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Annie and Willie's Prayer.

"Twas the eve before Christmas; 'Good night" had been said, And Annie and Willie had crept into bed; There were tears on their pil

been given,
That they should retire precisely at seve
Instead of eight; for they troubled

ents each year.

And this was the reason that two little heads
So restlessly tossed on their soft, downy beds.

Not a word had been spoken by either till then. When Willie's sad face from the blanket did

plies,
"I've tried it in vain, but I can't shut my eyes. For, somehow, it makes me so sorry because Dear papa has said there is no Santa Claus; Now, we know that there is, and it can't be

And four little knees the soft carpet pressed, And two tiny hands were clasped close to each

"Now, Willie, you know we must firmly be-That the presents we ask for we're sure to re-You must wait just as still till I say amen,
And by that you will know that your turn has
come then."
"Dear Jesus, look down on my brother and

me,
And grant us the favor we are asking of Thee.
I want a wax dolly, a tea-set and ring,
And an ebony work-box, that shuts with a

spring—
Bless papa, dear Jesus, and cause him to see
That Santa Claus loves us far better than heDon't let him get fretful and angry again
At dear brother Willie and Annie, Amen!"

night,
And bring us some presents before it is light;
I want he should dive me a nice little sed,
With bright, shiny runners, and all painted

yed—
A box full of tandy, a book and a toy,
Amen, and then, Desus, I'll be a dood boy."
Their prayers being ended, they raise up their heads,
And with hearts light and cheerful again

and deep,
And with fairies in dreamland were roaming in sleep.

Eight, nine, and the little French clock had struck ten—

Ere the father had thought of his children

again— He seemed now to hear Annie's half-suppressed sighs, And to see the big tears stand in Willie's blue eyes.
"I was harsh to my darlings," he mentally said,
"And should not have sent them so early to

But then I was troubled-my feelings tound vent, For bank stock to-day has gone down ten per But of course they've forgot their trouble ere And that I denied them the thrice-asked-for But just to make sure I'll steal up to their For I never spoke harsh to mydarlings before."
So saying, he softly ascended the stairs,
And arrived at the door to hear both of their

prayers.

His Annie's "bless papa" draws forth the big And Willie's grave promise falls sweet on his

"Strauge, strange, I'd torgotten," said he with

a sigh,

"How I longed, when a child, to have Christmas draw nigh.

I'll atone for my harshness," he inwardly said,

"By answering their prayers ere I sleep in my Then he turned to the stairs and softly went down, Threw off velvet slippers and silk dressing-Donned hat, coat and boots, and was out in

the street,
A millionaire tacing the cold, driving sleet,
Nor stopped he until he had bought every-From the box full of candy to the tiny gold ring—
Indeed, he kept adding so much to his store,
That the various presents outnumbered Then homeward he turned with his holiday

And with Aunt Mary's aid in the nursery 'twas stowed.

Miss Dolly was seated beneath a pine tree,
By the side of a table spread out for tea.

A work-box, well filled in the center was laid,
And on it a ring, for which Anne had prayed.

A soldier in uniform stood by a sled,

"With bright, shining runners, and all painted

There were bells, dogs and horses, books pleasing to see, And birds of all colors were perched in the While Santa Claus, laughing, stood up in the As if getting ready more presents to drop-

And as the fond father the picture surveyed, He thought for his trouble he'd been amply paid, And he said to himself, as he brushed off a tear, I'm happier to-night than I've been for a year, What care 1 it bank stock fall ten per cent.

more? Hereafter l'il make it a rule, I believe ve Santa Claus visit us each Chris mas So thinking, he gently extinguished the light,

And tripped down the stairs to retire for the as soon as the beams of the bright morning kness to flight, and the stars, one rifts prayed for were all of them

> ad they cried in their inuden 73" to come quick and see

voice soft and



While dear little Willie climbed up on his knee Determined no secret between them should be, And told in solt whispers how Aonie had said

Then we dot up and prayed dust as well as we tould,
And Dod answered our prayers—now wasn't

relent? And the basty words spoken, so soon to repent?

I was the Bring who made you steal sot ly up-And made you His agent to answer their

WILL HAYMAN'S CHRISTMAS.

BY FRANK DOUGLAS.

"A wild night this, master; there'll be a good many of the woman-folk anx-ious-like until we can see yon point a "Yes," I replied, "we can only hope

that their anxiety may not deepen into despair. God help those at sea to-The scene was truly a grand and sol-emn one, and a weird silence prevailed over the small knot of anxious watchers

who had braved the storm on that wild night, endeavoring to catch a glimpse of the fishing boats which had left in the morning, and should have returned long

I had a week before been summoned on urgent business to Bodmin, and in search of the information I required had to make frequent journeys to the out-lying villages. One of these was Pleasaunce, where I arrived on the af-ternoon of the 22d; I soon transacted my business, and returned to my inn, where I was welcomed by the savory odor of certain culinary preparations that were being made for my especial

After discussing very energetically the tempting meal that had been placed before me, I settled myself down to a comfortable chat with my worthy host, John Hayman, And a right good host he was, too—a thoroughly straightfor-ward face, a true index of the man; a this point was decided, the fishermen sturdy, well-knit frame; hands that bore evidence of many a hard day's toil; and above all, a genial, Saxon laugh, which made the rafters echo again and again. Saxon laugh, which ion was that seeing the gathering storm,

Well, we got to talking about he in near approach of Christmas, and I have expressing my intention to endeavor to hunt up some friends of mine, who I believed lived a few miles inland, when my host brought down his hand upon the table so emphatically, that the cups and saucers seemed inclined to take violent

"Why, Mister Douglas," said he, "if I may be so bold, I don't think you could do better than stay here. We always have a bit of a party on Christmas day, and this year we expect a lot of folk. My Fanny, who's just married, will be here with her husband, and my good woman's niece (I suppose she' she is too) she'll be here; she's been staying lately with some friends of hers up the coast, but my Will, who's as stout a lad as any in the villages, is going to marry her soon, and he insisted a sailor to put to sea in such threatenthat she should spend the Christmas ing weather, but Will would not be perwith us. Then there's some of the wife's suaded. I stayed on the shore for a litrelations, and one or two of my own, be-sides a few of the village folk, who al-ways look us up about this time; and, to cap all, I think our parson will most likely come in-and he's a regular jolly comfortable sort of a man, you know—so I don't think you'll be bad off for company, and if you don't mind putting

Such a hearty and spontaneous invi-tation could not possibly be declined, so it was arranged that I should stay at the Two Fisherman till the 26th.

When I awoke on the morang of the 24th, everything was bustle am confusion, and the grand aim of everybody seemed to be to thoroughly earn the morrow's enjoyment by tiring them-selves out first. As I entered the par-lor, my hostess was giving very particu-lar instructions to a sturdy young fisherlar instructions to a sturdy young fisher-man as to some important errand. It appeared that he was being deputed to call with his boat at the lonely village where the piece before mentioned was where the niece before-mentioned was time for the festivities, which were to commence as custom dietated on Christmas eve. In the natural course of events Will Hayman would have allowed no one to undertake this honor but himself, but he had been summoned the day before to the assizes to give evidence as to a boat which had been stove in a few days since. He was, therefore, very reluctantly compelled to forego the pleasure of bringing his affianced wife to his own home, and hence the very careful instructions of Mrs. Hayman to his

The boats went out in the usual man ner, amid a hearty chorus of cheers, and the last words I heard were from the young fisherman, who cried out: "Mind you have something good ready for us, missus, when we come home; I'm going to bring you a splendid cargo, you know." At this sally there was quite a roar of laughter from the men on shore, re-echoed by the fisher-wives who were

standing by.

