

THE BRITISH WORKWOMAN.



now in her white dress and lace ribbons, and the light streaming on her golden hair.

"Fidelity," she said, "you must come near, for my voice is not very strong. This is the strongest way in which you can be made to come brought to know each other. I had a feeling when I saw you in the Court that they think you were fearless and without fear. And little did I think that those friends would be my dear old cousin, Margaret, and her husband, Adam Lee. They are both very kind, and I am glad, but you are one of great use to them, but they may be taken down, you, and you ought to have some sense." The woman would be the lawyer for you, and so would a carpenter. It must be a trade that you could follow without too much labour. How would you like to be a tailor? These delicate hands of yours look as if they might learn to cut and sew and use a machine. If you think you would like it, I know a man in Rotherham, not far from Gallows Acre Lane, where you could go daily to learn. My father has often gone to leave in your way, and you can still see with Margaret. For you are to call her home home. Your aunt did not seem to wish to be responsible for you, and, indeed, you ought to be as much as we can expect her to take care of."

"Philip," Miss Kitchener said, "I am afraid you have never learned much about God, and Miss Lee, whose you stepfather stood over me, who she stopped, and put her hand to her face, 'I can't,' she said, 'ever speak of that moment without a pain.' It is wonderful." What she stood over me with the pearl I prayed for him that he might not hurt me, as well as for myself. I pray for him still, and when you talk with fourteen years you will know it. He may live to miss out of prison a better man. Tell your aunt and I must never forget to pray for him, and that prayer will give you better feelings about him in ten days of his life of us."

The praying of herself with another, the beautiful high noon July, only one month ago, a fadon, a man of law and strong—almost very wonderful. I believe the thought of that prayer, being for prayer, being for prayer, some such words which were to overwhelm me, and I always prayed as she told me. She gave me the pearl, with the words which she told me. She said she had a yellow, yellow with skin, and I had not the spirit which put that prayer into words, now, and it was answered.

Margaret Lee and I passed home in the twilight, Cherry asleep on my knee, and Margaret arguing well in his greatest sleep.

"My dear young lady is to be married," she said, if her health is strong enough, but, "Oh, I fear the risk is not long for this world." The gentleman has known her for many years, ever since she was quite a little girl, and he is worthy of her, and she is saying a good deal.

Margaret asked me how I felt the notion of being a tailor, and told me as I should be able to make Adam the best suit for Sunday, and keep my self in clothes.

Adam sat as before we got to Gallows Acre Lane. He thought we were late, and he was getting anxious. "Where is the man who is so short, listening to all that Margaret had to tell him of her suit at Gallows Acre, and I believe Cherry has me, he carried her in the hall."

"I'm thinking," he said, "of getting a bit of ground at the back of our place and turning it into a garden for vegetables." For I am sure you are likely to stay in those parts. There's a plan now for two new squares, and a church, and my master has got the contracts. He is to be in my knowledge. Meg, she has just no one, and you're both, and my wages are nearly a hard one.

"I'm so glad," Margaret said, "and there is still going to be a talk, so we shall be well off, indeed!"

"Ah, God is good to us!" Adam said, reverently, "and He does give His blessing."

"And that's what I want," Margaret said in a low voice, as the door stopped before the gate of their happy home.

(To be continued.)

The Little Outcast.

The black shadows of mist and fog—
Of human wretchedness and sin,
Looked down and unrepentant without,
But yet more dreadful within.

The broken windows, dark with dirt,
With intervals garnished wet with rain,
Were choked to stay the wild's chill blast
That swept upon the window pane.

Town Christmas days, and more at hand
The snows were dark and with Yule-side cheer;
And only needed the passing throngs,
But all was gloom and sadness here,
As brightly, one dwelling I approached,
And it was dreary and forbidding;
Its rooms were empty and the door
Lay rudely from its hinges torn.

I looked for a white-robed nurse,
And wondered what she had been
A ruin now it was—and I
Was strangely moved to enter in.
I climbed the narrow, flicking stairs
By light of a flickering street lamp glare;
But all within was dark and dull—
Was wall and silent as the grave.

Still higher in the dark I crept,
A street, strange whisper a cold sea on,
Till I had reached the topmost stair,
And all the flickering light was gone;
I groped up in the gloomy place,
Around the wretched, desolate,
A wooden ladder met my touch.

