

Berlin Office:
W., Potsdamer
Strasse 10/11.
Telephone:
VI 1079.

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Dresden Office:
A., Struve
Strasse 5, I.
Telephone:
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THE APPROACH OF SUMMER.

When is it that man turns over the new leaf, in January or in the spring? A clear-headed critic of human institutions might well pause to reflect on the arbitrariness with which we have decided upon the New Year as the mainspring of good intentions. Such a choice has against it all the forces of Nature. The first of January seldom comes with the outward mien of a good angel; it may be blustering, it may be icy, it may be tepid as the ministrations of a poor friend, but it is never spontaneously open-hearted. Like a wild colt which thinks any hurdle good enough to jump over, we surmount our artificial obstacle as though it separated the ploughed furrows from the springy turf, only to find that we have leapt from one morass into another. Were it not better, and more sensible, to leave superstitious demarcations of this sort to those who believe in Old Moore's Calendar and grandmotherly nostrums, and to take the juster, the ampler view at a season when Nature sees fit to screw us up to plausible enthusiasms? On New Year's Eve, perhaps, we may think well enough of New Year superstitions—for is there not a kind instinct by which we accommodate ourselves to what we can get when we cannot have what we should like? But now, when the earth and the sky, and the birds of the air, are mocking winter with the fulness of sounds and the spurting of bright colours; when to be up and about is a pleasure into which we fall as readily as we fell but yesterday into sloth and indifference; when the very brick and mortar of our walls glisten with new life; now the New Year seems like a charlatan and a pious rogue. If we have good resolutions, let us make them while Nature can assist us to fulfil them; but if the old resolutions of New Year's Eve be still unfulfilled it were foolish to attempt them at this hour; rather let us forget them, once and for all, and forgive ourselves as best we can. Is there not an unlimited page in the Future where better ones and truer ones may be registered?

Good resolutions, especially when they are so unhampered, so free from conventional bias, are too cheering to be taken with a grave countenance; let us take them at their real value, and let us take them laughingly. The summer is before us, perhaps not devoid of sunshine and cool breezes and the sight of the crisp, blue sea, perhaps keeping in store for us still nights and spacious gardens where nothing is heard but a distant cricket or the faint music of young voices on a distant river. Who can think of leafy, star-lit lanes, of the soft warm dust beneath one's feet as one tramps the sweet-smelling country, of the massed blossoms of May and June bursting into silver and rose beneath a rising moon, and not be thankful that once more the wheel has turned, that once more the unfathomable scheme of things is manifested to us on its tenderest side? Who, remembering the bareness of February and the restlessness of March, does not think of the blaze of flowering beds and the hum of the bees with a new joy of anticipation? While such delights may be ours, is it not sheer folly and waste of strength to bewail what we can never grasp again, or to stretch out our arms towards what is just as fugitive and thankless? There are treasures which cling to us imploring our good graces with such pitiful, exquisite entreaty, there are ideals which live around us, for us, with us at this season with such unobtrusive, delicate persistence, that only the most obtuse and callous of us all must fail to reach at them.

"Gather ye roses while ye may;
Old Time is still a-flying."

That is an oft-culled blossom, but it smells as sweetly today as when Herrick first broke it from its branch.

To be a little older and a little wiser, perhaps a little sadder, perhaps a little weaker, since we are not all young; to awaken year after year and season after season to fresh impulses and sensations which are as old as the world, as old as oneself, and yet so wondrously new; to attain to heights or sink into the valleys and yet always to see the hills blue before us—how singular is our organism and how tolerant of our pettiness! But this is not the season of moralising or introspection. Have we not had our fill of dreary winter nights and glowing fires? Let us forget that "our new thoughts

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have thrilled dead bosoms", and let us garner them while they are still unwithered.

When the air is full of sky-larks, and the morning lies chill in the sunshine, marshalling its mists on the horizon, the spirit of the season is abroad. Not yet languorous, indolent, full-blooded with the proud charm of Summer, the year has already left behind it the harshness of the past few months; and from a note of tenderness to a note of strength, from the tremulousness of things new-born to the assurance of a victor trampling down the conquered evil, it strikes its enrapturing chords again and again.

GENERAL NEWS.

ENGLISH NEWS.

KING EDWARD IN DENMARK.

A State banquet took place at Copenhagen on Wednesday in the Knights' Hall at the Palace of Christian VII. King Frederik and King Edward, in toasts proposed in the most cordial terms, drank to the mutual good relations of the two countries.

MEDDLESOME JOURNALISM.

