

the Sabbath. "Bishop Sanderson instances archery, leaping, pitching, the bar, and stool ball (a rudimentary form of cricket) as suitable recreations. He would doubtless have included bicycling, lawn tennis, and golf had they been pastimes of his day. He would, of course, approve most those which cause least trouble to others."



New Year's Eve.

It was eleven of the clock on the last day of the old year. Not a sound was heard in the whole house; all was sunk in profound repose. No light vied with the fitful moonbeams that gleamed through the library casement and stole with silent steps about the quiet room. They fell with pitying rays upon the bowed head of a man who sat by the fast-dying fire, and who gazed with sunken eyes into the nearly extinguished embers.

Strong of stature, his hair was prematurely sprinkled with gray, and the face, once so happy in expression, now bore the stamp of sorrow and care. What was life worth to him now? Nothing but the dull gray ashes remained. This time last year what a glad prospect had opened out before him! Life, love, everything that made earth an Eden; he remembered how this very evening another face, how dear to him he alone knew, had smiled at him across the hearth; how they two had planned what they would do in the coming year. Alas! that year was now drawing to its close! Death, with its ruthless hand, had cut down the young wife in the flower of her youth, and left him to mourn alone. Alone! Every inch and corner of the room seemed to echo that saddest of all words. Alone! Why did God let such things be? How could he bravely face the coming years when that voice was hushed for ever? In his bitter anguish the strong man cried out against the seeming injustice of the Creator.

Who is this who comes so softly across the carpeted floor? Who is this in long white robe, with her dark curls all flying round her shoulders, and her brown eyes not yet accustomed to the strange light? Some one who creeps up silently behind the old arm-chair and puts a pair of soft dimpled arms around his neck.

"Father, dear," says a sleepy voice, "I've been dreaming of mother, and it was all so lovely. I came to tell you about it. Father, why are you crying? Your cheeks are quite wet where I kissed you."

He did not answer her, but lifted the little white-robed figure upon his knee and gently smoothed the ruffled curls.

"Tell me about it, dear," he said. "I, too, have been thinking of mother."

So, with an arm around his neck and her head resting on his shoulder, May tells her story. "I wanted, mother so much last night; nurse was cross and wouldn't stay with me, so I just cried till I went to sleep. Then I dreamt mother came into the nursery, and she was just like an angel. She leaned over my bed and kissed me, as she used to do every night before the dear Lord took her away. Then I woke up, and I wanted to tell you about it; so I just crept down the hall till I found you."

So May prattled on, and every word fell like a healing balm on the stricken heart. There was something to love and cherish. God had not left him utterly desolate—a little child had been sent to comfort him.

Together they sat by the dying embers while the bells chimed out their glorious message:

"Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring out the false, ring in the true."

So the old year died away and the new year started; the fire died out and May sank into a dreamless sleep in her father's arms. Then he carried her to the nursery and tucked her up snug and warm in bed, and, as he pressed a last kiss upon the face so like the dear lost one's, he felt strong to take up his cross bravely through the coming year.

M. E. A. J.

New Year's Gifts.

"What do you bring, oh, blithe New Year,
To human sorrow and sadness?"

"For shrouded lives, an horizon clear,
For hearts that are desolate, friendship dear,
For midnight sufferers, starlight cheer,
And morrows of peace and gladness."

"To those who have climbed when barely shod,
New guerdons for brave endeavor,
New flowers to bloom on the graveyard sod,
New visions of heavenly heights untrod,
Yea, the gifts I bring are the gifts of God,
And of love that shall last forever!"

The Rev. Robert C. Johnstone, editor of the WESTERN CHURCHMAN, is prepared to take lecture engagements after February. Subjects of lectures:

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