

## Old Year.

Old Year, thy head is white with age,  
Thy summer fires no longer glow,  
Thy lingering days have naught but gloom,  
And thou art tottering to the tomb  
With feeble steps and slow.

Thy breath is cold upon my face,  
And thou art 'neath a burden bent  
Of shattered hopes and joys outworn,  
And sighs that many hearts have torn  
And many hours misspent.

And with thee on thy weary way,  
Not only these thou takest along,  
But smiles, whose memories are dear,  
And tones we ne'er again shall hear,  
And pleasure's hour and mirth's sweet song.

And yet I would not call thee back,  
If 'twere to live thee o'er again;  
Though I may sigh from thee to part,  
Though the regretful tear may start,  
It were too much of pain.

Farewell, old friend! full oft at eve  
A low and mournful voice I'll hear,  
Calling the silent hours to come  
And share with thee thy dreary tomb,  
And leave me lingering here.

## Origin of the Christmas Festival.

The Christmas festival seems to have first been devoted to the children in Germany and the north of Europe. Here St. Nicholas, a real personage, lived, a bishop in the time of Constantine, and died Dec. 8th, 343. For a time Christmas was here celebrated on the 6th of December, but later transferred to Dec. 25th, to correspond with the practice in other countries. The patron saint of the children, known as St. Nicholas in Germany, is called Santa Claus in Holland, and Samiklaus in Switzerland. In Austria he is known as Niklo or Niglo, and is followed by a masked servant called Krampus, while in the Tyrol he goes by the name of Holy Man, and is accompanied by St. Lucy, who is the girls' saint, and also sometimes by a little girl representing the Christ Child. At times St. Nicholas is accompanied by a masked bug bear who carries rods for the naughty children, instead of presents. The Christmas tree in its present relation to this festival originated with the Germans, but a similar ceremony was much earlier connected with pagan rites of a different kind. In the Protestant districts of Germany, Christmas is celebrated with the Christmas trees very much as with us, by the giving of presents between parents and children, and brothers and sisters, and a more sober scene often follows the Christmas tree when the mother takes occasion to tell the daughters, while the father tells the sons, what has been most praiseworthy in their conduct, and also those things of the opposite nature.

## Ringing Noises

In the ears, sometimes a roaring, buzzing sound, are caused by catarrh, that exceedingly disagreeable and very common disease. Loss of smell or hearing also result from catarrh. Hood's Sarsaparilla, the great blood purifier, is a peculiarly successful remedy for this disease, which it cures by purifying the blood.

Hood's Pills are the best after dinner pills, assist digestion, prevent constipation.

## Close of the Year.

It is sometimes hard to tell in God's vast sky what is actually high and what is low, but we can safely call the path of the winter sun a very low one in the heavens, as we see them in our latitude. The short, chilly days in themselves are convincing enough as they hasten gloomily to their close, without our having had much more than eight hours of sunlight. As the sable pall of night falls darkly over the earth, we cannot help a feeling of desolation, mingled with sorrow, over the receding light, and the fact that the year is almost at its close.

But it is only for a little while that the sun seems to stand still in his course. A change soon comes, a minute is added to the shortest day, and graceful shadows, at this time at their longest, once more begin to shorten. That first precious

minute of sunlight is the harbinger of physical life, the signs in the heavens that the laws that sway the universe will not fail, the first trophy in the combat between light and darkness. The change, invisible at first, is detected in a few days by a faint lingering in the glow of twilight, and, in a few days more, there is no longer a doubt, the sun has turned his smiling face northward and the days have perceptibly lengthened, as three minutes have been added to their length when December closes.

When the last afternoon of the year passes, the earth, in perihelion, is three million miles nearer the sun than in July, and the great day star, in nearer vicinity, is mildly tempering the winter's cold for the inhabitants of the northerly temperate zone. The starlit December sky is superb, for it is graced by the most beautiful stars and constellations that are ever seen by mortal eyes. When at this season the moon "runs high," the celestial picture cannot fail to be ennobling and uplifting, and all whose souls are in harmony with the grand spectacle spread out above will no doubt pay their tribute to its magnificence.

While the fixed stars are so far away, much further than we can fully comprehend, as there ceases to be much significance to distances computed by millions of miles, a very small change in their position can be discovered. A tolerably thick pencil mark placed about a hundred feet distant will subtend the angle that must be measured in order to find the distances of the fixed stars, and instruments of precision have fairly accurately determined these distances. Stellar photography has come to the rescue, and while a fixed star always appears as a point of light only, in large as in small telescopes, photography has enabled a much more accurate measurement to be made than any other method.

More than the mere ascertainment of their distances has been accomplished in many instances. There is a surprisingly large number of binary stars, consisting of two components revolving about their common centre of gravity. As soon as the period of revolution is known by observation, it becomes possible to calculate the mass of the combined system in terms of that of the sun, and the dimensions of their orbit. Wonderful as this is, it has been surpassed by the discovery, by means of the spectroscope, of binary systems, whose components are so close that no telescope is powerful enough to separate them, and yet it is possible to calculate their orbits and velocities. Mizar, the second star in the tail of the Great Bear, is an excellent illustration. Looked at on a clear night, it is tolerably easy to see close to it a small star, popularly known as "Jack by the horse's head." Mizar itself is resolved by the telescope into a double star, and the principal component is itself a spectroscopic double, with a period of revolution of 104 days, an orbit about the size of that of Mars, and a mass forty times that of the sun.

