

Looking Back Over the Old Year.

I doubt not that there are very many to whom, as they look through the year, it seems like some old cathedral that once was resonant with music, and radiant with altar fires, and filled with the glory of God, and with people that chanted His praise, but that now stands with the roof broken in, with the windows out, with the altar desolate, with the priest gone, with all the congregation dispersed, and with the winter wind sighing through from side to side, so that when one looks upon the spectacle he is constrained to say: "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." Is the year that is just past like an old dilapidated and desolate building to you?

Look again. Turn back and see if there has been nothing in the year but the transient. I know that the first yellow which I saw on the maples of the avenue that goes to the cottage that I have in the country struck a kind of sadness through me. I cannot keep it out of my mind after the twenty-first of June that the days are beginning to grow shorter; but I am not sorry. A man may be sad without being sorry. I cannot help feeling that I now tread out golden minutes, one or more from every single day; and the first signal that I see of decay strikes me with a feeling of sadness. For several summers in one of those trees there was a little invalid branch that the tree held out as a bright signal of failure sooner than it was betokened by any other thing; and I watch for that branch. When I see the paler green, and then the unquestionable yellow, and then the touches of scarlet, let the poet, let the sentimentalist say what he pleases, they say to me always: "A shorter day is coming." This is the first token of the wasting of the leaf; and every single four weeks after its appearance brings other tokens. One tree takes the hint, and another, and another; and the fields and all vegetation throw up their banners in succession, saying: "I am beginning to march." And now upon the hills and mountains, through the valleys of the surrounding country, everywhere, dreary winds sigh. The leaves are gone from the trees. And yet the trunk of the tree is there; the branches are there; the twig is there; the firm ground is there; and the roots are there. The substantial framework of the tree is unchanged, unmoved and unhurt.

So it is with the year. It stands like some powerful oak which is bare, to be sure, but whose frame is uninjured. The roots of the year are not touched; the trunks of the year are not touched; the boughs of the year are not touched. The leaves have fallen, and been trodden down into the ground—that is all.

And the laws of God, the decrees of God, the purposes of God—do they not stand just as certain and sure as they ever did? Has any change taken place in respect to the elements of truth? The great qualities of benevolence and love—have they been shaken, or fortified? Has advancing intelligence changed except to grow? Has not justice been better vindicated? Although individual histories and experiences and feelings have been fluctuating and changing, yet the great framework of God's purpose of mercy and love and justice and humanity has stood sure, and is unchanged and unchangeable.

More than that, I think no person can look into the past without feeling that while much that is good, sweet and noble has been changing, the change has not been one of clear loss. If you burn up your house, it is very true that you may burn some valuable furniture, and some pictures, and some little treasure; but what nests of mice, what walls full of vermin, and what quantities of trash of every sort you burn up, too!

How the New Year is Observed.

The celebration of New Years really begins just before midnight on the last day of the year. A small party passes the evening in playing games, music, conversation and often dancing. Shortly before midnight they adjourn to the dining room, where some light refreshments are provided.

Among the French, New Years is a much more important festival than Christmas. This is a great family day. In the morning the children

go to the chamber of their parents to salute them, and offer their good wishes for the new year. If a member of the family has died during the year, all the near relatives assemble at the grave early in the morning, renewing flowers and ornaments. After the midday meal the younger members of the family call upon the older ones, and in the evening they all meet for dinner at the home of the oldest member, who is considered the head of the family. When the French speak of their family it is in a broad sense, and includes all the relatives.

While few, if any, presents are given at Christmas, friends and servants are remembered with gifts at New Years. Gifts of flowers and confectionery are received by the ladies. Young men in society are expected to call at the homes of their lady friends, and either to bring or send flowers or confectionery. For the young man with a small salary this is a great demand; still if he has been receiving hospitalities all the year, here is an opportunity to show his appreciation. The French people, very wisely, do not give their children much candy, but at New Years children and older people indulge in this luxury, and there are few ladies who do not receive one or more *bonbonnières* filled with candy, largely chocolate, for the French run to this kind of confectionery.

The Christmas decorations of holly and mistletoe remain up until after Twelfth Night, and the observation of the day and evening is more like our Christmas than New Years. After dinner there are games, and perhaps music and dancing.

APPROPRIATE HYMNS for the 2nd Sunday after Christmas: compiled by Mr. F. Gatward, organist and choir master of St. Luke's Cathedral, Halifax, N.S. The numbers are taken from H. A. & M., but many of which are found in other hymnals:

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS.

(Festival of the Epiphany.)

Holy Communion: 177, 309, 312.
Processional: 73, 76, 488.
Offertory: 79, 81, 485.
Children's Hymns: 78, 341, 571.
General Hymns: 74, 77, 80, 219.