This led me south the roof of slate;
The place showed a view of the street;
That time more stark a better cry,
That showed me where a child had lain
Upon a heap of shavings lay.

This Christmas eve when first I heard his cry,
And when I saw the child with my eye,
To see the welcome Yule-side cheer—
The bully and the Christmas tree—
When he sat down and with play,
Slept, sweetly in their snowy bed,
With an innocent, than the thought
Of coming poor to fill their heads.

This time, when I saw and then,
Crowded on his bed of shavings old,
With no more covering than snow,
To drive away the scolding cold,
With meekness, his face was stained;
His face was pined with pain and we;
I did but touch him yet he came,
As if beneath a threatened blow.

"Why come you to this dreary place,
My little lad, this Christmas eve,
And standing in lambed and flickered voice,
The trembling courage replied,
"Oh, hush! please hush, don't speak my head,
Or he will find out where I'm hid,
He's looking for me now, I know it,
He'll find me, please—don't tell!"

"Who was that poor boy yesterday,
And who is seeking for you now?
I have seen none that you should be
Seeking for, my little boy."

"One friend had he and more,
"My father had me, sir," he said,
"But please don't tell him, else he'll find
His father, but he'll find me!"

"And whose was that mother my poor boy?
Why has she left you then?" I said,
"She would not leave me, sir," he sobbed,
"But please don't tell him, else he'll find
His father, but he'll find me!"

"Who did your father but get you
Not any more of mercy, did?
"My father, please sir, he was drunk,
And beat me, and he would not let me go."

"I used to be a street child once,
And then I got on pretty well,
Till I went to a mistress school,
And then I was a street child once,
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And then I was a street child once,

"Oh, thank you, sir, but 'twas you go
I'd like to sing a little hymn?"
And then more those strange old
Among the shadows weird and dim,

He sang to work and falling tears,
That seemed to sweep through the gloom,
The little hymn that he had learned
And sung within the margin room.

"O gentle Jesus meek and mild,
Look upon this little one,
Pity my simplicity,
Suffer me to come to Thee,
"With words I to Thee he brought
Gushings and forth it was,
In the kingdom of Thy grace
"Give a little child a home."

Indeed, indeed, indeed, indeed,
He got his little hymn all sung,
For well he knew he soon would be
Within the Palace of the King.

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New Year's Thoughts.

THE RAT in that rapping at the door,
It's a stranger? 'Tis he, let him in!
"Mark you, I've been a while
"You have no chance, I am coming
whenever. Coming to you, a new
friend on a long, long, long, long, long
months, say you as please. If well, you will
not find anything on my short life which has not
your, if I'd you will let me, I will be
pardon ever to repair the injury, let I depart on
the 31st December, 1896, never more to return."
Strange visitor, sitting on my door,
"Your words have not a thinking that when a
guest comes on a visit we are what in my phre-
nastic attention, for you are what in my phre-
nastic; why do you not see me in the
company to this guest, who will be a good friend
to us, and who will believe on us many valuable

George J. Wynn

gifts, and it will be our own fault alone if we make bad use of these gifts? Let us resolve to make a fresh start in this New Year, resolve to overcome again our fault or failing, to commence, if only one good practice.

General rules are well-nigh useless, for the lives and habits of men and women are so various in this busy world, but there are very many who, with a little self-denial, could rise half-an-hour earlier and devote the time to learning a few verses of the Bible. By this means many a character would be learned by the end of the year. And oh! the deep typical-sad happiness of having our loving Saviour's words and things done away in our minds, precious treasures always in our possession, priceless jewels.

Spent this New Year well; time flies quickly; let us take good heed what we make of it, the fleeting moments and hours can never be recalled. They will re-visit us with us all our lives, a bitter memory.

"The night cometh when no man can work." If however every man being to make the best use of the time given him; think of the gift of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will be His.

He was ever going about doing good, healing the broken-hearted, healing the sick, doing acts of love and mercy. Follow humbly in the blessed Master's footsteps.

Some of the most unhappy and miserable there are those spent on self, with no thought, or aim beyond self. Love of self engrosses him, lives almost unknown or unnoticed, but after a time it takes him in and needs to be rooted out.

Those who are conscious of a too great love of self, root it out this New Year. His is a rank weed, grows it not, sow in its stead the sweet flower of love for others.

