

Poetry.

THE COURSE OF TIME

Translated from a beautiful Spanish poem by Manrique, on the death of his father, quoted in the Edinburgh Review.

Oh! let the soul in slumber break,
Arouse its senses, and awake,
To see how soon
Life, with its glories, glides away,
And the stern footsteps of decay
Come stealing on;

How pleasure, like the passing wind,
Blows by, and leaves us nought behind
But grief at last;
How still our present happiness
Seems to the wayward fancy less
Than what is past.

And, while we eye the roiling tide,
Down which our flying minutes glide
Away so fast,
Let us the present hour employ
And deem each future dream of joy
Already past.

Let no vain hope deceive the mind—
No happier let us hope to find
To-morrow than to-day.
Our glided dreams of yore were bright:
Like them the present shall delight,
Like them decay.

Our lives like lasting streams must be,
That into one engulfing sea
Are doom'd to fall—
O'er king and kingdom, crown and throne,
The sea of death whose waves roll on,
And swallow all.

Alike the river's lordly tide,
Alike the humble riv'lets glide,
To that sad wave:
Death levels property and pride,
And rich and poor sleep side by side
Within the grave.

Our birth is but a starting-place;
Life is the running of the race,
And death the goal;
There all our steps at last are brought;
That path alone, of all unsought,
Is found of all.

Long ere the damps of death can blight,
The cheek's pure glow of joy and white
Hath pass'd away:
Youth smiled and all was heavenly fair;
Age came and laid his finger there—
And where are they?

Where is the strength that mock'd decay,
The step that rose so light and gay,
The heart's blithe tone?
The strength is gone, the step is slow,
And joy grows weariness and wo,
When age comes on.

Say, then, how poor and little worth
Are all those glittering toys of earth
That lure us here:
Dreams of sleep that death must break,
Alas! before it bids us wake,
Ye disappear.

THE WESLEYAN.

Halifax, Saturday Morning, December 28, 1850.

The Close of the Year.

[We have departed this week from our usual mode of procedure, and instead of furnishing an original article suitable to the present season, we have given some applicable remarks taken from *Hogg's Instructor* and *Dr. Dwight's Sermons*, believing they will contribute to the spiritual profit of those who favour them with a serious perusal. The close of the year calls for serious reflections on the past, devout acknowledgment of innumerable unmerited mercies received from a gracious and benevolent God, unfeigned repentance of past offences, lively trust in Christ the all-sufficient Saviour for present pardon, and renewed determination that the future of our lives shall be spent more in accordance with the divine requirements. In a short time the last day of 1850 will be gone, and the year itself numbered with those "beyond the flood." We are standing over the grave of one year, and about witnessing the birth of another. And yet many will pass away from this scene of sorrow, ere the present year, near as is its termination, expires! Into the dark, mysterious future, no human eye can penetrate. Clouds and darkness rest upon it, and the swift-passing hand of Time alone can remove them. Let us, like men who look for the coming of the Lord, live habitually in a state of preparation for eternity, having our loins girt about, our lamps trimmed and burning, and thus whether we live or not to see the close of the approaching year, all will be well. The

disruption of the ties which connect us with earth, will set the prepared and happy spirit free, to ascend to the presence of God and to form a re-union with those already before the throne.]

