

THE CHILD AND THE YEAR.

Said the Child to the youthful Year:
"What hast thou in store for me,
O giver of beautiful gifts, what cheer,
What joy dost thou bring with thee?"

"My seasons four shall bring
Their treasures: the winter's snows,
The autumn's store, and the flowers of spring
And the summer's perfect rose.

"All these and more shall be thine,
Dear Child—but the last and best
Thyself must earn by a strife divine,
If thou wouldst be truly blest.

"Wouldst know this last, best gift?
'Tis a conscience clear and bright,
A place of mind which the soul can lift
To an infinite delight.

"Truth, patience, courage and love
If thou unto me canst bring,
I will set thee all earth's hills above,
O Child, and crown thee a King!"

KATE'S VICTORY.

"Working girls, of course" said Kate Selwyn, "going home from the factory. Oh, poor things, how tired they look! Do you know, Mr. Varian, it always seems to me as if they belonged to a different order of beings from us."

"I don't know why you should draw such an inference as that," said Mr. Varian.

Kate laughed.
"Don't take my nonsense au sérieux," said she. "Have you any relations among the factory girls?"

"Not that I am aware of," Mr. Varian quietly answered.

"Then I don't see why you should espouse their cause," laughed Miss Selwyn. "Look at that fat little dowdy with the checked gingham dress, and the broken-backed feather in her hat, and the tall woman with the scanty hair and the high-heeled boots. Was there ever anything so ridiculous?"

And then the whistle blew, and the train moved on, and the smiles faded from Angus Varian's face as he watched the merry sparkle of his companion's eyes, the dimples coming and going on her rosy cheeks.

The very next station was Keyford, where they must alight. And he had not told Kate Selwyn yet—he could not tell her. Let circumstances develop themselves; he had not the heart rudely to plunge a dagger into that innocent young breast.

He had chanced to be coming from Albany, and had acquiesced in Dr. Selwyn's request that he should bring Kate home from boarding-school—blooming eighteen-year-old Kate, who had just graduated with all the honors, and who, having spent two vacations with favorite schoolmates, had not been at home for two years.

"And," Dr. Selwyn had hoarsely added, "if you find a fitting opportunity, Varian, you might mention to the child how things have changed at home. She'll have to know it sooner or later—and it may possibly save her a shock."

But the "fitting opportunity" had not presented itself, or Mr. Varian had neglected to avail himself of it. And here they were "slowing up" at Keyford, Kate springing joyously from her heap of traveling-shawls, novels, flowers and bonbons, with the cry of "Papa! Oh, I see papa!"

And the next minute she was in his arms, kissing and hugging him, while she thanked Mr. Varian for his kindness in escorting her home.

"You'll come and see me sometimes?" she said "if I have not wearied you out with my school-girl chatter."

Mr. Varian smiled, lifted his hat and went away, while Kate, leaning fondly on her father's arm, looked around inquiringly.

"Where is the carriage, papa?" she asked, "and the two darling old greys?"
"We'll walk, my dear," said Dr. Selwyn. "It is but a step. The—the fact is, we are not living where we did. We have moved."

"Moved, papa! Moved from Selwyn Grange!" cried Kate in amazement. "And we don't find ourselves able to afford the expense of a carriage any longer," said Dr. Selwyn huskily. "Didn't Varian tell you?"

"Mr. Varian, papa? Tell me what?" said Kate, with vague surprise.

"I see that he has not," said Dr. Selwyn. "Then I must tell you myself. We are very poor, Kate. We have lost all our property. I was foolish enough to speculate and have failed. So we have lost everything—the Grange, the carriage, the hot-houses the picture gallery, and all. We are living at Dean Cottage, and I think your mother will be very glad to have you back again to help her with the house-work. Why, Kate, my child, what is the matter?"

Kate choked down an immense sob. "N—nothing, papa," said she. "Only it was so sudden. I have never dreamed of such a thing."

"I have been too abrupt," said Dr. Selwyn. "I am used to the idea myself, and I did not know how unpleasantly it might affect you. But you'll bear it, bravely—oh, my darling, for our sakes."

"Yes, papa, I'll be brave," said Kate in a low voice.

Kate Selwyn was a stubborn aristocrat. All her life she had walked on roses, and smiled serenely down on the workers of the world, as a gold-plumed canary in its glittering cage might view the brown-winged sparrow rolling in the dust.

