

GOOD-BY, OLD YEAR, GOOD-BY.

BY GERALDINE GERMANE.

The bells ring now, in muffled tone,
The chilling wind makes sadder moan;
The flowers are dead, and all must die,
Good-by, Old Year, good-by.

The laughing streams are coldly now,
Sheep are shorn, with woolly brows,
Fair summer is dead, and you must die,
Good-by, Old Year, good-by.

Once you were young, but now you're old,
Our youth is lost, we can't bring it back;
Your youth is lost, we can't bring it back;
Good-by, Old Year, good-by.

Your glory's gone, your glee's gone;
All glory fades time breathes upon;
All joy is gone, and all must die,
Good-by, Old Year, good-by.

Yon brought us many glittering joys
That clayed and broke like children's toys;
Our joys you have killed, now you must die,
Good-by, Old Year, good-by.

You brought us many a time of galling grief,
But like old joys, now are all gone brief;
If joy must die aye, then grief must die,
Good-by, Old Year, good-by.

Then went a year of hundred years,
Of glorious triumph that endures,
But, all is the others, that must die,
Good-by, Old Year, good-by.

Then brought us many a time of grief,
Sooth the trials of our lives,
Then brought us much that will not die,
Good-by, Old Year, good-by.

JOE'S NEW-YEAR'S DINNER.

To have seen Joe Sterling stubbing and the store of Messrs. Sampson & Sturges no one would have suspected that he was a boy. He was a small, beseckled fellow, with a peaked face, and shoulders that stood out sharply—wearing never a plume, nor scarf, nor slashed velvet doublet, like the hero of romance and chivalry, neither epauletts and gold lace like the military hero, neither broadcloth and beaver like the gentleman hero of the moral drama, but attired with severe simplicity in a well-worn "pepper-and-salt" suit, that patched and mended, and so short in the sleeves, his yellow complexion effectually set off by a sky-blue neck-tie—a tie which Elkins, a spruce fellow-duck, who supported a dictionary, had stigmatized as "perennial"—his cuff-buttons not mates. Oh, but, Joe, blessed be the world on his New-Year's day, if it had more like you!

Who Joe was, where he came from, in the street, he went at, interested the presentation of that glory of the drama, "The Black Sheep," to be followed by "the side-splitting farce of 'The One-legged Shoemaker,'" but Joe had politely declined, musing something about the fact that he had remained at home, The shop, Elkins, had twisted his eyebrows, and made no advances. He had never found young men with "duties" congenial companions.

By 10:30, New-Year's morning, Joe had completed his marketing among the shops and stalls on Broad-and-Butter Street, and, with his basket swung on his arm, had begun trudging homeward. He kept a sharp watch, as was wont, to let out to right, to see if there was any sign of his Uncle William. When one is on the lookout for something of that nature, something generally turns up, and it was hard on to 11 when Joe turned into that sleepy, decayed old street, which he had turned into regularly every night since he had been in Sturges' employ.

He was growing dreadfully tired of that street. It wasn't a busy street, neither a merchant's shop nor a crowded man and woman going in and coming in from labor. Nothing ever went up on it; nothing ever came down. The old wooden buildings just gathered a few more lichens, and sank a little from twenty-months to twenty-months. It wasn't a cheerful street. It sometimes seemed to Joe as if the tired, and fatigued, and sick, and cross, in the city—all the world over, were to be wretched, and yet not despairing enough to give up a kind of automaton effort, had gathered themselves together there. Joe began whistling as soon as he entered its precincts, and whistled lustily, just as boys do who have their courage to keep up, until he came alongside the decrepit wooden building that held his home.

"Just look here, will you?" Joe dropped his heavy-laden and whistled around to the cushion.

"Careful, now—else, Joe," said Uncle William, dividing his attention between Joe and the forkful he was making up. "Now, under the other one—not so high up—a little lower down, dear! Can't you fit it right? Then, now! And won't you just wrap that corner of the shawl around me again?"

Joe came in, and, not in the least discouraged, began his dinner.

Uncle William, as he the second time passed his plate, groaned: "I can't help thinking of the New-Year's dinners I've eaten in years gone by—such dinners as you never dreamed of, Joe. Little did I anticipate I should ever come to this."

"But just think how much better this is nothing! We're going to have biscuit and grapes for dessert; and that's the last thing to eat, isn't it?" said Joe, smiling. "This is only our regular New-Year's dinner. We're going to have another after I get cleaned up," and Joe's face fairly beamed.

Uncle William, though still gloomy, appeared interested.