A year! how simple the word seems—how curt, and how finite, and yet how pregnant it is with an infinity of ideas and histories! To the dull sense of the unreflective and unobservant, it merely symbolises a succession of days and nights; to the thoughtful it is a world of thought—an arcana of ideas, dramas, histories, and natural wonders. The tick of the clock is the only rhetoric of the year to some senses. All forms of rhetoric are too feeble to express the circumstances which unite to render it a circumstance of awe and wonder to others. The sun, like some celestial sentinel, watches the earth in its annual course, and counts the moments of its circling flight. The moon, climbing the ebony walls of the palace of queenly night, places her silver lamp thirteen times in the sky, to light the pilgrim world on its nocturnal path; and the stars of the zodiac, like faithful handmaidens, shed their various influences on the seasons—Spring comes rustling down the valleys of the temperate zone, twining the lillies and the roses in her hair, and awakening up the song birds to hail the jocund morning of her presence; the heavens throw off their leaden wintry veil, and the earth awakens like some youth refreshed from slumber; and the youthful season smiles on a glorious future, and hope and promise shine bright in every eye. Then comes maternal summer, with her golden fruits and her flowers of every hue—with her green leafy trees, and her meadows so full of daisies, which glitter in the morning dew as if they were stars that had fallen from heaven over-night—with her flashing waters that tremble and dimple and hum soft songs, as the sunbeams dance on their face with footsteps light as the fifties—with the songs of the blackbird and thrush, that serenade the moon as if they supposed her to be a silver-winged bird of heaven. And then beautiful summer departs, and her sister, the brown-checked autumn, comes with her russet gown and her ample horn-of-plenty; then is the reapers' song heard in the fields of corn, as their sweat falls down to the ground, and their sickles flash in the sunbeams; then is the cheek of nature tinged with hues as varied as those which the exile saw in the visional throne of the Apocalypse; then are the sighs of the winds heard in the forest arches, deep and sad as the wails of orphans for mothers departed: And then, in his snowy shroud, with icicles crowning his temples and foam on his grizzled beard, comes the surly-tempered winter; the ruffian winds that come and herald the winter's coming, struggle and fight with the trees and bowl over the wold and meadow; the glory of nature has gone, and the year is lying in ruin till the voice of God again recalls the spring of beauty. Where is the poet whose eyes, full of prophetic glances, has seen all the beauty that lies in the bosom of a year? For ages and ages past have the many-tongued prophets and sages sung of the beautiful spring, of the summer, and autumn, and winter; and ages on ages shall come, and poet on poet awaken to strike the harps of song and reveal the aspects of nature; and still shall nature be, in her sisterhood of seasons, a deep unfathomable thought for prophets, bards, and sages. And what are the seasons but the passive aspects of the year? There are higher and deeper thoughts than they in its procreant bosom. A year is a link of the chain that we mortals designate life; and men, with all that pertains to their history, are associated with it.

The restless mind of man has through this, as through former periods, toiled, and cared, and watched, with its usual anxiety, to gain the objects of sense and sin. In how many instances have this toil and trouble been in vain! Avarice has dug, ambition has climbed, and voluptuousness has wanted, in the eager search for wealth, fame, power, and pleasure. But how often has the bankrupt, the shipwreck, and the fraud, robbed the miser of his pelf, and left him to sigh in poverty and sorrow? How often has a more successful candidate, or a changing populace, or a fickle sovereign, blasted the fond hopes indulged by the votary of power, and snatched the darling office from his hands, just opened to grasp it? How often has pleasure, like the humming-bird, receded from the silly child of sense as he was approaching to seize it, and retiring from flower to flower, always euded

his speed and cunning, till finally it skimmed away, and vanished from his sight? And how uniformly has the good expected by these worldlings disappeared at the moment when they had compassed the darling object of their wishes, and left nothing but vacuity and disappointment behind?

How frequently, also, has disease arrested them all in the midst of their highest hopes, and their most eager pursuit of earthly good? How frequently has the palsy withered the limbs and strunk the faculties of the mind; and the consumption blasted the hopes even of life, and forced the eye to turn its view from splendour and revelling to the dreary grave? How often has melancholy shrouded the soul in gloom, covered the bright light of heaven, and changed the world into a cavern of darkness and solitude; or delirium extinguished the lamp of reason, changed the man into a wild beast, and hurried him so the seclusion and chains of a dungeon?

How often has death called to the unthinking wretch, who forgot that he was not to live here for ever, and said, with a dreadful voice, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee." In obedience to this summons the fond, infatuated worshipper of the world has, amidst the gayest hopes and most confident promises of temporal gratification, quitted the beloved objects of his pursuit; and, instead of heaping up gold, glittering in power and splendour, and wallowing in sensuality, gone down to the grave, appeared before the bar of God, given up an account of his sins, and been consigned to endless poverty, ruin and despair.

At the same time how many innocent and lawful enjoyments have been also terminated during this period? How many persons have lost their health, property, comforts and hopes?

How many friends and families have been separated by death, whose affection, kind offices, and mutual pleasure, can never be renewed on this side of the grave?

In a multitude of instances, also, the blessings of providence have been wasted by thoughtless negligence and giddy profusion. These can never be recalled, nor the opportunity of employing them to the accomplishment of those valuable ends for which they were given.

In no small number of instances, also, the day of probation and the means of grace have been lost with a negligence and prodigality still more thoughtless and dreadful. From some of the wretched prodigals it is neither unnatural, nor uncharitable, to suppose, that God, by giving them up to their own desires, has finally taken away all disposition to a future, wise, and profitable, use of these blessings, so that, hereafter, his word will fail of all useful efficacy upon them, and Sabbaths return, the sanctuary open its doors, prayers ascend, and sermons call to repentance and to eternal life, in vain. To these persons Christ has proffered himself for the last time; the last sound of the voice of mercy has died upon the ear; and the evening of hope has terminated in everlasting night.

