The Acton Free Press

EVERY THURSDAY MORNING, -AT THE-

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Ausiness Directory. MEDICAL.

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Warerooms -- John St.

John McQueen.

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Poetry.

THE OLD YEAR. The days of the old year are numbered; His stay with us will soon be o'er; His life with vast cares has been cumbered; Ho'll soon alcop to waken no more ; His friends departed.

Alone and sad-hearted. He goes to the unchanging shore. No wonder that he is now dying, Such sorrow and trouble were bis. His young hopes around him are lying. Like fallen leaves blown from the trees;

Far away o'er the hills,

Where eternity fills, May be join all the past centuries. So much has occurred of disruption, Since first he appeared on the scone Of slaughter, repine and corruption,

To darken the time of his reign ; The base persecution, And vile execution, Has branded his life with a stafu. His twelve sturdy children proceded. Each soon passed away from earth's stage, Except the last one, who is needed

When the father expires. Nothing more he desires, And files like a bird from its cage. A month was the length of their sojourn, Borne down with life's burden and care; The weight of the world on their shoulders, Was more than their system could bear; Discouraged and jaded,

To cheer the last hours of his a.go;

Earth's pleasures all faded, They vanished like smoke in the air. The first three were sullen and frigid, 'Twas soldom that either one smiled. Their reign was so chilling and rigid. With little that cheered or beguiled; Fow mourned them when leaving, Or feigned any grieving,

But welcomed with joy the next child.

With gladness received the young brother, Though molting and moody, by turns, Who waked up the old sleeping m other, From resting to growing concerns; The rivers to flowing, The soft winds to blowing. Till emerald beauty returns.

The next one was busy and merry. While songs of bright birds filled the sir, Each day weaving garments so fairy, To cover old limbs brown and bare : All nature transforming. In gay robes adorning,

With blossom and bloom everywhere. Then follows the gayest and brightest, Whose secrets no alchemist knows : Who borrows his colors from sun beams, Which "Soi" the great artist bestows, With delicate tinting, Invisibly printing. No brush of poor mortal e'er shows.

The two next with warmest devotion, Assisted the work to complete, So silently, without commotion, Compounding a world's needed meat, Of corn, herb and root, With rich lucious fruit, To lay A gift at man's foot.

Then two more, each other succeeding, Bearing burdens of bountles for store, To last till the earth reproducing, Shall pour forth abundance more; To serve as a feast, For man and for beast, While winter's storms whistle and roar.

Has little indeed to commend, So barren and void of intention, That none will replace at his end ; Though sometimes reminding, Of storms flerce and blinding. As fogs and the dark mists portend. Dear ninety-nine, we'll not forget thee,

The last that is left us to mention.

For blessings which thou has bostowed, Thy presence has left no dark shadows, As we journeyd o'er life's changing road: We will bid thee adiou, While we further pursue Our way to our lasting abode. -P. L. Grant in Newmarket Era.

A New Year's Gift.

have remained up during the night, for, quivered, and in a sorrowful voice he conalthough his head rested on a downy tinued : "I wish I'd been a new boy when age for past seasons we beg to announce pillow, sleep never visited him during those mamma was here." long, last hours of the old year, nor the Stock for Fall and Winter is aret of the infant successor. At the best him, hold up for his inspection, his harehof times, when a man's or woman's heart ness? Was every word intended to deal a is free from the burden of a disapproving sure blow? When the little seven-yearalso a great advance in British and Foreign | conscience, there is something deeply im- old Eddie spoke of "mamma" Andrew goods, we placed our import orders early. pressive about the "old year night." As Foster could scarce repress a groan. we watch, passing, passing so swiftly, She was gone. Two years before she dying out, those last moments, how many had passed from earth. Oh, if she was there is another chance-a better time, we had been a good husband, and the gentle say; the morrow we will begin a new, make wife could not find in him anything to amenda for the past to him or her. Yet, reproach. But he knew how much was Ol if, within the passing year, that one left undone. How many little, loving acts, that we might have made happier has gone | that made life so doubly sweet, were fortoo-gone beyond recall-then ours are ceasuless regrets. It was not thus, however, with Andrew

