

THE NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS



THE NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS.
Make 'em, make 'em, even though you break 'em!
Good resolves are comforters, 'ye, even for a day;
Strive a little longer, it will make you stronger;
And perfection never yet was found in human clay.
Make a firm resistance, pray to have assistance;
Give the demon that you dread a tussle—and you can't!
Push the foe behind you; do not let him bind you;
And begin the new year, better woe-an, better man!

A NEW YEAR'S STORY.

By S. B. McClannan.
I want to tell you this New Year's night, what happened just a year ago in Hank Harmon's blacksmith shop. 'Tain't much to tell, over much for an outsider to harp on, but it means a mighty sight to me and the boys, an' I, for one, jist like to think of it an' talk it over and kind of bug and embrace the words, express 'em as it fits.

PUT THE HOSS BLANKET UP, were, and hold the sentences like a bitter sweet morsel under my tongue. My strength don't in any wise lay in retin' things and incidents, and it will be a good precaution, when I warn you not to break in into me and accordingly interrupt me, for it will take fine-haired and top sawyer work to make my story look as if it had any sense or meanin' at all, excep' to me and the boys as understand it complete.

Just a year ago tonight we met in Hank Harmon's blacksmith shop to celebrate the day by gettin' no hardy in drink, that we could dismember the miserable homes we had shacked away from and the heart-broken and down-trodden wives and children we had left in them. We hung a hoss blanket over the biggest cracks in the sides after Hank had fastened the door, and then we was in abrupt condition to guzzle and pour down our red-hot, thirty throats, jist as much of Joe Howard's red-hot, pliant whisky as we could manage to get with our tremblin' hands, or to our weak, waterin', disgraced mouths. After this, we know what would most likely happen, judgin' of course by what had happened before—we would fall over amongst the cinbers and hoss hoof skulls and old wagon tires and dragged and scrap iron, where we would sleep like hogs—hogs as had lost their respect—until the cold and the uncomfortableness would wake and sober us enough to crawl home and our wretched homes, which we would make wreched and miserably by our comin'.

We talked of this tonight, and we all remembered everything that was done and said, as if it was written on the black wall of the shop with white heat runnin' from the forge, and we all agreed too, never to try to disremember that night—the night when God or some of his shinin' holy angels come down to us and shamed us into being decent, sober, charmed-lovin' men.

In front of us. Some of them for safety sake and some for shame sake, and Jim furthermore said we ought to wear the furniture then disgraced and wicked days about us as an ancient sailor or some old salt, wear a dead goose about his neck as a keepsake that he had been low down and sinful.

But drunkards as we all certainly was, and what is more, verigin' clunk onto ben' bar-keepers, old drunkards as was no likely salvation for, we ain't any of us so very happy and comfortable and easy into our minds, at the beginnin' of that night a year ago in Hank Harmon's blacksmith shop in the alley, jist off the Ridge, something, bull-gard in the city 64 Sardinia, where we boys lived. We put the hoss blanket over the gap, and cracked to keep the wind from burnin' out the smutty lamp that stood smoky and wobbly on an old table where Hank with his accounts, amongst a lot of nails and bolts and rivets and small gearin', with a jug of Joe Howard's cheapest, hellish whisky in the middle as a kind of devil center piece. O, can't I, and can't all of us cronies jist remember exactly, how that jiggly, tremblin', dirty old table looked and I am bound that it had the delirium tremens, if anything, the worst kind, in an old man can have them. I can smell the oil that Hank spilled when he filled the lamp with his nervous, shakky hands and it ran along amongst the old iron and under Hank's day book and dropped over the edge onto the floor and went down a crack. And there was the white jug with the blue letterin', "I gal," with a sheaf of bile held below to make it look tasty and sell.

And this was our New Year's table! Four men—made in the image of God! And men for their folks and neighbors to be proud of—except they were drunkards. There was Jim Cameron, one, me, two, Jih Green, three, whose father had been a preacher—and Hank Harmon, as owned the shop. As Hank said, we were happy and comfortable that night, considerin' we had such a reckless layout and an early start. I have frequent noticed, that you can't always kick conscience under the table or settee as you can an unruly dog that whines and barks when he has no call to do. And some of our new residents from the park and the Library building. It was the prettiest, tastiest, impudicist house in the Circle and he had made every dollar of it out of such fellows as me and the rest of us.

One thing that made us feel a trifle sad and dismal was that the keeper of the home his father had given him and every brick and board in it was like a livin', lovin' thing to Jim—had moved into a little old untidy frowny house with a bowed in roof and anglin' shutters, in a part of the town where self-respectin' folks didn't generally try to get. And Jim knew, and we all knew that he and the rest of us and a lot more had built Joe's house in the park, and that every nail in it if it was counted a dozen times, wouldn't count up as many as a tenth as much as the tears shed for its puttin' up!