Everything went on very merrily at the inn, and the afternoon was wearing away, when suddenly one of the children cried out: "Why, how dark it's getting, Just a word to explain my presence at such an out-of-the-way place as Pleasunce, on the Cornish coast, in the unsaunce, on the Cornish looked up. Almost at the same momen a blinding flash of lightning lit up the whole cottage, followed by peal upon peal of deafening thunder. Suddenly a light flashed through the air, and we all rushed to the door, and saw dimly through the gathering darkness a gallant ship far out to sea, rolling to and fro, and sending up signal rockets for assistance. In a few moments an anx-ious crowd of weather-beaten men was assembled on the beach, which was immediately in front of the house, discussing the possibility of sending help to the unfortunate vessel; but it was quickly seen that no boat could live in such a sea and reach the ship, even had gathered in little groups discussing the grave position of their own comrades they would keep in shore, or land, and orst that would happen would be the delaying of the festivities. This

view of the matter seemed to take a load off the minds of the men, when one of them said: "But how about Fred? He promised to be here by five o'clock with Nelly Howard.' "What's that you say, mate?" said a

pleasant but eager voice behind me; "what about Nelly?"

not say a word.
"Isn't Nelly home yet?" Will asked, his face burning with intense eagerness; "I thought she'd be at the house."

His mates told him simply how matters stood, endeavoring to console him by saying that young Fred was too good too much for my powers of endurance, and I turned to go. Just as I did so, I was addressed in the manner I have mentioned at the commencement of my

I went home full of forebodings that up with the likes of us, I am sure we the day which had opened so brightly Will, who was now hidden in the gloom, after a period of lingering suspense we shall be very proud for you to join us." would close in dark despair upon many I went upstairs, and hastily arousing the saw one of the crew stoop over the

in this quiet little hamlet. I went to my room, and wearied by the unusual events of the day, fell asleep, and did not wake until past midnight. When I did so I heard voices and a sound of suppressed sobs, apparently proceeding from the parlor, which was immediately below my room. I went down-stairs, and through the partly opened door saw Will sanding before the fireplace, and his mother trying, as only a mother can, to soothe the terrible anguish which her assion that will incite to courageous action; and, what is a far greater trial of strength, patient waiting in times of sore distress, but at the same time I could not imagine a higher, nobler love than this strong man, now bowed in mental agony, exhibited. His portrait hung in the room which I occupied, and represented him as a sturdy, compactly-built man, with a frame of iron, and a look of determined resolution on his face. He seemed to me the perfect embodiment of everything that was ruggedly grand; almost a personification of those chivalric old knights of whom the poet laureate has so graphically told. He would, I imagined, have stood the test of the greatest physical suffering with

more than Spartan fortitude, and yet, so great was the witchery of a girl's tender glances, and the influence of her holy love, that this strong man was bowed and torn with anguish as if by some vast internal convulsion.

I watched them unseen for a little while, but, at last, being ashamed of my involuntary eavesdropping, crept softly upstairs, and endeavored to obtain a lit-

tle needed rest. I must have slept for nearly two hours, when I was awoke by a terrific clap of thunder just in time to see, by a lurid flash of lightning, which lit up the whole sky, a small fishing boat far out to sea, tossing about on the wild waves, with apparently no hand to guide it.

I thought I heard some one moving in the parlor, and went down-stairs for

the second time.

I entered the room, and saw Will standing against the paneling, looking out through the open window. But what a change! The whole scene is depicted on my mind's retina as vividly as if it were enacted but yesterday. Will had, it appeaped, been lying on the couch, endeavoring to obtain a little rest, when the thunder roused him, and the lightning showed him what I had seen from my room above. Another flash revealed to him something yet clearer than the first had done, and he stood there firm and rigid, peering with intense eagerness into the dark and fearful night. The wind howled and rattled through the rafters; the rain battered against the windows; the sea rolled and boomed on the surf not two hundred yards away, and the night was truly a weird and eerie one. Will had not noticed my presence; at last I spoke.

"This is a terrible night," said I. He turned sharply round, and said; "Terrible! ay, and you're right. I would to God I had never lived to see it. What have I done to deserve this

It was Will Hayman, who, walking home along the shore, had come upon us unobserved. The men looked at each other with meaning clarges but the shore with the us unobserved. The men looked at each other with meaning glances, but could the small boat I had before seen, with the figures of a man and woman clinging to the rigging. Then, whether my heated brain deceived me, or the wind wafted the sound to my ears, I know not but I seemed to hear above the roar of the raging elements a sweet, girlish

> At the same moment, and before I had time to speak, Will's voice rang out in trumpet tones: "I'll save you, Nelly, or I'll die for you," and he sprang out into the darkness with a tremendous bound and ran toward the shore.

I stood speechless for a moment, but oon regaining my senses, and knowing how useless it was to endeavor to stop

The folks were soon astir, and one of the boys was sent to rouse the fishermen, the boys was sent to rouse the fishermen, while I endeavored to find some trace of Will. But none could be found; my first impression was that in his desperation he had attempted to rig and launch the lifeboat, but there it lay, untouched. My next thought was that he had gone to some of the fishermen to enlist their help, but by this time nearly the whole help, but by this time nearly the whole of the village was on the shore, and no-body had seen him. Each one looked at the other, and then at Will's father,

the storm was abating, or with the in-creased weight and the exhausted con-dition of the crew, Will's noble devoand an awful sileace fell upon all. The lightning had ceased, and one of have lived through such a sea, and has-tily raising a rude table, a heap of wood was piled upon it, saturated with oil,

As the flames shot out against the sky one of the women shrieked out : "Look there, there's a man swimming!"

Every eye was instantly turned to-ward the speaker, but, though fresh fag-gots were quickly piled on, none could see any object on the boiling ocean. Even the ill-fated vessel, which I had seen from the window, was nowhere in sight. The woman persisted in her statement, but every one agreed that her heated imagination must have suggested what she seemed to see. Besides, how could a man, or anything animated, live

in such a sea, much less swim?"
Suddenly, as if by enchantment, the clouds opened, and the pale, eerie light of the moon shone on the water, and at the same moment the little vessel appeared on the top of a huge wave, only to disappear beyond our view. But that glimpse, brief though it was, showed that our worst fears were about to be consummated, for a man's figure, clasping a woman tightly with one hand, and holding to the mast with the other was plainly seen. Then, as if one horror were not enough, the increasing light of the moon revealed the form of a man swimming with vigorous strokes toward the vessel. Every eye wa-strained toward the figure, and a sudden dip of the wave brought the swims mer on his back, and we saw with un-mistakable clearness the face of Will

Hayman! For a moment all seemed speechless, but the next, with one spontaneous effort, the men raised such a ringing cheer that the very roar of the elements was for a moment silenced. I never heard before or since such a cheer; it seemed to put new life into us, and the women with tears in their eyes gathered round Will's mother to soothe her tears. Will could be seen struggling manfully on, and the boat seemed drifting nearer and ne rer, but the distance between it and him was a terrible one.

