

"THIS YEAR ALSO."

Only a little space of time marked off from the vast stretches of countless ages. It steals upon us noiselessly and glides away swiftly. Before we become quite accustomed to write 1907, we must pass on and begin to write 1908. The time is short, yet it is fraught with significance. This narrow space of one year is a gift of God for a holy purpose.

This year also for repentance. Much depends on repentance, for Jesus says, "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish." Time is required for repentance, not much time, but a little time is necessary. It is for this very purpose that time is afforded. Why are wicked men spared and permitted to grow old? Not because they are making the world better, or glorifying God, or doing any good, but because God delights in mercy. Yet how many millions passed through the year 1907 without repentance. They were far from God when the year began and are still far from Him today. Ample time has been afforded them to return unto the Lord. This they could have done in one day, in one hour, yea, perhaps in less time. But God has granted them many hours, many days, many years, and still they do not heed His call. They have had this year also, and yet are far away.

This year also for improvement. "Grow in grace." It is possible to advance in the knowledge of God, to know more and more of His character and works. It is possible to become richer every day in the knowledge of His Word. If one should search the Scriptures diligently every day for three score years he would be able to find more of the gold of the kingdom in them the last day than he found the first day. It is possible to improve every day in brotherly kindness, patience and charity. It is possible to grow wiser, better and stronger to the very end. It has been a busy year, a year of care and study and toil, but what have we to show for it all? Too often the toil that wears the body out and wears the years away is not the performance of duty at all. Too often the care is worse than needless, and the study is about things which do not profit nor edify.

The year has been full to overflowing with opportunities and advantages. We have had the Sabbath returning regularly every week. We have had the Bible with all its priceless treasures of truth. We have had the church with all the means of grace. An intelligent man lies sick in the hospital today. He has been there for three weeks, and has narrowly escaped with his life. Before going there he never attended church although he lived almost in sight of one. The other day he said, "Every time I have closed my eyes since I have been lying here suffering I could see the outside doors of the church, and they seemed to reproach me. If the good Lord will spare me, I will go straight to His house when I am able, and see the inside, and pay my vows unto the Lord." We have had the Bible, and good literature, and the mercy seat. We have had afflictions, and these also are means of grace. Many a man has been greatly benefited by the things he has suffered. God has fed us, clothed us, sheltered us, protected us, and brought us safely through another year. Have we made improvement? Is life richer, sweeter, larger, better than it was a year ago? Are we more grateful, more obedient, more loyal and true?

This year also for service. A selfish life is not worth living. It may be successful in vast material and intellectual accumulations, but it has been wasted. Service alone will redeem our years from waste. One can render some de-

finite service every day. No day should be permitted to close without some noble record. If every day should witness some real service what a splendid record would be revealed when the books shall be opened. But this year also has been a blank year with many. Can we recall one real act of service which we have rendered to anyone since the year began? If not we may well fear that it has been added to the long list of unfruitful years.

What years of wasted time we shall have to account for. One brilliant man says he wasted twenty years of his life on trifles. Science is teaching men how to utilize all kinds of waste almost. But science has not yet discovered any use for wasted time. Alas, it cannot be utilized. In a single hour a decision might be made which would determine a destiny, or a letter written which would win a soul, or a word spoken which would save a wanderer. In one hour a lesson might be learned which would make one rich forever. Think of the time wasted in school, in the church, in sickness. It is a great thing to sit at the feet of a great teacher for one year, to be engaged in some choice pursuit for one year, to be associated with some rare spirit for one year, to live in a Christian home for one year, to listen to some true man of God preach the gospel every Sabbath for one year. If all these opportunities were diligently improved how rich we should all be. Has this year also been wasted?—N. Y. Christian Advocate

A GRACE FOR THE NEW YEAR.

