

THE CHRISTIAN.

'FAITH COMETH BY HEARING, AND HEARING BY THE WORD OF GOD.'—Paul

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A Happy New Year.

Twelve months ago these words were on nearly everybody's lips, and they are repeated at the beginning of this year by the young and the old, the rich and the poor, the saint and the sinner. If wishes could make us happy we might be assured that the present year will be one of abundant cheerfulness. But wishes carry with them neither sorrow nor joy. They express a desire,— nothing more. A happy man is one who adapts himself to the "happenings." Happiness largely depends, not upon what others do or think, but upon what we do and think, not upon events, which, in God's providence may transpire, but upon how we permit them to influence us. Happiness is a condition; and when we can say with Paul, "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content," our happiness is to a great extent beyond the power of circumstances. It is thus in the power of everyone to make the year upon which we have just entered one of abiding and plentiful happiness. THE CHRISTIAN'S wish to its readers is, that they may each plainly see God's hand in the events of the coming year, and thus have the happiness which comes from the conviction that, "He doth all things well."

In the year whose dying knell has been sounded, THE CHRISTIAN has regularly visited the homes of its readers with messages suited to each. For all who were bowed down by sorrow it had words of genuine sympathy, and for all who rejoiced it had words of congratulation. There were words of warning for those who were wrapped up in the sinful pleasures of this life, that they might be aroused in time to avoid the threatened danger; and there were words of encouragement for those who were striving toward that perfection, which was exemplified in the life of Christ, that they might endure unto the end. It has endeavored to make the bad good, and the good better; to make the careless earnest, and the earnest more so; to do good to all according as it had opportunity.

Now that 1891 will live only in our memories, it is well for us to glance back and see ourselves as we appear in it. What was our condition a year ago? What is our condition now? The sun has

risen upon us three hundred and sixty-five times. Did it see us the same on the last as on the first? No! There must have been some change, and the question is, "Has it been for better or for worse?" Have we grown in grace as we have grown in years? Have we increased in usefulness with increasing opportunities? Have the good resolutions we made a year ago been steadfastly adhered to? God gave us a clean page upon which to write. What is written, is written. Are we satisfied with it, or no? Let us be encouraged by our success, and warned by our failures.

Is it well to make New Year resolutions? Yes,— if they are good ones and we intend by God's help to keep them. There is a sustaining power in a vow, which does not always exist where none has been recorded. It may prove as wings to the soul which wishes to rise. When a man says in reference to some duty, "I will do it," the chances for its being done are greater than if he had made no such determination. Without it he would have had only his sense of duty urging him on, and that is often sufficient, but with it duty is reinforced both by his honour and his veracity. Without it he may defer till duty seems no longer duty.

While good resolutions seem to spring up with the first rising sun of the new year as naturally as the grass in spring time — and also in many cases, like the grass, perish before winter comes, — there is no good reason why they should be confined to any one season. A person says in reference to a bad habit or sin, "Well I know I should abandon this, and I intend to do so as soon as my birthday comes round, or when this year closes." What does that mean? It means that he will hug the darling a little longer, and when his set time comes round it may be that the darling is hugging him, and will not let him go. The time to cease sinning is now; the time to begin doing good is now. "Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

Every year is full of certainties, of probabilities and of possibilities. Among the certainties we may include the death of millions of our race. That is inevitable. No power can prevent it. Among the probabilities we may safely place the departure of some of our friends. Who, we cannot say; when, we cannot tell. But that some of them will be called away we cannot doubt. Among the possibilities we must enroll our own flight as on an eagle's pinions to another world. This year may have that in store for us; some year has. We may be strong now, without an ache or a pain; we may be young and hopeful; but so were many a year ago who are now in the company of those whose trials are all over. There are ten thousand other certainties and probabilities and possibilities, but each can say to himself:

"And now my soul, another year
Of thy short life is past;
Thou canst not long continue here
And this may be thy last."

Is it well for us that we do not know what the future has in store for us? The fact that we do not is conclusive proof that we should not; for it is God who has drawn the veil, and He not only knows what is best, but does it as well. This is true, whether we can discover the reasons or not;

but these are as open to the thoughtful mind as the stars in the heavens are visible to the watchful eye on a clear December night. Does the prisoner awaiting the day of his execution look forward to the end with as much composure as the incurable invalid? By no means; and nevertheless the latter may be the first to cross the dividing line between this world and the next, and his passing over may be the rougher. It might be said that if a man saw his path before him as the locomotive engineer sees his railway track, he would be able to avoid dangers to which, as things now are, he is constantly exposed; but it must be said that the very fact that the engineer goes with extreme caution over a bridge whose stability is questioned should be to all a warning and an example in view of the uncertainties of life. "We know not what a day nor an hour may bring forth." "I say unto all, Watch."

Swift as the winged arrow flies,
Speedily the mark to find;
As the lightning from the skies
Darts and leaves no trace behind:

Swiftly thus our fleeting years
Bear us down life's rapid stream;
Upward, Lord, our spirit's raise,
All below is but a dream.

Thanks for mercies past received,
Pardon of our sins renew;
Teach us henceforth how to live,
With eternity in view.

Bless thy word to old and young,
Fill us with a Saviour's love;
Keep us, lest our feet should stray,
Till we reach thy courts above.

ITEMS AND NEWS.

Read the editorial.

You will find "church news" interesting.

Don't forget to renew your subscription. We pay our bills every month.

We congratulate the brethren at South Ringo, on the successful opening of their new church house. Digby Co is looking up.

BRO. G. D. WEAVER is visiting his parents in Digby Co. and preached for his home church last Lord's day.

SEVERAL interesting articles have reached us just as we go to press. They will appear in our next issue.

ANY of our subscribers can have a specimen copy of THE CHRISTIAN sent to their friends by sending us their address on a postal card.

FROM a private letter from Ontario we are informed that an earnest effort will be made in the near future to organize a band of disciples in Montreal. It is likely that the brethren all over Canada will be asked to aid in this worthy enterprise. We feel sure that the disciples of the Maritime provinces will give generously to help establish the cause of Christ in the chief city of the Dominion.