In this great world there are always vast multitudes at hand to help and help the poorest, the most unlearned can do something for a brother or sister's good. A clasp of the hand, a smile, a kindly word, do more a hundred times than silver or gold. Watch carefully in this coming year for opportunities of doing good, and be sure in the end you will reap a goodly harvest.

G. B.

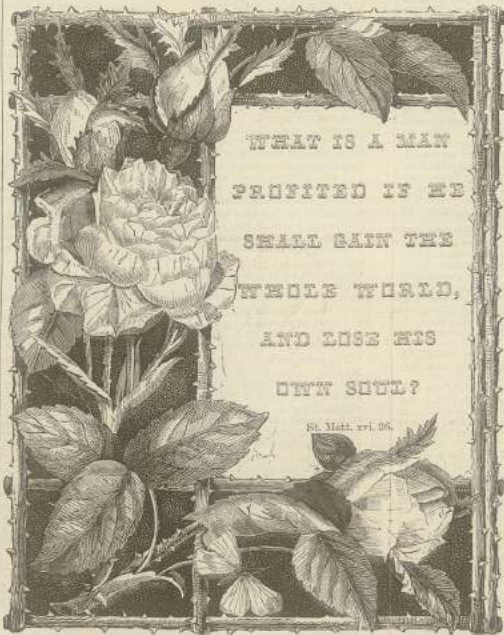
Thoughts on the Life of St. Peter.

I.

THE life of a good man must be a good study. Many have learnt more from men than from books—young women as well as young men should read good biography. The best biography, however, and the best life. And why are they the best? They are the best because they are written by the Best Hand.

They are the best because they are written by One who knew the inside of man as well as the outside. In the Bible the *facts* of men and women are not passed over. In the histories of their lives the evil things are written down as clearly as the good things. We shall find that this is so in the history of St. Peter. This warm-hearted, impulsive man, acting rashly often, less confident in himself, too weak to stand alone, and then, at length, so loving for Christ, until he died for His Name's sake; it has been said of him, "he is the man of all others among the apostles whom one would choose for a friend." Shall we think so as we simply read, step by step, his life story? St. Peter's birth into the world is not recorded. There is given to us, however, the account of another birthday—the birthday of the soul.

Christ. "What a wonderful little time must that have been! What words of love, what words of power those two men must have heard that day! It was their first opportunity, and they seized it, and used it all at once. How many opportunities we have had! Have we used them, or have we let them slip? Let us remember, when we sit at home, one day to give account for every opportunity. If a man has had but one call to come to Christ, he must answer for the way in which he has either listened or refused to listen to that call. How comes it to pass that God gives men and women so many calls which seem to be in vain? The reason is this—the heart, the ears, the eyes, are all wrong (as Matt. xiii. 14, 15), and the soul, and mind, and soul in soul do not hear the voice of Christ. John's two disciples are a beautiful instance of an *opened ear*, and the result "they loved him speak, and they followed Jesus" (John i. 37). Andrew was one of these men, and he had a brother, Simon Peter. Andrew had his brother in his heart very quickly after that visit to our Lord. Peter came to his mind at once. It was in that there was a beautiful brotherly friendship between the two men, and now Andrew had found a treasure and he would keep it to himself, Peter must share it. He could not but speak for himself, and Andrew could say, "I have found the Messiah." There was a great blessing certainly here—it was not we think, or we kept, God's love to us. It was such language as John knew to use in his Epistle. However good he use the little words "we know," words of unswerving faith, words of unshakable trust, and John could say, "that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you." These are the true steps to be trod by any one who seeks to win another soul to Christ. We must know for ourselves the power of the blessing that we wish another to share with us. Suppose you were laid upon a sick bed and a friend should come in to bring you some remedy in his hand and say to you, "I have tried this myself; I have been sick as you are, but I need this remedy and I am cured; would not that be a strong recommendation to you? would you not have far more confidence in trying that remedy than if it all you knew about it was that Andrew's words tell Peter of what he had himself found? He had found Christ. The very word "found" implies, perhaps, that he had been seeking—seeking for Christ. Those who seek do find (Eph. xiii. 13). Some seek for a long time and others are only seeking a short time before they find. Some seem to take one quick step to Christ, while others have to take many slow and painful steps before they find Him; but the result will be—*was it worth it?*—God is true, the same God for every seeking soul. Simon or later there will be but one testimony—that of Andrew—"we have found Him." When any man can say that he has found Him, and that he is the merchantman who has become possessed of "one pearl of great price." You will not need



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AGGIE'S WISH.—"IT IS HARD TO SAY WHO WAS HAPPIER."—See page 22

patient forgiveness, that shall be adequate return for all they owe to me in childhood?"

