

A Birthday Greeting.

What shall I wish thee for the coming year?
Twelve months of dreamlike ease? No care?
No pain?
Bright spring—calm summer—autumn without
rain
Of bitter tears? Wouldst have it thus, my
friend?
What lesson, then, were learnt at the year's
end?
What shall I wish thee, then? God knoweth
well
If I could have my way, no shade of woe
Should ever dim thy sunshine—but I know
Strong courage is not learnt in happy sleep,
Nor patience sweet by eyes that never weep.
Ah, would my wishes were of more avail
To keep from thee the many jars of life!
Still let me wish thee courage for the strife—
The happiness that comes of work well done—
And afterwards the peace of victory won!

UNDER THE WEATHER.

"Six of us!" said Fenella Greyton, "an I nothing to live upon!"

She looked around upon the rest of the Greyton family with the tragic air of a modern Medea.

The Greytons lived in a pretty, old manor house, on the Bloomingdale road, just a pleasant drive out of town.

They liked pretty draperies, and cultivated rare roses, and painted lovely little amateur pictures, and basked, in a sort of unthinking way, in life's sunshine.

They didn't know quite how much income they had, nor exactly where it came from. They only knew that everything was in the hands of "poor papa's" lawyer—a darling, white-haired old philanthropist, who was devoted to the heathen, and who officiated as secretary to half a dozen foreign mission associations. And whenever they wanted money they went to him for it.

And one day, when Mrs. Greyton and her daughter Lilla went to the city office, with a bundle of unpaid bills, to get Mr. Framingham to write a cheque for them, the door was padlocked, and a little notice "To Let!" was tacked up on it.

Where had Mr. Framingham gone? Nobody knew.

When would he return? The public was densely ignorant on that subject.

Why had he gone? And in answer to this question there was a very universal shrugging of shoulders, and a whisper about a general "smash-up!"

Poor Mrs. Greyton! She and Lilla were both as ignorant and inexperienced of the world as a pair of white kittens, and it was some time before she could comprehend that Mr. Framingham was a thorough-faced villain and that she and her little flock were penniless.

"What shall we do?" murmured Mrs. Greyton, after she had wept through her whole supply of pocket-handkerchiefs.

"Couldn't we sell our hand-painted china?" said Clarice, a swarthy-browed girl of eighteen. "I designed every piece myself. And Mr. Favall said—" "Pshaw!" curtly interrupted Fenella, "Just look at the china-store, crowded full of far finer work. Poor Clarice! they wouldn't pay you the price of the mineral paint it took to do them, for your plaques and vases."

"I can do art-embroidery very nicely," suggested Mona, a tall, shy girl, with liquid black eyes, and jetty hair growing low on her forehead.

"The embroidery market is overfull," said Fenella, who was the incarnation of common sense for the family. "If you could do housework now, Mona—"

Mona looked down at her slim, white hands, all sparkling with rings, and shuddered.

But Bess, the youngest, came bravely to the rescue.

"The first thing," said she, "is to send all the servants off, except Ann. We can't afford to pay four girls and a man any longer."

"But who is to keep the garden in order," cried Clarice, "if we discharge the man?"

"It must go without being kept in order," said Bess, "or else we must do it ourselves."

"My poor roses!" sighed Mrs. Greyton. "Mamma's roses shall not suffer," said Lilla. "I will look after them myself."

"And old Mrs. Playford, who spends a month with us every summer?" said Mona. "And the Bidgood girls, who always invite their friends here to the midsummer picnics—and all the people who drive out from the city to lunches and teas—"

"We must make a clearance of the whole of 'em!" said Fenella, crisply—

"unless, indeed, they would like to make a business matter of it and pay their board."

"Oh, Fenella!" cried Mrs. Greyton. "Well, why not, mamma? So far as I can see, we haven't got money enough to buy our own bread and butter—so how can we afford to order ices, and frozen puddings, and *pates de foie gras* for other people? But if we had a regular income, I am almost sure, with Ann's help, that we could set a very nice table for boarders."

Lilla looked terrified. "Mamma," said she, "has it come to this?"

Bess frowned savagely. "Lilla," said she, "don't be a fool!—unless you think you would like to starve."

And while the family were still in committee-of-the-whole, old Mrs. Playford's huge, old-fashioned barouche rumbled up to the door, with a Leaning Tower of Pisa strapped on behind in the shape of trunks!

