

Farewell, Old Year.

Farewell, Old Year we walk no more together
I catch the sweetness of thy latest sigh,
And, crowned with yellow brake and
withered heather,
I see thee stand beneath this cloudy sky.

Here in the dim light of a gray December.
We part in smiles, and yet we meet in
tears;
Watching thy chilly dawn, I well remember
I thought thee saddest born of all the
years.

I knew not then what precious gifts were
hidden
Under the mist that veiled thy path from
sight;
I knew not then that joy would come un-
bidden,
To make thy closing hours divinely
bright.

I only saw the dreary clouds unbroken,
I only heard the splash of icy rain,
And in that winter gloom I found no token
To tell me that the sun would shine
again.

O dear Old Year, I wronged a Father's
kindness,
I would not trust him with my load of
care;
I stumbled on in weariness and blindness,
And lo! he blessed me with an answered
prayer!

Good by kind Year, we walk no more to-
gether,
But here in quiet happiness we part;
And from thy wreath of faded fern and
heather
I take some sprays, and wear them on
my heart.

The Gateway of the Year.

Among most civilized peoples of to-day, January 1st, opens the portal of the new year, and to most of us there comes a sober thought as we pass through. There is something solemn in the poaling of the church-bells that rings out the old year and rings in the new. Charles Lamb said that he never heard it without a gathering up of his mind to a concentration of all the images that had been diffused over the past twelvemonth, all that he had done or suffered, performed or neglected, in that regretted time. Nor was it a poetical flight in a contemporary when he exclaimed, "I saw the skirts of the departing year."

It is a season for both retrospection and prospect. And it was with a certain appropriateness that the old Romans dedicated New-Year's-day, to that God of their pantheon who had two faces and experienced no difficulty in looking two ways at once, Janus Bidron. The deity could at the same time look backward into the past and forward into the future, and at his temple the old Latin God was represented with two faces. He was a peaceful and beneficent old deity, and from presiding over the opening of the new year, he gave an element of congratulatory salutations, friendly visits, and the mutual exchange of gifts, or strena, as they of Cæsar's mellifluous language termed them.

The old Romans on that day put on their holiday dress, and met each other with kindly salutations. Presents of figs, dates, honey-cakes, and confectionery were passed from house to house. Stately processions, in white attire, marched to the temples, and the altars smoked with sacrifices. Even the slaves had a vacation that day, and joyousness reigned. During the latter years of the Roman empire, New-Year's day was the grand holiday commonly observed, having entirely displaced alike the Lupercalia and the Saturnalia.

New-Year's-day, however, did not always occur on the first of January. Nearly every nation has had a different date for the beginning of the year. The Romans reckoned the beginning of the year from the winter solstice, December 21st, until Julius Cæsar, in his reform of the calendar, changed it to the first of January. He it was who arranged the year so that all the even numbers among the months, save February, had thirty days, and all the odd ones thirty-one. This regularity of alternation was changed by his nephew, Augustus, to gratify a silly vanity. "I am quite as good as my Uncle Julius," he said, and my month of August shall have as many days as his month of July." So he took a day from February, making that month still shorter, and added it to his own month.

The ancient Egyptians, Phœnicians, and Persians began their year at the autumnal equinox, September 22d. Among the latter people, exchange of gifts was practiced and the people kept holiday. The Jews began their civil year at the beginning of the month Tishri, about the 25th of our September, but in their ecclesiastical reckoning the year dated from the vernal equinox, March 22d. The distinguishing feature of the modern Jewish New-Year's festival (*Rosh hashshana*) consisted in the blowing of horns, in accordance with the institution of

their great law-giver.—(See Lev. 23: 24.)

The Greeks of the time of Solon and Themistocles kept New-Year's-day at the winter solstice; after 432 B. C., the summer solstice marked the gateway of the year, the change being made under Pericles. The Aztec new year also began at the same time as the summer solstice, under the Montezumas. A peculiar ceremony with the latter people was the extinguishing of all the lights and fires on the night preceding New-Year's day, and the building of a new sacred fire in the great temple, as an augury of the renewal of the year, at midnight, from which couriers carried the flame anew over the empire.

