

short of God's glory. Even confining attention to the past year, how much time has been unredeemed—how small the additions made to our christian knowledge—how limited our advance in holiness—how many faults in our tempers yet remain uncorrected—how scanty the fruit have we brought forth unto God—how sparing the good accomplished by our exertions or our example.

Does not the fact that we are alive this day suggest solemn considerations regarding our present and future responsibilities. It is often said, that it is a solemn thing to die, but it is scarcely less solemn to live. There is none of us but is exercising an influence for good or evil. The barren fig tree *embowered* the ground. It not only occupied space uselessly, it exercised a detrimental influence upon the neighbourhood. So every sinner and every unholy professor is an enemy to the welfare of mankind and the cause of the Redeemer, while the humblest christian lives to God's glory. Let us feel then as we go forth to the duties of another year that the possession of life involves renewed responsibilities. Let us live for some purpose, let us seek the salvation of our own soul and as we have opportunity do good to our fellow men. But especially is life solemn as upon it depends our future happiness or misery. Though there may be peculiar cases, in which men may be saved in a dying hour, yet the general rule of God's procedure is that as men live, so shall they die, and so shall they be for ever. "He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, and he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

In conclusion, may we all remember that the time is coming when we shall *not* be alive. No very long time will elapse till we shall all be consigned to the silent tomb—when in regard to each of us the word will be circulated, he, she is dead—when relatives shall weep and assembled friends shall gather round our remains to consign them to the house appointed for all living. It may be so during the year now commencing. It will be so with some of the readers of the *Record*; it may be so with its editors. When the number for January 1865 shall be issued, all will not be alive.

Many of those who read these thoughts will then be sleeping in the dust, while the hand which now writes them may have forever laid aside the weapons of his earthly warfare. O may writer and reader be taught whatever "his hand finds to do, to do it with all his might, seeing there is no device nor knowledge, in the grave whither we are going." O may our souls be bound up in the bundle of life, and may we at last be among those who "cannot die any more for they are equal with the angels."

THE PENTATEUCH VINDICATED.

BY REV. JAMES SMITH, D. D., PROFESSOR OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE.

The following vindication of the Pentateuch from the aspersions of Bishop Colenso, is the substance of the opening lecture for the present session of the Divinity Hall. It is now recast and presented in a popular form, much condensed, and denuded of all philological and learned reasonings and illustrations.

1. Bishop Colenso's first charge against the accuracy and historic credibility of the Pentateuch, is founded on the statement made by Moses respecting the offspring of Jacob, who went down with him into Egypt, amounting in all, with himself, to 70 persons. Of these, four were great grand-children of Jacob's viz., two of Judah's and two of Asher's grand sons. Judah's grand sons were Hezron and Hamul, twin brothers, and sons of Pharez, whom Judah had by Tamar. Now, Colenso maintains, that Judah's grand sons are represented as having been born in Canaan; and he thinks that as Judah could be only 42 years of age at the descent into Egypt, it was impossible for him, in his circumstances, to have had grand children at that early age. This constitutes Colenso's first objection; and so it proves, in his estimation, that the whole narrative is false, and the Pentateuch not worth the paper.

This difficulty is easily solved. The key to its solution consists in this, that the grand sons were not born in Canaan, but in Egypt; and that they are nowhere represented as going down with Jacob into Egypt, any