> Foster. The particular one whose happiness he had marred still was with him Daily he saw the face, once so bright and beautiful, growing palor; missed the merry, bird-like voice that filled the house with the sweetcat music! Yes: although he knew she was fading under his hard, un- believe." bending will, he would not bring her back to life-aye: for what is life without love Constantly during those midnight hours, as vainly he wood sleep, there would come 900 instead the plaintive little face, with the great beseeching looking eyes. Why would he not yield? Why, because pride of the wealthiest men in the city, give his child to one so far beneath her in position, and possessing nothing more than his own

Harry Landon was one of her father's clerks; and Gertie Foster, despite the toar; great gulf between them, grew to love, with all the devotion of her mature, the handsome young man. Every one liked Harry, and respected him; and no one in Andrew Foster's employ possessed more fully his confidence. Many times he would remark to friende, "Landon is a fine fellow ! noble fellow !" But when the truth came to the proud father that this young man had dared to love his child, his opinion muet bave undergone a great change, for he could scarcely restrain his wrath sufficiently to treat, with any show of decent politeness, Harry Landon when he came to him in a manly, truthful manner, and told his love. "Have you presumed to tell Miss Foster

this, air ?" asked the indignant father. "No, sir. I came to you first, sourcely daring to hope you would give my permission to speak. Still, there was a possibility and I seized it. But I am sure Miss Foster is not ignorant of my fee lings-" "Why, why are you sure, sir?"

"Why? Oh, elt! why do the blind know the sun is shining, when their whole being is filled with its warmth? Need we lingering hope that he might come to her tell them what it is? Every true woman with a word that would break the long knows when she is beloved. Oh, sir, I ask slence, that she might plead anew with you not to give her to me now -not until

The Press Press wishes its readers

I can prove my worthiness. But let me speak to her." "Impossible! I never will consent.

'Tis useless to say more on the subject. And after this conversation I suppose you position with our house." "I was about to ask, sir, if you would

give me letters of introduction to some other establishment?" "Certainly, certainly, Landon. I will see that you have a position quite as good, to say the least, as your present one. I-I am sorry this has happened. I am your

friend in every other way. You must

remember and command my services when | dreaming. Her mood of depression had you wish." And so the young man and his employer | sweetly. Visions of happier times were parted. Days passed until a fortnight had elepsed, and Gertle had not seen Harry it, yet moved not, nor opened her eyes.

candid manner, she went to her father and asked : "Where is Harry Landon, futher?" "He has left us for a better position at Black's," answered her father, with his

too, and with her usual straight-forward | fluence which was over her.

answered softly.

show of interest.

calm and happy.

was Harry Landon.

oyes still on his paper. "Why did he leave you, father? I heard you say you were going to do more for him ?" Andrew Foster raised his eyes then, and with sadness.

looking sternly into his daughter's replied:

"He presumed too far on my friendship | gift I was to bring you, Gertie? he asked. and it was desirable to both him and mysolf that he should seek employment else. | brought me one?" she asked, forcing a gazing into his with eager, anxious expres- | I have never for a moment ceased to think sion. She sunk down on a stool at his of it. It has been a subject of much

a blush suffusing her pretty, child-like put your arms around me, and give me a "Father, did he tell you that he loved | and then go. Look in the library and find him away for ?"

"Yes, Gertie. He might have known I could not listen for a moment to his suit. | about him : forgetting for the time, all but He is a very worthy young man; but her father's effort to please her. She really it was very presuming in him to-" know not why it was, but she saw and felt "Presuming, father, in an honorable, his agitation; and she strove to make him worthy man to love me? I don't think it so. I feel honored by the love of such a one. And, father, he has told you his secret ; I will do so too. Although he may

never know it, I love Harry Landon." There was much said between the father and child, she gently pleading for her love, he chiding and unyielding. A year had gone by since then. Occasionally Gertie would meet Harry Landon on the street. Once they stood side by side at the church door, and Gertie could not resist placing her hand in his, notwithstanding the probability of Mrs. Grundy's declaring it very unmaidenly, she whispered :

"I know all. And although I may never be yours, I will never wed another." Harry was nearer happiness then, than he had dreamed of ever being again. Now that he was assured of her love, her constancy, he would hope and work on.

