

"For this God is our God for ever and ever :
He shall be our Guide, even unto death."

Halt ! Anoint the milestone
With the oil of gladness ;
Rest awhile, and ponder
On the unseen way.
Praise shall bring our blessings
Down the golden ladder,
And the golden promise
Turn our night to day.
"Speak, Thy servant heareth ;"
Henceforth let me follow—
Let me trust the living God,
And ev'ry word He saith !

"For this God is our God for ever and ever :
He shall be our Guide, even unto death."

THE OLD AND THE NEW YEAR.

I MUSED as the midnight hour drew nigh,
and methought the old year stood before
me. Weary and wayworn he seemed,
and in his hand was an hour-glass, from
whence the last sands were fleeing.

As I looked upon his wretched forehead,
memories both pleasant and mourn-
ful came over me. Fain would I have
constrained his longer stay, and spake
earnestly to him :

"Many blessings hast thou brought
me, for which I give thee thanks. New
have they been every morning, and
fresh every moment.

"Thou hast, indeed, from my heart's
garden, uprooted some hopes that I
planted there, With their clustering
buds they fell, and were never quickened
again."

Then he said, "Praise God, both for
what I gave, and what I took away.
And lay up treasures in heaven, that thy
heart may be there also. What thou
hast called blighted hopes, are oft times
changed into the fruits of righteousness."

But I answered; "Thou hast also hid-
den from my sight the loved and the re-
vered. Clods are strewn upon their
faces: they reply to my call no more.
To the homes that they made so fair they
return not, and the places that once knew
them, know them no more forever."

Still he said, "Give praise to God.
Trouble not thyself about those that are
with him. Rather make thine own sal-
vation sure, that thou mayest go unto
them, and parted be no more."

Then, in a faint voice, he murmured,
"My mission unto man is done. For
me, the stone is rolled away from the
sepulchre. I shall enter in, and slumber
with the years beyond the flood, till the
last trumpet soundeth."

I gazed upon his wan brow, and to me
it was beautiful. Fain would I have
swept away the snows that gathered
around his hoary temples, but he suffered
me not, and stretched himself out to die.

By his side I knelt, and said. "O de-
parting Year! I behold a small scroll
beneath thy mantle. What witness shall
it bear of me at the judgment?"

Low and solemn were his last tones,
"Ask me not. Thou shalt know when
the books are opened, and the dead,
small and great, stand before God."

The midnight clock struck. And I
covered my face, and mourned for his
death who had been to me as a friend. I
remembered with pain how oft I had
slighted his warnings and the oppor-
tunities he had given me of doing good,
and had cast away the wealth of time,
that priceless boon from the Eternal.

Methought from the dying lips came
a feeble sigh, "Farewell—farewell."
Then a passion of weeping fell upon me.
And when again I lifted up my head, lo,
the New Year stood in the place of the
departed.

Smiling, he greeted me with good
wishes and words of cheer, while around
me lay many bright tokens of friendship
and love. But I was afraid. For to me
he was a stranger; and when I would
have returned his welcome, my lips
trembled and were silent.

Then he said, "Fear not. I come
unto thee from the Giver of every good
and perfect gift."

"New Year, whither wilt thou lead
me?" Art thou appointed to bring me
joy or sorrow, life or death?"

He replied, "I know not. Neither
does the angel nearest the throne know.
Only Him who sitteth thereon. Give me
thy hand, and question not. Enough
for thee, that I accomplish His will.
Make that will thine own, and thou shalt
wear an angel's smile, even here below.

"I promise thee nothing. Be content
to follow me. Take, with a prayer for
wisdom, this winged moment. The next
may not be mine to give. Yet, if we walk
together, forget not that thou art a pilgrim
for eternity.