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Poetry.

WHAT IS A YEAR.

What is a year? 'Tis but a wave
On life's dark rolling stream,
Which is so quickly gone that we
Account it but a dream.
'Tis but a single earnest thro'p
Of Time's old iron heart,
Which tireless now and strong as when
It first with life did start.

What is a year? 'Tis but a turn
Of Time's old brazen wheel—
Or but a page upon the book
Which death must shortly seal.
'Tis but a step upon the road
Which we must travel o'er,
A few more steps and we shall walk
Life's weary road no more.

What is a year? 'Tis but a breath
From Time's old nostrils blown,
As rushing onward o'er the earth,
We hear his weary moan.
'Tis like the bubble on the wave,
Or dew upon the lawn,
As transient as the mists of morn
Beneath the summer sun.

What is a year? 'Tis but a breath
Of life's oft changing scene,
Youth's happy morn comes gaily on
With hills and valleys green.
Next Summer's prime succeeds the Spring,
Then Autumn with a tear,
Then comes old Winter—death, and all
Must find their level here.

THE HARP AND FLOWER.

A harp within a vacant bower
Hung, when the day was closing,
And round it twined a smiling flower,
Amid its chords reposing;
And as the evening zephyr swept among
Its shining strings, a wild sweet song it sang,
Upon the calmly fading hour.

But soon a tempest veiled the heaven,
The angry winds were flying,
And from its peaceful air or riven,
The harp on earth was lying;
But still amid its broken image bound,
That sweet entwining flower was found,
While others far away were driven.

And then I thought on life, when cheering,
How many friends round it play,
Which, at the frowning storm's approach,
Upon its wings are borne away!
Oh! they alone are friends alike, who share
With us Time's changes, whether dark or fair,
And look upon the world unfeeling.

True friendship, like the gentle flower,
Binds up the heart when broken,
And clings around it in the hour
When bitter words are spoken;
And o'er its lonely, sadly sighing strings,
A ray of heavenly brightness softly flings,
To wake anew its stricken power.

Christian Miscellany.

We need a better acquaintance with the thoughts
and reasonings of pure and lofty minds.—Dr. Sayer.

Science and Faith.

It would indeed give melancholy force to the saying, "Much wisdom is much grief," if such wisdom were fatal to the Christian faith, and if he who increased his general knowledge must forfeit his religious hopes. But whilst science is fatal to superstition, and fatal to lying wonders and monkish legends, it is fortification to a scriptural faith. The Bible coming from God, and conscious of nothing but God's truth, it awaits the progress of knowledge with calm security. It watches the antiquary ransacking among classic ruins, and rejoices in every medal he discovers, and every inscription he deciphereth; for from that rusty coin or corroded marble it expects nothing but confirmations of its own veracity. In the unlocking of an Egyptian hieroglyphic, or the unearthing of some ancient implement, it hails the resurrection of so many witnesses; and with sparkling exultation it follows the botanist as he scales Mount Lebanon, or the zoologist as he makes acquaintance with the beasts of the Syrian desert, or the traveller as he stumbles on a long-lost Petra, or Nineveh, or Babylon; for in regions like these every stroke of the hammer and every crack of the

rifle awaken friendly echoes, and every production and every relic bring home a friendly evidence. And from the march of time it fears no evil, but calmly abides the fulfilment of those prophecies and the forthcoming of those events with whose predicted story inspiration has already inscribed its page. It is not light, but darkness, which the Bible deprecates; and if men of piety were also men of science, and if men of science would "search the scriptures," there would be more faith in the earth, and also more philosophy.

Few minds are sufficiently catholic. The psychologist is apt to despise the material sciences, and few mathematicians are good historians. But although there may be indifference or rivalry amongst their votaries, there is no antagonism between the truths themselves. There exists a mind as well as a material universe, and there are laws of thought as well as laws of motion; and although it cannot be proved by Algebra, yet it is pretty certain that Julius Caesar invaded Britain, and that George Washington achieved the independence of America. All truths are friendly and mutually consistent, and he is the wisest man who, if he cannot be an adept in all knowledge, dreads none and despises none; the Baconian intelligence to which the world and the works of the Most High are alike a revelation, and to which both alike are faithful witnesses, though both are not alike articulate.