The brave fishermen could endure it no longer. One hardy giant sprang to go home and get rested, and then I forward to the boat, and, in a voice shall only be too glad to see as many as hoarse with emotion, said: "Look here, mates, we ain't going to let Will Maybe we can make ourselves comfortdie like a dog. I'm going out to help able after all." him.. Who'll come?" Instantly a The crowd of dozen volunteers sprang forward, and though their weeping wives and sweet hearts well knew the tremendous perilincurred, not a word of dissuasion was uttered, so great was the effect of Will's

The boat was soon launched and plowing through the breakers, which threatened every moment to swamp it. I stood watching its slow and painful progress for a time, almost forgetting the swimmer, when all at once a tremendous shout arose : "Hurrah! he's got it, he's got it!" By an almost superhuman effort Will had reached the wreck, and a blue light shot from the voice, deepened with intense horror, crying out! "Oh Willy, Willy; save me, shot of the shore. A second light followed, and another, and another, and we could see Will fastening a rope round the two figures to the mast, and then, waving his hand in the air, he leaped again into the sea. We held our breath and directed our gaze to the boat, which, to our glad surprise, seemed only a few lengths from the swimmer, who could now be clearly seen by the light of the fast opening day. After a period of lingering suspense we

The Night Before Christmas.

I sprang from my bed to see what was snow, Gave a luster of mid-day to objects below; When, what to my wondering eyes sho

appear, But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny reindeer, With a little old driver, so lively and quic I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick. More rapid than eagles his coursers t

boat's side and drag in the exhausted man. In a moment a hawser was fastened to the rope which Will had brought with him, and one of the men quickly swung himself with it to the vessel. The interval seemed to us ages, but at last the fishing-boat was reached, the man and woman placed in the cradle, while the fisherman, with heroic daring, swung himself along, pushing his inanimate burden before him. The boat was reached, the rope cut, and the hardy seaman once more turned to en-

mysell.

A wink of his eye, and twist of his head,
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.
He spoke not a word, but went straight to his

work, And filled all the stockings—then turned with And laying his finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose.
He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a
whistle,
And away they all flew like the down of a Suffice it to say, that before the Christ-mas morning was fully begun the boat was being dragged up the beach by scores of willing hands, and in a few moments the boys had made hammooks of some blankets, and were carrying the apparently lifeless forms of Fred and Nelly Howard to the Two Fisher-

But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight, Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good

CHRISTMAS FACTS AND FANCIES.

Heap on more wood !—the wird is chill
But let it whistle as it will,
We'll keep our Christmas merry still.
It suits children to have Kris come
down the chimney, and it ought to soot

them, but the men gathered round Will, grasping his hand, and expressing in the heartiest manner their appreciation The first song ever composed in Eng-land was a Christmas carol in Anglo-

of his noble deed. And, strange to say, save a lameness caused by his long exposure, Will seemed to show but little trace of his unparalleled exertion. His face was flushed with triumph, and a ringing cheer was given by the men as they hoisted him, much against his will, on their shoulders, and bore him toward the house. Norman French. Country clergymen have made arrangements to deliver slippers by the thousand to wholesale shoe dealers in the city.

All glory to God,
Who laid by his rod,
To smile on the world through his Son,
And peace be on earth,
For this wonderful birth
Most wonderful conquests has won

mustn't see her, Will. She still lives, but the slightest excitement might kill her. I thank God I've got such a son. I shall never forget this night." Her feelings overcame her, and, clasping Will tightly round the neck, she sobbed like a child.

Never have I witnessed such a scene. His sisters clung to him, kissing him as though they never would be done; and his father came out of the little room where Fred was lying, and grasping Will's hand as if he would wring it off, said: "God bless you, my lad! We all thought you a bit foolhardy at first, but you've done a deed this night Happy, happy Christmas that can win us back to the delusions of our childish days; that can recall to the old man the pleasures of his youth; that can transport the sailor and the traveler, thousands of miles away, back to his own fireside and his quiet home.

About this time the young lady the country learns through a series for what you have done. I can't forget this is Christmas day. I thought a few hours ago it would be a bitter day for me, but, thanks to our Father in heaven, and to this brave lad, whom I'm proud to call my son, we've got our pair of number four Christmas slippers.

darling back. Now, I must ask you all to go home and get rested, and then I shall only be too glad to see as many as care to come in this room after tea. Maybe we can make ourselves comfortable after all."

The ground dispersed and the dotter was the midnight strain, and love the tidings that proclaim a Christman of the midnight strain, and love the tidings that proclaim a Christman of the midnight strain, and love the tidings that proclaim a Christman of the midnight strain, and love the tidings that proclaim a Christman of the merry of the mer able after all."

The crowd dispersed, and the doctor has a pronounced F ed and Nelly free from danger, we all retired to rest in a rich key-note, whose echo runs through all a rich key-note, whose echo runs through all

the music round; Let kindly voices ring beneath low-roof or palace dome,
For these alone are Christmas chimes that
bless a Christmas home. In former times the Christmas festiv

ities lasted until Twelfth Day. On day more—St. Distaff's—was allowe before resuming the daily toll. "Partly work, and partly play, Ye must on St. Distaff's day-"

At Candlemas, all the garlands were aken down in the churches and dwe ings, although they are now goes by, some quain, distondrops away, and is lost (Vaight) Thus many a splendid ceremony, many a royal feast, many an innocent sport, and many a wilder revel, which once unered in the merry Christmas has passed in oblivion. But never, we may writure to say, will Christmas itself, the birthday of Christ, cease to be remembered and joyfully celebrated. And as true rolls on, who can help wishing in his heart that each succeeding Christmas may be still merrier than the last?

Christmas is a golden milestone in the path of youth.

hardy seaman once more turned to en

men. All the women and girls followe

of his noble deed. And, strange to say

His first act was to ask to see Nelly

but Mrs. Hayman stopped him, saying, with big tears in her eyes: "You mustn't see her, Will. She still lives,

first, but you've done a deed this night that a king might be proud of." Then,

turning to the villagers who filled the room, he said: "Tha k you all, friends,

broad daylight.

My story is done. But before we

part I should like my readers to glance

with me at a letter which I received yesterday. It read thus:-

"Dear Sir:—I hope you will not think me bold in asking, but we should

be very g.ad if you could come and spend Christmas day with us this year.

You know that you will be right wel-come, and Nelly, who's the dearest wife

n earth, come. So, if you can away, please don't fail, "Yours, very uly, "WILL JAYMAN." on earth, joins me in asking you to come. So, if you can manage to get

Of course I consented; bachelor as I

am, an invitation like this was not to be despised, and I am looking forward to

my visit with great pleasure.

"PLEASAUNCE, Nov. 23, 1880.