"Was not my Fairweather poor Aggie's out of his arms on the grounds with her daughter Fritz's (Fritz was the name of Florida's little dog), how ever caught the well-known mind of Fritz's approval?"

"Oh, do, papa, cease and look at him," she said, eagerly, and snatching her father's hand, she dragged him up the bank to look over the wall.

"Look at him, papa, cease and look at him," she said, eagerly, and snatching her father's hand, she dragged him up the bank to look over the wall.

"He looks like a little pig," he said, laughing, "and very miserable."

"Oh, papa!" exclaimed Aggie, shocked.

"Dear me!" with what different feelings she gazed at her own dog! Inquiring now she looked to walk on and tell her friend of papa's promise, but she was afraid Florida would growl at her, and it would be so difficult to explain all about it, in very bad tones over the garden wall, so she would wait till the morning and get nurse to take her down the lane to meet Florida, and then she would tell her everything.

"Miss Aggie, Miss Aggie!" called nurse from the other side of the shrubs, "it's past bedtime."

"Oh! how provoking!" remarked Miss Aggie, in an undertone, with a gasp, and she only half-hastily stood there watching Fritz for another hour.

"I'll carry you up to bed, little woman," said nurse, condescendingly.

"Do central here to the nursery, and stand low on her bed. "Good night, dearest old papaw," she said, hobbling her hands tightly clasped round his neck.

"Good night, my precious child," he answered. "Good God how art, dismounting himself from her embrace, he said, "I shall give you a little Fritz of my own on my next birthday."

Nurse shook her head and looked doubtful.

"I am sorry, Nannie," she reiterated, "but I shan't tell him. I shall tell him all his wretched tales. I tell him, Nannie."

"Still nurse shook her head, not that she doubted papa's intention, but only what mamma would say and think."

"Aren't you glad, Nannie?" Aggie asked in a childlike tone of disappointment. "I wish mamma had some news from Mrs. Myerson's that I might tell her."

"But mamma did not come in to give her 'good night's kiss' till Aggie was sound asleep. "I'll call him Mustard, Nannie, like Uncle Charles's dog," had been the child's last waking words.

After all it was papa who first broke the news to mamma.

"I've promised Aggie a pet dog on her birthday," he said, "so I shall give up all thought of that picture. I had no idea her heart was so set upon it."

"O, Edward!" exclaimed Mrs. Fairweather, with assembled eyes and a deep sigh.

"Well, my love! haven't I done right?" he asked, proudly.

"I'm afraid not," she replied quite solemnly.

"I ought never to have thought of that picture," he went on in explanation, "and the money will be better spent in making the child happy."

"Isn't it so much the picture," the sympathetic wife answered with a loving smile, for she now knew to appreciate the child's happiness. "But I'm afraid Aggie ought not to have the dog."

"And then she had her husband's whole story, how determinedly Aggie had taken for it and how she, the mother, had lost the knowledge of the longing from him, that he might not be tempted to rob the child of this opportunity of a victory over himself."

"Well, it's too late now, my love," he said, when he had heard his wife to the end, "I've given her my promise, and she's got a shrewd way upon it. Whatever happens, her father's promise must stand."

"Of course, of course," continued Mrs. Fairweather, and then she closed her eyes to think and pray instead of to sleep. There was one she knew, who could overrule everything for good, but she had to turn, and in it she trusted.

"I'm so glad," said July and August came and went, and, at last, after a long and anxious season to Aggie, September broke. It wanted

but a fortnight to the birthday. Already all the story of mamma had gone. "There had been nothing but wet paths and dripping rain and the leafless trees and faded the money going in the thick cold atmosphere. (It was an unusual winter very early and, and the worst of it was that frost had come with the downy and fog, and was raging so terribly about Aggie's house that she was kept a prisoner in the house and garden. The family dogs were usually allowed to run up and down the gravel paths with her hoopy, or skip on the terraces. It was well for her that she never saw Fritz's wretched nose for she was forbidden to climb the wet, sodden lawn.