"I'm a little earlier than usual, my sweet girls," said she, with a smile that revealed the golden hinges of her false teeth after a most ghastly fashion. "But the season is intolerably hot, and my doctor declares it would be suicide for me to remain longer in town. And I know, darlings, I'm always sure of a welcome here!"

Mrs. Greyton was about to reply when Fenella stepped forward.

"Then you haven't heard of it?" said she. "We are ruined, Mrs. Playford. Old Mr. Framingham has spent all our money and gone to Australia. We can't entertain company any longer. But if you would like to board here, at a reasonable compensation, we shall be glad to receive you, and give you all the comforts of a home."

Mrs. Playford's jaw dropped; she tumbled a sickly, putty color.

"John, John!" she cried, to the man; "you needn't unstrap those trunks. I have so many friends who are anxious for my society, that really I am not at liberty to accept your very singular proposition" (to Fenella). "Of course, (to Mrs. Greyton) "I sympathize deeply with you, but we all know that riches have wings, and I never did put any confidence in Mr. Framingham as a business man. So sorry that things should have come to such an awkward complication!"

"There she goes—the old harridan!" said Mona, as the withered hand waved itself from the carriage-window, half-way down the drive. "She has lived upon us for six summers, and now she wouldn't fling one of us a penny if we were starving!"

Old Mrs. Playford was better than an advertisement in the newspaper. The Bidgood girls came no more; the city people kept sublimely away. The old adage concerning the flight of rats from a falling house, came strictly true.

"Rosa Bidgood hasn't even come after that conserve of rose-leaves I promised her," said Mona, sadly. "And I gave five dollars for the spices and essential-oils, and I dried the Jacqueminot and niel-leaves so carefully and Clarice painted such a beautiful butter-fly jar for it!"

"Can I have the pot-pourri, Mona?" asked Bess, suddenly.

"Yes, if you want it," answered Mona, with a shrug of her shoulders. "We can't eat nor drink dried rose-leaves." "Perhaps we can," said Bess to herself.

And she rumaged out divers and sundry rare old porcelain jars and vases from the family store, filled them with the sweet, strangely-scented mass that Mona had concocted, and carried them quietly to town.

"It smells exactly like Mrs. Greyton's drawing-room at the manor house, here!" exclaimed Ferdinand Houghton, as he entered the studio of Miss Malvina Morris, a fair feminine sculptor who had some very original ideas of her own, and was on "hail-fellow-well-met" terms with all the other artists of both sexes.

She was neither young nor pretty, yet every one liked Miss Morris.

"Well, I should think it might," said she. "Do you see those wine-jars on the shelf?"

"Of course I do. What are they?"

"They are filled with conserved rose-leaves. Mona Greyton made them. Bess, the second sister, wants me to sell them for her. Real old porcelain; leaves full of the subtlest scents of Bendemeer. Will you take one at ten dollars, Ferdy?"

"Then it's true?" said Houghton. "About their financial troubles?"

Unfortunately, yes," said Miss Malvina. "I only wish I could help them. Come, buy the pot-pourri—there's a good fellow!"

"It's my last ten-dollar bill," said Ferdinand, "but here goes! Mona Greyton is an angel. Do you suppose, Miss Malvina, she would accept a poor artist like me, with no particular income and nothing to live on?"

"Try it and see," said Miss Morris. "But I'm not half good enough for her."

"Possibly," acceded Miss Malvina. "But there are five girls, you know, and nothing to live on."

So Ferdinand bought the pot-pourri, and rode out at once to the manor house.

"Your uncle, sir, wants to see you up at the house," said the groom who led out his little gray nag.

"I can't stay this morning," said Houghton. "I am in a hurry."

"But it is some very particular business," said the man, running down the pavement after him.

"Oh, hang business!" said Houghton; and off he rode.

Mona was in the garden, with a basket, gathering more rose-leaves. She thought the pot-pourri question promised favorably.

Clarice was painting desperately away at old India ginger-jars, up stairs.

Fenella was writing an advertisement, "Boarders Wanted," for the paper.

"The house is as big as a hotel," said she. "Why shouldn't we make some use of it?"

Mona Greyton listened with smiles and tears to Ferdinand Houghton's vehement proposal.

"But what could we live upon?" said she.

"Why, I could paint pictures!" said this sanguine young wooer. "I'm sure to sell them at a tearing big price, as soon as my name becomes a little better known; and I'll have your mother and all the girls to live with us."

