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Poetry.

THE NEW YEAR.

A YEAR—another year—has fled!
Here let me rest awhile,
As they who stand around the dead,
And watch the funeral pile;
This year whose breath has passed away,
Once thrilled with life, with hope was gay!
But, close as wave is urged on wave,
Age after age sweeps by;
And this is all the gift we have,
To look around—and die!
Twere vain to dream we shall not bend,
Where all are hast'ning to an end.
What, this new-waking year, may rise,
As yet, is hid from me;
'Tis well, a veil, which mocks our eyes,
Spreads o'er the days to be;
Such foresight who, on earth would crave,
Where knowledge is not power to save!
It may be dark,—a rising storm,
To blast, with lightning wing,
The bliss which cheers,—the joys that warm!
It may be doomed to bring
The wish that I have reared as mine,
A victim to an early shrine!
But—be it fair or dark—my breast
Its hope will not forego;
Hope's rainbow never shines so blest
As on the clouds of woe;
And, seen with her phosphoric light,
Even affliction's waves look bright!
But I must steer my bark of life
Towards a deathless land;
Nor need I fear the seas of strife,
May it but reach the strand,
Where all is peace, and angels come,
To take the outworn wanderer home!

THE BETTER LAND.

I hear thee speak of the better land:
Thou call'st its children a happy band:
Mother! oh, where is that radiant shore,
Shall we not seek it and weep no more?
Is it where the flower of the orange blows,
And the fire-flies dance through the myrtle boughs?
"Not there, not there, my child."
Is it where feathered palm-trees rise,
And the date grows ripe under sunny skies,
Or amidst the green islands of glittering seas,
Where fragrant forests perfume the breeze,
And strange bright birds, on their starry wings,
Bear the rich hues of all glorious things?
"Not there, not there, my child."
Is it far away in some region old,
Where the rivers wander o'er sands of gold—
Where the burning rays of the ruby shine,
And the diamond lights up the secret mine,
And the pearl gleams forth from the coral strand—
Is it there, sweet mother, that better land?
"Not there, not there, my child."
Eye hath not seen it, my gentle boy!
Ear hath not heard its deep songs of joy,
Dreams cannot picture a world so fair,
Sorrow and death may not enter there!
Time doth not breathe on its fideless bloom,
For beyond the clouds, and beyond the tomb
"It is there, it is there, my child."

Hemans.

Christian Miscellany.

"We need a better acquaintance with the thoughts and reasonings of pure and lofty minds."—Dr. Stimp.

Admonitions for the New Year.

Let us begin the year with solemn reflection—and say, with Job, "When a few years are come I shall go the way whence I shall not return." Let me not only believe this; but think of it, and feel the importance of the sentiment. Ye join a little time I shall be no more seen. How—where—shall I be disposed of?—The seasons will return as before; but the places that know me will know me no more for ever. Will this be a curse? or a blessing? If I die in my sins I shall return no more to my possessions and enjoyments; to the calls of mercy; to the throne of grace; to the house of prayer! If I die in the Lord I shall, O blessed impossibility! return no more to these thorns and briars; to this vain and wicked world; to this aching head; to this throbbing heart; to these temptations and troubles, and sorrows.

Let us begin the year with self-inspection—and say, with the chief butler, "I do remember my faults this day." We are prone to think of the failings of our fellow-creatures, and often imagine because we are free from their faults that we are faultless. But we may have other faults; we may have worse; and while a mote is in our brother's eye a beam may be in our own. Let us deal faithfully with our own hearts. Let us not compare ourselves with others, and especially the more vile of our fellow-creatures; but with our advantages; with our knowledge; with our professions; with the law of God.

Let us begin the year with a determination to abandon whatever appears sinful—and say, with Elihu, "If I have done iniquity, I will do no more." Should the evil course or the evil passion solicit, let it plead in vain while the Saviour-Judge says—"If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell."