"If I had only had my Fritz," she would cry to herself in private all this wet weather.

She always spoke to him as "my Fritz," but that she had any idea of calling him "Fritz," on that point she was quite decided, though what she should call him, she could never make up her mind. She thought a great deal about it, and hunted in all her story books for the names of dear pet dogs; and the above Fritz's father counsel and asked for advice and suggestions. Sometimes she would pretend to be calling a little dog, but she knew very well that she would not, and sometimes she would write down a number of names on different bits of paper, and get nurse to read them to her as she sat at her dressing-table. But yet here she was, within a fortnight of the birthday day, and the knotty question was still unsettled.

She had written a collar for him, herself in her favorite colors, light blue, though she could not make it up till he arrived, because, as nurse said, it was quite impossible that she should have the size of his throat. But it was a comfort to think that it was already for him, and mamma had promised to make it up in a very short time, so she had not any more to do with it.

Monday, the above week, and first one and then another in the more, suddenly inhibited part of the suburb was laid low, and indeed Aggie could see from her nursery that a fine, pinkish, smoky wind up the opposite hill. They looked especially gloomy in the mist, the black houses and a black sky, or two, and half-a-dozen men on in black clothes. Aggie would gaze at them with wondering eyes. "How sad and terrible dark seems! How well that still not come near her! For the time she would forget her dolls and toys, and was "my Fritz," and speculate in her childish way.

One day there was a leisure with some fine white birds flying about in the hill was often low.

"Why are they white, to-day?" asked Aggie of nurse who was standing beside her looking out.

"Because it's a young person," answered nurse, smiling more information.

"How young?" next asked the child.

"I don't know exactly," said nurse cheerily.

"As young as I am myself, Aggie, to being her studiously in the face.

"A little younger, I think," returned nurse, making her finger to wind giving the exact time, she asked her.

"Then I might die?" said Aggie solemnly and had following reply.

"Don't think of such things, my precious one," answered nurse as a frightened tone.

"But I do," said Aggie, and mamma has told me so often, but I never quite understood about it before, and many times that day her thoughts returned to the new light which had been kind in upon her.

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"Mamma, if I was to be," the strong emphasis on "was," was intended to suggest as a comfort the extreme improbability of such a thing; "if I was to do you don't think I should be sorry I had ever had him?"

"How do you mean, my love?" asked the mother puzzled.

"Do you remember, mamma," and the child smiled sweet and the voice sank lower, "don't you remember your fondling me when I was a baby to wish for a little dog to snuggle, when I had so many, many pretty things, and some poor little dog for me and nobody to love? I was so glad to make God angry, and I know you were sorry when papa promised to give me one, so I thought, if I die, perhaps if I were to die, I could be sorry too, and you wouldn't be sorry for my Fritz, because it would remind you that I had been naughty. Ask Nannie to get out of the room for a minute or two, and let me say part of my prayer over again."

"With how happy and thankful a heart did Mrs. Fairweather lay herself down to rest that night; she had not trusted in vain. The uncontrolled child had been over-ruled to even greater good than she had dared to hope.

The next day was the great and most earnest transaction between mother and child, one result of which was in a few days Mrs. Fairweather had in her hands the price of "my Fritz," to be spent by Aggie for her birthday, as she should prefer either mamma's suggestions or her own.

Well, the very first day Miss Mamma and Aggie went up by a morning train to London, and when they came back nurse, who was then at the station, had a large brown paper parcel given her to carry.

"You don't tell papa, Nannie, send you don't," said Aggie, "I tell him myself!"

"Mamma, you must shake your finger hard at the sea went on, "if you see I'm going to, you'll say."

Her mother smiled and promised.

It was a great struggle to keep the secret, but at last the birthday dawned. Aggie looked at her father's door, and Papa rose to come down to breakfast with her this morning," she said, when her father had given her his birthday kisses and good wishes.

She took his hand and laid him downstairs. There was mamma, who had made her greetings already in this nursery, standing smiling behind the singing urch, and at papa's end of the table was something covered up with a little napkin.

"Papa, this is my birthday present," she cried, "and I give it to you—Come, my little hands and neck."

The father came to do his bidding, and, lifting off the napkin, Aggie saw a dog lying there.