Lord, for what we have received,
Learned and loved, unlearned, achieved;

For our measure of success,
Failures, cares and fears no less;
For the joy and stress and strife,
All that truly counts as life,
For the kindness and the grace
On each friendly human face;
For a larger trust in Thee—
May we truly thankful be!
And for what, if we should live,
We are going to receive;
For the rapture and the pain
Certain to be ours again;
For the future, still unseen,
And the veil that hangs between,
For the knowledge all is right,
Though the darkness hide the light,
Though Death himself should draw his sword—
Make us truly thankful, Lord.

—E. F. Howard, in The Watchman.

What could the modern church do without the religious press as a chronicle of current Church History? It brings tidings of the progress of the kingdom of God in all parts of the world. It does regularly, systematically and widely what the apostles and messengers did occasionally and within narrow limits, when they rehearsed at Antioch or reported to Jerusalem what had occurred in Iconium or Samaria. The scant mention of these reports in the Acts and Epistles show the place and power of Christian news, of intelligent and sympathetic acquaintance with the movements of God's Providence and Spirit in every quarter. The facts are fuel to the zeal and faith of the church. And this fuel the Christian press brings weekly to the home, kindling the hearts of God's people and seeking to widen the circle of this sacred fire.

He whose aim is to help God develop the best there is in him, has a saner immorality than he who, neglecting this endeavor, walks the plutocrat's path to the tomb.

If every one would mend one, we should have a new world.—Matthew Arnold.

BEWARE OF COVETOUSNESS.

(By Rev. Dr. Dickson, Galt.)

This teaching regarding covetousness is often on our Lord's lips. It is set forth in parable, in precept, as well as in plain teaching. It is one of the most strongly insisted upon truths in His ministry. And why? Because covetousness is one of the most prevalent vices and grows to be one of the most deadly sins. Covetousness takes away the affections of the heart from God, and robs divine things of all their interests. Covetousness is idolatry, the worship of wealth; it makes a god of money and pays to it the devotion that is due to Jehovah, and offers to it the sacrifices of thought, time, labor and life, that belong to God, and which he claims as his own; pours out the heart with all its affections to wealth, which ought to be given to God; robs God of His rightful due, and this in the light of God's goodness, mercy and grace, is a horrible sin.

Wealth and riches are in many ways the touchstone of man's nature, telling what he is, telling it as by public proclamation, for it cannot be hidden. Who does not know of Carnegie, or Rockefeller, or McCormick, or McDonald. As they are known to the whole world, so others are known in their own little world, and that by the particular use they make of their riches, which represents to them world power, and their means of influence. This parable of the fool who laid up riches, tells what the man is who worships his wealth. He is a fool. He trusts in uncertain riches, which often deceive, and so we have this strong statement in Proverbs 33:24: Labor not to be rich, cease from thine own wisdom. Wilt thou eat thine eyes upon that which is not, for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle towards heaven.

"When a man makes up his mind to enjoy what he has accumulated, saying, 'Soul thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat drink and be merry,' he forgets that God said unto him, 'Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee, then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided.' So is he that laveth up treasures for himself and is not rich towards God."

"What is it then to be rich before God? It is to abound in the God-like, in the holy Spirit's presence and the graces which he imparts. To be rich towards God was to have faith in God, to have love for God.

How do we stand? Are we poor because we are like the man that is nyan in his immortal allegory represents as working with the muck-rake, ever looking down, and never looking up, seeking mostly and chiefly material things, or are we listening to the cry of the soul, and coveting earnestly the best gifts.

The spirit of our time has been making us poor, because we have been engrossed by business, and the affairs of this world. And by success and prosperity our hearts have been lifted up. We have been worshipping the temporal and material, and thrusting God from His throne.

"And now what means the change that has come like a bolt out of the blue sky? What means the arrested wheels of machinery?"

It is God coming in to convince the gainsayers that He rules over the hosts of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth. It is to assure men that God still lives, and that though men turn to Him a deaf ear through their immersion in business, yet God will make Himself heard, as the old colored woman said at a time of disappointment and dismay, to the friends of freedom, "God is not dead; God is not dead."