And now—now! Alas, how sadly it was all changed!

But Kate was a heroine in her way,

and she sat down to tea in the dingy back room of Dean Cottage as brightly as if it had been the stately dining room of Selwyn Grange, even while no slightest detail of the shabby housekeeping that surrounded her escaped her eye.

Oh, the mended carpets, the faded window draperies, the table-cloth darned and patched, the poor glued chairs, and the window-pane cracked across, and mended with a piece of brown paper. Kate would have flung herself despairingly on the threadbare sofa and cried her heart out—but she was too brave for that.

And after tea there were no wanderings among the flowers, no sitting at the piano (that had been sacrificed in the general wreck also), no watching the red and opal effects of the sunset in dreamy far niente visions. There was no servant, and the dishes were to be washed, the room swept, all the household cares to be attended to.

They were in debt as well. Kate discovered that the next day when the butcher presented himself, declaring that "his orders were to give no more, trust until old scores were settled up," and the baker's cart clattered by without taking any heed whatsoever of Mrs. Selwyn's beckoning finger.

"Mamma," said Kate, "we cannot live so."

"It is very hard, my dear," said Mrs. Selwyn with a quivering lip; "but I do not know what else is to be done. It was your father's ambition to keep you at school, and we have strained every nerve to pay Madame D'Orient's bills until you should graduate."

Kate thought of her Italian poets, her great piles of music-books, her French authors, her watercolor sketches, the crayons she had been so proud of, with a choking lump in her throat. Of what use were they all in this moment of dire necessity?

She could not force herself on anyone as a governess, she could not compel people to buy her pictures.

And the pale little mother wasting away by degrees, and the tottering paralytic father, whose feebleness was so painfully apparent to her now, although she had scarcely observed it at first.

"I must do something," she thought, "I have been a drag and a hindrance long enough. We must hire a little servant to help mamma. And papa must have something of this load of debt lifted from his poor bowed shoulders. Oh, what can I do? Whither shall I turn? For with all my expensive education, it seems to me now as if I knew absolutely nothing."

And Kate Selwyn resolved that she would ask Mr. Varian, the kind family friend that came to see them so often, who sent the white grapes that tempted her mother's appetite when nothing else did, who brought the illustrated newspapers to papa, and had so many bright ideas and suggestions from the outer world to cheer up Kate herself, when her spirits were at the lowest ebb.

More than this she had learned from her mother that he wanted to lend them money, but the old Selwyn pride had risen up in arms against that. But she did not ask his advice. She decided finally for herself.

"Mamma," she said, coming cheerfully home one day, "you must manage to do without me for a little while, now. I have engaged Linda Darty to help you, and—"

"My child, what does this mean," said Mrs. Selwyn.

"It means, mamma," said Kate with a low curtsy, "that I have taken a position in the factory."

"You, Kate!" gasped the dismayed mother. "A factory girl!"

"Why not, mamma?" appealed Kate. "I only wish you could see some of the girls there. They are as perfect ladies as you would meet in any drawing room in the land. And the machines are worked by steam-power, and the foreman is so kind and polite; and only think, mamma, I shall earn from ten to fifteen shillings a week, if I am a skillful hand."

Mrs. Selwyn burst into tears.

"Oh, Kate, my Kate," she faltered, "I never felt our loss so acutely as I do now."

"And I," said Kate brightly, "never felt so proud as I do now. Oh, mamma, I have spent my first month's earnings in anticipation already. 'You don't know what an heiress I feel.'"

"A new hand," said Mr. Varian, carelessly, as he glanced over the books of the steam factory. "But really, Mr. Harcic, I have nothing to do with the hands you may see fit to engage. It was quite unnecessary to consult me."

For Mr. Varian, a silent partner in this driving concern, had lounged in as usual, to glance over the books laid open for his quarterly examination.

"No, sir, I know that," said Harcic respectfully, "but this isn't an ordinary case, Mr. Varian; it's old Dr. Selwyn's daughter."

"Miss Selwyn?"

Mr. Varian was roused into animation at last.

"She came here, sir," explained the foreman, "and said she had been learning to work the machine, and that she wanted to earn money to help her parents. Of course I was a little doubtful as to her experience, at first, but I find she is a first-class operator, and—"

"What floor is she on?" Mr. Varian hurriedly asked.

