

THE OLD WORK BASKET.

No delicate filigree frail,
With zephyrs and silks showing through,
To be tenderly handled and cared for—
Unfit home's real duties to do,
But sturdy and close interwoven,
And strong and ample to hold
Many small garments and bundles,
And rags and scraps manifold.
The curves of the close-woven body
Are dented and cranked by the weight
Of the burdens of patching and darning
It has borne with housewifely state.
The gleam of its once golden willows
Is darkened and browned by the years—
The stains on the rim and the handle
Are sad as the markings of tears.
Nine little children have ransacked
Its depths, in the years long ago,
For treasures of doll-rags and trap-strings,
Or bandage for finger or toe.
And night after night by the work-stand,
In straight-backed, shuck-bottomed chair,
The mother, with thin, patient fingers,
Has sewed with painstaking care—
Dreaming vague dreams of the future
Of the little ones sleeping up stairs—
Praying the Saviour to keep them
From the world's delusions and snares.
Long years have passed, and the children,
In the ranks of the army of Life,
Marched out from the home of their childhood
To join in the world's ceaseless strife.
With no childish hands to upset it,
Or fumble its work o'er and o'er,
In stately and dignified loneliness,
The old basket sits on the floor.
And when to the men and the women,
Who knew it in childhood's fresh day,
In the pauses of life's hard endeavor
Come dreams of the home far away—
When all that is sacred and hallowed
Comes up at memory's call,
To gentle the hearts growing careless,
The old basket comes first of all.
And out on Texas prairies,
And up in Tennessee's hills,
In the backwoods of dear Alabama,
Are hearts that its memory thrills.
And whatever distance may part them,
Or however time may estrange,
The memories of home and of childhood,
At least, can never know change.
Lucy S. V. KING.
CHATTANOOGA, TENN., Feb. 16, 1884.

"WRITE THEM A LETTER TO-NIGHT."

Don't go to the theater, concert or ball,
But stay in your room to-night;
Deny yourself to the friends that call,
And a good long letter write—
Write to the sad old folks at home,
Who sit when the day is done,
With folded hands and downcast eyes,
And think of the absent one.
Don't selfishly scribble, "Excuse my haste,
I've scarcely the time to write,"
Lest their brooding thoughts go wandering back
To many a by-gone night.
When they lost their needed sleep and rest,
And every breath was a prayer
That God would leave their delicate babe
To their tender love and care.
Don't let them feel that you've no more need
Of their love or counsel wise;
For the heart grows strongly sensitive
When age has dimmed their eyes.
It might be well to let them believe
You never forget them quite;
That you deem it a pleasure when far away,
Long letters home to write.
Don't think that the young and giddy friends,
Who make your pastime gay,
Have half the anxious thoughts for you
That the old folks have to-day.
The duty of writing do not put off;
Let sleep or pleasure wait,
Let the letter for which they looked and longed
Be not a day or an hour too late.
For the sad old folks at home,
With locks fast turning white,
All longing to hear from the absent one—
Write them a letter to-night.

"FOT WOULD YOU TAKE?"

She was ready for bed and lay on my arm,
In her little frilled cap so fine,
With her golden hair falling out at the
edge,
Like a circle of noon sunshine.
And I hummed the old tune of "Banbury
Cross,"
And "Three Men who put out to Sea,"
When she sleepily said, as she closed her
blue eyes:
"Papa, fot would you take for me?"
And I answered: "A dollar dear little heart,"
And she slept, baby weary with play,
But I held her warm in my love-strong arms,
And rocked her and rocked away.
The dollar meant all the world to me,
The land and the sea and sky,
The lowest depth of the lowest place,
The highest of all that's high.
The cities with streets and palaces,
Their pictures and stores of art,
I would not take for one low, soft throb
Of my little one's loving heart.
For all the gold that was ever found
In the busy, wealth-finding past,
Would I take for one smile of my darling's
face,
Did I know it must be the last.
So I rocked my baby and rocked away,
And I felt such a sweet content,
For the words of the song expressed to me
more
Than they ever before had meant.
And the night crept on and I slept and
dreamed
Of things far too glad to be,
And I wakened with lips saying close in my
ear:
"Papa, fot would you take for me?"
—S. B. McManus, in Brooklyn Eagle.

THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW.

BY FATHER RYAN.

How swift they go,
Life's many years,
With their winds of woe
And their storms of tears,
And the darkest of nights whose shadowy slopes
Are lit with the flashes of starriest hopes,
And their sunshiny days on whose calm heavens
loom
The clouds of the tempest—the shadows of
gloom!
And ah! we pray
With a grief so drear,
That the years may stay
When their graves are near;
Tho' the brows of to-morrows be radiant and
bright,
With love and with beauty, with life and with
light,
The dead hearts of yesterdays, cold on the bier,
To the hearts that survive them are evermore
dear.
For the heart so true
To each Old Year cleaves;
Tho' the hand of the New
Flowers garlands weaves.
But the flowers of the future, tho' fragrant and
fair,
With the past's withered leaflets may never com-
pare;
For dear is each dead leaf—and dearer each
thorn—
In the wreaths which the brows of our past
years have worn.
Yea! men will cling
With a love to the last,
And wildly fling
Their arms round their past!
As the vine that clings to the oak that falls,
As the ivy twines round the tumbling walls;
For the dust of the past some hearts higher
prize
Than the stars that flash out from the future's
bright skies.
And why not so?
The old, old years,
They knew and they know
All our hopes and fears;
We walked by their side, and we told them each
grief,
And they kissed off our tears while they whis-
pered relief;
And the stories of hearts that may not be re-
vealed
In the hearts of the dead years are buried and
sealed.
Let the New Year sing
At the Old Year's grave;
Will the New Year bring
What the old year gave?
Ah! the Stranger-Year trips over the snows,
And his brow is wreathed with many a rose;
But how many thorns do the roses conceal
Which the roses, when withered, shall so soon
reveal?
Let the New Year smile
While the Old Year dies;
In how short a while
Shall the smiles be sighs?
Yea! Stranger-Year, thou hast many a charm,
And thy face is fair and thy greeting warm,
But, nearer than thou—in his shroud of snows—
Is the furrowed face of the Year that goes.
Yea! bright New Year,
O'er all the earth,
With song and cheer,
They will hail thy birth;
They will trust thy words in a single hour,
They will love thy face, they will laud thy power,
For the New has charms which the old has not,
And the Stranger's face makes the Friend's for-
got.