It is the custom in England to regard the American Press as the incarnation of mendacity, officiousness and inanity, an opinion which, needless to say, is almost entirely based upon those libels on Transatlantic journalism—the Hearst newspapers. But all this righteous horror does not deter certain British contemporaries from sincerely flattering the Press of the United States by faithfully copying the sensational methods they attempt to decry. For downright absurdity commend us to the account of the new British Prime Minister's journey to Biarritz that appeared in the *Daily Mail*, written by an individual described by his paper as "Our Own Special Correspondent on Mr. Asquith's train." This enterprising journalist seems to have spied on Mr. Asquith all the way from Charing Cross to Dover, from Dover to Calais, from Calais to Paris, and from Paris to Biarritz. He poked his inquisitive nose everywhere. Apparently his ear was laid in turn to every door jamb and his eye to every keyhole. Barring that he does not tell how Mr. Asquith gets into bed, or which leg he puts first into the lower half of his pyjama suit, he hardly

misses a detail of what the Premier did *en route*. And a whole column of this nonsensical recitation finds place of honour in the *Mail* as if it were a fine example of journalistic enterprise, worthy of admiration. We are told how Mr. Asquith wrapped himself up for the journey, each fleeting expression that crossed the august countenance is described, much copy is made of the bowl of soup and the whisky-and-soda with which the right honourable gentleman regaled himself at Calais. When the traveller entered the train for Paris he drew down the blinds of his reserved compartment, from which we gather that he had caught the ubiquitous reporter peeping. At the Gare du Nord Mr. Asquith walked briskly along the platform; here he was carrying a yellow-backed French novel—even its name is given—apparently preferring it to a yellow journal. The weighty details continue: Mr. Asquith lit a cigar, "and after a few moments spent in contemplating the wreaths of smoke curling towards the ceiling, he"—&c., &c., &c.

Our only apology for inflicting this rignarole upon our patient readers is to emphasise the fact that, however much journals across the Atlantic may merit their reputation for inanity, the British newspapers live in far too fragile a habitation to render the flinging of stones—or even mud—a safe practice.

A SUFFRAGETTE BAZAAR.

A London correspondent sends us the following: The members of the Women's Freedom League have been branching forth in a fresh direction. They have run a Bazaar and Sale of Work at Caxton Hall, and have obviously revelled in this opportunity of displaying, to the doubting eyes of the unconverted, the skill of the Suffragette in the feminine arts of cooking and needlework. And indeed they had reason to be complacent, for their handiwork was excellent. There were several reminders that the smiling dames and damsels, clad in pretty gowns, who presided over the various stalls were, in very sooth, Suffragettes of the militant variety. Many a one had the lace or ribbons at her throat fastened by that silver representation of grim Holloway that none are entitled to wear unless they have in very truth sojourned within its walls. Then one of the side-shows was a full-sized replica of a Holloway prison cell, containing one member of the League arrayed in correct prison garb, industriously stitching, while another was got-up in the navy serge costume of a wardress—black cap and clanking keys complete. The cell itself had cost ten pounds to make and erect, and one admiring visitor promptly gave a ten-pound cheque to cover that expense. There was an entrance fee of sixpence, and in two days of the bazaar the cell alone contributed over fifty pounds to the funds. There are members of the League who can sing, dance and play as well as the most unpolitical woman going, and then such well-known artistes as Mrs. Theodore Wright, Miss Lillah McCarthy and Miss Edith Olive gave their services to help the cause. Another slight reminder that the Women's Freedom League is a militant organisation was the unheralded appearance of an important police inspector, accompanied by a stalwart bobby. The two men made a complete tour of the room, and how they enjoyed it! How they beamed! And small wonder, for the scene was attractive, and the best of everything was brought forward for the admiration of the amiable inspector. Outside in the street stood the travelling gipsy van that Mrs. Despard has presented to the League. In it, enterprising Suffragettes propose to tour the country throughout the summer, preaching the gospel of Votes for Women in villages too tiny for the holding of public meetings. Altogether the ladies are well pleased with themselves and their Bazaar.

THE ALL-RED ROUTE.

Lord Strathcona, High Commissioner of Canada, lecturing at the Royal Colonial Institute on "The All-Red Route," contended that the journey from England to Australia via Canada could be made in 28 days as against the 30 days required for the Suez Route; and the journey from England to New Zealand in 25 days as against 35. Sir J. C. R. Colomb thought that the proposed Imperial grant should be spent in battleships instead.

(Continued on page 2.)