As Andrew Foster stood before the window that New Year's morning, looking out on the passers-by, many pleasant faces greeted him with a smile, and "Happy New Year, sir." A moment more, and the room door was

thrown open and his boy, his only one, the

youngest of his children, came running up,

orying out: "Happy New Year for papa! See, papa Eddie's happy. New Year's day, with new clothes, new boots, new everything. am going to be a new boy, too. Gertie says everybody must try to make somebody happy to-day ! I am going to make T was New Year's morn. Andrew Nellie happy, for I'll stop teasing her. Foster was up much earlier than wish !-Oh, I wish mamma was here." neuel; in truth, he might as well His blue eyes filled with tears and his lips

Was everybody striving to place before

a heart is filled with vain regrets? But with him, how different he would be ! He gotten then. Again Eddie's voice sounded in the

> father's ear. "Paps, are you going to be a new man to.day? Papa, make me happy first with a splendid pair of skates. And Nollio and Gertie must be happy too, paps. Make Gertie be a new girl, please. She won't sing and play with as ; sho's getting of i, I No argument, no pleading, no matter

now earnest, could have made such an im pression on Andrew Foster as that child's procent prattle. Again the door opened and Gertie and Nellie were beside him. The kisses were given and received. The father saw his of the ships with black ink, and leave the

said nay. Could be, Andrew Foster, one child was striving to be cheerful, and not cast her shadow over him. He told them all to speak their wish, what he should give them that day. Eddie and Nellie were quick to tell, but. Gertin said, with a smile that threatened to be a

> "Give me what you choose, father. You give me so much. I have no wish to speak : what you think I'd like; I trust to your are set in motion.

After breakfast he said : "You will lay seide your deep mourning to-day, my child, and help me receive my friends. We shall have many I think." She promised she would : but her father knew it would be an unpleasant tack-that Gertie would much sooner spend the day quietly with her little ones, or in acts of love and mercy.

The guests were all gone. The tiresome iny was nearly over. Gertie had thrown herself wearily into an arm chair. There was no longer need for dissembling; the forced smales could die away; she could rest and weep. The children had been made happy. Her father had given all save her the New Year presents. She had not owred for any, but she had held a

A Happy New Year,

Andrew Foster had closely watched his

child, as she did, with so much dignity and grace, the honors of his elegant establishment. And he saw, through the parments she wore, never so plainly was will not feel so well contented in your | shown the changes that the last year had wrought when he saw her sink so wearily the minister for his services in farm prointo the chair, his heart smote him, and he ducts. "How ridiculous!" commented the went out quickly. Possibly he feared, should he linger, he might grow weak and

> Gertie heard the hall door close, and she knew her father had gone out for the throw stones." "What do you mean, Jonas Farmer?" evening likely. asked his wife, sharply. How long she remained she knew not

taken wings and she was smiling gently, before her. to the great discontentment of his wife. A cautious step approached. She heard Landon. She missed him from the store | She wished not to throw off the sweet in-

> I believe you're saying that just to He, her father, bent gently, longingly hector me." over her and murmured: "She is eleeping and happy Gertie !" he called softly. "Father, I've not been eleeping," she

> "You know I had been running the farm "I thought you were, and dreaming-"I . was dreaming happy dreams-vain fleeting visions," she said, her voice filled "Have you forgotten your New Year's

"No, sir : I thought you had. Have you Parson Steadman told the man he hadn't the money by him, but would be Her beautiful, truthful eyes were still "Yes, little daughter, I have brought it; over again in a few days and settle, and he hired man told him that would be all "Well, when we were married, I gave

feet, leaned her head caressingly against | weight. You left it to my decision, and I him a moment, and then whiepered, with wished to be sure of pleasing you. Now the parson a brand-new ten-dollar bill, one that I had got clean from the bank for that | bottle. kiss-one of Gertie's old loving caresses- purpose. your daughter? And was it that you sent | your New Year's gift," her father said, his | came the parson to our place. He asked whole form trembling with emotion. She was again a child, clinging lovingly

> "Go, go now darling, you are still my night before, and thirty-five cents besides, own dear Gertle," he said with another and handed them to me. "Some one will soon rob me of my darling," he said, smiling sadly.