In England, December 25th was New-Year's day until William the Norman's time. His coronation happened to occur on January 1st, and as it was considered an important event, the year was ordered to commence on that day; but it soon grew out of fashion, and for four hundred years the English began the year with the 25th of March. In 1752, King George II. and parliament adopted the Gregorian calendar and declared that henceforth the gateway of the year should be January 1st.

The Russians alone, of all the European nations, still reckon by the Julian calendar, and consequently the new year in Russia is twelve days later than ours. Although the thermometer may point to thirty degrees below zero, the Muscovites keep it as a gala day. Like good members of the Greek Church, they celebrate mass early and devote the rest of the day to making and receiving congratulatory visits,—the gentlemen calling and the ladies receiving. Ceremonious visits are also paid in military and official circles, and equipages containing stately men in showy uniforms are intermixed in the broad and interminable streets with the droshkies of well-to-do civilians. In some of the Russian provinces the paying of visits in masks is popular on New-Year's night.

The Japanese first day falls on the 29th of January, by which date all accounts have been adjusted and disputes settled. The first thing in the morning, the people from the highest to the lowest put on a sort of regulation dress of light-blue cotton, and throughout that day and the two that follow, they visit their friends and relatives in the vicinity, and send letters of congratulation to those in distant places. They have grand processions and brilliant displays of fireworks on this fete, and in the higher circles the ladies deport themselves with a peculiar diversion called the "butterfly dancy." Presents are offered of cooked rice, roasted peas, oranges, figs, and confections. On the fourth day, the New-Year's decorations, representing lobsters, the emblem of production, oranges (good fortune), cabbage (riches), are taken down, and boughs of fruit-trees and flowers, of which the Japanese are passionately fond, are set before the doors to signify the advent of spring.

The gateway of the year swings open for the people of Hindustan on February 14th, at which season there is an annual rejoicing called the Hooly, celebrated in honor of Krishna. A peculiarity of the celebration is that "caste" is not observed. "Red" is the order and the fun of the day, all classes of people dressing in red clothes and going about throwing red powder at one another or squirting it mixed with water from a syringe on passers-by. For the three or four days this red-letter feast lasts, everybody appears to have been dipped in a tub of *ak beer*, not even the pet monkeys escaping. All this is taken in as good part as snow-balling is with us in America.

The Chinese begin early on the 2d of February their New-year's-day, by propitiating heaven and earth with offerings of rice, tea, wine, oranges, and imitation paper-money, which they burn with incense, joss-sticks, and candles. Afterward they worship their household gods, and make offerings to their deceased ancestors. During fifteen subsequent days there is a constant festival in which all classes take part.—*Golden Rule*.

A Natural Consequence.

I lately read a pathetic article depicting the last days of a lonely old man living in his married son's family. No one was positively unkind to him yet they all had their business, their pleasure, their friends, and the old man was mentally and spiritually alone.

We commiserate the dearth of such an old age and do not remind ourselves that it may be the natural outcome of the son's dreary childhood. There is a similarity between the condition of little children and that of old men and women. At both ends of life there is need of sympathy, help, a stooping, brooding kindness. The child is too young to take hold of life, the old man has let go. This lonely man, whom we

pity in the sketch referred to, was probably absorbed in affairs when his son was a little child. Most likely he was too busy to inquire into his baby needs, to sympathize with his baby wishes, to get acquainted with the little mind and satisfy its bent, to win the innocent, confiding heart and make for himself a support for its outpouring tendrils.