A Happy New Year. All robed in othereal whiteness.
Glides in the first morn of the year, And round it a wonderful brightness
Is floating, in token of cheer.
The glad and the sorrowful-hearted

Alike look for blessings to be, Here it join the long ages departed, Submerged in eternity's sea. Already the year which has left us Already the year which has left us
Seems old as the Pyramids are.
It taught, or enriched, or bereft us,
Yet now hath receded as far,
As wholly hath lessened and taded
From vision, and melted from clasp,
As the years which Rome's purple o'ershade
When the world was a toy in her grasp.

Even yesterday past groweth hoary, Allied to traditions of eld, Partaking the gloom and the glory The cycles uncounted have held. And the new year, with breathless to-morrowith raptures and yearnings and sighs, With passionate blisses and sorrows, Has Eden's lost youth in our eyes.

Not new, like the coin golden glinting, Completed, that falls from the mint;
Nor new, like the broidery hinting
Of splendor in every fresh tint;
But new, like the ohild onward gazing
At life all before it unknown,
Like the prince when the vassals are raising Their banners in love round his th

No word of its words hath been spoken, No deed of its deeds hath been done, Nor the bread of its benisons broken, Nor its battles in bravery won. Still tarry its songs for the singers, Still slumber its manifold looms; Its bells are yet waiting the ringers, And vacant are standing its tombs.

Though it bear for us wisdom or folly, Though it bear for us wisdom or folly,
In silence it utters no sign;
Through our garlands of cedar and holly
There rustles no message divine,
Save this, that with loyal endeavor,
And heart of all enmity clear,
Who welcomes it gayly may ever
Look forth on a Happy New Year.

IN THE LIGHTHOUSE

A NEW YEAR'S STORY.

It was the last day in the old year, and yet it did not seem much like win-ter, though the maple trees were bare and the flowers all dead. The oaks

house at Fishing Point, was bru his weather-beaten coat (once black, now almost "sage-green") and giving parting directions to John Hudson, Junior—called "Jack" by his familiars.

Junior—called "Jack" by his familiars. with the oil-there isn't very much of it left now. There's that cord of wood in the yard; I guess you had better fill expect the inspector will be round bething taut and trim when he comes.

you. There's a rat, sure's I live: Blok it, Stub! S-s-sick it!"
"Now," said Jack, after an exciting chase, in which boy and dog had howled chase, in which boy and dog had howled and barked a most powerful duet, "now, Stub, we'll wash the breakfast -won't we?"

Stub looked a knowing assent, and sat gravely on a chair (which he first knocked the cat off), while Jack washed and dried the few dishes as deft as a girl. He had lived here as long as he could remember. His earliest recollection was looking at the bright re-flector upstairs, and seeing in it a sweet, loving face, with tender blue eyes near his own. His next memory of the face was in a coffin, pale and still, while his father held his hand, and the minister from the village talked in a low sad tone. But this was years ago, when Jack was (as he would inform you) "only a little fellow." Now, from his dignified age of ten years, he felt himself almost arrived at man's es-His father was formerly a sailor, but in consequence of losing some of pened to father?" his fingers in the icy regions of the North he had had to accept the position of lighthouse keeper—loving the sea too well to think for a moment of "The light! Oh! suppos sea too well to think for a moment of any work further inland. Such stories as no used to tell Jack in the winter days, when they would be cut off by snowdrifts from the rest of the world. Such thrilling adventures delighted the boy's ears in the long, solitary evenugs. Stories of the time on Labrador, then a tremendous whale capsized a poat's crew, and two men got drowned; the mutiny that once broke out on

Fair Betsy, and the sneaking Italwho got put in irons for starting it.
ack would go to bed with a "creepy"
and of feeling after these stories, but the morning light always drove away the shadows, and he would vow to himself never to let such ridiculous stories righten him again. "Stub, let's play phison Crusoe in the yard, now the disna are all washed; Jane (to the the, too, if you want," said F g the door. Stub accepted the carriation for himself and Jane by making a dart at her as she lay blinking near the stove, and rushing

her out doors with scant ceremony. "This shed here shall be the cave, and I'll wear father's fur cap and be Robinson Crusoe. You can be Friday, Stub. You are black, and you don't know much; and Jane shall sit up here on the woodpile and be the parrot. Now, Riday, you just stay there while go to get some sticks for the wood-box;" and Jack, making his work into play, worked with a will, while the But it was the lighthouse-keeper's

shore like merry children, and a little gray cloud, no bigger than a man's hand, rose slowly in the north and made

they look heavy, too, as if they were just bursting with the piles of snow-flakes hid away in them. My! won't it be jolly coasting though! It hasn't been half a winter yet—no snow, except a little that melted right away, and none of the ponds frozen over. I guess I had better see if my sled's all right;" and away Jack ran on this hollow pretense this delighful piece of self-delusion about the condition of the "Artful Dodger;" for had he not examined it daily for the past two months, and longed impatiently for a chance to use it? "My! there's a snow-flake, as sure's the world; and there's another, and another—swarms of 'emi" exclaimed happy Jack to his small but select audience of Stub and Jane. They were very amiable, and frisked and gamboled with as good an appearance of happy innocence as could be desired.

"It's getting dark very quickly; not four o'clock yet. I guess it's going to be a pretty big fall this time, and— whew! Stub, hear the wind; sounds squally, don't it?" Stub looked with an air of gravity

through the window, and seemed to be of the opinion that it certainly did appear threatening. "What keeps father so late, I wonder? If it keeps on getting dark as fast as this the light will have to be fixed

pretty soon. Thick and fast fell the snow-flakes hurrying, scurrying down, as if in haste to see which could first reach the earth. Every now and then a violent gust of

wind would come that romped and rioted among the dry leaves that still clung to some of the trees, and near at hand the waves surged and dashed and tossed themselves on the shore and against the

rocks.

"I know the lamp ought to be lit. I'd better go right away and do it," said Jack, addressing his companions. As they raised no objection, Jack started, materials in hand, and they followed—to see, no doubt, that everything was done fairly and squarely. Up the stairs went the trio, Stub ahead, snuffing and peering into all the dark corners; Jack, with the lamp and oil in his hand, following warily, and Jane, with a dignity snifable. warily, and Jane, with a dignity suitable for a lady of her years, bringing up the rear. Jack knew how to set to work. He watched his father daily, and had sometimes been allowed to help him; so, in a very short time, a friendly glow of light poured through the windows of the little tower, and laid bare the deep, treacherous rocks with blunt distinctness, while they strove vainly to hide beneath the stormy waves.
"I suppose we might as well get

supper ready now, against father comes," and Jack laid the cloth neatly and cut he bread with a will. Like a few rare and isolated boys of h s age, being hun-gry was Jack's normal condition, relieved at occasional intervals by being satisfied. Supper was waiting—father's tea was boiling and bubbling on the stove (Jack's limited knowledge of cooking had not taught him that tea should were covered thickly with leaves. True, when the wind blew, it rustled through brown, dry follage very different to the living tints of months back; but when you looked at the soft, muddy roads, or the clear blue sky, you scarcely realized that it was just past Christmas.

John Hudson, keeper of the lightoutside, stormy and blustering.

fire while I am gone. I must fix that chimney when I get back, or we'll be burnt out yet; and don't take to fooling getting his cannibalistic tendencies, getting his cannibalistic tendencies, made a hearty repast on dried beef and pieces of Jack's bread and butter.

