fig and date; one of Commodus;
another of Victory; and a third,
Janus standing in a temple,
with an inscription, wishing a
happy New Year to the emperor.
New Year's gifts were continued
under the Roman emperors until
they were prohibited by Claudius.
Yet in the early ages of the
Church the Christian emperors
received them; nor did they whol-
ly cease, although condemned by
ecclesiastical councils on account
of the pagan ceremonies at their
presentation.
The late Rev. John Brand, in
his "Popular Antiquities," edited
by Mr. Ellis, observes from Bish-
op Stillingfleet, that among the
Saxons of the North the festival

of the New Year was observed
with more than ordinary jollity
and feasting, and by sending New
Year's gifts to one another. Mr.
Fosbroke notices the continuation
of the Roman practice during the
middle ages; and that our kings,
and the nobility especially, inter-
changed presents. Mr. Ellis
quotes Matthew Paris, who ap-
pears to show that Henry III. ex-
torted New Year's gifts; and he
cites from a MS. of Edward VI., an en-
try of "rewards given on New
Year's Day to the king's officers
and servants in ordinary, £155 5s.,
and to their servants that present
the king's majesty with New
Year's gifts." An orange stuck
with cloves seems, by reference
to Mr. Fosbroke and our early
authors, to have been a popular
New Year's gift.
Thomas Naogeorgus, in "The
Popish Kingdom," a Latin poem
written in 1553, and Englished
by Barbabe Googe, after remark-
ing on days of the Old Year, urges
this recollection:

The next to this New year's day,
Whoe'er to ever feares,
They costly presents in do bring,
And New year's gifts do sende.
These gifts the husband gives his wife,
And father the child,
And master on his men bestowes
The like, with favor mide.
Honest old Latimer, instead of
presenting Henry VIII. with a
purse of gold, as was customary
for a New Year's gift, put into
the king's hand a New Testament.
Dr. Drake is of opinion that the
wardrobe and jewelry of Queen
Elizabeth were principally sup-
ported by the annual contribu-
tions on New Year's Day. He
cites lists of the New Year's gifts
presented to her from the original
rolls published in her "Progresses-
" by Mr. Nicholas; and from
these it appears that the greatest
part, if not all the peers and peer-
esses of the realm, all the bishops,
the chief officers of state, and sev-
eral of the queen's household ser-
vants, even down to her apothec-
aries, master cook, serjeant of
the pantry, etc., gave a New
Year's gift to her majesty; con-
sisting, in general, either of a sum
of money, or jewels, or trinkets,
or wearing apparel. Dr. Drake
says that though Elizabeth made
returns to the New Year's gifts
in plate and other articles, yet she
took sufficient care that the bal-
ance should be in her own favor.

THEY SHALL SHINE AS
STARS.

I do not know that Mary was a
strong-minded woman, or that she
was wealthy or beautiful; perhaps
she did not move in the very best
of society, but there is one thing I
do know—she could love. Where-
ever the Gospel of the Son of God
is preached that story is told out.
I suppose Mary forgot all about
herself, but she loved the Master
and she poured that ointment out
upon Him. Eighteen centuries
have rolled away, but the name of
Mary of Bethany is as fresh as
ever it was. I suppose there is
no woman's name so fresh as hers,
except the name of Mary, the
mother of the Saviour. I can
imagine some man, when Christ
was on earth, prophesying that
that story would be told in the
nineteenth century, and not a man
or the face of the earth would have
believed it. We look back on the
days of miracles, but we forget we
are living in the days of miracles.
Missionary societies in New York
and London have put the story of
Mary into two hundred and fifty
languages, and have sent out mil-
lions of copies of it. That story
will live as long as the church of
God is upon earth. She made
herself immortal by that one act.
Nothing you do for Christ is small.
We want, to-day, men and women
who are willing to do.
I suppose if these reporters had
been living in the days of Jari-
salem that she had broken that
alabaster box upon Him, they
would not have thought it worth
noticing; but it has outlived every-
thing else that took place then. If
they had seen that widow cast
those two mites into the treasury
of the Lord, they would have said:
"There will be no one in Jerusa-
lem that will care for that."
But see! Eighteen centuries
have rolled away and that story
has outlived anything else that
occurred there.—*Mr. Moody.*

Make others to see Christ in
you, moving, doing, speaking and
thinking; your actions will speak
of him, if he be in you.—*Ruther-
ford.*
A man is divinely empowered
for all he is divinely called to do.

THE OLD YEAR'S BLESSING.

I am fading from you,
But one draught near,
Called the Angel guardian
Of the coming year.
If my gifts and graces
Obliviously I 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 me Patient
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.
 Adelaide Proctor.