"Oh, Ferdinand!" said Mona, half laughing, half crying. And then the young artist knew that he had not pleaded in vain.

"And it's all owing to the pot-pourri," said she, "the sweet, poetical pot-pourri!"

"Every bit of it," said Ferdinand.

But his uncle listened gravely to the tale, when the young man came home late in the moonlight, with his heart full of his love affairs.

"Humph!" said Uncle Barlow. "How many pictures did you sell during the past year?"

"Two, sir!"

"At how much?"

"Seventy-five dollars each!" reluctantly admitted Ferdinand.

"Humph!" again grunted this relentless old Rhadamanthus. "And you expect to maintain a wife and her mother and four sisters, on a hundred and fifty dollars a year?"

"I shall manage to maintain them in some way, sir," said the unabashed nephew. "There's always the Far West, you know!"

Uncle Barlow laughed.

"I think I can manage to do better than that for you, you young scamp," said he. "If you had turned back this morning when I sent for you, instead of pelting off to the manor house, as if it was a question of life or death, you would have learned that old Framingham had been overhauled in London, en route for Van Dieman's Land, gorged with plunder, like an old leech!"

"What, sir," shouted Ferdinand. "The Greyton's defaulting lawyer?"

"Himself, and none other," said Uncle Barlow. "We had a cable telegraph at eleven o'clock. Mrs. Greyton's money is all safe in the hands of our London agent!"

"But, sir," gasped Ferdinand, "how do you come to know this?"

"Old Dorrance Greyton did me a favor once, when I was a struggling man," said Mr. Barlow. "It was not my intention to stand by and see his widow defrauded without some slight effort in her behalf. It seems that I was just in time."

So there was an end to Greyton troubles. They kept the old manor house. Ferdinand Houghton set up his studio there in one of the great north-lighted rooms, and Mrs. Houghton makes pot-pourris every year, of rose-leaves.

And as fast as the other girls marry off—which is by no means a slow business, for they are every one of them handsome—she gives them each a wedding present of a sweet conserve of scented leaves, in an old Oriental jar.

TOPICS OF THE DAY.

Dr. A. Graham Bell says that out of over 30,000 deaf mutes in the United States, more than half are congenitally deaf, and the proportion in the Old World is still greater. Deafness is far less common in negroes than among white people.

The *Medical Record* estimates that among 1,000 doctors the annual death rate ranges between fifteen and twenty-five, making a yearly loss of 1,800 physicians out of our 90,000. But the supply is such as to remove all cause of apprehension, for the number of medical graduates in 1882-3 was 3,879, more than double the estimated number of deaths.

A poultry farm of 6,000 Plymouth Rocks is owned and carried on by A. C. Hawkins at Lancaster, Mass., says the *Boston Cultivator*. He calculates to have about 8,000 fowls every fall, and carries over about 2,500 laying hens through winter. His farm contains twenty-five acres, and his poultry buildings occupy an acre and a half. They are situated on the slope of a hill and comprise six or seven sheds 200 feet in length. Each shed is divided into apartments of 12x20 feet, and about twenty-five hens are kept in each division. A yard is made in front of each apartment, so that the members of each are by themselves.

It requires a very experienced guesser to decipher the blind addresses of the letters received at the Washington dead letter office, and for that purpose women are employed. In the presence of a correspondent recently one of these guessers made out that Mount Islia meant Monticello; that Tupke, Kance, meant Topeka, Kan.; Eyewood, Hillinoie meant Highwood, Ill.; Ocreg, Alla, meant Oak Ridge, Ala. "Now here is one of a kind that sometimes trouble us," said the guesser, picking up a letter. "It has the street and number, but no city or state is given. This is directed to '2518 St. Mary's avenue, corner Twenty-sixth street,' and that is all. I look at the directories and I find that several cities have streets so designated; but these streets cross each other in Omaha. So St. Mary's avenue, corner of Twenty-sixth street, must be there."

It is but a few years since anything like systematic bee culture has been attempted in the United States, but the business has now become an important industry, more than 35,000,000 pounds of honey being yearly produced and sold. The trade is principally carried on by large capitalists, who often have from 2,500 to 5,000 swarms of bees. In California the bees are farmed out, that is apiaries of 100 swarms or so are placed in the ground of farmers, generally from three to four miles apart. The farmers receive a fixed rent or a share of the honey for their compensation, as may be agreed upon. On an average one acre of ground is estimated to support twenty-five swarms of bees, and the yield of a swarm is generally about fifty pounds of honey a year.