"Seven o'clock, and father not home the wood boxes, and pick up a bit. I yet! Well, the light will burn an hour expect the inspector will be round be-fore long, and we want to have every-burn longer than that, but it's safest to look at it every four hours, and he's Get your dinner when you're ready; I sure to be here before it wants looking may be back in time, and I may not, to." So Jack got his favorite book from with all these errands to do in the village; but anyway, I shall be home this afternoon. Good-by, sonny," and he tramped briskly away through the Crusoe and Friday discover the arrival "Stub! Stub! here, sir. You must stay home with me. Father don't want you. There's a rat, sure's I live! Sick it Stub! See sick it!" his ideas began to stray and his eyes to blink and close. Stub had settled himself near for a little quiet meditation— nose between two black, outstretched

> forepaws, and gaze fixed on nothing in particular; while Jane, having first made her toilet for the night by careful washing and patting, dozed peacefully behind the stove. Tired Jack slept, and dreamed he was Crusoe, and had just built a beautiful sled, and he and Friday coasted down among the cannibals and sent them flying on all sides; and the old clock ticked, ticked, while out doors the snow blew in whirls, and a weary man fought hard against the wind, and sought to find again the beaten path to his home. Hour after hour passed, till the faithful hammer, striking ten, woke Jack in bewilderment at not finding himself in his own little bed.

"What's the matter?" he said, shaking himself and standing up. "Why, how late it is! What can have hap-Stub roused up, but could not answer

it's gone out! I must go up this minute to see, though it's awfully dark and the stove's gone out, too; but I can't stop to make it up now. Come, Stub, you can go with me if you want so," said diplomatic Jack, who sally didn't like to go through all those dark passages and stairways alone, but who wouldn't have had Stub know it for the

world. The house had got all cold, and Jack was hunting long about with shivering fingers before he could find proper oil for the light. At last, however, he found it, spilled a lot of it in pouring it out into the small can, and got the rest safely up the first flights of stairs, Stub following rather sleepily. The light tower was built high above the dwelling part of the house, and was reached by several steep flights of stairs, and finally by a ladder to a traploor. The roof and walls from about our feet f om the floor were glass, and the light, amp and reflector stood on a kind of standard about five feet high. All the beautiful brass plates were kept as brilliant as a mirror, and the windows were transparent and speckless as pure water. It was John Hudson's quized: luty to keep them in this condition. nspectors were always dropping in at unexpected times, and dismissal from the post would have followed any lack of proper attention to these details.

nished even beyond any laws and regu-

Jack reached the foot of the ladder, hand, rose slowly in the north and made another dash of color in the brilliant sky.

"Why, I declare, if it ain't going to snow! I wish father would hurry up. How quickly the clouds have come! and they look heavy, too, as if they were a little distance.

"What's the matter now? What ails "What's the matter now? What ails my foot?" said he, making several ineffectual attempts to stand. My! how it hurts!" and he held it in his hand while he bravely kept the tears back. "I guess I've sprained it, or something. What shall I do? I could manage to slide downstairs again and wait there till father comes. But then the light; that ought to be attended to. Oh! why ain't father back!" and he winced with pain as a sudden twinger. winced with pain as a sudden twinge came from his ankle.
"Oh, dear, it's tough work," said

he, as with the oil can slung across one arm he tried to climb the ladder with one foot and one knee. "I guess I'd better give it—pshaw! What's a fellow good for, anyway, if he can't put himself out of the way for other folks once in a while. How the tower shakes! What a night it is!"

The ascent was made at last and the light reached. "Just in time," said Jack; the oil's all but finished. I guess I didn't put as much in as father did," and he hopped around the narrow space and trimmed the lamp. It took him some time, and the boy's fingers were getting stiff with cold, while his ankle kept bringing a look of pain across his face.

"I shall freeze before I get it done," groaned Jack, putting his finger ends its bits possible to the state of the state

into his mouth to warm them. "My foot! my foot!" he shrieked, as forgetting it for an instant, he had stepped on it. Stub, in the room below, gave a howl of sympathy, and dashed frantially at the foot of the ladder to reach his comrade.

i "I can't stand it any longer! Oh, father! father!" and Jack fell unconscious on the floor. All was silent once again in the house; no voice save the old clock tick-ticking the seconds away—the last minutes of

the old year. Loud blew the wind in the face of a footsore man, bruised by an out-stretched branch, unseen—in the dark-ness, and striving, with unsteady steps, to reach his home. Out at sea, a noble vessel was battling with the storu, and happy hearts, unconscious of danger, were thinking of the glad meetings of the morrow—thinking of the dear faces that should welcome their return in the bright new year. Anxious hearts were beating in secret, as the pilot and the captain paced the deck uneasily, and peered through the storm, and—

'Questioned of the darkness, which was see and which was land. "Fishing Point light ought to show

to the nor'ard," said the captain. "I've been looking for it," returned the pilot, "but the snow is so blinding I've not been able to see it yet. There it is!" he exclaimed, after some minutes more of weary watching, and the snow cloud seemed parted by a warm gleam of light. And miles away, in stormrocked tower, lay a prostrate form, cold and motionless, while the joy bells of the glad new year were ringing in the hopes and triumphs of a thousand hearts.

Bravely the good ship Dauntless sailed into port on that morning, with John Hudson, keeper of the light- warm and cozy, cheery and homelike; colors flying and friendly cheers from the shore.

"A pretty narrow escape we had last night-so the pilot tells me," said a passenger to his friend, after a hearty greeting. "All but lost off Fishing Point. The light shone on the rocks just in time, or we should not have been here naw."

But Jack never knew anything of this. All he knew was that his father said, patting his head: "God bless you, sonny. If it hadn't been for the light shining through the darkness of that awful night, I shouldn't have been alive to take care of you now." And Jack thought this quite made up for the long, weary weeks of pain before he could use his lame foot again

Seasonable Thoughts.

We can get along without William Tell, we can spare Pocohontas, but we cannot dispense with Santa Claus, or Kris Kringle, or any other shape in which the Christmas spirit is embodied in the legends of different nations. Always the fancy of the children will hear the patter of his reindeer hoofs apon the roof as they lie waiting for Christmas dawn. Always will maternal and paternal love take delight in concealing its own plans and gifts under the fur-trimmed mantle of the merry and waggish Christmas sprite. Always will the warning of his wise discrin ination between good children and bad children have a wholesome effect in making boys and girls more gentle and less selfish. And yet it is surprising that the little child philosophers in our homes, so curious about other things, do not ask more puzzling questions about this. Why do they not want to know how Santa Claus makes his way down the narrow chimneys of our mod ern houses, or what his feelings are when he finds an air-tight stove at the bottom, or what becomes of him when there is no opening to the chimney short of the furnace? It is well that such questions are not agitated. The Santa Claus legend, to be sure, was meant for the broad chimneys and big fireplaces of the old time, but let the little people, none the less, go on pinning up their stockings wherever they can find the most convenient place and trust that they will be found and filled.

Calculating for Christmas.

