

videntially spared the afflicting rod which has been laid so heavily upon a vast portion of society, one thing is certain, another year is numbered with the past—never to return; and you are still the mutable creature, in the hands of an offended and immutable Creator.—But few, very few are the number, who cannot point to some friend or friends who have left their happy homes, their early associations, their green fields, their pleasant dwellings, and every thing that was near and dear to them on earth, and have taken their abode within the dark cemeteries of earth or among the heaving billows of the deep.

Ourselves have recorded a tale never to be forgotten while memory remains enthroned within us. In one short week of 1858, we were forever deprived of a tender and beloved father, and a dearly beloved brother,—the former three score years and ten; the latter in the prime of blooming manhood.

And our own case forms but a small part of the thousands, yet untold, who have lost their lives on the battle-field, in loathsome dungeons and prisons, under the despot's rod, and in the multitudinous walks of life,—leaving untold thousands of mourners in their train.—On taking a momentary leave of the mournful picture, we are taught in the most tangible manner, that mutability and change are written upon every phase of society.

The year now being catalogued with the past has been characteristic of great national movements. India, with her 180,000,000 of inhabitants, where the most barbaric acts have been committed ever recorded in the annals of the last century, is again brought within the bounds of order. A commercial monopoly—the power of a despotic company—is at an end, and more wholesome laws are being enforced, so that the teeming millions of that vast and rich country, the seat of heathenism, and once the seat of empires, is now being made ready for the reception of knowledge and the introduction of Christianity.

The Emperor of Russia has set a philanthropic example to his nobles, by setting his 200,000 serfs, or slaves, free. He has also re-established and encouraged by a large donation, Bible Societies in his dominions. This far seeing monarch no doubt sees, what every intelli-

gent country is now forced to acknowledge, namely, that “a Bible reading nation is a great nation.”

National independence has assumed a prominent stand within the last year.—Nations protect their subjects, when in foreign lands, so that even a foreign child cannot be incarcerated with impunity; and the manner in which the captive is set free brings with it salutary instruction.

Liberty is beginning to take her place amid the darkest of despotisms.—liberty of conscience, liberty to read and write, liberty of the press, and the spread of useful knowledge,—however dimly shadowed forth in some countries, is beginning to assume its rights. Various reforms have been introduced into Great Britain; and slavery in the United States has received some salutary checks; the northern section of the States still continues to lift up its testimony against the “grant, bargain and sale” of human beings,—so that the year is not far hence that will record the abolition of this national curse, and set 3,000,000 of human beings free—free to read and understand the great end of their existence.

British America has, within the last year, received a large share of public attention. The gold regions of Fraser River, the establishment of a new colony, British Columbia, in that region, and the laying of the Atlantic telegraph cable, proving the practicability at least of ocean telegraphing, and the flattering aspect of the speedy construction of the Halifax and Quebec Railway, with its ultimate extension to the Pacific Ocean, and also the steady development of the resources of this vast country, are among the good things that crown the year, and are tending to make those hitherto neglected colonies better known and appreciated.

Comparatively speaking at least, the three and a half millions of people who inhabit these vast dependencies of the British crown, have great reason to be thankful;—we are, generally speaking, free from that reckless spirit of speculation and new fangled notions manifested by our brethren of the States; when commercial depression overtakes us, our public institutions, banks, etc., stand fast—few suffer very materially—none suffer for want of the necessaries of life. It is true we have not got the developed