

## ESSAYS, HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL

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### THE NEW YEAR.

ERE our sheet shall have passed from the press into the hands of our readers, we shall have entered on a new year. It is barely ninety degrees distant from us at the present moment. It landed on the eastern extremity of Asia as the 1st of January 1845, just as we were rising from our breakfasts in Edinburgh on the 31st of December 1844 ; and it has been gliding westwards towards us, in the character of *one o'clock in the morning*, ever since. In a few hours more it will be striding across the backwoods of America, in its seven-league boots, and careering over the Pacific in its canoe. And then, at some undefinable point, not yet fixed by the philosopher, it will find itself transformed from the first into the second day of the year ; and thus it will continue to roll on, round and round, like an Archimedes screw, picking up at every gyration an additional unit, until the three hundred and sixty-five shall be complete.

The past year has witnessed many curious changes, as a dweller in time ; the coming year has already looked down on many a curious scene, as a journeyer over space. It has