

THE DEATH OF THE OLD YEAR.

Oh! the dear old year is dying!
 His children, the months, drooped one by one,
 And the last week died as the first had done,
 And the days all went with the setting sun;
 And the old, old year,
 Grand, hoary and drear,
 On his deathbed lone is lying.

Oh! the dear old year is dying!
 His brow is cold with the chill of the tomb,
 And his eyes are dark with a deathly gloom,
 And the hours are weaving on ghostly loom
 His burial shroud,
 Where silent and proud,
 On his deathbed lone he is lying.

Oh! save the year that is dying!
 Oh! stay the sands so cruelly flowing!
 Oh! stay the minutes so stealthily going!
 Oh! quicken the pulses so tremulous growing,
 Ere it be too late!
 E'en while we wait,
 The year on his deathbed is lying!

Oh! the year, the year is dying!
 And the shifting scene of sunshine and rain,
 The dear delight, and the dearer pain,
 The hope that fell, but to blossom again,
 The dreams and the fears,
 The smiles and the tears,
 All, all on that deathbed are lying!

Oh! help is none for the dying!
 The hours have woven a winding sheet
 Of the pale, white mist, and the falling sleet,
 And the midnight comes on its errand fleet.
 One word of command,
 One touch of its hand—
 And the year in the grave is lying!

Oh! weep for the year that is fled!
 The dear, old year that is ours no more,
 That stands aloof on the phantom shore
 With the ghost of the years that have gone before,
 Yet we weep in vain,
 For never again,
 Shall live the old year that is dead.

—Selected.

THE NEW NEW-YEAR.

New Year's Day has always seemed to us, to be in the south-west corner of the circle of the year. There is the splice now—the only break in the whole circumference. Its childhood memories are irresistibly associated with the frostiest show, the best fun, the merriest bells, the whitest, shiniest roads and the most beautiful trees—in the front yard, in the orchard, down in the interval, away up on the broad mountain-side—all dressed with hanging crystals glinting in the sun, and their pretty snowy tops seeming at the time to transcend the beauty of summer foliage as far as heaven shines above the earth, all sparkling into a joy that filled the youthful gazers raptured heart. The mountains loomed up on either side of our sheltered vale and promised protection for another year. The brook beneath the hill that used to be our daily companion, running cheerily by our side in the tulip months, now frozen over receives us with coldness, teaches us that some things change, and rushing past the air holes in the ice awakens beneath a thick fur cap strange, dawning thoughts of the rapid rushing, head-long year. A whole year older in one night. Coming up the hill he sees new thoughts in the smoke rising so straight from the chimney, a new beauty in the sky, a new response in the fresh aspirations of his new born soul. Grandfather's face and beard and cane, coming slowly along the shovelled, trampled walk, he scans with a wiser, intenser and kinder interest and lets fall his sled rope to think. In the evening seated around the fire, mittens hung behind the stove in the kitchen, father and mother look grander and dearer than ever before. His heart fills with a new appreciation of all their kindness with love not to die till he dies. He breathes perhaps his first petition—not to an unknown God—for them that they may live a long while yet, for strange things are opening before him and he knows not what this life does mean.

This new New-Year comes round with a strange and startling click. All that was torpid within us before, surprised, now springs to sudden wakefulness. Now the mind turns quickly. Now the recesses of memory give up their hideous and beautiful dead. Now do we look ahead with resolution and thrilling expectation to new creations of happier associations larger usefulness and sweeter toil. Why is it that just here the past and the future, two opposing seas, meet and foam about our breasts? Why