E. P. ROE.

The story of how E. P. Roe
found his present prominent place
as a writer of religious novels,
would make an interesting illus-
tration for one of Samuel Smiles'
pleasant books. He was an army
chaplain during the war, and at-
terward became pastor of the lit-
tle church at Highland Falls, near
West Point. A new church was
needed, and to build it the pastor
himself went pluckily to work to
raise the money. The summer
visitors at the Point did their
share, but there remained a gap,
to fill which Mr. Roe began to
lecture about the country on the
facts of his army life, but without
any notion that he was a writer
of fiction. Meanwhile the Chica-
go fire occurred, and under the
strong spell of a desire to visit the
scene, though without special pur-
pose in view, he made a "forced
march" by railroad, and reached
there while the ruins were still
smoking. In his study there are
some curious relics of the fire in
the shape of china, which he found
in the ruins, on which the intense
heat had burned in a smoky iri-
descence. Out of this journey there
gradually developed "Barriers
Burned Away," his first work of
fiction. It was published in 1872,
and at once had an enormous sale.
Up to this fall he had published
nine novels—missing only two
years, when he issued, instead of
a novel, his "Success with Small
Fruits"—and their sales aggregat-
ed 346,000 copies. The tenth
novel, "His Sombre Rivals," uti-
lizes his experiences of the war;
and the season's sale of this and
the previous books promises to
bring the total up to 400,000 cop-
ies—an extraordinary result for
little over ten years of literary
work. At the usual return of ten
per cent., this would come to \$60,
000, but this, which represents
very nearly the high-water mark
of successful authorship is, after
all, little in comparison with the
returns of successful business
men. Mr. Roe's method of work
has been peculiar. He writes
MS. in a huge ledger or hand-
book, and usually finishes a novel
under tremendous pressure, some-
times shutting himself up in a
room in a New York hotel, and
driving away on a diet of beef-
steak and coffee, allowing himself
only the recreation of an evening
of good music, till his book is
finished. This method occasionally
results in a visible carelessness of
construction, which his readers,
however, easily forgive. Besides
writing novels Mr. Roe has been
very successful as a grower of
small fruits, and does one of the
largest businesses of the country
in strawberry-plants. His present
residence and fruit-farm is at
Cornwall, on the side of old Storm
King. He is now finishing a
story of a novel kind, the plan of
which was suggested to him by
the editor of *Harper's Magazine*,
and which will begin in the forth-
coming Christmas number of that
periodical, and run, in company
with William Black's "Judith
Shakespeare," for a year. The
title is "Nature's Serial Story,"
and the life (and love-making) of
a country home is followed month
by month through the year, with
careful studies of the outdoor
phases of nature, of plant and ani-
mal life. Mr. W. H. Gibson is
associated with Mr. Roe in his
work, and has been making stu-
dies for lavish illustration in the

neighborhood of Storm King,
where the scene of the story is re-
alistically placed. His pictures
will be supplemented by figure il-
lustrations from Mr. Frederic
Dielman, who drew "A Girl I
Know" in the mammoth "*Har-
per's Christmas* of last year. Mr.
Roe's books have also had consid-
erable sales in England, some-
times with, oftener without, profit
to him; but his American re-
turns alone would have made him,
had it not been for his having
some of the misfortunes of others,
the owner of what for an author
might be called a considerable
fortune. But his own satisfaction
seems to be rather in the good
stories have been to others, in their
thousand-pulpit power, than in
the returns they have brought
to himself.—*Literary World.*

DRESSED FOR CHURCH-
GOING.

"The question of dress when at-
tending divine service is, to my
mind, a very important one, and I
wish that all professing Christians
would seriously consider it. There
is no doubt whatever in my mind
that our congregations would be
larger, and embrace many more
of that class of people who particu-
larly need to have the Gospel
preached to them, if our churches
were not filled with ladies whose
dresses are so elaborate that poor-
er women cannot afford to rival
them. These last prefer staying
away altogether to appearing in
church at what they fancy to be a
disadvantage. There is no organ-
ized movement on the part of pas-
tors or any body else that I know
of, to discourage this display of
rich toilets in our churches. There
is a movement, however, I believe,
which is silently working in the
matter, and which is founded on
the common-sense of parishioners,
many of whom are beginning to
feel that the house of God is not
the proper place to make an exhibi-
tion of their fine clothes. The
more common-sense is brought to
bear on this question, the more
true refinement will be shown in
our congregations, and I hope to
see the day when no poor man or
woman will feel a false sense of
dignity in coming to church be-
cause she or he cannot afford to
dress quite so well as somebody
else." I think the reign of com-
mon-sense in this matter will be-
gin in earnest before long. I
have thought that I have not
iced for some time a tendency on-
the part of our ladies to make less
display of their fine clothes on the
streets than they used to do. They
do not seem to dress so
'loud,' to use an expression of the
streets. This is a very healthy
sign; it is a sign that our Ameri-
can women are becoming more
truly refined, and are learning the
fact that elaborate and expensive
toilets are not adapted to all times
and all places. If the street is
not the place to exhibit the rich-
est dresses of a lady's wardrobe,
the church is certainly not the
proper place to display them, and
I think that the ladies of our con-
gregations will eventually see
this, and act upon their convic-
tions of what is right. The
church, above all places in the
world, is the one place where all
Christians are supposed to be on
an equality, and nothing should
be allowed to step between them
and make one class feel that it is
on a lower plane than another.
Above all, no false sentiments of
pride should be aroused in the
Church of God which will prevent
those seeking the benefits of re-
ligion from attending Divine serv-
ice. There is no doubt that such
sentiments are aroused by the dis-
play of elaborate toilets on the
part of wealthy women, and for
that reason, if for no other, I shall
welcome the day when a truer re-
finement holds sway and the fact
is recognised that the church is
neither a ball-room nor a parlor.
The English people are much
more refined than we are in this
matter. They do not as a rule go
to church dressed in such a man-
ner as to attract attention. They
keep their richest toilets for dis-
play within their houses and
among their own social circles.
When Americans follow their ex-
ample we shall have made a great
advance towards inducing the
great body of poor people to at-
tend our churches.—*Rev. Dr. He-
ber Newton, New York.*

