

Holiday Supplement



THE NEW YEAR GIRL.

My little lady sits alone
In her boudoir, white and gold,
Waiting to greet the New Year
And bid adieu to the old.
What is beyond the morrow?
(Hark to the bells that ring)
Are there tears or smiles and sunshine?
Oh, what does the New Year bring?



My Lady rose from the table and swept gracefully from the dining room, statuette and beautiful, as always. At the door she turned and said:

"Why, certainly, have them down for the holidays if you think they would enjoy it. My time will be so fully occupied, however, that I will not have much of it to devote to them—and our holiday atmosphere is not of the sort they are accustomed to in the country, a fancy." This with a smile denoting well-bred acquiescence but absolutely devoid of warmth.

The man behind her, gray and a trifle bent, with tired eyes, deep wrinkles in his face, inclined his head with a half sigh and replied:

"Thank you, my dear, and I guess you are right. It would be anything but a merry Christmas, I fear, for the girls here. We seem to have lost the spirit of the season. I thought perhaps they might bring a little of the holiday cheer into the house—but you are right, it would only spoil their season."

Insooth it was little of the holiday cheer that the great house had ever known. Long, long years ago, just after they were married and when they had lived in the humbler home in the suburbs Christmas had been a season of holly and mistletoe, of love tokens and surprises, of turkey and cranberry sauce and plum pudding. Especially after baby came there had been some gorgeous celebrations with Christmas trees and Santa Claus and all the things so dear to the heart of childhood. But when the little one died the shock and sorrow and the disappointment and the heart-sickness were so keen that it was simply impossible to return to the old habits and ways of which the little one had been so essential a part. They had even shrunk from the ordinary manifestations of mutual affection and companionship, which served as a poignant reminder of the loss each felt so deeply in their very different ways.

Something of all these things was in the mind of each that December evening a week before Christmas as they sat in the magnificent drawing room, he half reading his newspaper and she idly turning the pages of a magazine. Presently she rang for a servant and ordered her carriage.

"Are you going out?" he asked, a shade of disappointment in his voice. "I thought I would go to consult with Mrs. Bogardus regarding the charity ball," she replied. "It is getting near the time and we are on the committee. However, if you have other plans it is not at all important."

"No," he replied, "I have no other plans. I have a trial balance to go over, come to think of it."

But his eyes looked more weary and more sunken as she left the room. As she turned to wave him a good-natured adieu he arose to go to his library and she caught the expression and her eyes contracted with a puzzled look.

It was a stormy night, and as My Lady rode through the rain her carriage collided with a cab recklessly driven in the opposite direction and of the wheels was taken



off and the occupant considerably shaken up. Then she was compelled to seek the shelter of a cottage (the accident occurred in the poorer district of the city) until the coachman could summon another carriage. She apologized with her characteristic grace to the faded little woman who offered her a refuge in response to the driver's appeal and was received with whole-hearted cordiality.

It was a very humble home in which My Lady had found refuge. It was small and scantily furnished and everything was of the cheapest. The carpets, the furniture, the clothing of the people, were all of the cheapest, and the atmosphere was that of the most rigid economy. And yet there was excellent taste displayed, notwithstanding all the cheapness, and everything was neat and tidy and the atmosphere was distinctly that of a home. All these things suggested themselves to her as she seated herself in the modest little parlor. A sturdy boy of three, seated at a table making marks on a sheet of paper, eyed her askance. Encouraged at her smile he volunteered the information that he was writing a letter to Santa Claus.

"I'm tellin' him dat I want a tandy tane and some choo-choo cars," he informed her.

"Do you think he will bring them?" she asked.

"Es I do. Mamma says dat he will

complete canvas hunting suit. "I made this all but the hat," she said. "The gun was the hardest. I saved it all out of my table allowance excepting ten dollars I made by baking for the Woman's Exchange. He doesn't know anything about that, though, and, my, but wouldn't he be mad if he did. He thinks I have enough to do with the housework and the children."

The faded little woman heard a step on the walk and hustled her treasures back into their hiding place. The door flew open and John appeared covered with snow. He merrily kissed the wife and boy and was duly presented to My Lady, at which he subsided in great confusion. There was some little talk about the approaching Christmas and when a few moments later the wife went out to put the boy in bed, John said hastily:

"Would you consider it asking too much of you to look at a present I have got for the little woman. It is out of my line and it cost quite a bit, and I could change it now if it was not all right."

My Lady acquiesced and John rushed out of the room and returned with a cloak of rather good quality—exceedingly good quality in contrast with the things in the house.

"I think it is the most beautiful cloak I ever saw," My Lady responded warmly with moisture in her eyes. Then she added hastily, "for the price

during the next week and kept much to the seclusion of her room. On Christmas morning when Stephen Wells rose he found a chair standing close to his bed and from one corner hung one of his socks. Investigating in amazement he discovered crowded into it two pair of knit socks and pinned to them was the following note:

"Dear Stephen: I wanted to give you something that was my own handiwork and that cost me something of time or sacrifice to get. I can do so little that I could think of nothing excepting to knit you some socks like grandma used to knit." So here they are—not much, excepting a love-token from your wife."

The man went to the window and looked out into the vista of sparkling snow for a long time. When he proceeded with his dressing there were tears in his eyes. He went straight to his wife and gathering her in his arms kissed her again and again.

