

times at least. Now, what shall we say? The first thing that we presume to think we understand at all is the article with three headings, but almost before arriving at the third, we give it up and pronounce the whole thing to be a military rocket in some way connected with the "grand (?) display of fireworks," in which we were lost.

LAST in order of arrival is the *Heidelberg Monthly Journal*. Its appearance is exceedingly prepossessing, and merits more time and space than we have at our disposal in the present issue.

THE OLD YEAR.

IT was the last night of December, and slowly the great hands of the clock were nearing the hour of midnight. The firelight and shaded lamps cast fantastic pictures in the dark corners of the room, while marvellous frost pictures grew upon the window-panes. Without, the wind was sobbing and moaning among the bare branches, in the chimney and casements, and I knew, though I saw it not, that great drifts of snow were whirling and piling in the darkness. During all the weary hours my thoughts had been dwelling sadly among the graves of my past. Again my soul had put on her sack-cloth of bitter days, that had been lain away for mirthful vestment. But now a strangeness came over me. I heard no sound of foot-fall, but was silently borne away from my fireside to the portals of a wonderful cathedral. The walls were cruelly white, and covered with mysterious figures and hieroglyphics. The vaulted roof rose hundreds of feet above, and was supported by the sculptured figures of angels. Long corridors extended further than eye could see. All was silent, except a low sound like a requiem of sighs, that came echoing from the dim corridors, and chilled the heart icily. Bewildered and trembling, I would have hastened away from the dazzling whiteness, but strange influences held me stationary. Then behind me I heard voices, and suddenly was surrounded by a numberless crowd of human beings. Passionately they hurried along into the cathedral, till I was carried on like a leaf on the surging ocean. On, on, but now like a

phantom throng, noiselessly and death-like, for even the foot-falls on the stone pavement awakened no echo. But soon the crowd moved slower, and I saw we were approaching a bier whereon something lay. Nearer, and we stood mute and breathless, for before us—lying low among sere leaves and faded flowers, wrapped in his winding sheet—lay the Old Year we had loved so well, white, rigid and dead. The weight of his last days had pressed heavily, and his face was furrowed and sad to look upon. Around him, in mockery, upon the sombre pall were scattered the gifts he had bestowed. The soundless wave of human life surged on. Some came eagerly, as if to see a joyous thing; others with lingering footsteps and few with sneering faces; but as they one by one looked upon the pale face and laid some treasure or some burden down, feeling that the year was indeed dead, they turned away more sadly, and some with tears. They were bringing their cares, sorrows, fancied ills, and incompleting tasks. Each striving for self, each heavily laden, thinking it possible to bury all sadness in one dead year, but passing to find the burden but little lighter and little left behind. Some came with gloomy faces bearing imaginary cares, and some bore bitter griefs. Many, mourning-vestured, laid down carefully handfuls of ashes. These were they whose idols had been broken, and beautiful shrines lay crumbled in the dust; still, they gathered the ashes to their hearts, again, and went away mourning. One young girl, bending under the burden of a lost idol, wasted and careworn, went to the bier, and looked with a sigh on the cold face but could not fling the burden off; as she turned she staggered and fell; when they lifted her up she was—dead. Children eagerly flung down their broken toys and felt no lingering sadness for the shrouded year. Many a youth brought resolutions and broken ambitions, and holding high his right hand made solemn vows for the future. One strong man, weary and heavily laden, knelt on the cold floor clasping the shroud and prayed; when he arose a light more than earthly broke over his face and he went onward with the music of a new song in his soul. While yet they were urging in with their voiceless weariness, a bell commenced tolling in awful tones, that woke echoes in the corridors. Then the