A newsboy, with three or four mornng papers under his arm, called in a odward avenue jewelry store, yesteras day morning, and inquired:
"Kin you tell me the price of a

woman's gold watch—one of them kind winds up by twisting the knob?" "You mean a stem-winder?" answered the clerk; "you can get a pretty good

one for about \$60." "Jist sixty?"

"Yes. "And how much for a diamond pinne most as big as a bean?" " Well about \$300 "

"Three hundred'll take it, will they?" "Yes. "Thanks," said the boy, as he backed ut. He sat down with his back to the wall, figured with a pencil on the margin of one of his papers, and presently solilo

"Three hundred for the pin and sixty for the watch-that's three hundred and sixty. Them's my Santa Claus present for maw and paw, and I've got eighty-one cents on hand and two weeks more ay, worked with a will, while the pride to keep them bright and bur- papers!"—Detroit Free Press, CHRISTMAS IN SWEDEN.

J.1 (Yule) is the great Swedish festival, but it was a festival among the Scandinavians long before the birth of Scandinavians long before the birth of our Savior. They commenced their year with the longest night, for, according to them, night, darkness and cold preceded daylight and warmth. This longest night comes on the twenty-first of December. Odin, who lived about a hundred years before Christ, ordered that at this season a great sacrificial test should be observed, lasting during the period when the lengthening of the days were hardly perceptible. This festival, called Jul blot, continued, according to some, until the thir-This festival, called Jul blot, continued, according to some, until the thirteenth of January; according to others, until the close of the month. As there was only four days difference between Jul-mat and Christmas, when Christianity supplanted paganism, there was little difficulty in making the change of time, and the heathen, Jul, retaining its own name, and some of its ald observed. own name, and some of its old observances, was transformed into Christmas. Preparations for the coming Jul are made long beforehand. While the grain is unthrashed the choicest sheaves

are selected from which to brew the Jul ale and bake the Jul bread. On Julation, the day before Christmas, the cate must be let out from the cow-house and driven to water an hour earlier than common, and returned before noon; otherwise the next harvest will be late. The Swedish peasantry have the same antipathy to forests which characterizes our pioneers; all the trees are carefully cut down around their dwellings. But at Jul young pines, stripped of their bark and lower branches, are set out before the bouse; and as the sun goes down a sheaf of unthrashed grain is hoisted on a pole from the housetop for the benefit of the small birds, for all creatures must have reason to rejoice on the day when Christ came into the world. Meanwhile, within the doors, the women have been busy scouring and brightening the room and household utensils. The best garments of the carriers are the standard of the carriers and the standard of the carriers are the standard of the carriers and the standard of the carriers are the standard of the s family are got out and hung on the walls, for they think the Jul fire shining upon them will preserve them from the oth. The servants then proceed to the cattle-house. A mess has been prepared, composed of the same materials as the dinner of the family; a portion of this and a bundle of the choicest forage are given to each cow, with the words, "This is Julation, my little one." The horses, in addition to their forage have a drink of ale, in order that they may be mettlesome when going to matins the next morning. The poultry are regaled with a dish of Jul-grot, a kind of pudding of flour or rice and milk. The

very watchdog is unchained this night, for it would be a pity that the poor fel-low should be tied up and miserable, while every dog creature is free and happy. From the position of the cattle auguries are drawn as to the coming harvest. If they are laying down the crops will be abundant; if they are standing, they will be scanty. If possible, a few hairs from a newly killed hear are that into each will, this it is bear are put into each crib; this, it is supposed, will act as a preventive against the attacks of these ferocious animals during the ensuing year."

When night is fallen the great room is lighted up with pitch-pine torches and candles. Supper comes off at ten or eleven o'clock. A pig's head or at least some part of a swine—and a large loaf of bread, called Jul-boar, is always god Frey, the giver of light and sunshine, because it was said that this animal, by turning up the soil with its tusks, taught man to plow. All the family coin and silver cups and man to plow the soil with its family coin and silver cups and man to plow. family coin and silver cups and spoons are placed on the table, for it is held that the light of the Jul-fire will cause them to be lucky and increase.

The supper concludes with a psalm, in which all the company join. A tankard of ale is left on the table for the deectation of celestial visitants; this is called "Angla ol," angel's ale. A plate of stir-a-bout, a little tobacco, and some articles of diminutive clothing are left here and there for the "Tente-Gubbe," or little old man of the house, a sort of seen him describe him as clothed in gray home-spun, with a red night-cap and clumsy shoes. His special office is to watch around the house and cattle-sheds, and see that everything is kept clean and tidy, and that the animals are well cared for. So long as he remains with the family all goes well; but if he be displeased, and betakes himself elsewhere, misfortune is sure to follow.

Christmas Thoughts.

Numerous indeed are the hearts to which Christmas brings a brief season of happiness and enjoyment. How many families, whose members have been dispersed and scattered far and wide in the restless struggle of life, are then reunited, and meet once again in that happy state of companionship and mutual good-will which is a source of such pure and unalloyed delight, and one so incompatible with the cares and orrows of the world, that the religious belief of the most civilized nations, and the rude traditions of the roughest savages, alike number it among the first joys of a future condition of existence, provided for the blest and happy! How many old recollections, and how many dormant sympathies does Christmas ime awaken?

We write these words now, many miles distant from the spot at which, year after year, we met on that day a merry and joyous circle. Many of the hearts that throbbed so gayly then have ceased to beat; many of the looks that have shone so brightly then have ceased to glow; the hands we grasped have grown cold; the eyes we sought have hid their luster in the grave; and yet the old house, the room, the merry voices and smiling faces, the jest, the laugh, the most minute and trivial circumstances connected with those happy meetings crowd upon our mind at each recurrence of the season, as if the last as semblage had been but yesterday! Happy, happy Christmas, that wins us back to the delusion of our childish days; that can recall to the old man the pleasures of his youth; than can transport the sailor and the traveler, thousands of miles away, back to his own fireside and his quiet home.—Charles Dickens.

The children of poverty usually receive their Christmas boxes in the head, but they do not derive much mental pleasure from them.

A fellow told a young lady he would like a pair of wristlets for a Christmas present. Next day he was arrested for theft, and she sent him a pair of hand-

The Closing Your. Faster than petals fall on windy days From ruined roses,
Hope after hope falls flattering, and decays,
Ere the year closes.

For little hopes, that open but to die, And little pleasures, Divide the long, sad year, that labors by,

Yea, let them go! our day lived hopes are no The life we cherish;
Love lives, till disappointments are forgot
And sorrows perish.

On withered boughs, where still the old leaf olings, New leaves come never; And in the heart, where hope hangs inded, springs No new endeavor.

THE ANTIQUE DESK.

A NEW YEAR'S STORY. It was the last week of the year, when, one morning, I read aloud this

WANTED-To buy, an antique desk. A liberal price will be paid for one satis-y in every respect. "Oh, Lucile !" I cried, "this is your

chance. You can now retrieve your fallen fortunes," And I tossed the newspaper across the breakfast-table. Lucile read the advertisement again, and looked over, with a sigh, to where, between the windows, an old desk, such as the newspaper described, occupied the post of honor.