There were several surprises at the Wells home that day. The formal course dinner was supplanted, much to the chef's disgust, with a genuine old-fashioned turkey dinner; the house was resplendent with holly and mistletoe, and in the evening there was the merriest sort of a Christmas tree, loaded with good things. The nieces from the country voted that it was the jolliest Christmas they had ever spent. Down at the cottage whence the in-



YULE TIDE PROBLEMS.

Hunting for a Christmas present
For each blooming friend you know
Is a task that's far from pleasant
When your funds are running low.
It is hard to make selections
That with joy all hearts will thrill
When you've got to make twelve sections
Of a lone ten-dollar bill.

People's wants are so extensive
That they fill you with despair.
They all hope for gifts expensive,
They don't know how ill they'll fare!
If you have a lot of money,
Buying presents is great sport,
But it's anything but funny
When your bank account is short.



Christmas tide has come again and all the little children are thinking about Santa Claus, and some are wondering if he will come to their house this time. There is hardly any reason for any child to believe that he will not come. A good many things change in this world, but on Christmas Eve merry old Santa Claus is always heard of—his hair as white, his nose as red, as ever; his bag of toys just as full; his cry down the chimney of "Any good children here?" just as loud.

Kris Kringle is another name for Santa Claus, and a very good name too; and stockings are not the only things that hold toys. Little German peasant children often set their wooden shoes on the hearth on Christmas eve, pretty sure of a cake and a toy; for children, however poor their parents may be, are made much of in Germany. And in some places in Europe a curious thing happens. The mother, the father, and the rest of the family sit about the fire together on Christmas Eve.

All the room is tidy. The children, half hopeful, half terrified, draw close to mother, father, or grandmothers, as they hear a sound of trumpets or horns outside. Then the mother says: "What can this be?" and opens the door. As she does so, a number of very strange looking figures come in—amongst them one person dressed in white, with wings, and a great basket in his hand, and another in black, with a bunch of rods.

"God bless you all," says the figure in white. "Are there any good children here?"

"Are there any bad children here?" asks the black figure.

"My children are all pretty good," the mother answers.

"I am glad to hear it," says the white visitor. "I have gifts here for good children."

"Stop!" the black figure cries; "they are not good. Hans struck his brother yesterday. Gretchen does not know her catechism, and Petra broke a piece from the Sunday cake as it sat to cool on the window-sill. I will leave rods to whip them all with."

The children begin to cry. The white figure spreads out his hands and says:

"The little ones will be better next year." Then he takes one of the rods from the black visitor and drives him out. The visitors play on the instruments they have brought, and the whole family sing Christmas hymns. The angelic visitor then empties his basket on the table, and leaves there a great number of iced cakes, gilded nuts, gingerbread horses, and wooden toys, and then departs. The mother tells the children to be good all the year, lest the rod should really be left for them on the next Christmas, and all have supper and go to bed.

Christmas day is a happy one for most children all over the Christian world, and I hope that because this is so they will remember that this day is kept because eighteen hundred and eighty-one years ago, Jesus, who said, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven," was first a babe in his mother's arms.—Mary Kyle Dallas in the New York Ledger.



ON CHRISTMAS MORNING.

if I don't ask too much. Do you think dat is too much?" he demanded.

"No, indeed," she responded warmly, "and I am sure he will bring them."

"We always try to observe Christmas and the holidays," remarked the faded little woman. "Of course we are not able to do much, but we try to catch the spirit of the days, and it seems to brighten us all up so much to forget the worries and struggles for one day now and then—and it is so much to the children. I want to show you what I am going to give John—if you don't mind. I've just got it, and I will burst if I don't show it to someone. John is my husband, you know, and he is very fond of hunting, but he doesn't go very often because he hasn't got a gun and it costs so much to rent one." Whereupon she dodged into a closet and emerged with a bright new double-barreled shot gun.

"And that ain't all," she went on, her eyes glowing with excitement. "See what I've made for him," and she disappeared again and emerged with a

It is well worth the money, I assure you, and your wife will be the happiest woman in the world, I am sure."

A half hour later she entered her husband's library and said: "Stephen, I have been thinking it over and I really would like to have the girls down for the holidays. I have decided to decline all invitations for the Christmas week and I think we can make it pleasant for them—and as you said, they may bring some of the holiday cheer into the house."

"Very well," he responded, looking at her in some surprise, but evidently pleased, "I will write them tonight."

As he rose from his chair he uttered an exclamation: "Confound that rheumatism. I believe it is getting worse. I half believe if I wore home-knit socks like old Grandma Black used to knit for me that it would help. This city-made hosiery never comes up to the mark set by the old-time home-knit socks."

My Lady was a very busy woman

piration came there was another jolly Christmas. My Lady had sent all the materials for the most gorgeous dinner that ever was served, from an eighteen pound turkey to plum pudding and loads of candy for the children, besides a wonderful train of automatic cars for the boy who wrote to Santa Claus.

Society wonders why it lost Mrs. Wells and why the Wells' gave up their mansion on the avenue and moved to the cosy home-like house in the suburb. The business world wonders why Stephen Wells retired so suddenly from active business just after making plans for widening and extending his operations. A certain little woman who used to look faded but now is quite fresh and rosy wonders what good angel arranged for the breaking down of Mrs. Wells' carriage in front of her door and what there was in the brief stay that gave the visitor such a sustained interest in her affairs and John's. For John now occupies a very important and well-paid position secured through the influence of Stephen Wells. (Copyright 1901.)