## Tried and Recommended.

I have used with beneficial results K. D. C. and have recommended it to a great many of my friends, all of whom speak very highly of it. To all who suffer from indigestion I can heartily recommend it as the best.

J. H. TIMMIS,  
Secretary-Treasurer, City Printing and Publishing Co., Montreal, P. Q.

—Dr. Parkhurst has entered into a contract with *The Ladies' Home Journal* by which he will practically become a regular editorial contributor to that magazine for some time. The great New York preacher says that he has for a long time past been desirous of saying some very necessary things to women, and he now announces that he will say them through these articles. He will take up all the social, moral and equality questions which are so uppermost in the minds of women to-day. Dr. Parkhurst will begin this work at once, his first article appearing in the next issue of the *Journal*.

Norway Pine Syrup cures coughs.  
Norway Pine Syrup cures colds.  
Norway Pine Syrup heals the lungs.

## Hints to Housekeepers.

Half roast a couple of ducks; take them from the fire and carve them so that the meat will still be attached to the bone. Dust over a little fine pepper and salt and squeeze over the birds the juice of two large oranges. Then turn the ducks over on to a plate and press till nearly flat. Set them on a hot stove till they hiss, then turn the bird over and let the breast cook till of a golden brown. Send to table on a warm dish straight from the stove, with a tureen of well made apple sauce.

A very nice way to use up cold roast beef and pork or veal is to soak thin slices in weak vinegar over night, then dip in egg and grated bread crumbs and fry a light brown in good sweet lard or butter for breakfast.

Hundreds of lives might have been saved by a knowledge of this simple receipt—a large teaspoonful of made mustard, mixed in a tumbler of warm water, and swallowed as soon as possible, acts as an instant emetic, sufficiently powerful to remove all that is lodged in the stomach.

PUREE OF POTATOES.—Boil and mash in two quarts of water four large potatoes, a small onion, two stalks of celery and a sprig of parsley. When done pass through a sieve. Return to the fire, season with salt, pepper and two generous tablespoonfuls of butter, rubbed into a dessertspoonful of flour. Boil up once and pour into a tureen over a cupful of whipped cream.

SOUND AS A DOLLAR.—Some people are lucky in finding the right remedy at the right time. A case in point follows, and is worth reading: About three months ago I was all used up with Rheumatism, suffering more than torture from it. I took three bottles of your valuable medicine, Burdock Blood Bitters, and now feel all O.K. Some six years ago I took a few bottles of B.B.B., and found it the best medicine I had ever used. I had the very best of health until this attack of Rheumatism, but now I am glad to say that B.B.B. has made me as sound as a dollar.—A. McConachie, Kenabutch P. O., Ont.

NO EQUAL TO IT.—As a cure for Frost Bites, Chilblains, Burns and Scalds, Chafing, Chapped Hands, Inflamed Breasts, Sprains, Wounds, Bruises, Hagyard's Yellow Oil is the most reliable remedy on the market.

CREAM OF TOMATO SOUP.—Add to a pint of water ten medium-sized, or one quart of canned tomatoes, a teaspoonful of sugar, three or four whole cloves, a slice of onion and a little parsley, and boil fifteen or twenty minutes. Add a small teaspoonful of soda, and in a few moments strain. Thicken one quart of milk with a large teaspoonful of cornstarch, stirring and boiling for ten minutes. Add to this a little salt, a sprinkling of cayenne pepper, a heaping tablespoonful of butter and the mixture of tomatoes, allowing the whole to become thoroughly heated through, but not to boil.

SNOW APPLE PUDDING.—Remove the inside from six large baked apples. Beat to a stiff froth the whites of three eggs, stir into the apple, and serve with the following sauce: Beat the yolks of the eggs with one cup of sugar, adding one-half a cup of boiling milk, and flavour with lemon.

CHOCOLATE BLANC MANGE.—Cover an ounce of gelatine with water. Boil one quart of milk, four ounces of chocolate and twelve ounces of sugar five minutes. Add the gelatine and boil five minutes longer, stirring constantly. Flavour with vanilla, and pour into moulds to cool. This dessert may be served with sweetened cream or a rich custard sauce.

To make French nougat, boil one pound of granulated sugar and one teacupful of water over a sharp fire until it begins to turn yellow. Do not stir while boiling. Have ready one-half pound of almonds blanched and dried. Put them in the oven and leave door open; when they begin to look yellow add to the candy as it reaches the turning point described above, and quickly pour into a well-oiled tin or iron pan about one-half an inch thick. Mark with a sharp knife into bars before it cools. By bending the tins between the hands slightly the candy will come out easily.