"Number four, sir."

Mr. Varian waited until the big bell clanged for the dismissal of the hands, and then he joined Kate Selwyn as she came out. Kate colored, but she smiled as she saw him.

"I never knew, until to-day, Mr. Va-

rian," she said, "that you were one of the proprietors of this factory."

"Neither was I," he answered, until last month, when I fell heir to my uncle's share in it. But I have always had more or less charge of his affairs here."

"I suppose," said Kate, her long eyelashes drooping, "that you are recalling in your secret mind the silly speeches I made about factory girls, not so very long ago. But I am wiser now. There is no teacher like experience."

"On the contrary," he exclaimed eagerly, "I only await an opportunity to tell you how infinitely I respect your spirit and courage. Miss Selwyn, I have admired you for a long time, but now the feeling assumes an entirely different type. May I dare to say openly that—I love you?"

"Mr. Varian," said Kate, with flickering color on her cheeks, "you are rich. I am only a poor working-girl."

"Kate, I shall be poor indeed, if you refuse me the great boon of your love. And in all respects, dearest, you are a fit bride for a king," said Mr. Varian with enthusiasm. "Answer me, Kate, I cannot live on in suspense."

The answer came soft, slow, and indistinct; but such as it was it entirely satisfied Mr. Varian. And Miss Selwyn did not long remain a factory-girl.

But she had learned a lesson. The lesson that a working-girl need not necessarily cease to be a lady, and that a lady might still be a working-girl.

"That week in my husband's factory," she often said brightly, "taught me more than all my five years at Madame D'Orient's fashionable-boarding-school."

Why Can't a Woman be a Mason.

A lady friend of ours and wife of a brother in good standing has frequently importuned us to disclose the reason "Why a woman couldn't be made a Mason." We have thus far failed to comply with the request, but happily find a solution to the proposition in the following from an address delivered by Major Sherman at Austin, Nevada:

"Women sometime complain that they are not permitted to join our lodge and work with the craft in their labors, and learn all there is to be learned in the situation. We will explain the reason. We learn that before the Almighty had finished his work he was in some doubt about creating Eve. The creation of every living creeping thing had been accomplished, and the Almighty had made Adam (who was the first Mason), and created him for the finest lodge in the world, and called it Paradise No. 1. He then caused all the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air to pass before Adam for him to know them, which was a piece of work he had to do alone so that no confusion might therefore arise when Eve was created, whom he knew would make trouble if she was allowed to participate in it, if he created her before hand. Adam, being very much fatigued with the labors of his first task, fell asleep, and when he awoke he found Eve in the lodge with him. Adam being Senior Warden, placed Eve as the pillar of beauty, in the south, and they received their instructions from the Grand Master in the east, which when finished, she immediately called the Craft, from labor to refreshment. Instead of attending to the duties of the office as she ought, she left her station, violated the obligations, let in an expelled Mason, who had no business there, and went around with him, leaving Adam to look after the jewels. This fellow had been expelled from the Lodge, with several others, some time before. But hearing the footsteps of the Grand Master, he suddenly took his leave, telling Eve to go making aprons, as she and Adam were not in proper regalia. She went and told Adam, and when the Grand Master returned to the Lodge, he found his gavel had been stolen. He called for the Senior and Junior Wardens, who had neglected to guard the door, and found them absent. After searching for some time he came to where they were hid, and demanded of Adam what he was doing there instead of occupying his official station. Adam replied that he was waiting for Eve to call the Craft from refreshment to labor again; and that the Craft was not properly clothed, which they were making provisions for. Turning to Eve, he asked her what she had to offer in excuse for her unofficial and unmasonic conduct. She replied that a fellow passing himself off as a grand lecturer, had been giving her instructions, and thought it was no harm. The Grand Master then asked her what had become of his gavel. She said she didn't know unless the fellow had taken it away. Finding that Eve was no longer trustworthy, and that she had caused Adam to neglect his duty, and had let in one whom he had expelled, the Grand Master closed the lodge, and turning them out, set a faithful Tyler to watch the door with a flaming sword. Adam, repenting of his folly, went to work like a man and a good Mason, in order to get reinstated again. Not so with Eve—she got angry about it, and commenced raising Cain.

