

* PALM BRANCH *

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JANUARY, 1898.



HAPPY NEW YEAR to all our readers! As we write 1898 we remember that only two years remain of the nineteenth century, and feel with regret that we shall soon be called upon to say good bye to an old friend, for it is the only Century we have ever known!

And a wonderful Century it has been—a good friend to the world. We are lost in astonishment when we think of all the progress the world has made throughout its years. It has given to the British nation a good Queen whose praise is in all lands. And then the wonderful discoveries, inventions and improvements, many of them within the last fifty years! Steamships, railways, photography, telegraph, telephone, phonograph and all the marvellous developments of Electricity. The very thought of it makes us disposed to pity the poor people who lived in an earlier age, just as the actors in the next Century will pity us—perhaps we could not fly.

Then, the wonderful progress of art, science and literature; the freedom of the Press; the rapid diffusion of knowledge among the common people, especially on our own continent; and above all, religious toleration even among other than English speaking people.

God is fulfilling his promise in giving man dominion over the earth. Man is harnessing the forces of nature and bidding them do his will, and as a result of all this God's will is being done, and His wonderful plans for the salvation of men are being carried out. The discoveries and improvements of the Century are being pressed into this service and the world is becoming a great highway for the carriage of the Gospel. Witness the wonderful opening up of such countries as Japan, Corea, the vast empire of China, India, the Islands of the sea and even Africa.

Scarcely any organized Protestant Missionary work was done before the dawn of the present Century. True, brave souls, here and there, struck out for God, but men and women had not then generally awakened to the fact that the evangelization of the world depended on them—that it was not to be accomplished by God or by angels, but by men and women filled with the spirit of God. Are we fully awakened yet to the magnitude of the trust? There is much lost time to be made up. Let us hasten to do our part.

We are glad to be able to give this month the tender little sketch of Mrs. Purvis (Maria Hart) written by one who was near and dear to her. No touch of ours can add to this pen portrait of one so greatly beloved, but we would fain place on record our own cherished memories of our friend; our keen appreciation of her high character and attainments, her many noble engaging qualities of heart and mind and her world-wide sympathies which endeared her to all who knew her, and made her so often a very angel of comfort in time of need.

Do not forget us in thy home afar.

Watch o'er us with thy holy spirit eyes,

So shall we hail thee as a guiding star,

So shall we follow to thy home—the skies.

This is the first month in the New year, so, of course, this is the time to subscribe for the PALM BRANCH, if you have never done so before. It will make a fine New Year's gift for a little friend. For further particulars see the heading of this Editorial page.

If you do not renew in time we cannot promise you that we will be able to supply all back numbers.

Hu King Eng, the first Chinese woman doctor, is a great success in the Flowery Land. Having studied and taken the degree of M. D. in the United States, after seven years' hard work, she is now in charge of the Siang-Hu Hospital at Foo-chow, and a story is told of a coolie who wheeled his blind old mother a thousand miles on a barrow to take her to the woman doctor. A double operation for cataract was the result, and the old woman can see as well as ever. Dr. Hu King Eng is to be one of the delegates to the Woman's Congress to be held in London next year. She belongs to the Christian faith, her grandfather, a mandarin of great wealth and power, having been converted late in life.

“Upon Thy word I rest,

So strong, so sure;

So full of comfort blest,

So sweet, so pure.

The word that changeth not, that faileth never;
My King! I rest upon Thy word forever.”