

WHAT HAS THE YEAR LEFT UNDONE?

BY HENRY WARE, JR.

It is the last month of the year. Reader, what account have you rendered for the past year? In closing up the books of the departed months, what have been the heaviest items against you? Have they been wrongs against others or yourself? Overt acts, or secret thoughts? Evil done, or good left undone?

We are very prone to limit our self-judgment and our self-condemnation to the visible, palpable acts of open wrong-doing. Able in no other way to judge of others, we come in this way to judge of ourselves. But herein we are wrong; and in an hour of serious contemplation, when we sit down to search ourselves thoroughly, we must perceive that there is very much besides *actions* which goes to decide our characters, and for which we must account. We may be unable to recall positive acts of sin; and yet may find that we have cherished a state of mind which has rendered the whole year little else than one long sin. Or we may find, that, through thoughtlessness or sloth, we have let pass opportunities of virtuous action, till our most innocent days are darkened with the guilt of negligence.

This is, probably, no uncommon case. A man comforts himself, perhaps prides himself, in perceiving that he cannot be charged with any gross deviation from moral propriety; but he is not aware how often he has neglected a moral duty. He does not consider that the frequent