FRUITS OF GRACE.

And now, my dear friend, in
looking back upon the past year
of our pilgrimage, can we not at
least say that this New Year finds
us in the enjoyment of a far
stronger sense of the reality of the
love of Christ than we once had—
of its all-sufficiency for the hap-

piness of the soul without any
addition from earth? Not, per-
haps, that we have no earthly
longings left; but are they not
much reduced by the much strong-
er belief that we once had of the
good which there is in Christ—of
his intimate relations with the
soul—more intimate infinitely
than those of our nearest kindred;
of his love, so much sweeter in its
nature, to say nothing of its depth
and breadth? And yet, in another
sense, our love to him makes our
affection for each other far deeper
than it could otherwise be; indeed,
gives it its immortal meaning.

I can only say, that loving you,
as I do, in Him, I know my love
for you can never die. Many of
my friendships prove but blossoms,
which the winds of time scatter;
but our friendship, formed in the
"bud of our being," shall have the
growth of eternity. How overwhelm-
ing the thought that you and I, who
have talked so much together of the
hidden life and of the Saviour while
knowing him only by faith, shall resume
our communion upon these sub-
jects after that life shall have been
fully developed by the sight of him
in glory.—*The Rev. Wm. Jones.*

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

THE NEW YEAR.
It's coming, boys,
It's coming, girls,
The grand New Year!
A year to be glad in,
Not to be sad in,
A year to live in,
To gain an' give in;
A year for trying,
And not for sighing,
A year for striving,
And hea'ly th'iving;
A bright New Year,
O' hold it dear;
For God, who sendeth,
He only lendeth.
—*St. Nicholas.*

RESOLUTIONS FOR 1884.

- I herby solemnly covenant, as
God shall help me—
Never to neglect my morning
and evening devotions.
Always to speak kindly to
every person with whom I am as-
sociated.
Always to speak well, and never
evil, of any absent person.
To endeavor to lead at least one
person to the Saviour during the
present year.
To strive to attend one devo-
tional meeting during the week.
My dear young friends: The
New Year is one of the times
when we should gird on our armor
afresh and renew our vows.
Will you cut out these resolu-
tions; or, better still, copy them
and sign your names to them, and
place them in your Bibles and en-
deavor to keep them all the year
through?
If at any time you should fail,
remember you have an Advocate
with the Father. Ask Jesus to
forgive you, and commence again.
Then shall the New Year prove
to you—
Another year of progress, another year of
prize;
Another year of proving His presence, all
the days;
Another year of service, of witness for His
love;
Another year of training for holier work
above.

HONOUR OLD AGE.

The Germans have a story about
a little girl, named Jeannette, who
went out to see a grand review.
She found a capital place, from
which to see the soldiers pass,
when she noticed a poor old woman
in the crowd trying very hard to
get where she could see.
Jeannette said to herself, "I
should like to see the soldiers
march; but it isn't kind in me to
stay in this nice seat and let that
old woman stay when she can't
see anything. I ought to honour
old age, and I will." So she
called the old woman and, placing
her in the nice seat, fell back
among the crowd. There she had
to tiptoe and peep and dodge about
to catch a glimpse of the splendid
scene, which she might have seen
fully and easily if she had kept
her place.
Some of the people said she was
a silly girl, and laughed at her.
Jeannette was rewarded in her
heart for the kindness to old age.
A few minutes later a man, cover-
ed with lace, elbowed his way
through the crowd and said to
her: "Little girl, will you come
to her ladyship?" She could not
imagine who her ladyship was,
but she followed the man to a
scaffold within the crowd. A
lady met her at the top of the
stairs and said: "My dear child,
I saw you yield your seat to the
old woman. You acted nobly.
Now sit down here by me. You
can see everything here." Thus
Jeannette was rewarded a second
time for honouring old age.