"Just look here, will you?" Joe drew out from beneath the table a little oyster-keep. "The aren't your common-day kind of oysters, though there are extra, prime, extravagant kinds, the big bugs—Pass me that."

Sturges opened his eyes. Sampson had a respectful bow to Uncle William, a most respectful one to Joe, and ambled out.

"Joe, resume his stone-blacking, clattering the covers more merrily than ever."

"Sturges," said Sampson to his partner next morning, "what kind of a fellow do you call young Sterling?"

"Reliable!" firmly replied Sturges.

"And we paying him only 500?"

"I'm going to make it six this year."

"Make it seven; and, if he bears that well, increase it by another hundred next year."

Sturges opened his eyes. Sampson had a respectful bow to Uncle William, and a most respectful one to Joe, and ambled out.

"I wish you success, young man. I think I must speak with Sturges about this case—yes, I will speak with Sturges. This is still observed by the more rigorous of Methodists, both in England and this country, though as a religious exercise among this sect of Christians it is far from being universal, and is generally given up in favor of a more efficient medicine of its kind."

This was Joe's Uncle William.

Uncle William had been in his day a dashing young man, but he had dashed just a little too far, and all once, as sometimes happen in parallel cases, found himself used up, body and soul. Then, since nothing else remained to be done, he had repented, and found, to his sorrow, that the laws of nature wouldn't work back again for repentant prodigals. The time had passed.

Just then Joe, the size of a man, had left his home, and, with his pocket-knife and some kind of punget liniment, had left a pleasant boarding-place for a delectable tenement, saddled himself with a burden which he was likely to carry for life, and gone to housekeeping.

Uncle William, when securely established in his three chairs, Joe's excuse, had given himself unmercifully to brooding over his troubles and lamenting his hard fate. His melancholy gaze was, this morning, fixed out of the window, and he failed to withdraw it when Joe entered.

"Morning again, Uncle William," said Joe, briskly. "It's been a bit dull here for New-Year's morning; has it, eh?"

Uncle William, slowly turning from the window, delivered himself of a sound that might have been either a grunt or a groan.

"And you haven't found anything interesting in the papers?" continued Joe, looking down at the pile of periodicals. "I had in liberally for all the pictorial, alas, hoping you would be entertained by them."

Uncle William shook his head slowly and triflingly.

"I'm not at all entertained, by pictorial, Joe; I've been pleased, though."

"Then I wouldn't reflect any more. It doesn't agree with you. Aren't you glad you're going to have me for company, this afternoon? And a hot dinner. Hot dinners are luxuries nowadays. See here, will you?" pulling from out his basket a round of beef.

Uncle William eyed it gloomily. "I expect a good dinner for New-Year's dinner I'll muster her."

"Beefsteak isn't to be despised—not if it's tender and juicy as this," replied Joe, making an incision in the beef with his pocket-knife, and watching the juice start out with an expression of keen gratification.

"Not in our present situation, I know it, Joe; that's the sting of it. I don't blame you, Joe; but I can't help thinking he'll need to be with me."

Joe, however, attempted moving one of his limbs in his foot against a chair-back, and cried out with pain.

Joe slipped his steaming foot against Uncle William's liniment, and then pinched off into his bedroom—three minutes, and he was back again, in a suit the patches whereof attested the fact that he did his own mending, well as cooking.

"Now, we must have dinner in a jiffy, under. Then I'm going to give the room a thorough cleaning up; and after that, if Mrs. Dowd brings up the wash-

ing, I'll sew up the holes in the stockings, while you read aloud."

"You know I can't read aloud. Joe, it must be out of breath," snapped Uncle William.

"No more you can't. How forgetful in me! Well talk, then, and have a good time just the same."

Uncle William grunted derisively, and fingered his swollen and bandaged toes.

Joe shook down the ashes in his stove, turned on a pile of coal, and lit the oven and flamed up in half dozen or more matches. From suspicious looks even the table he舞ed forth a gridiron, which he began scraping vigorously, meanwhile talking briskly—whether to himself or Uncle William, it would have been difficult to decide.

"It's a miserable way to leave a gridiron, without cleaning; but what can a fellow do who has as much iron in him as I have?"

"I'm here to do you a favor," said Mr. Sampson.

"I think it seems to me that I've met you before, young man," said Mr. Sampson.

"Yes, sir; I'm the Sterling that clerks in your store," said Joe.

"Bless me, so you are! I Sturges attends to the store mainly, and I don't have much chance to know you boys. So you're here to do you a favor?"

"I'm here to do you a favor," said Mr. Sampson.

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