CHANGES THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN THEIR OBSERVANCE.

The Old Time Round of Calling and Drinking No Longer Fashionable in New York-Country Frolles Are Now Popular-A Sad Story.

There was a time, and that was not too many years ago to count upon the ingers, when New Year's day was the "maddest, merriest day of all the glad New Year," for every man put on his holiday manner and his very best clothes, and called on all the women he knew. In towns and cities where this custom prevailed each house wore a festal air, and each housekeeper spread her table with such attractive viands as could be partaken without ceremony, for there was no time for sitting down to eating and drinking with a list such as many men had of several hundred calls to be rushed through in that one day.

In New York the custom became at last a tax. There was no real sociability made evident in a hurried handshake and greeting, followed immediately by an equally hurried farewell; and yet there was time for nothing more, and even with all this haste few men could finish the calls written upon their lists, and omissions were apt to give offense.

Pushing young men took advantage of the hurry and flurry of the day to call at houses where entry under other circumstances would not have been possible.

Even if they could only bow to the engrossed hostess they could pass on to some of the young women receiving with her, who would naturally suppose them friends of the house. Their cards would be left and possibly included among the guests to be invited on other occasions, which was the end they hoped to gain by their assurance.

Another evil which right thinking people took a grave view of was the promotion of social drinking which the custom fostered. Men who could not stop for a bite did manage to pause for a glass of wine or cordial, or even a stiff dose of brandy and water, "just to keep the cold out, you know." The result of so many tastes was apt to become disastrous before the day was out, and there were incidents and scenes which were sad to witness.

Worse than all was the fall of some who yielded against their better judg-ment to the pleading of Circe as she sparkled and beamed and threatened to frown on the young man who refused the glass she held to him in her white gloved hand.

I know a white haired mother whose sad lips refuse to smile because her only daughter is hopelessly insane. The girl was engaged to a man to whom liquor was a terrible temptation, a hereditary craving against which he had silently bought a good fight and triumphed. One New Year's day, the first of their engagement, his fiancee made a point of his taking a glass of wine with her. He refused, she insisted—not knowing his weakness-and at last declared that if he would not yield to her pleasure in such a small matter his affection could not be what he pretended. He could not resist beyond that, but that one glass opened the gate to his enemy, and the passion for drink conquered him and was never overcome. Grief and remorse deprived the gay, thoughtless girl of reason. That is only one story. There are thousands as pitiful, and, feeling the danger which attended the pretty custom of New Year's calls one can hardly tom of New Year's calls, one can hardly

In New York and Philadelphia, and to d degree in some other places, it is fashionable to make up country parties, leaving town on one of the last days of the year and spending a week in such amusements as the hostess can invent. If she owns a country house she will open it for her guests, or lacking a house she will hire of some farmer all the rooms he can spare, and turn her entertainments into an institution of some of the primitive frolics in which our ancestors were supposed to delight.

Barn dances for the evenings and straw rides for the daylight are among the amusements offered on these occacions, and for variety the Halloween tests or ceremonies are introduced, and the gay visitors toss apple skins, float apples, name chestnuts and eat hard boiled eggs with salt, filling the cavity made by taking out the yolk, agreeably to the old tradition that a dream would follow in which the thirsty one's lover would bring a drink.

For those who stay at home the festivities which belong to the day are not overwhelming, being generally confined to a family dinner, and possibly the theater or a reception in the evening. It is not a day for family gatherings, like Christmas or Thanksgiving, and, as the usual avocations are relinquished, time seems unoccupied and the day is not altogether enjoyable.

But the New Year deserves a form of celebration as well as the other anniversaries, and those who mold and lead society should inaugurate some especial entertainment or custom by which we may enliven the day.-New York Re-

New Year's Song.

Come, new year,
And strew pole roses for thy sister's bier!
Loves are turned cold that at her birth leaped high,
When the

When thou art old, thou, too, forgot, shalt lie, With all thy golden glories faded, sere. Come, new year!

Sleep, dead year!
For dear delights are flown, and days are drear,
For oh, for oh, bleak lie the fields and bare;
Wee is me-wee-winter is everywhere;
With eyes that see not, cars that never hear, Sleep, dend year!

Come, new year!

But sliently! Let fall no foolish tear
For cankering care, or grief, or joy gone by,
Since all must yield to age and change, and die.

With past joys cherished, perished, days once
dear.

Sleep, dead year!

Sleep, dead year! Soon on spring's breast your violets shall peer, Burst from earth's casket for thy pleasuring.
Purple and gold, her tender treasuring.
Hark! the first robin, singing loud and clear!
Come, new year!
—Agnes Gerard in Boston Transcript.

CUTTING THE MISTLETOE.