A lover of children often observes the kind of training which results in forgetful sons and daughters. A child leans against the father's knee and looks up wistfully, longingly. He is pushed aside, while the father goes on with his talk or his reading or his work. The mature mind is absorbed with thoughts of business, of gain or loss, with far-reading plans, it may be with grudges or hurts. The approach of the little intelligence asking to be permitted to mingle itself with the father's mind is felt to be an intrusion, a hindrance. This unintentional hardness to children is shown perhaps as often by mothers as by fathers. The mother is intent upon making the little garment, or cooking the dainty dish, or she is making the house spick and span for company. The little one follows her about feeling exactly the same sense of isolation, of sadness, that the mother will perhaps experience by and by when the same child, a woman grown, is unwilling to give up time and self for cherishing and pleasing the aged child-woman.

What traveler has not seen in the cars a little group of bright, eager, curious children anxious to be told about this or that on the way. The mother, deep in a love story, scowls, scolds, commands stillness, instead of lovingly giving herself up to the little folks as interpreter and guide. It is dangerous to chill even once a child's enthusiasm. What if the clinging tendrils of the reaching, yearning soul be constantly unwound from their natural clinging place? The question answers itself.—*Congregationalist*.

Two Death Scenes.

A rich man was dying. He was one of those cautious millionaires who would have only the best securities that he could get. So he had all that he was worth in U. S. Government bonds. As he grew weak and delirious, he kept saying: "Where is my money? I don't see it! I don't feel it! Have I lost it! Must I die a pauper after all?" His son and only heir, after consulting with the physician, went to his father's vault in the safe deposit and brought a bundle of bonds. These he handed to the dying man, whose eyes brightened at once. Taking the package in his skinny hands, he opened his bosom and placed it against his heart. He muttered: "Yes, I feel it! Yes, I am rich! I am going to die a millionaire!" No doubt the touch of those promises to pay soothed his anguish. He was suffering from the delirium of avarice, the insanity of selfishness. It was incurable, but the bonds gave such alleviation as they could. He was permitted to hug his idols as long as sensation lasted. Then they were taken back to the vault. He could not take them with him into the spirit world. His heirs would not bury them with him in the tomb. He and his wealth were parted forever.

The other scene was that of a poor man rich in faith. His mind was wandering, too; but it wandered Christward and heavenward. He murmured: "Didn't you say, O Lord, that you would come again and receive me to yourself? Didn't you have it printed in the Book for me? The devil says no; but I won't believe him. Yet I want to be sure. Children, bring me the Book, the one I used to take to church with me! Open it to that chapter in John that begins, 'Let not your heart be troubled.' Open my bosom and lay the open Bible on my heart. As long as the heart beats I want it to beat against that promise, that God may know I die in faith."

Now, I don't think that that good old man was so very crazy after all. When we are weak and sorely tempted we need all the props we can get to sustain our faith. I have a Bagster Bible that I have read for many years. I think that when I get too feeble to read I will have it opened at the sweetest of chapters and laid on my heart. And I will tell them that when I die I want them to bury it with me. There may be a tinge of superstition in this, but I don't care. I want to get all the comfort out of the Bible that I can, and to do all I can to commend it to others. And I can't help thinking that seeing an old man carried to his burial with his Bible on his breast will make an impression upon the minds and hearts of the spectators.—*Senior Smith in Journal*.

How to Read with Profit.—Reading is companionship, education, culture. It upbuilds and furnishes and beautifies the soul. It develops confidence, enriches conversation, and cultivates grace. The

knowledge of good books "Is the food of youth, the delight of age, the ornament of prosperity, the comfort of adversity."

It is an open door to the best society, a stepping stone to the highest fame, a crown of honor that outshines the sun. These being true, it is one of life's societies that the young should read good books and not weary therein. The following suggestions will help to profit in reading:—

