

Reflections at the Close of Day.

The departure of day is a natural period for meditation. Another portion of our brief existence is stricken off. The hopes that engaged—the employments that occupied it, are laid aside, and the mind which was, perhaps, too much elated or depressed by surrounding objects—subsiding, takes more accurate note of time, and of itself. Light withdraws its exciting vehicle, and silent Darkness, the sister of Contemplation, resumes her reign. The solemn regency of stars comes forth on the mighty concave, bearing witness that God remembereth his great family, around whom he hath drawn the curtains of repose. Perhaps the moon, silvery hill and vale and stream, glide on her course of beauty, the hostage of a more glorious orb, which shall soon revisit the firmament. Seem they not all to utter the promise of Divine love—"Seed-time and harvest, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease?"

Let us look back upon all the changes of the varied day. Let us take our leave of it, kindly and tenderly, as of a friend who must return to us no more. It brought us gifts from the "Better Land,"—opportunities of acquiring knowledge, of confirming good resolution into habit, of seeking the happiness of others, and of increasing our own. May we be enabled to compile the memory of its gifts with their faithful improvement. May it have spoken to us of Him who sent them and itself to us in mercy, and found listening and loving hearts. And if, as we retrace its lineaments, a tear of contrition should mingle with them, may it be accepted by Him

"Who, from his throne of glory hears
Through seraph songs, the sound of tears."

As we bid farewell to the day whose mantle is faded at the gates of the west, let us inquire if any event has marked it in the old time that is before us. Perhaps it was the anniversary of some revolution in the history of nations; or the birth or death of some illustrious individual—or, in the domestic annal, it may have displayed some feature of joy or sorrow, of hope or adversity, which it is both fitting and necessary to retrace and depress. The habit of marking our recurring days by the peculiar incidents which appertain to them, imparts a sense of individuality which heightens their importance, and might aid us in so arresting their rapid course, as to number and apply them with wisdom. It is a useful practise, to arrange systematically, in a manuscript book a list of

events which have distinguished every day in the year. They may be gathered from the scroll of history, from general reading, especially biographical, and from the heart's treasured legends of friendship and domestic love. To recapitulate in the evening the events thus commemorated, among other subjects of meditation, will often have a tendency to rekindle gratitude to an unwearied Benefactor.

At this very moment, during years that are past, nations may have been organizing amid the pangs of revolution, or the horrors of war. Is our own country at peace? and under the protection of laws, which give confidence to the weakest, and guard the rights of those who have no where to lay their heads? How many may have mourned the fate of their dearest ones slain in battle: or, musing on their adventurous course upon the deep, shudder at the thought of the tempest and the iceberg, and the shipwreck! Are those whom we love, safe? How many are now suffering from sickness, or bending, with broken hearts, over the couch of the dying! Are we in health? Are our dear ones untouched by the destroyer?

Souls are at this moment going forth, some rent unwillingly from the body, terror-stricken, unprepared. Is our own ready for the summons? Oh! how great is the value of each fleeting day, which, by lengthening our probation, gives us opportunity to repair what has been omitted, to repent of what is amiss, and to take a stronger hold of that only hope, which is to the soul as "an anchor, sure and steadfast."

The spirit of our graceful prayer should rise upon the downy pinions of night, for the refreshment of sleep. How sweet, yet mysterious, is that balm which, shed on the closing eyelids, soothes the weary multitude from their pain, and cheats the worldly-minded from their "carking care," and divides the bad, for a while, from their evil practices, and renews the Christian to "run his way rejoicing."—The sad of heart lays down his burden; and an act of oblivion passes over all that had distressed him. The traveller ceases to count the leagues that divide him from his native land, and the prisoner to measure the walls of his dungeon. The galley-slave bows his head upon the ear, and is as great as a king. The sea-boy forgets alike the storm that rocks the mast, and the home that he had too rashly left. The voyager, with the tear of parting on his cheek, slumbers deeply, notwithstanding

"The visitation of the winds, -
That take the ruffian billows by the top,