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DAYS AND STRENGTH.

Progression is a law of God's universe. Seasons change into each other. From the opening spring there is a gradual approach, through summer, to the maturity of autumn, which again gives place to the reign of stern winter. The powers of man, physical and mental, have a progressive development. Men out-grow the clothes of childhood, and come forth to battle in strong mail suited to resist the blows of life. Life itself slowly advances through various stages from youth to old age. Year after year passes away. Already the year 1862 is closing, its privileges are being rung out. Life is passing, and we are nearing the boundary line of another section of our earthly sojourn. This brings to us a suitable time for reflection, for self-examination, for renewed consecration, for true decision. There is in man a natural desire to look into the future—we may form general conclusions of the nature of that future, but we cannot tell what may in particular happen to us. The rising curtain of a day may reveal a few objects, yet the exact future is unknown. Is it not a check to a vain curiosity, to go to the promises of God, and as thoughts of future days crowd on the heart, to learn that "as our day is our strength shall be?" The trials, duties and privileges of future days will find us prepared to endure, to obey, to enjoy, when God's strength is ours.

In seasons of prosperity we ought to remember the Giver of all good. We need strength to keep us humble. Surveying our blessings, dare we say, the might of mine own arm hath gotten them? We have peace instead of war—plenty instead of famine—ordinances instead of persecution. Strength is needed to praise God for all the great things he has done for us. The days that many spend are sadly defective in gratitude. The rich man fared sumptuously every day, afterwards he lifted up his eyes in hell; the fool in the gospel thought not only of days but of years to eat, drink and be merry; young men may rejoice in the day of their youth, and walk in the ways of their heart, but for all these things God will bring them into judgment. Our days of mercies may well inspire us with strength to make liberal sacrifices. It has been well said:—

"What has God the Father done for me? Up till now He has given me life, health, food, raiment, reason, friends, comforts. He gave me His only Son, His Bible, His Sabbath, His Church, His throne of grace, His communion-table, and His constant access for my soul's welfare; then, if He has given me so much, what have I given to Him in return? Every sunbeam, breath, raindrop, proves God's liberality to me. Then what can I now return to Him for all His gifts?"