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NEW YEAR'S DAY.

Did ever mortal of our modern times
 Regard this day with an indifferent air?
Did ever soul, upon whose ear the chimes
 Of old year out and new year in,
 Of battles won and those to win,
Remain untouched in heart, and free from care?
 I trow that would be sin—
Remain untouched, as that most solemn peal
 Rings out across the midnight air so clear,
All unconcernèd whether woe or weal
 Has, since the dying year began,
 And all throughout its twelve-month span,
Been prone to purge with grief, or bless with cheer,
 As months their courses ran!
This is the day from which we count our time:
 The look-out point from which we view the past,
The higher we with care and trouble climb
 By thoughtful gathering-up of mind
 Each "cabinet in the brain" to find,
The better we can estimate how vast
 The year we leave behind.
A year is vast, for when we ask its worth,
 As of a friend who dies, a dear one gone,
We learn that from the moment of its birth,
 Its happenings both oft and rare,
 Diffused throughout it here and there,
Speak mighty volumes to the minds that con
 O'er all their train with care.
Ought not each one with sober sadness then
 Take thoughtful leave of a departing year,
To call its weeks and months to mind again,
 And with a calm and careful view,
 Note what was false and what was true,
What wrought in love, and what performed thro' fear?
 This ought each one to do.
To some, perchance, the dying year would tell
 Of love that long had lingered in the heart,
But which, within the twelve-month 'gan to well,
 And joyed to find the responsive love
 As pure as that which dwells above,
Had learned contentment and will ne'er depart
 From one—a gentle dove.
To some the year would sadly speak of grief;
 Of moments when the heart was sorely tried;
When slowly passing days gave no relief,
 And it was hard midst the unrest
 To see all working for the best,
And yet thro' all, the true and faithful Guide
 Was making each life blest.
For every mortal, time now past and gone
 Has stores of knowledge and of warnings too;
By which those profit, as the days go on,
 Who, o'er the book traced by each age,
 Turn slowly backward page by page,
To learn some lessons, even tho' but few,
 Their future course to gage.

This is not all a retrospective day,
 We turn our thoughts upon the new-born span,
With firmly fixed resolve that all the way
 Our mode of life shall ever be
 So worthy, that each one may see
The noble spirit of that Perfect Man,
 Whose gospel makes us free.

CLARE READE, '97.

University College, Jan., 1897.

1896—A RETROSPECT.

[A paper read before the Women's Literary Society, at the request of the members of which it is published.]

Ill-omened has been the beginning of the year that is now passing away. Scarcely had the Christmastide, "Peace on earth, good will toward men," been sung, than war showed its hideous face, and even such kindred nations as the English and the American, displayed unchristian and unseasonable hostility. For on January 1st, 1896, the famous "Dr. Jim," having on December 29—Mr. Gladstone's birthday by the way—with his 500 followers, crossed the Transvaal borders to aid the Uitlanders against the Boers, fought at Krügersdorf. You know the sequel—the defeat and capture of Jameson; the period of wild excitement in England, made wilder by the congratulatory message of William, "the witless," cartoonist and Kaiser, to President Krüger; the putting into commission of the Royal Squadron, with a speed which caused as much admiration as alarm among the nations, who had thought the Queen of the Seas had lost her old-time vigor. The now historic phrase, "splendid isolation," described her position. For Britain, always unpopular in Europe, had added America to the list of her enemies. On the same day as Jameson's attack on the Boers, President Cleveland appointed his commission to investigate the boundary question between England and Venezuela. It looked as if England might have to face a world in arms against her. Did England's courage fail? We are told that never in the memory of man had there been such an eagerness shown by Englishmen, of all ages, sorts and conditions, to enlist. Cowardice is not one of the national characteristics.

Happily, however, in the interests of humanity and of the civilization of which we hear so much talk in such tiresome superlatives, war was averted. In the Transvaal President Krüger showed his good sense and justice in sending Jameson to England for trial; and, in spite of popular demonstrations in Jameson's favor, British justice condemned him to fifteen months' imprisonment. Only the other day, however, he was released, a physical wreck apparently. Poor Dr. Jim! In his case, valor, lacking its better part, discretion, bore its natural, if bitter fruits. And his failure brought with it the fall of him who has been not inaptly termed the uncrowned king of South Africa—Cecil Rhodes, Premier of Cape Colony. His place as Premier has been filled by Sir George Sprigg, but Rhodes has since then shown that, after all, he is the only Englishman that can be trusted to deal with the turbulent