The Little House By the Road

A New Year's Story

BY ANNIE HAMILTON DONNELL

Martha Lowe met Henry at the side door.

"Any news?"

Henry Lowe was thick and short, and clambered out from behind the wheel of his little car with difficulty. Everybody in East Lebanon, except Martha, his wife, called Henry fat, but Martha loved him. Her tender glance refused to linger on any of his suburbs, but went straight to the pleasant residence streets of his eyes, where Henry dwelt.

She always asked, "Any news?" when he came back from town, but today—if he had noted—there was a difference. You might say she was in a hurry for him to get through his news.

"M-m—why, they're paintin' the parsonage a primin' coat. Pliny Sleeper's got a new car—tickled to death! They're goin' to have the church social that was put off last week 'count o' the rain, *this* week—want you should carry a meat pie, Marthy. Lessee—oh, yes! an' butter's riz' again."

He was through now. Martha had barely waited.

"Well, I've got some news for you! Sophia Cox has been here. Angeline ...y's coming home, Henry."

... Not to the old Perry Place? ...t much old Perry Place left ..."

...hat's the heartbreaking ...e had a good cry! ...nt. I slipped over ...hree whole ...

offended the sight and principles of Lebanon. Old Miss Angeline had "come into" her money six years ago and gone away to more luxurious living in the city. In six years, much may happen to a little house beside the road. Especially, to a little house on the way to a school. The curious, innate fascination of snapping, breaking window panes had not escaped the youth of Lebanon.

Angeline Perry, plunged in utter melancholy, bereft suddenly of all her beloved luxuries—driven back to a loveless, empty home—remembered many things. She hated—she hated so to remember! She hated so to go back!

"They'll all of 'em crow over me behind my back. They'll hate me worse than ever—I hate them! 'Look!' they'll point, 'there goes Angeline Perry—poor as a rat. Let her put on airs, now!'" For that was one of the things she hated to remember—that she had put on airs.

She had a mental picture of what the "Perry Place" must be now. Angeline was of a quick intelligence. Oh, she knew—she knew! It would stand there beside the road, a bleak horror—a wreck as piteous as her own wrecked life. Yet she must go back there to it. Fate drove her back with thangs that cut into her bleeding pride.

And no one cared.

"H... could they care? I never cared," she thought in her sorry musings. The world was a cruel place.

Martha Lowe, on the evening of her talk with Henry about Angeline, ...have been seen slipping quietly ... frozen roadway, curiously ... She had taken advan... 's absence, almost as if ... Henry to see her go. ...hores and gone down ... he often did. ...to the tip-end of ... had held off ...risp with ...d Mar... was

Henry? Glasses of jelly on the pantry shelves! Ghost jelly! An' there is a crock of butter, too—"

"There's a new plank in this porch floor, an' I've found a saw," contributed Henry, excitedly. "An' look a-here, will you, Martha—quick, before the moon goes under again! See that corner post that holds the porch roof up? Well sir, that post was all leant over last night! Straight enough now!"

"Hullo—hullo!" a voice called from the front path. A figure loomed into faint sight. "My hat, if 'tain't you folks! I'm constable o' this town—I arrest all suspicious prowlers!"

"What you doin' here, Pliny Sleeper—*prowlin'?*" demanded the laughing voice of Martha.

"Me? Oh, I had my new car out, exercisin' it. Just kind of brought along a few little things on the back seat—awful lot o' room in that car! Say, you folks—" Pliny's voice sobered. "Lebanon's kind o' worked up over Miss Angeline's comin' back. It's all over town. My wife's worked up. I've got some fixin's—paint cans an' things. I don't know what's the use of being' a painter if you don't paint somethin'! An' I brought one o' my ladders along, on the runnin' board—"

"You're going to paint this house!" cried Martha, joyously.

"'Twon't take so terrible long. It's a little house, an' the boys'll help. We'll start right in, in the mornin'."

"Henry! Henry, do you hear?"

Henry had heard.

"An', say, they's a lot o' little carpenterin' jobs—'Ern Libby wants to know what's the use o' bein' a carpenter——"

"Henry! Henry!"

It was a good kind world. Lebanon was sorry—listen to what Pliny was saying now!

"Everybody's worked up. I tell you it's hard lines on the old lady. Losin' out like that, an' the old place not fit to come to——"

"We'll make it fit! Henry, Pliny—listen! Let's have a 'bee'—a Busy ...body that's sorry come to ...hildren, too, ..."

had been her cat—her only companion—and she had left him behind with one of the neighbors. That was how much she had thought of Peter! But now, she thought of him—now she longed for Peter.

"He'd purr," she sighed. "He'd love me enough for that." No one else in all the world would purr. But, of course, in six years, Peter would be dead.

"East Leb'non! East Leb'non!" the brakeman was intoning, and old Angeline had got home. Someone on the little station platform was shouting "Happy New Year!" to someone who was getting off the train. It must be pleasant to hear that shouted to you. Miss Angeline caught sight of the answering face. A young girl was springing down into the arms of a youth. So there was love in the world—Miss Angeline had forgotten.

The rattling little station car received her and her few belongings—all she had retrieved from the wreck of her life. Sitting rigid and straight here, as on the train, she was rattled away. She would not look on either side of her. There was nothing—there was nobody—she wanted to see. Thus she lost the pleasant nods and greetings of a few on her way. She went on solitarily to the Perry Place by the side of the road.

Then she looked.