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

Holy Communion: 178, 555, 323.
Processional: 78, 218, 175.
Offertory: 79, 179, 80.
Children's Hymns: 76, 331, 573.
General Hymns: 75, 220, 307, 487.

Nova Scotia.

HALIFAX.—The grand organ for St. Luke's Cathedral will be shipped from England early in the New Year. Mr. Benson, of the firm of Norman Bros. & Beard (the builders), Norwich, England, will superintend its erection. While here he will be prepared to estimate and undertake organ work in any part of Canada. The large organ for the South African Exhibition, 1892, was erected under Mr. Benson's care. The firm takes high rank among English organ builders. The present 2-manual organ at St. Luke's is for sale.

Sins of Manner.

In your manner you can commit sin. Somebody has just been introduced to you, and instead of bowing pleasantly, you give a stiff, haughty bow that makes a shy woman feel uncomfortable and causes her to have anything but a pleasant opinion of you. In your home you come into the dining-room late for a meal, throw yourself carelessly into a chair, and as you eat the semi-cold dishes, you sulk and refuse to speak to anybody. When you are asked to help a little in the household, you start to do it by banging the door and give poor work because your heart is not in it, and you make everybody about you uncomfortable by your disagreeable manner. Some one comes in to see your mother, some old friend, and she wishes to present you to her. You toss your head, curl your lips, don't want to go, but at last yield, principally from curiosity. Probably the lady you meet is not very finely dressed, nor can she chatter about social affairs, as you like your friends

to, but that doesn't excuse your speaking to her in the stiffest manner and making her feel anything but comfortable.

—In a recent article on Coffee and Cocoa, the eminent German Chemist, Professor Stutzer, speaking of the Dutch process of preparing Cocoa by the addition of potash, and of the process common in Germany in which ammonia is added, says: "The only result of these processes is to make the liquid appear turbid to the eye of the consumer, without effecting a real solution of the Cocoa substances. This artificial manipulation for the purpose of so-called solubility is, therefore, more or less inspired by deception, and always takes place at the cost of purity, pleasant taste, useful action, and aromatic flavour. The treatment of Cocoa by such chemical means is entirely objectionable. . . . Cocoa treated with potash or ammonia would be entirely unsaleable but for the supplementary addition of artificial flavours by which a poor substitute for the aroma driven out into the air is offered to the consumer." The delicious Breakfast Cocoa made by WALTER BAKER & Co., of Dorchester, Mass., is absolutely pure and soluble. No chemicals, or dyes, or artificial flavours are used in it.

—The London *Daily Telegraph* prints some choice specimens of English "vestry" oratory: "Most parishes can boast of supplying some fine specimens of 'English as she is spoke' by vestrymen, but in this respect Battersea can 'take the cake.' In a recent discussion on sanitary matters, a vestryman talked about 'tubular diseases' and 'tripod fever,' and wanted a 'crematorium in every parish.' Another member would not accept a statement upon the 'hipset dixer' of the chairman. At this same vestry a member declared the chairman ought to be 'like Potiphar's wife, above suspicion.' When it was proposed to give a deserving official 'an honorarium,' a member wanted to know whether it would not be an inducement to the official to waste his time: 'If he attends to his duty he won't have much time to play the honorarium!'

—Byron occasionally made impromptu verses, and his earliest effusion is said to have been caused when a child, by the visit of a certain old lady to his mother, who cherished some curious idea with regard to the soul, which she imagined took its flight to the moon after death, as a preliminary halt before proceeding further. After this, young Byron declared he could not bear the sight of her, and broke into the following doggerel, which he repeated over and over again:

"In Nottingham town, very near to Swine-green,
Lives as crusty an old lady as ever was seen;
And when she does die, which I hope will be soon,
She firmly believes she will go to the moon."

—The following notice appeared in a parish paper: "The service on Sunday morning is at 10.30 a.m. The supposition that it is ten minutes later is a mistake. Young men are not excluded from the week-night service. The seats in the front portion of the church have been carefully examined. They are quite sound and may be trusted not to give way. It is quite legitimate to join in the singing. The object of the choir is to encourage, not to discourage, the congregation."

An Apt Reply.

A young British soldier was conducting a party from the United States over the citadel at Quebec. One member of the party was a small maid of nine, and to her the young soldier devoted most of his attention. She was a saucy child, full of enthusiasm, and blessed with the earnest, aggressive patriotism of extreme youth. "Here," said the soldier, as they stood before two worn brass cannon, "are two guns that we took from your people at the battle of Bunker Hill;" and he smiled in triumph. Nonplussed for a moment, the child was still; then she looked up. "Come home with me," she said softly, "and I'll show you a whole country we took away from your people about the same time."—*Life*.