"A little pet dog? No—but what—what—the picture of his dear old home!" said Aggie, had all the story told her, and when she had her own free will had chosen to spend papa's £20 on the picture instead of on the puppy.

"This your birthday present, my darling?" said Mr. Fairweather asked in a voice hoarse from emotion, and he looked towards the mother, whose eyes were now shining with admiration.

"Yes, papa," answered Aggie, eagerly, "it's my birthday present, only it's for you."

"Oho, how my precious child," he said, "and let me kiss you."

And the child ran to him, and he held her in a close embrace, his heart throbbing beyond the power of expression.

The mother came and joined them, and, slipping down on her knees beside her husband, she took one hand of each dear one in her own, and her tears fell fast. No one could speak, and Aggie's little "oh!" heart swelled and ebbed like the sea.

"Mamma, I'm so happy with papa's arms round me, and her hand in mine, but I don't have a little toy to relieve her unaverted frowns."

"Then her father released her from his hand, and said, "Oh! bless you, my own child, just you, my darling wife!"

Aggie scrambled down. "Oh! how much, much better she is than I am!"

Her father mastered his emotion, and said, cheerfully, "But when are Aggie's other presents? The child must have a few more, and for a moment or two was silent, then she said—

given full years had been disposed of," answered Mrs. Fairweather, "but I will rig for Esther."

"And Esther came, bearing a tray, with several little parcels."

"Let us give them to you, my darling," said Mamma, and she handed them off the tray one by one.

First, there was her own present to Aggie, Anderson's lovely Fairy-bell, now beautifully bound and illustrated; then there was a grocer's shop, with scales and weights, and boxes and canisters and everything complete from Suren; then a new red worsted sock from the other servants, and a gold locket from uncle and godpapa Charlie, and more books from other well-wishers, and, finally, grandmother's—mamma's—mamma's present.

"This you must open yourself," said Mrs. Fairweather, "but put it on the table first, and the carefully gave into Aggie's hand a round black cover over with a peck-of-ham-brother's chief."

"So careful, Miss Aggie, love, do," said Mamma, who was looking on, showing by her face that she had been let in on the whole first."

And Aggie unwrapped it quietly, lifting up one corner of the ham-brother's lid to take a peep, and—what do you think she saw?"

She could hardly believe her eyes. She almost wanted to send it away, she had been so happy, giving up her dress. But mamma told her it was grandmother's present, and she must write and thank her for it. And she did so, very late one evening, after tea, but grandmother, having the whole story, had determined to send this put dog as a return to the girl that blessed day, but this I can tell you, that Aggie never wrote home, and she called, in pique, Mamma's name the shortest name Bally, for her father's first name. And as for Mrs. Fairweather, the picture, signed to his him a hundred-fold, hangs opposite his place at dinner, and it was the first of telling his friends, while his wife listened with an approving smile, that it was a present to him from the little girl. And grandmother came and saw it, and said, "Bally," as Aggie fondly called him, on her lap, and Uncle Charlie taught the parrot all sorts of wonderful tricks, and Aggie took mamma in her private ear she hoped Bally would never do, but always be there to remind her of the first lesson of her life: "I must be honest to give them receive."

COLNET BIRDIE.

New Year Folk-lore.

THE New Year has its customs and its legends, and is not put in on the table first."

Prior to 1720, our New Year commenced on March 25. Thus there was no "leap" in the festivities of Christmas, while the civil and the ecclesiastical years ran along together.

It is customary both to offer presents and to give returns to good wishes at the commencement of a New Year, which customs are both relics of Saxon superstitions designed to propitiate the Gods, and secure a prosperous year. It is a custom to this day, it is considered unlucky for a female to enter the house first on New Year's morning, but if it is done, she should be a bright happy, and fortunate year is secured. Among the rural population of England there is a tradition that the spirits of those who are to die in the succeeding year, pass into the church at midnight in the order in which they are to die, and some people have a custom of going out into the church-yard in the New Year, in order to see the terrible sight for themselves. In ghastly features and wretched, dismal expressions, they lack in connection with this superstition. Mourning is also a New Year's custom, which is past time obtained considerable practice in this country, but is now fast dying out. Formerly, burning barrels, burning fish had to become a thing of the past. Burial dressed in all sorts of fantastic dresses, some of them wearing women's apparel, got about from farmhouse to farmhouse, dancing, reeling, and using excess

imitations of the Marseilles Fife. It is evidently derived from the Sotocavalie of the Romans—the feast of Maschianian myth and festivity in honour of Saturn. On these days universal holiday was proclaimed, servants were free and acolyte with their masters, presents were sent to each other, the assemblies kept jovial, no war was to be declared, and no criminal executed. And as these days fell upon the celebration of various seasons adopted some of the principal features of the Saturnalia into their New Year observance.