> "Not likely, papa," she answered "If I had recognized you as the man thinking, "I shall never leave him. Oh! why will he not relent ?" She opened the door, passed through he ball, and entered the library. The father should have been aquare.' strained his ear to catch the sound of joyous surprise. He hears it. It falls on through the form of passing the money his ear and sinks into his heart, and he

"Gone! Mine no longer." Seeking her father's gift, she raised her eyes, and there, smiling, standing before her, his arms put forth to welcome her,

She could not realize the great joy-it was too much. She dared not accept it yet. And withdrawing herself from his enciroled arms, she said : "Come, come to father! Can he

that we shall be happy ?" Kneeling before him, sho asked, between tears and smiles: "Do you mean-Oh, father! Tell what it is?"

choice. Have I succeeded in pleasing you little one?" HAD HIM FAST. The English people will never under-

stand the humorous temper of the American, which makes him ask such questions as that recorded by Mark Twain as having been asked by a friend of his in the British Museum. A guide had exhibited an Egyptian mummy, and discoursed long upon the antiguity of it, and the Egyptian process of embalming, and so forth : and at last the American asked, "Is

It was only recently, according to a letter in an exchange, that in St. Paul's Cathedral a London guide held forth the to an American gentleman : "That, sir, is the tomb of the greatest

"It is, sir, the tomb of Lord Nelson. This marble sarcophigges weight forty-two tons. Hipside that is a steel receptacle weighing twelve tone, and hinside that is a leaden casket, 'ermetically sealed, weighing two tons. Hinside that is a ma'ogany coffin 'olding the ashes of the great 'ero."

"Well," said the Yankee, after reflecting

a moment, "I guess you've got him. If he

ever gets out of that telegraph me at my

paval 'ero Europe or the whole world ever

BATTLE AT SEA, WITH CHALK AND VINEGAR.

Shape pieces of chalk into ships, plan- part with my Resolution Cushion for the ing the bottoms evenly, and use matches world !" for masts and smokestacks. Mark come others uncolored. Place the rival ships in a pan or plate, pour vinegar in between the forces. You will hear a sharp hissing sound like escaping steam, and the ships will at once move forward, leaving tracks of foam in their wake. Their speed increases as they near the dividing line, and they come together with a crash and a jump, striving to push one another out. but-" she hesitated-she almost dared to | Sometimes the battle is very exciting, the breathe it forth. No, no; she would not victorious side being the one with the most cloud his heart that day. She cast aside ships left in the centre. The chemistry the wild hope, and continued: "Bring me | class may be able to explain why the ships

_____ A HAPPY NEW YEAR. Just at the turn of the midnight, When the children are fast asleep, The tired Old Year slips out by himself, Glad of a chance to be laid on the shelf, And the New Year takes a peop At the beautiful world that is waiting

For the wonderful things in his pedier's pack;

Weather, all sorts, there will be no lack,

For the hours that he will bring:

And many a marvellous thing.

Flowers, by hosts and armies, Stars and sunshine and rain The merry times and the serrowful times. Quickstep and jingle and dirge and chimes, And the weaving of joy and pain. When the children wake in the morning, Shouting their "Happy New Year," The year will be started well on his way, Swinging along through his first white day,

Twelve long months for his journey: Fifty-two weeks of a spell ; At the end of it all be'll slip out himself, Glad of a chance to be laid on the shelf. At the stroke of the midnight bell.

With the path before blin clear.

HOW HE PAID THE MINISTER.

The wife of a well-to-do Vermont farmer called the attention of her husband to newspaper article describing a wedding out West, where the groom had compensated

good lady. Her husband smiled- "It isn't the ordinary thing," he remarked, "but then people who live in glass houses mustn't

"Wal," returned Jonas, "when I married you, I paid the minister two pige, and he gave me thirty-five cents' change and with that Mr. Farmer burst into a laugh, "I've lived with you thirty years and I never heard that before," she said, "and I should like to know what you mean by it.

"No. M'ri," answered her spouse, when his mirth had somewhat subsided, "I'll tell you how it happened.

for father before were married, and Parson Steadman, who married us, had just come to town. He wanted a couple of pigs, and came over to our place to get them. I was gone, but the hired man sold them to him, by weight, and they amounted to just ten dollars and thirty-five cents.

