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**THE OLD YEAR.**

Another page of God's great volume is written and folded away with the inexorable past. Each and all of us have left our mark on that page—stains that *we* can never obliterate. With all its sorrows and sins, with all its tears and smiles, the old year has passed into the presence and the keeping of God. We have sown seed that must meet us in other years,—that must meet us even at the bar of the Great Judge. How solemn the thought! How carefully should we examine ourselves, and go anew to the Fountain of cleansing, that all our sins may be taken away!

How many, who commenced the old year blessed with good health, full of high hopes and purposes with regard to this life's future, are now slumbering under the winter's snow, or, still more sadly, are deep under the cold waves of the sea. How many instances crowd upon us day by day, illustrating the frailty and uncertainty of human life, and confirming to our hearts the testimony of God's word concerning our days! We are strangers and sojourners here. We are consumed before the moth. We all do fade as a leaf, as a flower of the field, as the flower of the grass, for the sun no sooner riseth in his strength than the grace of the fashion thereof perisheth. Our days are as an hand-breadth; they are swifter than the weaver's shuttle, swifter than the swift ships, and than the eagle hastening to the prey. Here we have no continuing city, no rest, no home. The same sad, sad story of blighted youth, of trembling age, of sickness, death and the

grave, has been told by all the generations of men. It is well that this side of the truth should be frequently and profoundly before our thoughts; and there is no period more fitting for such meditations than now when we have buried the old year.

Thanks be to God that resplendent light pierces through all our darkness—that heavenly joy may drive away our sorrows—that in the midst of death we may lay hold on everlasting life, and hear the voice of Jesus saying, "I am the Resurrection and the Life. He that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall ye live; and he that liveth and believeth on me shall never die!"

No Christian, therefore, need mourn over the swiftness of time; but rather rejoice that the day is coming very swiftly when he shall see Christ, lay hold on His endless life, and dwell forever in His presence. At His call the graves must give up their dead; the sea, too, must give up the dead that are in it. They, whom last year has divided forever so far as this life is concerned, shall be reunited by a coming New Year, towards which we are hastening, guided by Him who says, Behold I make all things new.

On this New Year's day how many have to thank God for sparing and preserving mercy. Parents and children, brothers and sisters, meet and form again the old family circle. Friend grasps the hand of friend. Masters and servants, ministers and people, writers and readers rejoice together. Let those whose circle is unbroken, whose cup of mercy is full, remember lovingly such as are less favoured. Gladden, if you can, the