"I should feel as if I were selling my grandma's bones," she said, decisively.
"Well, I don't believe your grandmother," I began, "would blame you, if

she knew-Here Ruth stopped me with a look and began telling something that had happened in the store that day. Ruth was saleslady in the cloak department in one of our great city establishments. I taught school, and Lucile had been the French instructor in a young ladies' academy. We kept house together, until quite recently, in two rooms in the third story of a New York house. We had our own furniture, and cooked our own meals over a little gas stove. To girls who had been motherless from childhood, and to whom the word "home" was a word with no meaning, such a life was very pleasant.

Lucile was a dark-eyed, graceful French girl, who had once seen better days, though she was quite reticent as

French girl, who had once seen better days, though she was quite reticent, except to us, about it. She was so innocent and beautiful that Ruth and I loved and guarded her as if she had been our younger sister. Ruth was sturdy, independent, and New England born, and so true-hearted and brave, that we looked up to her in everything, and felt safe under her protection. As for me, I was Mollie, born in the sunny South, willful, high tempered, but capable of willful, high tempered, but capable of deep feeling, they said. The war had ruined the fortunes of my family, and my life had been full of hardships ever

I do not think three girls could have been more railike. And yet we led a very tranquil, happy life, until a month or two before the evening of which I write, when a cloud had appeared on

our horizon.

That night Lucile came home flushed and indignant. It took but little questioning to discover the cause.

The assistant principal of the school had long annoyed Lucile with his attentions, and her studied avoidance of him placed on the table. This is an undid not seem to make any difference. doubted relic of heathen times; for the

"Never mind," said Ruth, encouragingly, "you need a rest, and Mollie and I need a housekeeper. This is your home, you know."

The girl's dark eyes filled with tears.
"You are very kind," she sobbed out.
'But, ah! it is this that makes me think of the old days in France, when grandmamma was slive. We lived in the country, you know, and in such a beautiful little chateau. And the neighbors were so kind, especially those friendly elf, upon whose good-will much depends. He is supposed to have the form of a little old man not larger than a child. The few who profess to have they gave. But then grandma lost her fortune; and she was too proud to stay where she was known, and she came out to America and died. You know the rest. Oh, you are very kind."

We tried, after this, to get her an other situation, but were not successful. Finally, I found two of my scholars who wanted to take French lessons, and

this kept up her hopes.

That night, after I showed Lucile the advertisement, she left the table and went to the desk, passing her hand lovingly over it. It was a quaint, oldfashioned thing, inlaid with different kinds of wood, in the style of the early part of the last century. It had be-longed to Lucile's grandmother, and to the family before, and was the only relic she possessed of her happy childhood in France.

I knew what her feelings were when suggested the idea of selling it, but I knew still better that she needed the money sorely. There was an unpaid doctor's bill that haunted her, and which Ruth and I dare not pay, because is usually very well known to them of her pride.

The next night was New Year's eve, and when Ruth and I came home the desk was gone. There were traces of tears on Lucile's cheeks, but she made laden Christmas tree. we felt all the evening as if there had been a funeral in our little home. The next day Lucile told us about it.

It seemed that some wealthy gentleman was furnishing his house, in the antique style, and had commissioned his agent to find him a desk. The agent came, and looked at it; was delighted, as well he might be; paid a large sum, and had it carried away. That evening Lucile sat playing low, soft airs on the little upright plane

we had rented, when a rap on the door startled us. I rose to open it. A tall, handsome young man, with an unmistakable foreign air, stood there. He bowed with high-bred grace, and inquired, with a slight accent, for the young lady who had sold an antique writing-desk the day before. Lucile, who had started at the sound

of the voice, came forward. Her dark eyes shone; the color flushed into the cheeks. "Henri!" she cried. She had extended her hand, but drew it back instantly, and stood there blushing and

trembling.

The gentleman started, gazed eagerly at her, and then clasped her hands in both of his.

"Lucile! Lucile!" he cried. "Mon Dieu, what a pleasure!" His eyes shone with delight as he spoke. Lucile, after a moment, turned to us. "Oh, girls, only think," she said, "it is Henri, my old playmate. You re-

member my telling you of the boy who was so kind to me. Often and often we children played in the library, where the dark old desk stood. Many an hour we have spent puzzling our heads over its quaint inlaid ornaments. Ah!

the dear old days-" She broke down. She could speak no more. The memory of those old days, and of all her troubles since she had been left alone in the world, overpowered her. She turned away her head to hide her emotion. Monsieur Lamont pressed her hand, bowed over it, and kissed it in his foreign fashion. Then, looking around at the head of the same transfer of the same tran looking around at us, he told us the rest of the story. How he had come to this country for a few years to establish how his mother had come with him; how he had purchased and fitted up a house to suit her fancies; how, when his agent had brought him the desk, his mother and he were struck with the resemblance it bore to the one they had

seen so often in France. "We were both sure it was the same." he said; there could not be two, and behold! I am here."

Madame Lamont came, too, the next day. We were not so blind but we could see the little romance which was unfolding under our eyes and we re-

unfolding under our eyes, and we re-joiced that such a happy future was to be the fate of our dear girl. Never did the course of love run

smoother. The mother and son were of one mind, and hurried matters as fast as possible. So it was not many months before

In a few years they are to go back to France, and, though we shall miss Lucile, we shall know she is living, once more, in the dear old chateau, which her husband, meantime, has purchased. So the New Year's eve that opened so sadly ended in a happy New Year.

Christmas Among the Bretons. Bretons will work on Sunday sooner than on a fete day, which they keep most sacredly, and artists who have lived for years among them are very careful not to work (in sight of a Breton) on such days, if he would have their good-will. Bretons are more scrupulous, too, in their observance of the Sabbath than the French ance of the Sabbath than the French are, and all kinds of work are generally abandoned. The fetes of Noel and le Jour de l'An are kept somewhat after our manner. Christmas is for merry-making; not in the sense of an English Christmas—dinners are a little better than usual, and thirsty peasants are supposed to be hospitably received by landlords and landladies. A cheap and weak mixture is provided especially for weak mixture is provided especially for them, probably to prevent intoxication. But the Breton, in revenge for such par-simony, sheers away to the nearest au-berge by night to join his jovial com-rades, every one of whom staggers in a bee line homeward before twelve o'clock

-for at that hour come the hobgoblins. After the Christmas dinner is over there is served a Christmas cake upon a large platter. A bean is cooked in the cake, and the girl who takes the slice in which it is contained is dubbed queen; she has the right to choose from the company whomever she will for king, who comes and sits beside her. To this royal pair the rest do homage and obeisance; throughout the evening their word is law and their commands inviolable, "Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown," howmust furnish his queen and his subjects with whatever is called for, to be paid for out of his royal exchequer. If this makes his royal majesty squirm, there is yet one pleasure in store for him-that of kissing the queen.

Santa Claus.