Next morning, bright and early, over the hired man if I was at home, and when I came out he was pretty much surprised to see that I was the same man that he had married the day before. He turned kind of red and looked a little queer, and said he had come over to settle for those two pige, and he took from his pooket that very ten-dollar bill that I gave him the

"I burst out langhing and he looked kind of sober for a minute, then he burst out laughing, too.

owed for the pigs, when you were at my house last night,' he said, 'I could have handed you thirty-five cents, and wo "So you see, M'ri, that while we went

RESOLUTION CUSHIONS.

back and forth you were practically

bought for two pigs, minus thirty-five

The was an expectant smile on Grandma Bartlett's face. She pulled the shade over the lamp and drew the curtains, shutting her room in cozily. The clock on | The Week of Prayer, as organized by the the mantle was ticking the old year away | Evangelical Alliance, has had a remarkas fast as it could hurry him off. It was able influence for good in all churches and duck and New Year's eve, and that was the in all lands. It has been followed by a time for the Pincushion coremony at season of spiritual awakening in multi-Bartlett's. Fred met Alice on the stairs, tudes of cases, and the followers of Christ and Belle and Arthur came along the hall. | in the various denominations have been Belle carried Baby Letty in her arms, and | brought closer together. "Gertie's New Year's gift-her father's they each bore a bristling little red tomato pincushion in their hands.

Grandma had placed five hassocks in a "Come, dearies," she called out Arthur's subdued knock. They filled in, twentieth century. All Christian En-

dropping to her hassock. "O grandma, my | making these services spiritually powerful. quehion is full of pils. I broke my resolotion every other day. I resolved to keep proportion as believing souls lay hold of my temper, you know, and I got so tired of | the promises, and thus link themselves by poking in a pin for a slip, nights at bed- faith to the might of Omnipotence. He

Letty stuck up her ousbion. It was churches, what multitudes of souls may be "Now, dears," said grandma, "proceed

with the ceremony."

Solemly they each tumbled their pins inton box on the table. Another stood "Why, there's not half so many as last year, grandma!" cried Fred. "Why! why! And we all felt

happily, picking up Letty to hog her. "Now for grandma's New Year's pre-They were beautiful books and games. "I always feel as if you paid us for being naughty," said Alice, looking up with a mile from her book. "But I wouldn't

"Clean coshions again," said grandma

Arthur looked at his empty oushion. "I'm glad those pine are gone," he said. "A clean start for a happy New Year. I say, grandma, how we love you !" And four impetuous pairs of arms simost smothered dear, gentle grandma.

MOTHER AT PRAYER.

"Once says a writer, "I suddenly opened the door of my mother's room and saw her on her knees beside her chair, and heard surprise her speak my name in prayer. I quickly and quietly withdrew with a feeling of awe and reverence in my heart. Soon I 'em, they'd be pleased, and besides that, went away from bome to school, then to bein' visitors, they'd feel sort of 'obliged to college, then into life's sterner duties. | bnv." But I never forgot that one plimpse of my mother at prayer, nor the one word, my | that he was forced to abandon-greatly to own name which I heard her utter. Well his surprise as well as his regret-his prodid I know that what I had seen that day | ject of mingling business with entertainwas but a glimpse of what was going on | ment. every day in that sacred closet of prayer, and the consciousness strengthened me a thousand times in duty, in danger, and in struggle."

SEASONABLE SIZE. Johnny Jones was one of the children who still bave faith in Santa Claus. Two

days before Christmas he entered the village store and asked for a pair of stockings. "What size do you want?" inquired the salesmen. "About number twenty," said Johnny. "But, my little man, you can't wear anything larger than a four."

"Yes, but I sin't going to wear them. Day after to-morrow is Christmas." The Free Press wishes its readers THE OLD AND THE NEW

The old year has gone, with its sorrows. Its griefs and its palus swallowed up With the hopes and the aims of te-morrow's Unouding, the sweets of life's cup. All bitterness, batred, rescutment, In Oblinion's sea now are cast. All pleasures, delights and contentment Are mirrored in mists of the past. For a fortnight the earth has slopt under A mantle of downlest snow, calm, childlike, upbroken slumber. A dreamless and peaceful repose.