An Ancient Druid New Year Custom Now

Associated with Christmas. The mistletoe has for many years been generally associated with the celebration of Christmas, but in fact the cutting of the mistletoe was in honor of the New Year.

The Druids were summoned to meet at this time by the supreme pontiff. The priests came forth from their forests and traversed their various districts, inviting the faithful to follow them with the cry of kal first day of the year) or kalonna (gifts) to attend the holy ceremony of gui (mistletoe) of the New Year.

The supreme pontiff of the Druidical order was, as it were, its pope. Immense numbers of the clergy and laity were present at the fete. The ceremony opened with a search for the famous mistletoe upon a tree of thirty years' growth, and the mistletoe so found was to become by its consecration the pancristrum or panacea for all woes.

When the mistletoe was found, a triangular altar of earth was raised at the foot of the tree on which it had been discovered, and then commenced a procession. First marched the Engali, conducting two white bulls, which had never been subjected to a yoke. These were followed by the bards, who sang hymns in honor of the Supreme Being. Next came the novices, students and disciples, accompanied by a herald in white. Then followed the most ancient pontiffs—one carrying bread that was to be offered up; the second two vessels one filled with water and the other with wine, and the third a hand made of ivory attached to a wand, symbolical of justice and power. Next came the clergy, preceded by the supreme pontiff in a white robe and wearing a girdle of gdid, and the procession closed with the

nobles and the people.

The cortege having arrived beneath the tree, the officiant, after prayers, burned a morsel of bread and poured some wine and water on the altar and divided what remained among the as sistant priests. This done, he ascended the tree and cut off with a golden sickle the mistletoe and dropped it into the robe of one of the principal pontiffs, who received it with profound reverence. The supreme pontiff, aided by the Eubagi, then immolated the two bulls and concluded the religious ceremony by praying, with his arms raised, that God would permit his benediction to rest upon the gift he was about to distribute among the people then prostrate man among the people, then prostrate upon the ground.

Immediately afterward the inferior priests distributed as a gift to the assembled multitude particles of the sacred mistletoe. They sent portions also to the temple and to the chieftains, who felt honored in receiving it, and who, as an act of devotion and as a talisman against harm, wore it round their necks in time of war.

Sickness, enchantment and malevolent spirits were expelled by it. Nothing evil was capable of diminishing its celestial power, and lightning itself would not fall upon the house that contained it.—Philadelphia Times.

New Year's Gifts.

In England the observance of New Year's day by the bestowal of gifts dates from the Cæsars. In the Seventeenth century it was customary for the English nobility to send purses of gold to the king. The reason prompting this custom of gifts arose from belief that it was a message drawn from the first things met with on the beginning of a day, week or year, and of course nothrejoicing with friends at their escape from the year's dangers, joined to mutual congratulations for the future, by presents and good wishes for the happy continuance of good fortune, is a proper view of life and its duties.

In olden times hospitalities were re newed by offerings called xenia, which was the name bestowed upon New Year's gifts, as serving to renew friendship, one of the greatest blessings imparted by heaven to man; a blessing not fully appreciated by the community at large at the present moment. The Dutch had evily brought their good old fashioned ideas of friendship with them when they landed here, and they had acquired them before quitting their native land from pretty nearly the same sources as other

An Anecdote of the Olden Time. In the time of Charles I of England

nations. -- Exchange.

a court jester was cleverly outwitted by a nobleman, who had, according to the custom of the day, presented the jester with a sum of money.

On New Year's morning the jester came into the presence of the nobleman, and received, as he expected, a number of gold pieces. He thought he had not been given enough, so he tossed them in his hand, muttering that they were light. The nobleman saw this, and said, "Prithee, Archy, let me see them again; and, by the way, there is one of them I would be loath to part with."

Naturally enough, perhaps, Archy thought more coins were to be added to his store, so he willingly returned them to his lordship. But the nobleman put them into his pocket, saying. "I once gave my money into the hands of a fool who hadn't the wit to keep it."-Philadelphia Record.

The New Year.

The New Year rises from night's silent tide, As Venus rose from out the foaming spray.
And with his dimpled arms extended wide
Smiles on the glories of Time's newborn day.
With blushing pride upon his tinted cheek,
And love light flashing from his sparkling

eye. He feels a rapture which he dare not speak, Lest this bright vision fade from earth and

-New Orleans Times-Democrat.

-New York Herald.

Is It? Is it?

He had a Christmas frolic
And a New Year's jamboree,
And when he came unto himself
A sadder man was he.
And if he then made good resolves,
And swore them all by thunder,
You good men who have all been there.
Just say if it's a wonder.

—New York Herald.

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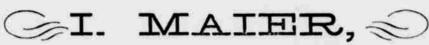
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