In many more instances the instructions of parents have partially lost their influence, the warnings of God's providence, and the threatenings and promises of his word, have failed of their effect, tenderness of conscience, gradually decaying, has degenerated towards hardness of heart, and apprehensiveness of guilt towards security in sin. In this manner the soul, insensibly to itself, is removed further from repentance, life and hope, and "the power of darkness" advanced towards an ascendancy over it, final and fatal.

At no distant period, all your years will come to an end. Your feet will then stumble on the dark mountains, and your eyes be closed in the iron sleep. Your souls will then leave the bodies which they here inhabited, and will return to God who gave them, to have every work, with every secret thing, brought into judgment. When from a dying bed you come to take a retrospect of all you will then have done, suffered, and enjoyed in this world, what, in your view, will probably be the amount? Will your whole life, like the year that is now closing, appear like a tale that is told, not only momentary, but vain, idle, a mere amusement; a day, in which you have fluttered and sported in the sunbeams to no useful end, without providing for a peaceful death, a comfortable account, or a happy eternity. Will it then appear, that the means of grace have all been squandered by you; and that the day of salvation, that sweet and accepted time, has been laughed, slept, and signed away? "Oh, that you were wise; that you understood these things: that you would consider your latter end!"

CIRCULAR.

The following "Circular" has been forwarded to us, by our respected friend and brother, the REV. WM. TEMPLE,—which, we deem best for all concerned, to publish in *The Wesleyan*:

Fredericton, New Brunswick, Dec. 9, 1850.

As every exertion must be made to rebuild the Wesleyan Chapel in this City, during the ensuing summer, it is proposed as one of the means for raising the necessary sum, that a Bazaar shall be held in the month of August next.

The members of the Wesleyan Methodist Society therefore earnestly and respectfully solicit the contributions of their friends, and they have taken this early opportunity for so doing, in order that ample time may be afforded for the production of articles worthy of the interesting occasion.

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT.

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| Mrs. T. B. Smith, | Mrs. S. Barker, |
| Mrs. H. Fisher, | Mrs. Hale, |
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In giving publicity to the above document, we design not only to let our readers see that our Fredericton friends, who have suffered so grievous a calamity as the loss of their large and commodious Church by the recent fire, are putting forth vigorous exertions to help themselves, but also to commend their claims on christian sympathy and benevolence to the hearts and liberality of our numerous readers and the public generally. Our correspondent writes, that, beside the contemplated Bazaar, "we have commenced a Subscription among our friends here, which in a few days,—notwithstanding what our people have suffered recently by the unprecedented conflagration, and previously by the altered Imperial policy in respect to colonial trade,—has amounted to £650, and we hope will not fall short of £1000." This we regard as a good beginning and a noble effort, worthy of the well-known energetic and indomitable character of our New Brunswick neighbours, and which cannot fail to produce a favourable impression on the minds of those to whom an appeal for assistance is now made. Our correspondent very properly reminds us of the fact, that—"Our friends in Fredericton have ever recognized the OBLIGATIONS arising out of the adoption of the 'CONFESSIONAL PRINCIPLE,' and now he hopes in the time of their need, they will enjoy some of the BENEFITS resulting therefrom." He adds,—"Nowhere have our people been more generous to others—or more spirited in providing for themselves—and such a people, visited as we have been by the hand of God, deserve the interposition of an enlarged and practical sympathy."—We cordially endorse these sentiments, honourable alike to the writer, and to the people in whose behalf he so touchingly pleads; and, at present, for we shall doubtless feel it a duty to recur to the subject again, we earnestly solicit from the Wesleyans and other favourably disposed citizens of Halifax, a fraternal, christian, and generous expression of their wanted sympathy, in donations, and articles, ornamental and otherwise, for the intended Bazaar, and in any other practical and efficient manner, to which their kindness and generosity may prompt.

LITERARY NOTICE.

The National Temperance Bazaar, and Sons and Daughters of Temperance, City, N. York, S. E. Cary, M. W. P. of the S. of T. of North America, New York: R. Vanden, pp. vi. 1850.

This elegant Annual, for which we may call it, has been kindly laid on our table by Mr. Kellogg, of Temperance celebrity. We understand it is the first of an intended series of works of a similar character to be presented annually to the reading public.

It contains forty-two articles, all having more or less bearing on the great and important subject of Temperance, written many of them in a style of once elegant and interesting. The Illustrative Steel Engravings are sixteen in number, and enhance the interest and value of the work. The "Offering" is on sale at *The Athenaeum*, Temperance Hall, and may be procured from Mr. Kellogg, who is acting as the Agent.