But the mantle grow murky and blackoned By ashes, and deepest of grime, Just as all of life's pure things are ravished And tarnished by cycles of time. But now as I look from my window, With an optimist's vision of cheer, soo fleecy flakes low descending.

The mantle beems purified, clear. So the pictures of hope that have vanished Shall be framed in a network of gold, And the pure and sweet thoughts of the New

Blot out all the sins of old. HE GOT THE SUGAR. The following anecdots of a tame monkey, to whom was given a corked

the sugar was a problem that bade fair to drive him crazy. Sometimes, in an impulse of disgust, he would throw the bot'le out of his reach, and then be distracted until it was given back to him. At other times he would sit with a countenance of intense dejection. contemplating the bottled sugar, and then, as if pulling himself together for another effort at solution, would sternly take up the problem afresh, and gaze into the

bottle with a lump of sugar inside, indi-

cates that the animal, though unable to

invent, could imitate. A phrenologiet

would say that the monkey had "percep-

tion" but not "causality." How to get at

He would tilt it one way and try to drink the engar out of the neck, and then suddenly reversing it, try to outch it as it fell out at the bottom.

Under the impression that he could capture the sugar by surprise, he kept rasping his teeth against the glass in futile bites, and warming to the pursuit of the revolving lump, used to tie himself into regular knots around the bottle. Fits of the most ludicrous melancholy would alternate with spasms of delight as

a new idea seemed to suggest itself, followed by a fresh series of experiments. Nothing availed however, until one day a light was shed upon the problem by a jar containing bauanas falling from the table with a crash and the fruit rolling about in all directions. His monkeyship contemplated the catastrophe, and reasoned upon

Lifting the bottle high in his paws, he brought it down upon the floor with ... trenendous noise, smashing the glass intofragments' after which he calmly transferred the sugar to his mouth, and munched it with much estisfaction.

ENTERING THE NEW YEAR.

It is fitting that Christians should begin the year in the spirit of prayerfulness.

The services that begin the year 1900

will be characterized by specially impressive associations. It is the last year of this marvellous century, and the year that is to prepare for the still more marvellous deavor Societies should co-operate with the "Stools of repentance," cried tall Belle, | church workers to the fullest extent is The Week of Prayer will be valuable in commands infinite resources. Nothing "Look at my lazy pine," mourned Fred. is too hard for the Lord. His power and "And my behind-time stickers," chimed | wisdom and grace are sufficient to quicken and dull soul, strengthen any laggard arm, "I didn't think I did put off things so | gird with might any selfier for the fray. often," sighed Arthur, and then Baby What blessings may fall upon the

led to Christ before the dawn of the

twentieth century, if the Christian

worl I should unitedly wast upon God in

earnest, believing prayer! - Endeavor Her-

READY FOR BUSINESS. To be diligent in business is commendable, but surely one may err on the side of too great diligence by being ready for a trade at an unsuitable time. A mappeddler, in pursuance of his vocation. chanced to stop at a hotel in a Long Island village. A friend, whom he had known elsewhere, seeing him at the botel, invited him to a purty which he was to give the same ovening.

The map-peddler came, and when

"How de do?" he said. "Got any nails?

I thought as there was to be a good many

folks here to-night, I'd hang up some of

my maps here and let 'em look at 'em.

Good chauce for business. Maybe some of

received by his host at the door, was found

with three maps in his hands.

'em would like to buy 'em, and I could explain 'em just as well as not." His host endeavored to persuade him that it would not be a suitable place to urge his business, much to the man's "Now you don't understand," urged the

peddler. "'Twould amuse and interest But he was then spoken to so plainly

MORTIFYING.

The other day a Detroit mother poured

some ink on the pantry shelf, near the augar box, and went up stairs, leaving her small son playing with the cat. When she came down the boy sat by the window wearing a placid, innocent look, but there were ink stains on his fingers. "There! you've been at the sugar!" she exclaimed as she seized him by the collar. "Mother, do you think I'd steel sugar ?" "What made 'em?" "Those stains, mother?" "Well, I cannot tell a bold lie, mother. I think I've commenced to mortify." She wasn't sure, and he was allowed to go out and play circus.

· A Happy New Year.

1875-1900