But the principal custom associated with the New Year is that of Twelfth Day, and its accompaniments of Twelfth Cake. This day is called Twelfth Night, which means the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles for on that day, as we believe, the Eastern Magi were guided by the "star" in the east. "Alas," per their homage to the Infant Saviour. Alfred the Great commanded that all Christmas festivities should cease on Twelfth Night, saying that "he was fain" in that night laid down their girls, gold, frankincense, and myrrh" at the Station's bet. In some parts of England, people used to light a large bonfire in the garden or on hills, in memory of the "Star in the East," while on the great wide-brimmed-hearth of the amusee members of the family would burn juniper berries, in order that the sweet perfume of the burning berries might try the fragrance of the frankincense and myrrh. In many parts the Twelfth Cake was made in the shape of a loaf to represent the Holy Child. But generally speaking, the Twelfth Cake was a large sized plum cake, into which were put various things according to the traditions and custom of the locality. Sometimes it would be a loaf, sometimes a wedding-ring, sometimes a thimble, and at other times a spoonful of essence. All these articles had their various significations, for instance, the loaf symbolized the honor of kingship during the festival of the King who should reign by the "hundred-man" word, the spoonful wealth, and the wedding-ring marriage. At the proper period the cake was cut up by the children among the company, all with the exception of five pieces. These five pieces were intended for the Infant Saviour, the Virgin Mary, and the three Wise Men, but the world may be pleased to receive their portions, they were immediately distributed to the beggars who waited at the table thus or other Servant's stand. May it not be true that the German custom of placing a plate, knife, and fork, and an empty chair at the Christmas feast for the "Christ child" was derived from this? The Germans, having done this, look out for any poor destitute hungry child or beggar who may come to the door, and bringing him in, make him sit down and eat the "Christ portion." Notwithstanding the probable superstitions origin the custom is a beautiful one, and carries out the spirit of our Lord's own directions for feasts. "When thou hast made a feast call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and those that shall be blessed, for they cannot recompense thee; but thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."—Luk. 14.

To those who have not received Christ, I would commend this form of Christian charity, as one which is peculiarly acceptable and kind to its recipients.

The lucky possession of the piece of cake containing the bean was declared king for the whole evening, and the privilege of calling him "King" to begin with, he was carried round the room, a certain number of times in a chair supported by the three, upon the shoulders of the strongest of the party. After this usual-time—containing piped bits, hot toast, and roasted apples—was partaken of, and they all drank in turn. If any of the company became drunk or mischievous, the king was possessed of power to sentence him to some punishment. This punishment was dealt out by the king, plucking him by the queen's hair, in order to pronounce it, and his suiters entering it. It is very rare now, the king being a very crying officer. The power of the party was also required, toward midnight, to ring the bell upon the queen's lap and answer any questions that might be put to him. After this king, he was dismissed until the return of the next Twelfth Night festival.

The Twelfth Night of the present day are generally surmised with fantastic figures, representing the king, queen, and court officials, around the cake are then displayed officers, con-

taining characters, which are drawn by the members of the assembled company according to lot.

The chronicle of Christmas and New Year customs and legends is an interesting one. Our forefathers, who flourished before the days of gas, telegraphs, railways, telephones, and photographs, had more leisure wherein to enjoy these quaint customs, and to watch and record the ways of life on this day, may purchase benefit physically and mentally by observing the festival with a little more of the old-fashioned ways of life, and to give more hearty charity, and joyous abode of our forefathers. Our lives are so full of caring care, headless hurry, or grasping for the things we see and ignore the abundant opportunities of feasting those "poor, maimed, blind, and" who "cannot recompense" us. Still, to give, to give, to give, Christmas is a blessed day, while the New Year brings with it a renewal of earnest purpose for the time yet to come.

HENRY LEYBURN.

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