We called that one of us had handed enough hard earned money over his counter to pay for the grand stairway,

every inch of which was the premium work of an artist, a man to make grand stairways for a livin' and never botched, and I reckoned, jist makin' a rough, ungarin' estimate, that I had traded enough with Joe one time and another as much, or may be more, than pay for the plate glass windows, not mentionin' the stained ones, that looked like flower beds set into his walls, with wreaths and roses and young children and blue sky and grass and things. And there was my wife and youngsters at home—if such a place as we had finally got to could be called a home—with the windows filled with old seats and cushions and not enough in the cupboard to eat to much more, than prevent them from goin' to bed hungry. And this was New Year's night! It wasn't a cheerful, glowin' outlook, no odds how perseverin' one tried to be chirk gleeful over it.

Hank Harmon remarked as he took his place at the table, with his back again the way to prevent anyone from droopin' in unexpected, that like-walkin' a rough, uneducated callation, he had helped Joe Howard in the buildin' of his mansion, as the newspaper called Joe's house, quite a considerable, even to the pinchin' of his family for provisions and clothin'. Hank rattled he had done as much toward the house, as the puttin' in of the plumbin'—pipin'—chandeliers, with the furnace throwed in for fair measure and good feedin'. And speakin' of the furnace, Hank happened to recollect that there wasn't a stick of wood or a pound of coal in his house, and his wife was sick and his children not averted with bitterness and sweated. And reminescencin' along this line, we naturally got dismal and down-hearted and some of us—me—for I hadn't pretin' to confound or forget anything that happened that night—moved that we unanimously take a drink and I accordingly pulled the cork from the white stone jug, with the blue letterin' and wheat sheaf. But Jim Cameron nor Hank nor Jim Green held up their cups, but I jiggled mine in a manly, don't-care way and set close to the edge of the table by me.

Just then, Jim Green began to cry. And it wasn't a drunk, maudlin, swasy cry that makes one tired, but a great, man, heart-beatin'—heart full cry, not loud nor noisy, but low and heavy with bitterness and remorse and the useless wishin' that you hadn't done some things. And while Jim cried we all looked away and kinder about each others heads and I sneaked my cup of whisky from the table and emptied it without makin' a sound.

A NEW YEAR'S CALLER

A year ago, around last New Year's, I was called upon by a gorgeous young creature—a saving beauty—who bore a letter of introduction from a mutual friend in St. Louis.

"The girl is staggerin'! Can you do anything for her?"

"She was the most artificial thing I ever seen. I doubted whether she could answer for herself."

"Have you had any stage experience?"

"Only with amateurs."

"Ah! Have you any money?"

She looked at me much as a well-posted countryman would gaze at a "huno steerer."

"No, I didn't. I don't want your money, but it might be to your advantage to take a course in some good training school, and that requires cash."

Her nose went up.

"Oh, I don't wish anything like that," she said disdainfully. "I want an arrangement where I can get a salary."

"Well, you might possibly begin by playing very small parts," I replied. "I'm generally called on by fifteen or twenty young girls connected with his theater who are occasionally selected."

"No!" she interrupted. "I must do better than that. Will you hear me recite a speech from 'Parthenia'?"

"This was pretty hard, but I was prepared to go on with it," I said. "In friendship's name," as the gentleman sings in "Iolanthe."

"Go ahead," I said harshly.

"This was pretty hard, but I was prepared to go on with it," I said.

"My dear," I said, "there is no call for Parthenia unless they have cash galore, and even then the 'all' comes

and the one that he loved best and the world, killed her with cruel hands and sorrow—with God's help he was ready to make her child in heaven that night, that he would never touch another drop of liquor as long as he lived.

There was stillness for a time and the edges of the old blanket flapped like big, ragged elf wings and the unworked jug sent out a smell that put me in mind of venoms snakes that close by danger; while the smutty, cracked lamp flared up and then almost went out as if even that little wisp, crippled light was ashamed of its company. Pretty soon, Jim Cameron pulled his legs out from under the trembling table, and straightening himself up as best he could, he got tall and standin' as he did just under the eaves of Hank's shop—said, "Boys, I have a notion that amounts to dead certainty, that my wife and I will move back to our old home before long. We are both homesick for the grass and geraniums and big trees in the front yard, and the stone dog on the door step, and the little room where our babies died. I think we shall go back pretty soon, because you see with God's help and God for a witness, I and Hank Harmon and my neighbor, William Wren, for witnesses, I now solemnly promise—with my dear children to hear, too—that like our friend who has jist left us, will never touch another drop of intoxicating liquor as long as he lives. And he picked up his hat and went away.

And me and Hank was left alone. But Cameron hadn't much more than shut the door, when, as he owned the shop, kicked the box out from under him and came right up to uspin' the infirm old table and while he put on his ragged overcoat, kind of carelessly remarked—only anyone that knew Hank would have known that he was in solemn, awful earnest—that it didn't look neighborly nor civil to have company like this, but I guessed—no, I'll be damned if I guess—(Hank wasn't a swearin' man, never he said, I know I must do as Jim Green and Jim Cameron have done, and with God to help me and God and you, William Wren, to be my witnesses, I, Henry Harmon, will never drink another drop of intoxicating liquor so long as I live. And the rickety old door dragged back to its place and he was gone, and I alone.