"Adam, on account of his reformation, was permitted to establish Lodges and work in the degrees, and while Eve was allowed to join him in acts of charity outside, she was never again to be admitted to assist in the regular Lodge work of the craft. Hence the reason why a woman cannot become an inside Mason."—Oconomowoc Times.

El Mahdi.

This great heathen and full-blown prophet was once a poor boy, without a dollar in his pocket. Years ago, when little Mahdi used to snare suckers along the White Nile, no one thought that to-day he would be the champion heavy weight prophet of the known world. It shows what can be done by a brave, courageous little boy, even in a foreign land.

In appearance he is a brunette of about the style of the successful meerschau pipe. He does not dress as we do, but wears a white turban that looks somelike an Etruscan hen's nest. On chilly days he adds other articles of apparel to this turban, during the summer months that is sufficient for evening dress. In the morning he puts on his turban, buckles a six-shooter around his waist and he is dressed. It doesn't take Mahdi long to make his toilet.

Years ago he decided that he would retire to a lonely island in the Nile and put himself in training for a prophet, so he crawled into a cave and lived there on whatever he could get hold of. While others were down at Khartoum, having a good time at the skating rink, Mahdi remained in his gloomy cave, setting up the pins to get into the prophet business and murder the king's English.

Soon people began to hear of El Mahdi, and as he put a card in the morning papers of the Soudan, he at once had all the prophesying he could do and had to hire an amanuensis or assistant prophet to help him out. During the holidays, when trade was brisk, the Mahdi had to sit up and prophesy till ten at night.

His real name is Mohammed Achmed, and he was the son of a petty sheik, whose name I have forgotten. This man was an inferior person and a very ordinary sheik, I am told—just such a sheik as you could go in and find on the ten cent counters of the Soudan anywhere.

Mohammed Achmed for a long time showed one of the prevailing characteristics of a tramp, and so they began to educate him as a fakir. A fakir is a man who has permission to ramble through the country, chiseling people out of money and groceries in the name of religion. He is a sort of Oriental gospel bum, whose business is to go around over the country weeping over the sins of the people who are too busy to be hypocrites. These fakirs are always devout, hungary and sad. They yearn for a bright immortality, but they are in no great rush about acquiring it. They are perfectly willing to wait till the Egyptian pullets run out. I am glad that we have no fakirs in America.

By and by Mohammed Achmed got a call to rise up William Riley and gather the clans of the Soudan together. He went to them and told them in confidence that he was the only genuine all wool prophet on the Nile, and if they wanted some fun, to get their double barrel shot guns and join the gang. They did so. None of them ever did anything at home to obtain a livelihood, so they could go away on the warpath all summer and their business wouldn't suffer at all.

They then proceeded to murder the king's English, who had come there to conquer and acquire their sand pile.

The Arabian style of warfare is peculiar. It consists largely in drinking alkali water on their part and in requiring their enemies to do the same for ninety days. So it becomes simply a question of who has the firmest and most durable Bessemer steel bowels.

No one but a Bedouin would have thought of such a style of warfare. It is not, therefore, a question of who can drink concentrated lye all summer and take his alimentary canal home with him in the fall.

In the battle, the Arab charge is peculiar in the extreme. The Arab does not stand up in line of battle for an hour while the commanding officer gallops up and down the line on a "heavy" horse and the enemy pours a galling fire into his ranks. He sails up toward the enemy, waves his Oriental night shirt in the Egyptian air, shoots some one and goes away. When the battle ground is examined on the following day, it is discovered that eight hundred brave and handsome English soldiers are killed and one moth-eaten Arab has stepped on his Gothic shirt tail and sprained his ankle.

El Mahdi is not a bad looking man at all, and the report that he has lost his teeth, so that when he gives his orders he has to gum Arabic, is not true.—Bill Nye, in New York Mercury.

Waste of Bullets in War.