The history of Santa Claus-a curious mixture of truth and fable-goes far back into the ancient time. turies ago a child was born in Asia Minor who received the name of Nicholas. His parents were wealthy and of high rank, and, desiring to express their gratitude to God for the birth of their son, they resolved to educate him for the Christian priesthood. The child was sober and thoughtful, and while yet young both his parents died, and he inherited their great wealth. He considered the riches a sacred trust : he fed the hungry, he clothed the destitute and performed all kinds of good deeds as secretly as possible. As a priest he was greatly beloved; as a bishop he continued his benevolence; after his death the chursh canonized him, and he became one of the greatest of patron saints, being revered as the helper of the poor, the protector of the weak, and as the especial patron saint of little children, who were taught to believe that their good gifts came from him. Saint Nicholas was the name given him by the monks, and this was familiarly changed to Santa Nic'laus, and finally clipped down to Santa 'Claus, who is still represented as retaining his old habits of secret benevolence and coming down the chimney at nights laden with Christmas presents for children. A pleasant fiction it is to them, under the cover of which that charming secreey concerning the donors of gifts is kept up, though little eyes and ears and minds are keen, and Santa Claus as a much more modern personage than old St. Nicholas. But the children enjoy the harmless pretense, the mysterious filling of stockings, and the heavily

Always New.

Christmas never grows old. beautiful legends clustering around the name are fresh to young ears, and the old listen as to familiar tales that grow more charming with every recital. Each year as Christmas tide comes near we realize how curiously blended are old memories and youthful feelings. They do not interfere with each other, and the union is very beautiful. Christmas day, now generally regarded as the conventional, not the true, date of the birth of Christ, was celebrated in very early times, although the origin of the special festivities of the day is obscure. But its celebration seems to spring from a spontaneous and wide spread desire to con memorate an event so important. Many popular Christmas customs doubtless had their source in an age prior to the birth of Christ-a fact which will make some of them more easily understood. But kindliness, generous charity, and grateful joy are the feelings which the very name of Christmas inspires.

"Christmas saw old wrongs forgiven, Friends long parted reconciled." "Many a one that night was merry Who had toiled through all the year.

"Joy and plenty in the cottage.
Peace and feastings in the hal'
And the voices of the children
Ringing clear above it all."

THE NEW YEAR AND THE OLD.

"The King of light, father of aged Time, Hath brought about that day, which is the To the slow gliding months, when every day

To the slow gliding months, when every day.
Wears symptoms of a sober joility,
And every hand is ready to present
Some service in a real compliment.
Be tails day frugal, and none spare his friend
Some gift, to show his love finds not an end
With the deceased year."

As day succeeds night, and one month another, so does year follow year. Time never halts on his solemn march, while it becomes a part of eternity it-self. Like to the year, the human race

self. Like to the year, the human race is also ever coming and disappearing, just as the phœnix is said to be reproduced out of its own ashes.

That the new year should begin with January, or "chilly month," as the Hollanders call it, is not inappropriate, so far, at least, as the northern hemisphere is concerned, inasmuch as being close when the winter solution the result in t close upon the winter solstice, the year is made to represent a regular and harmonious series of changes. It was Numa who decreed that the new year should open with January, and who ad-ded two additional months to the calender. The first month was aptly denominated Januarius, in honor of Janus, the deity who was considered to preside over doors. The ancient Jewish year commenced on the 25th of March, and for a long time the Christian nations reckoned their new year from the same date. It was not until 1757 that the first of January begame the initial day first of January became the initial day

Ruth and I were alone, and Lucile was mistress of a beautiful home.

Brown Sayor maganitors the overline the opening the constant of the legal and the popular year. By our Saxon progenitors the opening month of the year was termed "Wolfmonat," or Wolf-month. This arose from menat," or Wolf-month. This arose from the circumstance that people were more likely to be eaten by wolves at that period than during the other sections of the year, because of the difficulty of procuring food, owing to the great severity of the season.

In the ancient Roman mythology, Janus and Jana were held in special honor. Their appelations are derived from dies, light, or day, an appropriate

from dies, light, or day, an appropriate symbol of the opening year. Their original form was that of Diana, subseoriginal form was that of Diana, subsequently corrupted into the titles mentioned. Originally special rites were employed in the worship of Jana and her brother Janus; but such became finally merged into a common religious ceremony. It is supposed that the idea of Janus was borrowed from the Tuscans, Janus was borrowed from the Tuscans, among whom a similar deity was worshiped from a very early period, and that he was regarded as presiding over the beginning of things.

Janus was highly significant. Two faces were given to this diety. The one looked forward, the other backward, the state of the stat

thereby implying that the god stood b tween the Old Year and the New:

"Tis he! the two far'd Janus comes in view Wild hyacinths his robe adorn, And snow drops, rivals of the morn;
He spurns the gost aside,
Butsmiles upon the new

But smiles upon the new Emerging year with pride; And now unlocks, with agate key, The ruby gates of orient day." How tender and pathetically Milton refers to his great physical deprivation in the Third Book of "Paradise Lost." He says:

"Thus with the year Seasons return, but not to me returns
Day, or the sweet approach of even or moon
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
Or flocks, or berbs, or human face divine." The first month of the year is thus allegorized.

"Le, my fair! the morning lazy, Reeps abroad from yonder hill; Phosbus rises, red and hazy;

Frost has stopped the vidage mill. Not living and inanimate beings alone are calculated to speak to our eyes and ears, addressing "social reason's inner sense with inarticulate language." The season's also, particularly the departing year, and the advent of the new, are specially calculated to "point a moral" for man's behest. Conjointly, they address his reason, imagination and feelings, and it should be with results similar to those so exquisitely described by Woodsworth:

" For the man Who, in this spirit, communes with the forms Of nature, who, with understanding heart, Doth know and love such objects as excite No morbid passions, no disquietude,
No wengeance, and no hatred, heeds must feel
The joy of the pure principle of love
So deeply, that unsatisfied with aught
Less pure and exquisite, he cannot choose
But seek for objects of a kindred love
In fellow patters and a hisdred love In fellow nature, and a kindred joy.

of each recurrent year serves as garlands for the memory of those who have the skill to twine them: "Years may roll on, and manhood's brow go

The season of the opening and closing

And life's dull winter spread it's dark'ning pall O'er cherish'd hopes; yet Time cannot with-A precious boon which mem'ry gives

all;—
Fond recollection, when the tale is told Which forms the record of Life's festival, Recalls the pleasure of Youth's opening scene And Age seems young—rememb'ring what hath been."

The year stands to us in a particula relation, while the regular advance o time but adumbrates the progress an completion of human life. It has bee pertinently observed in illustration of this sentiment that "an old man is full of years." "His years have been few," is the expression we use regarding one who had died in youth. The anniversary of an event makes an appeal to our feelings. Moreover, we also speak of the history of a nation as its annalsthe transactions of its succession of years. There must have been a sense of time from a very early period in the history of humanity, for even the simplest and rudest people would be sensible of "the season's difference," and of the cycle which the seasons formed, and would soon begin, by observations of the rising of the stars, to ascertain roughly the space of time which cycle occupies. Thus, in the words of the Psalmist, "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth forth knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. lines have gone forth through all the earth, and their words to the end of the

world. New Year's day was formerly distinguished by a round of divers gifts and peculiar amusements. With regard to the former, we find that in 1604 James I. received a gift from Prince Henry, but then ten of a poem in Latin verses. were commonly forwarded presents. The prodigious g that at one period obtaine legan to decline in 1605. s lantern," observ

writer, "was evidently moment when the lar in the frame of Qr curious as a rel

Song of + eral infatu expects C