

practiced just as under the old Roman Emperors, and the custom of voluntarily making them to the reigning English Sovereign continued until Oliver Cromwell, on becoming Lord Protector, put a stop to it.

Apropos of this custom of giving New Year's gifts, a good story is told of a Court jester of James I, who, being sent by his royal master with a bag containing a fine lap dog as a New Year's present to a female favorite, was persuaded by some ways of the Court to refresh himself *en route* at a tavern, where they exchanged the lap dog for a pig. The dismay of the jester on tumbling out his sowship at the feet of the lady was so great that he rushed precipitately from the house of the favorite and into the presence of the king, shouting all the way that he had been bewitched by some fiend who had metamorphosed his master's lap dog into a pig, a statement which received ready credence from the king, who was a devout believer in witches and witchcraft, and who had written and published a voluminous work on those subjects.

Everyone is familiar with the customs of masquerading on New Year's eve and day, of watching the old year out and the new one in, and of firing off guns, blowing horns, singing, and partaking of good cheer on New Year's Eve; but probably few are aware that these are among the oldest of all our social usages, and have been practiced in variously modified forms in nearly all civilized countries ever since the Roman Emperor Julian reformed the calendar and made the "calends", or first day of January, the beginning of the year. In many parts of rural England and Scotland it is customary for large parties of men and women to go about on New Year's Eve bearing from house to house an abundant supply of cakes, bread and cheese, together with a great bowl of what is called wassail or "lamb's wool," a drink composed of hot ale, spices, sugar, toast and apples. In the households they visit all the members of the family are awaiting their coming, and are prepared to welcome them with a plentiful supply of good cheer. The first house visited by these wassail carriers after midnight is regarded as highly favored, it being a popular belief that good fortune throughout the entire year is then sure to follow all its inmates. Great care is taken, however, that the first member of the wassail party crossing the threshold shall be a man, for were a

woman to be the first to enter, misery and misfortune would infallibly ensue.

Upon the calends or first day of January, the ancient Romans were especially careful to so regulate their conduct that their every word and act should be a happy augury for all the ensuing days of the year, and they believed that as they were fortunate or the reverse, glad or sorrowful, happy or miserable upon that day so would they continue to be throughout the following twelve months. This old superstition still exists in the minds of many persons, especially in the northern counties of England, where both old and young are particularly careful in their behavior on New Year's Day.

In many of the rural districts of Scotland it is still customary, as it has been from time immemorial, for all horses and cattle to receive an extra feeding on New Year's Day, that they as well as their masters may have cause to commence the new year with rejoicing. Readers of the Scottish poet, Robert Burns, will remember his "Auld Farmer's New Year Morning Salutation to His Auld Mare Maggie, on Giving Her the accustomed ripp of Corn to Hansel in the New Year."

"A Guid New Year I wish thee, Maggie!
Hail, there's a ripp to thy auld haggie—"

a ripp being a handful of corn.

Felix Fonteneau, a Frenchman who published a very curious work on astrology in 1680, says that New Year's Eve should never be spent in idle mirth and frivolity, and that unhappiness and misfortune will be the result of thus misusing it. He adds that it should be devoted to pious meditation and to an effort to read the future.

Pythagoras, an old Greek philosopher (a term which he was the first to apply to himself because he was a lover of wisdom), required his disciples, of whom he had 600, to devote New Year's Day to recalling all the events and actions of their lives during the preceding twelve-month, in order that by condemning those meriting censure and by praising those who were worthy they might the better regulate their conduct for the ensuing year.

A pious old English custom was for one of two friends meeting on New Year's morning to exclaim, "Welcome the New Year," to which the other would reply, "And God's blessing on us both while it continues."

Lady readers will be interested to learn that the term "pin money" is directly connected with New Year's,

from the fact that when the present style of pins first came into vogue they were so expensive and were thought so desirable that they were largely utilized as New Year's presents, and instead of the pins themselves, the money with which to buy them was often given, thus giving rise to the term "pin money," which finally came to be applied to all money bestowed for the purchase of feminine dress or ornament.

In this connection it is related that Queen Elizabeth once said to Sir Walter Raleigh, on receiving from him a New Year's gift of the new-style pins, "I trust these will pin your loyalty still closer to our person," to which Sir Walter gallantly replied, "That might not be well, for my love for your majesty might ooze through the pin holes in my loyalty in so unruly a manner as to be displeasing to your highness."

GEOFFREY WILLISTON CHRISTINE.

STAND YOUR GROUND.

What if mortal powers decree
Truth no longer Truth shall be?
What if multitudes decree
Laws revealed from heaven most high?
By the Truth, in honor bound,
Zion's children! stand your ground.

Millions now accept with pride
Truths once scornfully denied;
Millions yet will truths endorse
That are now opposed by force.
Truth will yet the world astound—
Zion's children! stand your ground.

Lo! the skies are overcast;
Fierce the gale and loud the blast.
But the wise to Truth will cling,
At the cost of everything:
Let oppressors run their round—
Zion's children! stand your ground.

Man, inclined to rule and reign,
May, indeed, the body chain;
O'er oppression's harsh control
Towers the independent soul.
Courage, comrades! Free or bound,—
Zion's children! stand your ground.

What if timorous traitors cringe,
And upon the truth infringe?
What if doubtful friends devise
Subtle plans, and call them wise?
Satan, oft disguised, is found—
Zion's children! stand your ground.

What is freedom, power, or place,
Purchased by the soul's disgrace?
Wherefore turn from glory's gate,
Even for a Sovereign's state?
Better strive for joys profound—
Zion's children! stand your ground.

Falsehood cannot face the light;
Evil hates to help the right;
Not by some degrading scheme
Will the Lord His own redeem.
Let your faith in God abound;
Zion's children! stand your ground.

When Messiah comes to earth,
Faith will be of priceless worth;
Lack of faith, the saving kind,
Is the curse of human kind;
Faithful souls will yet be crowned—
Zion's children! stand your ground.

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