It was early twilight only, but a ...ght glimmered dim in the remaining ... one of her windows. A ...smoke curl... ...himney! ...t and

Don't let your past spoil your future. Don't let the old year spoil the new. No matter how many mistakes or failures you have made, or what misfortunes have overtaken you, even though you have lost everything you had in the world—family, money, friends, property, make a new start. Success does not depend upon the distance you have traveled, but the way you are headed no matter how discouraging the outlook, keep headed toward your goal. A stout heart, an indomitable will and unwavering faith in the power that sustains you will win out in spite of the most unfortunate and discouraging conditions.—O. S. Marden.

A "Recollection" New Year's Party

If you are planning to "watch the old year out," invite your friends to take part in a "recollection" New Year's party while you wait for the clocks to strike twelve. Ask all to come prepared to offer something connected with their childhood—a story, an anecdote, a song—that will furnish entertainment. And ask all who can remember their youthful plans—things that they would do some day—to come dressed in costumes representative of those plans.

For example, the woman or girl who wanted to be a nurse will wear a white apron and cap over her party frock and carry a thermometer case and a wrist watch; the would-be pirate, armed with an old sword, will come in a scarlet bandanna and gay trousers and sash; the profes: e will wear sober black and carry a globe and use spectacles; the artist will come in a smock, with an artist's cap on her head and a palette in her hand.

Of course it will be in keeping with the spirit of the occasion to play all the old-time games. Have a memory test too. Place a number of miscellaneous articles on a table, let each guest look at the collection for three minutes and then write down what he or she remembers. Give a prize—a notebook for a "memory book"—to the one who remembers the largest number of things.

Have ready as many leaflets—with the title Looking Backward written on the covers—as there are guests. Each page should carry a different heading bearing on an old-time interest—winding bee, spelling match, singing school, and so on. Give the leaflets out to be filled just as a dance program is filled; that is, the company can record the names of partners for each contest named in the leaflets.

For the winding bee let the girls hold skeins of yarn while the boys wind the yarn into balls, the first couple to finish to have a prize. The singing school is to determine which couple can sing best. A booby prize for the most unsuccessful performers will furnish additional fun.

About eleven o'clock serve the refreshments: fruits, nuts, doughnuts and sweet cider,—everyone sitting round the fire, if there is a fire,—and let each in turn tell his story or anecdote or sing his song.

Meanwhile let one of the boys steal away and dress up as the old year. A white beard and wig, a long dark cloak or coat and a staff are all the costume that he needs. Give him a basketful of little calendars,—one for each guest,—and as the last stroke of twelve dies away let him enter and distribute the calendars.

The New Year.

A pathless stretch of glistening snow,
The river locked in the vale below;
Calm, cold smile of a Wintry moon
And the New Year born in the night's still moon!
Little New Year,
We're glad you're here.
Welcome, thrice welcome, happy New Year!

A deep, still hush through the leafless trees,
And a low, sad moan of a dreary breeze,
The distant peal of a midnight bell
Ringing the Old Year out! Ah, well.
Through the cold snow,
Follow him slow,
Gaily he came, but he's loath to go.

Lost in the folds of the drifting snow,
Locked in the depths of the stream below,
Sorrow and pain of the year that's gone,
Sinning and strife through the days now gone;
Far out of sight,
... the night,

Some people seem to think that any time but the present is a good time to live in. But the men and women who move the world must be a part of the present. They must touch the life that now is, and feel the thrill of the movement of civilization. It is not living in the world of yesterday, or in the world of to-morrow, but in to-day's world, that counts. We must know the world and the day we are living in, and keep in responsive touch with the great movements of civilization. Much of the precious energy of mankind is wasted in living in the past or dreaming of the future.

A Year's Pennies.

Hi penny, ho penny, dollar and dime!
What shall we buy in the breezy spring time?
Buy us a kite to fly up to the sky,
Over the steeples and ever so high;
...tiful ... that will fly like a
...body that's
...

TWELFTH NIGHT

The sixth of January is called Twelfth Night, being the twelfth day after Christmas, and ends the Christmas period of holiday making. So upon this night a King of Beans is named. A large cake is baked, a bean is placed in the cake. It is then cut, each man partaking of a slice. He who finds the bean is king for the night.

There must be a queen also, so the ladies draw lots from a large bowl for the honor of being queen. This is a most important ceremony in France. The mock sovereign is called the "Roi de la Feve," meaning good luck; and "il trouve la feve au gateau"—he hath found the bean.

In England they lift the mock king to the rafters, where he marks a cross on the beams with a piece of chalk; this is done three times amid great cheering and laughter. This is supposed to ward off evil spirits.

MAKING THE BEAN CAKE.

Beat three eggs without separating and one cup of sugar until light and frothy and creamy. Weighing out eight ounces of flour (two cups), sift one-half lightly into the egg and sugar, mixing it thoroughly. Add one-half cup of water to the cake. Beat for four minutes, then add the remaining flour, juice and the grated rind of one lemon. One-quarter teaspoonful of salt, three level teaspoonfuls of baking powder. Beat the whole to a light smooth mass. Bake either in a large round or square pan in a moderate oven for fifty-five minutes. Then place a large bean and clove in the cake. Ice with water icing.

He who finds the clove must be the knave or court jester. In France the bean king pays the cost of the feast. In Yorkshire, England, the people invite friends and neighbors as their guests for cards and supper, serving mince pies as an indispensable feature of the repast. After supper the wassail bowl is brought in, with the top covered with roasted apples floating in a sea of cider. The cider is the drink, while all sing the toast:

Here's to the old apple tree
Whence thou may bud and blow
And whence thou may bear apples enow,
Hats full, caps, full,
Bushels, bushels, sacks full
And my pockets full—Huzza!

This is the old Devonshire famous toast to the orchard on the Twelfth Night for a prosperous harvest.

TO MAKE THE WASSAIL BOWL.

The wassail bowl plays an important part in the Twelfth Night festivities.

Roast as many apples as you will ... Place in a large punch ...