Be sages, then, not sciolists. In the world of knowledge be cosmopolites, and be not the pedants of one department. Be historians as well as mathematicians. Receive every truth on its appropriate evidence, and there is nothing to prevent your faith in the gospel from being equally strong with your faith in the course of nature. And although the cyclops of science may have an eye for only one-half of truth's horizon; although the bigot of demonstration may jeer at testimony; although the secretary of physics may repudiate history; if your knowledge be really "general,"—if it be sufficiently comprehensive and catholic, and correct withal—the more you grow in knowledge, the more you will be confirmed in that most excellent of all knowledge, a positive and historical Christianity.

But, you say, the natural sciences are all certain; theology is all conflict and confusion. Let us understand one another. If you say that the phenomena of nature are all patent and explicit, I reply, and so are the sayings of Scripture. If candour and ingenuousness can interpret the one, they may equally expound the other. But, if you say that, unlike the word of God, His words have never been misunderstood, you surely forget that the "History of the Inductive Sciences" is just a history of erroneous interpretations replaced by interpretations less erroneous, and destined to be succeeded by interpretations still more exhaustive and true. If you smile at the Hutchesonian or Cœcilian systems of exegesis; if you quote the hostile theories which still linger in the field of polemics, I ask, is this peculiar to theology? Have you forgotten how the abhorrents of a vacuum abhorred Torricelli and Pascal? Have you forgotten how the old physiologists were vexed at Harvey for discovering the circulation of the blood? Do you not remember how the Stahlian chemists, like a burnt-out family, long lingered round the ashes of phlogiston, and denounced the wilful fire-raising of Lavoisier and oxygen? In early youth have you never seen a disciple of Werner, and pitied the affectionate tenacity with which he clung to the last plank of the fair Neptunian theory? Or would every world-maker forgive Lord Rosse's telescope if it swept from the firmament all trace of the nebular hypothesis? Or, because there is still an emissionary as well as an undulatory theory of light, must we deny that optics is a science, and must we hold that the laws of refraction and reflection are mere matters of opinion? Nature is no liar, although her "minister and interpreter" has often mistak-

en her meaning; and, notwithstanding the errors which have received a temporary sanction from the learned, there is, after all, nothing but truth in the material universe; and so far as man has sagacity or sincerity to collect that truth, he has got a true science, a true astronomy, a true chemistry, a true physiology, as the case may be. And even so, whatsoever vagaries particular persons may indulge, or whatsoever false systems may receive a transient support, there is, after all, nothing but truth in the Bible; and so far as we have sincerity and sagacity enough to collect that Bible truth, we have got a true religion. Nay, the most important facts and statements in that word speak for themselves, and require no theory. And just as the mariner might safely avail himself of Jupiter's satellites though Copernicus had never existed; just as the gunner must allow for the earth's attraction, whatever becomes of the Newtonian philosophy; just as the apothecary would continue to mix his salts and acids in definite proportions, even although some mishap befell the atomic theory; just as we ourselves do not close our eyes and dispense with light, until the partisans of rays shall have made it up with the advocates of ether; so the Scriptures abound in statements and facts on which we may safely proceed, whatever becomes of human theories. "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature." So far as it is founded on such sayings as these, religion is not only the simplest, but, being immediately from God, it is the most secure of all the sciences.—Dr. Hamilton.

"I CANNOT."

"I cannot get ready in time for public worship on the Sabbath morning, I am so tired on Saturday, so hard at work all the week." "Could you not get ready if you had a pleasant journey to take?"

"I cannot keep awake in the house of God, I am so drowsy." Would you be drowsy sitting to hear a will read, if you were expecting a legacy was left you, though the reading of it lasted an hour?