Begin the year with pious and personal devotion—and say, with David, "Lord, I am thine; save me." Through him who is the way yield yourselves unto God. It is your reasonable service. He has infinite claims to you. You will never be truly your own till you are his.

Begin the year with relative religion; and if the worship of God has never been established in your family, now commence it—and say, with Joshua, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." A family without prayer is like a house without a roof. It is uncovered and exposed: and we know who has threatened to pour out his fury upon the families that call not upon his Name.

Begin the year with fresh concern to be useful—and ask, with Saul of Tarsus, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Let me look at my condition; my resources; my opportunities. How can I glorify God and promote the welfare of my fellow-creatures? Is there not a Bible to spread? Are there not missionaries to support? Are there none perishing for lack of knowledge that I can myself instruct? Have I no irreligious neighbours to reclaim? Are there no poor to relieve? No widows and fatherless to visit?

Begin the year with more conduct in the arrangement of your affairs, and resemble Ezra and his brethren, who "did according to the custom, as the duty of every day required." God has said let every thing be done decently and in order. Much of your comfort will arise from regularity in your meals, in your devotions, in your callings; and your piety will be aided by it. Have a place to receive every thing; an end to simplify it; a rule to arrange it. Leave nothing for the morrow that ought to be discharged to-day. Sufficient for each period will be its own claims; and your mind ought to be always at liberty to attend to fresh engagements.

Finally, Time, this short, this uncertain, this all important time, upon every instant of which eternity depends, will not allow of our trifling away any of its moments. Resolve therefore to redeem it. Gather up its fragments that nothing be lost. Especially rescue it from needless sleep; and if you have hitherto accustomed yourself to the shameful indulgence of lying late in bed, begin the new year with the habit of early rising; by which you will promote your health and improvement of every kind, and live much longer than others in the same number of days—and say, with David, "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord: in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up."

And if this be your determination, the season will be the date of your happiness.—

God himself says, "From this day will I bless you."—Jay.

Anecdote of Chalmers.

About this time his eloquence as a preacher appears to have been at its height, and we read of crowds bursting open his church doors, and of soldiers required to keep clear the passage. His feelings under all this have been brought out in a narrative given by J. Wright, Esq.:

"At the time I allude to, Dr. Chalmers had been preaching in the Barony Church, for the venerable Dr. Burns, on the Monday after the communion, which was in the suburban districts, about two months after the time of its celebration in the town churches. As was customary on such occasions, Dr. Burns invited the ministers who had assisted him, and some of his elders and friends, to dinner on the Monday. I was on that day one of the party, and I was exceedingly disappointed to see that Dr. Chalmers, who, in ordinary times, poured a fascinating influence over every company where he was, seemed extremely dull, nay, I may say, dejected.—When he arose, about nine o'clock, to go away, as our track homeward lay for some distance in the same direction, I left the company along with him. When we had got together, I said to the Doctor, "Are you well enough to-day, Doctor? for I have noticed you have not to-day, been in your usual trim." "O yes," he said, "I am quite in good health, but I am not comfortable. I am grieved in my mind." Seeing that he so frankly communicated to me the general cause of his unusual appearance, I used the freedom to say, "Well, Doctor, is this a matter that I may be made acquainted with, as, if it is not, I have no wish to pry into anything of a private nature." "O yes!" he replied, "you may perfectly know it, for it is a matter that presses very grievously upon me. In short, the truth is," said he, in his own emphatic manner, "I have mistaken the way of my duty to God in at all coming to your city. I am doing no good. God has not blessed, and is not blessing, my ministry here." On hearing this, I replied, "Well, Doctor, it is a very remarkable circumstance that, in the providence of God, you should have been sent with your complaint to me on this point, because I have it in my power at any rate to mention one instance in which your ministry has been made instrumental in bringing a soul from darkness to the marvellous light of the Gospel of salvation." "Can you?" said he, "then you will give me the best news I have heard since I came among you."

The particulars being narrated,—"Ah," said he, "Mr. Wright, what blessed, what comforting news you give me! I knew it not; but it strengthens me; for really I was beginning to fail, from an apprehension that I had not been acting according to the will of God in coming to your city."—London Watchman

Objections to a Revival.