Our readers may have seen or heard the statement that it takes a soldier's weight of lead to kill him in battle, and they may have considered it to be merely a rhetorical hyperbole, suggested by the obvious fact that comparatively few out of the whole number of shots in war take effect. It seems, however, that the assertion, which originated with the famous Marshal Saxe, was proved by Cassendi, after careful mathematical calculation, to be exaggeration, and with all the improvements that have been made in muskets and in the art of using them effectively, it is still not far from the truth. At the battle of Solferino a comparison of the number of shots fired on the Austrian side with the number killed and wounded on the part of the enemy shows that seven hundred bullets were expended for each man wounded, and 4,200 for each one killed. Now, as the average weight of the ball used was thirty grams, it must have required at least 126 kilo-

grams, or about 277 pounds of lead, to kill a man. In the Franco-Prussian war the slaughter caused by the needle-gun among the French shows how much superior that firearm was to the Austrian carbine; but about 1,300 shots were required then to accomplish the destruction of a single soldier. It is found in practice that a great majority of the wasted bullets go over the heads of the enemy; hence resort is sometimes had to the expedient of pressing down, by means of a staff, the muskets of a platoon of men about to fire; a sergeant being detailed for the service. When the shots are aimed at an isolated soldier, the chances against him are, of course, greater; but even then the waste of lead is enormous. In the Franco-Prussian war, according to an officer who witnessed the performance, a French company of chasseurs fired for a quarter of an hour at a German mounted sentry posted on a hillock about three hundred yards off. Full four hundred shots were fired before either man or horse was hit. A really expert marksman would probably have picked off the man at the very first attempt, or certainly at the second.—Popular Science News.

A Practical Girl.

Helen Burdett's father was an Illinois farmer, with a good farm of, perhaps, 200 acres, but without any one to share his labors or inherit his estate. He accordingly brought up his daughter Helen very much as he would have brought up a boy. She was strong and healthy, very intelligent, and with a decided taste for out-door life, and she very soon attained a reputation for "judgment" and for knowledge second to that of no farmer or stock-raiser in the vicinity. When she was eighteen years old her father died, and it seemed necessary that she should carry on the place for at least a year to come, a task to which she was fully equal. The crops were accordingly planted under her direction, and she went out to buy steers, as her father usually went at that season. She purchased sixty-five head of steers, and sold them at the end of the season at a clear profit of exactly \$1,065. She knew "every inch of ground" on the farm, as the saying is, and just what should be done with it. Every man in the vicinity understood that she was thoroughly intelligent in her business, and that it would be useless to try to overreach her. One man, when questioned about her, remarked in the vernacular of the country, "There ain't a man in the State can size up a herd of steers as close as she can, and our drover says she beats him at a bargain every time." Yet Miss Helen Burdett is as modest and lady-like as any girl in the United States. The drover did not mean that she "beat him down," or "beat him out," but simply that she understood cattle and could tell their "points" better than he could.

When Helen was fourteen years old, her father gave her permission to go and buy a cow for herself. She went forth alone and independent, bought her cow, and came home leading it by the rope.

Her cow proved to be an excellent investment. "I knew," said her father triumphantly, "that she could pick out a better one than I could myself, and I believe she has done it."

A picture of Miss Helen Burdett stands before me, as I write. But she is Helen Burdett no longer. A wealthy young farmer from the far West came to know and love her, and appreciated her value. When she married, her father's house and farm were sold at auction. She managed the sale and it was completed most admirably. The picture is taken in her wedding dress, and the quiet, regular, thoughtful face would indicate to the uninitiated a student, possibly an artist or a writer. No one would suspect this elegantly attired and self-possessed young woman of being a thorough farmer and an expert stock-raiser. "I tell you," said a keen old man, who has watched her progress from early girlhood, "it's a lucky man that gets Helen Burdett for a wife. She'll double his property, in plain dollars and cents, if he'll only take her advice, inside of five years."—Philadelphia Press.

Newspapers of To-Day.

People generally, and even those who may be termed steady readers and close observers, have but a faint conception of the magnitude and influence the press of this country has attained. From a careful examination of the advance pages of the 1885 edition of the American Newspaper Directory, issued May 1st, by George P. Powell & Co., of New York, it appears that there are 14,147 newspapers and periodicals published in the United States and Canada; of these the United States has 12,973, an average of one paper for every 3,867 persons. In 1884 the total number of newspapers was less than by 823 than at present, and while the gain this year is not so marked as in some previous years, it is still considerable. Kansas shows the greatest increase, the number being 78 while Illinois follows with a gain of 77. It is curious to notice that New York, the scene of so much political activity during the last campaign, should have only about one-third as many new papers as the state of Pennsylvania. As an index to the comparative growth and prosperity of different sections of the country, especially the Territories, the number of new papers forms an interesting study, and may well occupy the attention of the curious.