THE BOY WHO WOULD NOT GO TO BED.

[Independent.]

You may think him a dunce,
But he begged that for once
He might sit up all night, or as long as he pleased;
The nurse was in tears,
With her murmured "My dears!"
But only the louder and faster he teased.
Overhearing the din,
His father came in:
"Wish to sit up all night, John?" he thoughtfully
cried:
"You shall have your request
Till you've learned we know best.
Nurse can go. I will stay at this naughty boy's
side."
When two hours had passed,
John grew sleepy at last
And so tired that he feared he would fall from his
chair;
But, attempting to go,
Heard his father's stern "No!"
Keep your seat at the table. Your place, sir, is
there."
Oh! how slow ticks the clock,
With its dicky dock,
(For his father insists he should keep wide
awake).
Till quite humbly he said:
"May I please go to bed?"
I've found you were right, and I made a mis-
take."
His father said yes;
And now you can guess
If ever that boy did the same thing again.
No sermon could preach,
No punishment teach,
A lesson more clearly than he learned it then.
Now, boys, when you're told
That it's bed-time, don't scold,
And say that you feel just like keeping awake;
Sitting up all the night
Isn't such a delight.
Just try it for once and you'll own your mistake.

PRESENCE.

[You'll's Companion.]

Full of rest the western breeze
Makes its music through the trees,
Thou canst feel its breathing warm,
But thine eyes behold no form.
In thine inner consciousness
Thou canst feel the sweet caress
Of thy Maker's constant care.
Shalt thou doubt because thine eyes
View no splendid vision rise,
Glorifying all the air?

MINE SHILDREN.

O dose shildren, dose shildren dey bod-
dher mine life!
Vhy don'd dey keep quiet like Gretchen,
mine wife?
Vot makes dem so shook full of miserief,
I vunder,
A-shumping der room roundt mit noisec
like dunder?
Hear dot? Vas der any ding make sooch
a noise
As Herman and Otto, mine two leedle
poys?
Ven I dake oud mine pipe for a good,
quiet shmoke,
Dey crawl me all ofer, und dink id a
shoke
To go droo mine bockets to see vot dey
fird,
Und if mid der latch-key my vatch dey
cah vian.
Id takes someding more as dher fader
und moder
To quiet dot Otto und his leedle broder.
Dey shtub oudt dher boots, und var
holes in dere knees
Of dher drouzers und stockings und
sooch dings as dese.
I dink if dot Croesus vas lifing to-day,
Dose poys make more bills as dot kaiser
could pay;
I find me qvick oudt dot some riches
dake vings,
Ven each couple a tays I must buy dem
new dings.
I bring dose two shafers some toys efry
tay,
Pecause "Shonny Schwarts has sooch
nice dings," dey say.
"Und Shonny Schwarts' parents vas
poorer as ve"—
Dot's vot der young rashkels vas saying
to me.
Dot oldt Santa Klaus mit a sleigh fool
of toys
Don'd gif sadisfaction to dose greedy
poys.
Dey kick der clothes off ven ashleep in
dher ped,
Und get so mooch croup dot dey al-
almostt vas dead;
Budt id don'd make no tifferent; before
id vas light
Day vas oop in der morning mit billows
to fight.
I dink it vas bedher you don'd got some
ears
Ven dey play "Holdt der Fort," und den
gif dree cheers.
O dose shildren, dose shildren, dey bod-
dher mine life!
Budt shtop shust a leedle. If Gretchen,
mine wife,
Und dose leedle shildren dey don'd been
around,
Und all droo der house der vas nefer a
sound—
Vell, poys, vy you look oud dot vay mit
surprise?
I guess dey see tears in dher oldt fader's
eyes.
—Harper's Magazine.

THANKSGIVING.

BY HENRY T. STANTON.

The grass came up in spring, and grew
The great wide closure over;
The heavy kine went knee-deep through
The riot vines of clover;
The regal bees on virgin bloom
Their waxen thighs were drumming;
By vale and mead, with new perfume,
The vagrant air was coming.
The plow man ran his mellow groove—
A border to the fallow,
The dove went cooing to the dove;
The fish o'er the shallow.
Thus March and April through their terms
A vigor fine were showing,
And all the May was full of germs,
And all the germs were growing.
The milk-tipped lily by the pool
That opal-sets the meadow,
Bent white and silent from its stool
Hid in the under shadow,
The sea green tassel broke the husk
To prove the later comer;
The rose and pink to scent to dusk,
Adjoined the eve of summer.
With stubble thick the fields were set,
Their yellow glory winnowed,
And mild October winds were met
In holy, autumn synod;
And thus the goodly news went round,
Till member greeted member;
"In fruit and grain the year is crowned,
And peace pervades November.
For this give thanks to God who rules
His many people over,
Who plants the lily by the pools,
And tangles rank the clover
Give thanks to him for fecund earth,
For pregnant mari and fallow,
Who brings all being into birth
To consecrate and hallow.