Not only does the worldly religionist caricature the movement we call a revival,—others are, in many instances, unreasonably averse to it. It is often regarded by men, not enemies to spiritual religion, with suspicion and alarm. They are sincerely, but excessively, jealous of the honour of religion; though, perhaps, this often means only the public status of their own community. They dread the scandal it gives to the world, or they shrink from the over publicity which it attaches to the cause of religion in a neighbourhood; or they fear lest it should evaporate in a noisy ebullition, rather than a well-governed expression of religious feeling,—lest it should be spurious, consequently damaging,—ephemeral, consequently bringing on a collapse. Their habits, as religious men, are inveterate,—their views disregarded,—their tastes offended. They are alive to their share individually in Church responsibility to public opinion, and to the risk implied in the production of an extensive excitement, in minds of every variety of intelligence and

moral condition. They do not separate the operation itself from its accidents; nor appreciate its advantages as a set off against its many possible disparagements. Not regarding the work itself as paramount to every other,—they do not overlook the concomitants that human folly may bind to it. An inefficient, and almost neutral state of the Church, is preferred to one that invests it with new powers, and places it before the world in an aggressive attitude. Reduction and enfeeblement may be sincerely deplored; but comfort is taken in the prerogatives of a sovereignty which reserves "the times and seasons" in its own power; instead of an enlightened consideration, and a vigorous application of evangelic, published, chartered remedies to existing evils. In a declining state of the Church, reasons are rather sought out to induce acquiescence in it as inevitable; while faith, in its resources, is lowered to a positive diffidence, and the tone of feeling is correspondingly humbled. It is flat and unenterprising,—all agencies are pervaded by torpor,—they become intermittent and powerless. Results are scarcely aimed at, because not hoped for. Duty (if performed at all) is regarded as an end rather than as a means, when disjoined from successful effort.—Steward's Religion the Weal of the Church.

Reminiscences of Harrison.

While musing on the death of General Taylor, we were led to think of a sermon which was preached in Washington by Dr. C. Van Rensselaer, on the occasion of Gen. Harrison's decease. We turned it up from a pile of pamphlets, and have read it with deepened interest after the lapse of years. From this discourse we derive some facts and thoughts that we venture to copy.

Dr. Van Rensselaer was in a bookstore in the City of Washington, when the President purchased a Bible, "the best in the store;" and he expressed to Dr. V. his surprise that there was no Bible in the President's mansion, and then remarked, "The Bible ought to be a part of the furniture of the house, and I intend to buy out of the Congressional appropriation, the best copy I can find, and to write in it, 'The President of the United States, from the People of the United States.'"

The first Sabbath after his inauguration, he was very much annoyed by some persons who had been admitted into his house contrary to his orders, and he remarked to one of his family, "We must break up this Sunday visiting."

The next Sabbath, some of the foreign ambassadors called, and were refused admittance; but in the evening some gentlemen succeeded under the plea of being particular friends. The President sat with them a few minutes in evident uneasiness, then rose and walked about the room a little, and said with great kindness, "Gentlemen, I shall be happy to see you any evening but Sunday evening," and retired to his room, leaving them with some other members of his family.

Such reverence for the Bible and the Sabbath is worthy of being imitated by those in high places.

The Sabbath.

An under-sheriff of London mentioning the saying of a Puritan divine, "Hem the Sabbath well, and it will not ravel out all the week;" adds, "my office has enabled me to confirm the value of the Sabbath, there being scarcely a criminal, whether for death or minor punishment, who was not daily confessing to me, in Newgate, that he considered his first fall, and subsequent misery, to be owing to the violation of that blessed day."

Hints to Ministers.

A sermon should be made for a text, and not a text found for a sermon.—Burnett.
In preaching, study not to draw applauses, but groans, from the hearers.—Jacomb.
Steep your sermons in your hearts before you preach them.—Bishop Felton.