"I cannot find time for secret prayer or reading the Scriptures in private." Rather say, I am not willing. Were you to receive triple wages for one hour's early rising, would you say, I cannot?

"I cannot have family worship; I never was accustomed to it." Do you tell the beggar what he has to say? Can you calmly read in Jeremiah x. 25, "Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name," and not feel; and, friend, will this excuse please you on a death-bed?

"I cannot make a profession of religion, for fear of dishonouring the cause of God." Does not the Lord promise to assist you, for none goes a warfare on his own charges—does not Paul say, "I can do all things, through Christ strengthening me."

"I cannot give my heart now to Jesus; by and by I hope to do so." Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth. Will this excuse do at the judgment-seat?—Tract Magazine.

A Dreadful Risk.

A few Sabbaths since, at the close of a discourse of great pungency and plainness, a preacher made a solemn appeal to his hearers, whether, in view of the truths and warnings he had uttered, they would run the risk of delaying the work of repentance? Will you run the risk of losing your souls? Will you run the risk of perishing in your sins, and dying without hope? The appeal was kindly and solemnly pressed on the minds of

those present. At the close of the service, in passing down the aisle, a lady, deeply impressed with the appeal which had been made, said in a low but earnest tone to a gay young lady of her acquaintance, "Can you resist such an appeal as you have just now heard? Will you venture to run the risk of losing your soul?" "O yes," she replied in a thoughtless tone, "I will run the risk." A few days after, the pastor who made the appeal was called to attend the funeral of a young lady in a certain street, who had died suddenly. It proved to be the young lady who had ventured to run the dreadful risk of losing her soul. Behind the curtain of eternity we may not penetrate, or follow the spirit to its last account.

The Lonely Cottager.

A pious cottager, residing in the centre of a long and dreary heath, being asked by a Christian visitor, "Are you not sometimes afraid in your lonely situation, especially in winter?" replied, "O no, sir, for faith shuts the door at night, and mercy opens it in the morning." Cottagers, what are your feelings on retiring to rest, and as you arise in the morning? Do they afford similar confidence to this poor believer, and with her do you also say:

"I lay my body down to rest,
Since thou wilt not remove,
And in the morning let me rise,
Rejoicing in thy love?"

And if so, you will surely exclaim, "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

The Dreaded Visit.

There was near my congregation a public house, in which neither the landlord nor his wife were professors of religion. It was quite a resort for the thoughtless and profane, and I dreaded visiting the place, but conceiving it to be my duty, I nerved myself up to the task. I was respectfully received and invited into the sitting room, where I found the tavern-keeper and his wife alone. I conversed with, or rather talked to them, about the interests of their immortal souls, endeavoured to show them the responsibility of their station, and urged them to give immediate attention to the things which belonged to their peace. But I could get no other answer than a promise from the landlord that he would think of it. I left the house with a heavy heart, feeling that I had done them no good.

They soon left the place, and I knew nothing of them until ten years after my visit, when I received a very kind note from the man, informing me that the conversation which seemed to be so little regarded had resulted in the conversion of both himself and wife.

I record this incident in my pastoral life as an encouragement to ministers and Christians to go forward in their labours of love, and never suffer themselves to be deterred from warning sinners to flee from the wrath to come by fear of a cold or unkind reception. We must avail ourselves of every opportunity to exhort and entreat sinners to be reconciled to God, if they hear us, we shall save a soul from death, but if they refuse to hear, their blood will be upon their own head, and God will not require it at our hands.—Incidents in a Pastor's Life.

Dying Words of Pope Pius V.

It is said of Pius Quintus, that when dying he cried out in despair: "When I was in low condition, I had some hopes of salvation; when I was advanced to be a cardinal, I greatly doubted it; but since I came to the papedom, I have no hope at all."

Christ stands between the wrath of God and the sin of man, intercepting the one, and purging the other.