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OLD AND NEW IN CANADA.

FEW acts that we perform bring with them more of inward admonition than the changing of the date as we enter upon a new year. How often by force of habit we write mechanically the old familiar figures, only to be reminded, as we correct them, of days that are no more. The feelings excited within us, as we think of the year that has gone, vary with our individual experiences; but to all, except the very young or the very thoughtless, reflections are suggested that ought to be, and no doubt are, in a greater or less degree wholesome. The flight of time leaves us all something to mourn over, or, at least, regret. Our standard of duty and our aim in life must have been low if we have fully realized either the one or the other. There is no sense in undue self-depreciation, and when a man has, upon the whole, done well, he ought to acknowledge the fact to himself, though he need not boast of it to others. But who that has done well does not feel that he might, and therefore ought, to have done better? It is the most elevated characters, as a rule, those whose lives are the worthiest, that know least of the pleasures of self-complacency.

Not a few, perhaps, as they review the past, will confess to themselves that they have *not* done well; but, however sadly the confession may be made, the advent of the New Year, with all its accompaniments of social and family rejoicing, should inspire in such a manly trust that, in the future, the errors of the past may be atoned for or retrieved. Who indeed does not feel nerved at this time for more serious and worthy efforts? Who does not hope that the New Year will be better than its predecessor? Too often, alas, such hopes are illusory; but it is well that they should come and shed at least a transitory gleam over our lives, and raise us, though it be but for a moment, above our ordinary selves. There are cases, however, in which but a little quickening or encouragement is needed to lift a man decisively into a higher plane of life, and this, the advent of a new year, with its opening vista of hopes and possibilities, is as likely as anything else to supply. The past has indeed borne away with it many precious opportunities; but has it not also borne away our errors, and left us in present possession of experience? Let us then, at such a time as this, endeavour to realize