

JANUARY—OUR FIRST MONTH.

We have passed the threshold, and entered upon a New Year. One more page in the book of life has been turned, and a new scroll is now ready to receive the impress of our thoughts and actions. The entrance upon a new stage of existence should be fraught with solemnity, for we feel that another of the way-marks in the road of time has been passed, and that we are progressing rapidly to our journey's end—

"The spindle for the thread of life,
Is nearly full for us."

But the New Year is always a time for rejoicing, and we will regard it as such, and leave the heart to draw the moral in its own silence from these land-marks of time. January opens with festivity, kind wishes and kindly feelings. An admirable custom prevails with us, in common with our sister provinces, and adopted we believe from the neighbouring Republic, of receiving the welcome congratulations of our friends on New Year's day, thus giving many an opportunity of exchanging those kindly courtesies of life which otherwise would be neglected. Gentlemen are enabled to renew their acquaintance, with those whom business denies them the opportunity of meeting through the more work day part of the passing year. Visiting is kept up with great spirit when the weather permits—the ladies wear their brightest smiles, and offer refreshments in their most persuasive tones, while the gentlemen sustain their part, by hearty shaking of hands, joyous remarks, kind wishes and congratulations. The day often closes with a gay party, and almost always with a social gathering round the bright hearth of the household, when families for one evening at least are united, and hearts are strengthened by kindly words and offices for the battle of life through the coming year. January seems the favorite month for festivity during our winter season, the long evenings naturally induce some plan for amusement, and the gay among our inhabitants, often devote them to private balls and public assemblies. Music and mirth resound from many a dwelling and light hearts dance down the midnight, and laugh at the keen north wind, and it may be, driving snow, that rushes past the casement. The sleighing which usually abounds in this month, gives our streets an animated appearance as the warmly clad sleigh drawn by prancing horses, glides rapidly onward, heralding its approach by the merry bells that ring out such a stirring, enlivening peal.

It is the skaters month also—it usually brings the first firm ice of the season, and the sport has all its enjoyment with none of its satiety. The fine bracing air of winter and the healthful tone of the exercise make this a most delightful amusement for its votaries, and the lakes often present a most animated spectacle, particularly when enlivened by the presence of