

BOYS AND GIRLS



Watching the Old Year Die.

Many choose to pass the closing hours of the dying year in prayer and contemplation—a fitting way for the Christian, to whom the changer of time and season are constant reminders of God's goodness. Our artist has selected a pleasant subject for his illustration; a family group who, having decided to 'see the old year out,' are now watching with breathless interest the ticking away of the last moments of its existence.

Slowly, yet inevitably, the old clock

Points and beckons with its hands
From its case of massive oak,

as it records the last echoes of the expiring year. The old clock does its duty well:

Through days of sorrow, and of mirth
Through days of death and days of birth,
Through every swift vicissitude
Of changeful time, unchanged it stood.

Now the whole household hangs upon
The first stroke of midnight, which ushers

in the new-born year, and the old year forever becomes a memory. What joys and sorrows go with it! What hopes and fears come to us with its successor! It is a moment in which the grateful heart rises to the Father above and thrills with thankfulness for past mercies. What will the year bring? Who knows what its weeks may have in store for him, of joy or sorrow, of happiness or misery? Happy is he who can greet the new year in calm confidence founded on faith in his loving Father. Strong in that confidence, he can look forward without apprehension, knowing that nothing can come to him but by the will of his Almighty Friend, and that be it pleasant or painful, all things will work together for good to them that love God.

The opening year Thy mercy shows;
That mercy crowns it till its close.
By day, by night, at home, abroad,
Still we are guided by our God.
Oh, God! Our Helper, ever near,
Crown with thy smile this glad New Year.

—'Christian Herald.'

A Thought For the New Year

I wish this could reach the eyes of all the ladies in our city, for I know it then would touch their hearts, not from any merit of its own, but simply from the fact that it will cause them to think. What I am about to speak of is a custom of New Year's Day, that great day in society and in our lives. It is the time of all others when most people, realizing that another year has gone with its burden of good, and, in many cases, its so much heavier burden of evil deeds, think of the past and its failures, and resolve for the coming year to make the world better, not worse, for their having lived in it.

Now, I speak to the ladies. Will you, knowing what you do, deliberately plant the seed of evil and sorrow in many homes on this day? I can see you start in indignation at the accusation or question; yet that is what you are doing. How many of you, mothers and sisters, loving your husbands, sons and brothers dearly, will for the sake of them and their friends risk public opinion and banish the decanter