1. Plan your reading. Select the books to be read far in advance. Prefer books that are old enough and good enough to be classical, attractive if possible, pure always. Books with beads are better than beadless books.
 2. Vary your reading. Follow romance with history, history with biography, travel, art, science, philosophy, religion. Variety gives breadth and keeps up interest.
 3. Limit your reading. Know a few books well than many books indifferently. Intensive is better than extensive reading. Big fish swim in deep water.
 4. Fix your reading. To this end read carefully, weigh thoughts, talk them over to yourself and with others, try to remember them. "Thinking makes what we read ours."
 5. Time your readings. Have a book hour each day if possible. Especially however, utilize fragments of time for a few pages of reading. Little and often masters the largest volumes.
 6. Enrich your reading. This do by looking up all allusion to his story, poetry, art, mythology, persons, places, etc.
 7. Preserve your reading. Own, if possible, every book you read; make choice passages in them; make comparisons of them; often commune with them.
- These seven things remember, namely: plan, vary, limit, fix, time, enrich, and preserve your reading will be one of the most profitable exercises of your life.

MOTHER—Our boy is out late nights.

FATHER—Well, we must tax these saloons \$50.

M.—Husband, I believe John drinks.

F.—We must put up that tax to \$100.

M.—My dear husband, our boy is being ruined.

F. Try 'em awhile at \$200.

M.—Oh, my God! my boy came home drunk.

F.—Well, well, we must make it \$300.

M.—Just think, William, our boy is in jail.

F.—I'll fix those saloons. Tax 'em \$400.

M.—poor child is a confirmed drunkard.

F.—Up with that tax and make it \$500.

M.—Our once noble boy a wreck.

F.—Now I'll stop 'em; make it \$600.

M.—We carried our poor boy to a drunkard's grave today.

F.—Well, I declare, we must regulate this traffic; we ought to have made that tax \$1,000.—Exchange.

Grace is all of God. The first movements of the heart are by his Spirit. How well the apostles put the case: "After that ye have known God; or rather are known of God." We know him, in his first knowing us.

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GENTLEMEN.—I used to be troubled with quinsy, having an attack every winter. About five years ago I tried Hagyard's Yellow Oil, applying it inside my throat with a feather. It quickly cured me and I have not since been troubled. I always keep it in the house.

MRS. J. M. LEWIS,
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Maitland, N. S.

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Rev. J. B. Huff, Florence, writes: "I have great pleasure in testifying to the good effects which I have experienced from the use of Northrop & Lyman's Vegetable Discovery for Dyspepsia. For several years nearly all kinds of food fermented on my stomach, so that after eating I had very distressing sensations, but from the time I commenced the use of the Vegetable Discovery I obtained relief.

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B. W. Baldwin, Carnesville, Tenn., writes: I have used your German Syrup in my family, and find it the best medicine I ever tried for coughs and colds. I recommend it to everyone for these troubles.

R. Schnalhausen, Druggist, of Charleston, Ill., writes: After trying scores of prescriptions and preparations I had on my files and shelves, without relief for a very severe cold, which had settled on my lungs, I tried your German Syrup. It gave me immediate relief and a permanent cure.

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Woodbury, New Jersey, U. S. A.

'92 Christmas Season, '92

We are showing an immense stock of GOODS SUITABLE for PRESENTS, and to help you to make a selection, we will enumerate a few articles, from which you have a splendid assortment to choose.

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FOR GENTLEMEN:—Good Persian Lamb, Otter or Beaver Caps, Silk Handkerchiefs, Linen Handkerchiefs, Mufflers, Lined Kid Gloves or Mitts, Nappa Tan and Buckskin Gloves and Mitts, Fur Coats of which we have a fine selection; Melissa Rain-proof Coats, a splendid thing for cold or wet weather. Now we must stop enumerating, as our space is limited, and we invite one and all to give us a call.

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1874	64,072.88	621,362.81	1,864,302.00
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1878	127,505.87	773,895.71	3,374,683.14
1880	141,402.81	911,132.93	3,881,478.09
1882	254,841.73	1,073,877.94	5,849,889.1
1884	278,378.65	1,274,397.24	6,844,404.0
1885	319,987.05	1,411,004.58	7,030,878.7
1886	373,500.31	1,573,027.10	9,413,358.0
1887	495,831.54	1,750,004.48	10,875,777.0
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