A Washington Territory correspondent of the *San Francisco Chronicle* alleges that the smuggling of Chinamen from British Columbia has attained the proportions of a regular business there. He says that they come from Victoria, and are smuggled across to Dungeness, Point Discovery, or Point Wilson. The distance is about thirty-five miles, and they come over night, in Indian canoes, accompanied by white guides or pilots. As wages in British Columbia are much lower than on the American side and as it has been found practically impossible to watch the coast line, unless a large force is placed there, this smuggling bids fair to continue.

California fruit growers have discovered that apricots bleached with sulphur fumes and then dried in the sun are superior to those that are dried in any other manner or that are canned. They regard this fact of very great importance to the whole State. It enables every fruit, culturist, however limited his means, and however small the product of his orchards, to dry his own fruit for market, and makes him independent of the canning factories. It is also stated that fruit can be prepared in this manner more cheaply than in any other, that its

weight is better preserved, and that it is of superior flavor. Large dealers in dried fruit say that the market for such products of California orchards will always be greater than the supply can possibly be. The United States alone will readily take all the fruit of the kind and quality now being produced by the sun-drying process that California can ever raise. Many thousands of apricot trees have been planted within a recent date in orchard form in southern California. Sun-dried apricots are being sold to California dealers at double the price paid for the best raisins.

Statistics are being collected in France for the purpose of forming an estimate as to whether the total number of inhabitants in the country will be greater or less than it is now at the close of the century. Thus far the figures tend to show that there is likely to be a decrease rather than an increase in the population. There are not upon an average more than two children now in each family in France and, though there has always been an increase in the population since 1806, the rate of the increase has been constantly declining from thirty-eight per 10,000 yearly to twenty-six per 10,000. Returns also state that out of every 100 inhabitants of Paris only thirty-six are born in the department, fifty-seven coming from the provinces, and seven from abroad. Moreover, while the number of births remains nearly stationary in France, the rate of infant mortality is enormous, being as much as twenty-seven per cent. in Normandy and fifteen per cent. for the whole of France.

Most of the recent converts made by Mormon missionaries have been settled in Colorado. One of their settlements, Manassa, in Conejos county, has been visited by a correspondent of the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, who furnishes his paper with a statement of the condition of affairs there, and a number of interviews with individual converts to Mormonism. These immigrants are mostly from Georgia and Kentucky. They were attracted by the preaching of the missionaries, who said nothing about polygamy or blood atonement, and forgot to mention the "doctrines and covenants" and various other peculiar features of Mormonism. "They kept pretty close to the old Bible." They represented that Utah was a land of promise, where all would be better off in a worldly way, and where all was good-will and brotherly love. When they reached their settlement, they found the soil was capable of one good crop in six years; that polygamy was practiced; that they were obliged to buy their supplies of the Mormon dealers, who charged them two or three prices; that the "old Bible" vanished into the background and the doctrines and covenants of the Mormon church came prominently forward; and that they were expected and required to vote according to the dictation of the Mormon leaders. It was an exercise of this last prerogative of the church that finally goaded them to the point of revolt. Half the southerners in the colony are now in Colorado, having refused at the election last November to vote the ticket dictated by the Mormon priesthood.

There was a Chicago man who found out that he was not so peculiarly endowed by nature as he supposed. An inch more than usual would probably be a great deal on a nose. This man had it, and in consequence he overated his nasal importance. A test proved that it does not render him thrilling to the masses. He is a cigar-maker by trade. Whenever he took his walks abroad he was gazed at in amazement. "If I am to be looked on as a curiosity," he reasoned, "it would be better to make a lazy living with my abnormal nose." So he took his big feature to the manager of a ten-cent museum. "Very well," was the offer which he received; "I'll do just the same by you that I do by any other new freak. We can't tell what'll catch on with the public. You can have a place on the platform for a week. If you make a failure, I'll give you five dollars. If you hit 'em, I'll fix a square, liberal salary." "But how'm I to know whether I hit 'em?" the amateur curiosity asked. "By seeing whether the folks stop to look at you. That's the test." The nose was not potent. What had been novel in private life was almost disregarded in a professional. The man returned to his cigar bench.