
January 1

Sea Bears No Trace of the Equatorial Belt,
But Mariners Know Where It Lies

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And he that sat upon the throne said, "Behold,
I make all things new." Revelation 21:5

There has been so much evil about ourselves and our old nature, so much mischief about our surroundings and the old temptations, that we are not distressed by the belief that old things are passing away. Hope springs up at the first sound of these words from the lips of our risen and reigning Lord: "Behold, I make all things new." It is fitting that things so outworn and defiled should be laid aside, and better and purer things fill their places.

The first day of a new year is a solemnly joyous day. Though there is no real difference between it and any other day, yet in our mind and thought it is a marked period, which we regard as one of the milestones set up on the highway of our life. It is only in imagination that there is any closure of one year and beginning of another year; and yet the New Year has most fitly all the force of a great fact. When men "cross the line," they find no visible mark: the sea bears no trace of an equatorial belt. Yet mariners know whereabouts they are, and they take notice thereof, so that a man can hardly cross the line for the first time without remembering it to the day of his death. We are crossing the line now. We have sailed into the year of grace 1885. Therefore, let us keep a feast unto the Lord. If Jesus has not made us new already, let the new year cause us to think about the great and needful change of conversion. And if our Lord has begun to make us new, and we have somewhat entered into the new world wherein dwelleth righteousness, let us press forward into the center of his new creation—crossing this equator in time yet one more time—and strive to feel to the full all the power of his grace.