And I thought, I thought, I thought, manly thing left for me to do, and by this time it was the only thing I wanted to do and standing up with only God for witness, I took the jug and promised as the other boys had promised, and then, with a thread of a prayer that would tangle itself with my thoughts, I took the jug and smashed it upon the anvil.

While it came to us unexpected that we should begin a new and dismal life—jist like a message from God, almost—it was put upon us to help ourselves, jist all that was possible. God stood

THE CHRISTMAS ROSE.

'Twas Mabelon, the little maid, Alone upon the wintry hill, The stars were bright, the wind was cold, The snow was white, The grief at her heart, she wept and prayed.

The shepherds passed her on their way, They said their gifts, heard what they said; But she would wait, and weep and pray, The while she grieved a shape drew near.

And stood in glory at her side— The "hossion angel" (wise and tried, Gabriel, in heaven without a peer, Sweetly he spoke and very low, He laid his hand upon her head, "An' cannot with a gift to give," she said, "An' cannot with the shepherds go, 'Tis winter, and the cold wind blows, And summer is far away; And if she heard me weep and pray, She cannot but come, and bring the rose."

A burst of glory burned around, Flashed up and down the barren hill; "Run, children, where you will Along the warm and blossomy ground!" Flying along the flowery ward, "The winter is to flower the summer goes, But still it stays), the Christmas rose, A gift from Him, the Infant Lord, —John Vance Cheney.

GO UP IT

Resolve upon this New Year's day To "stop it," whatever it be! Perhaps you like "the cup that cheers," Perhaps you gamble recklessly; Perhaps you're hell-bent in tone; Perhaps you're prone to sigh and groan; Perhaps you're temper's very bad; You talk enough to drive folks mad; You think that no one else is right; You flirt with everything in sight; You have an overbearing way; Or tell your "symptoms" night and day.

Perhaps you die the half that's gray; Perhaps your debts you do not pay; Perhaps—oh, well, whatever it be, If with your world it don't agree, And brings you care or misery, Strike now the blow that sets you free! —Polly Pry.

The Traveler's Tale.
"Smoking in Holland," said a traveler, "is so common that it is impossible to tell one person from another in a room of smokers." How is any one to tell one person from another, if he is to be picked out, then? asked a listener. "Oh, a water gourd round with a pair of bellows and blows the smoke from before each face till you recognize him," said the traveler.

Red Cross Hospital in China.
Something entirely new in China is the red cross hospital, a fully equipped hospital, where from fifty to one hundred or more patients are treated daily. The hospital is in charge of four native physicians.

principally from the manager, who principals his rent guaranteed, and the actors, who need their salaries. We are also overworked with Juliet and full of the most vicious passions."
She rose impatiently.
"Then you don't give me any encouragement?"
"Not that line, no."
"You don't think I spoke well?"
"Let us talk of something else."
"No, I should like an answer pleased to hear of you."
"Well, then, if you must insist, I didn't care for you in the speech."
She walked out, trembling with indignity, crying light was ashamed of its company.
Yesterday I met her.
Beautiful still, but with a look of hard experience in her eyes and her hair, with Rosalind in her dress.
My heart warmed toward her, and I seized her poorly gloved hand with fervor.
"How sorry you were offended with me," I murmured.
She gave a sigh.
"You were quite right," she said, "and I had known it on the spot."
"You have been on the stage?"
"Been on the stage?" she echoed.
"Well?"
"Yes, I have been on the stage."
"You were a great success?"
"I was very successful, but I was not a fool of me." She—"I wonder why it is a man never recovers from a thing of that kind." —Brooklyn Life.

Winter in the South.
The season approaches when one's thoughts turn toward a place where the inconveniences of a Northern winter may be escaped. No section of this country offers such ideal spots as the Gulf Coast on the line of the Louisville & Nashville Railroad between Mobile and New Orleans. It possesses a mild climate, pure air, every temperature and facilities for hunting and fishing enjoyed by no other section. Accommodations for tourists are first-class, and can be secured at moderate prices.
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BEEN DOING SMALL PARTS.
With a bitter smile. "Why, I've hardly been off it for the last four months."
"Well?"
"Well, I've been doing small parts in a 'twice a day performance' company, and I'm half dead. We were given up to rehearsal. I tried important parts just twice—when the leading woman was ill—and made a batch of three nights. And one was our old friend Parthenia." She laughed cynically.
"But your experience will count in the end," I ventured.
"No, it won't," she retorted. "I'm one of the actresses who 'don't offend.' I haven't any talent, and fourteen performers a week is a little too much! I'm going back to St. Louis to get married."
"Very sensible."
And she sped away and was lost in the crowd of Theopians that decorate Broadway and Fortieth street.

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GO UP IT

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