

Young People's Department.



NEW YEAR'S GREETING. SOUTH INDIA.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

"WE wish you a happy New Year."

In this way the year 1889, like all its predecessors, has been announced and it is a goodly custom for people to wish one another a happy New Year.

But fancy a New Year's Day without snow and ice and with a hot burning sun and garlands of flowers. Such indeed would seem strange to Canadian children, yet such is New Year's Day in hot climates. Such it is in South India and you see above a curious picture of Indian customs! We should think it very odd if school children were to dress up their teachers with garlands as a mark of respect, and if men studying in the college for those who are to be ordained, were to come and do such a thing, we should think they must be much too babyish to make good clergymen.

But things are not the same in India. Native clergymen are of much more use amongst their neighbors if they are like them in whatever is not wrong in their customs, and bowing to the ground and making garlands is the Indian way of being civil, just as our way is shaking hands.

The picture represents the head of a college who had been ill for a long time, and the students and the children are so delighted at his recovery that they are bringing garlands to hang all round him so as to let him know how glad they were that he had not died. It must have been a very pretty sight to see so many native Indians coming to greet their Christian teacher.

Every one in India who wishes to pay respect to anyone is supposed to make him a present, but the present, of course, is not always valuable.

Sometimes it is only a little green lime. One missionary says that he used to get so much of this that he kept it to make lime juice with.

With us it is the custom to make presents to one another on Christmas Day, but in some countries it is more the custom to do so at New Year's. There is much that is interesting in any case. It is indeed the true idea of the Christian religion, for the first principle of our religion is to remember others. Everyone likes to get a present, and if we can make others happy in such a way we shall render ourselves happy.

It is the principle of the Christian missionary. He gives a great deal when he undertakes to teach heathen people about Christ. The natives may bring their garlands of flowers to show how much they think of him, but he has already given them something of great value when he told them of Christ and taught them how to be what He would like them to be.

For the third time we are glad to wish all our young friends "A happy New Year."

THERE was a New England boy who built himself a booth down at the rear of his father's farm, in a swamp, where neither boys nor the cows would disturb him. There he read heavy books, like "Locke on the Human Understanding," wrote compositions, watched the balancing of the clouds, revelled in the crash and flash of the storm, and tried to feel the nearness of God who made all things. He was Jonathan Edwards.

Boys and girls beginning life, you are at the head of the rapids. Your craft is already catching the drift of strong desires, ambitions, passions. Have no anxiety except to aim at what is right.