

TOO DEEP FOR THAT.

"Y. S." said Farmer Brown,  
Bringing his hard fist down  
On the old oak table.

"They say that men can talk,  
From Paris to New York,  
Through a sunken cable!

"Tis perfectly absurd;  
For to hear a single word  
No man is able;  
And it's clear enough to me  
That this wispspr of mystery  
Is a foolish fable.

"The news we get from Rome  
Is all made up at home,  
'Tis my conviction.  
And that you see will account  
For the terrible amount  
Of contradiction.

"Yes," said Farmer Brown,  
Bringing his hard fist down  
On the old oak table  
"My wife and I have tried  
The experiment; we tied  
A good stout bit of cable

"To the fence just over there  
And the rocker of this chair;  
And we couldn't do it,  
Though we screamed ourselves as hoarse  
As tree toads; but of course  
Not one word went through it!

"Don't talk to me I pray,  
Of fresh news every day  
Through sunken cables:  
Sea-yarns are always tough,  
And I have heard enough  
Of such old fables!"

THE HIDDEN CLOCK.

FOR THE NEW YEAR.

ONE lovely summer evening I was walking with a friend down a quiet street, when our attention was arrested by what we thought a curious sight. The day had been very hot, and most of the houses that we passed had the windows wide open to admit the air, which was now beginning to be pleasantly cool. In one house the lower sash was thrown up, and, as we walked by, we could see the pendulum of a clock that was on the wall, but the blind drawn over the upper part of the window hid the face from our sight.

"How singular that pendulum looks!" I said; "it is swinging away as if it were all alone, and were just going backwards and forwards to amuse itself."

"Yes," said my friend, "it is strange to watch that moving thing without seeing the other part of the clock. Do you know what it makes me think of?"

"Of what?" I asked.

"Well," said my companion, "somehow that pendulum, which we see while the clock is hidden, seems very much like our life on earth: slowly, regularly passing from us a day at a time. Each day seems like one tick of the clock, and each New Year like the striking of another hour. Now, as I look at that pendulum, there are some things that I know about the clock, and others that I cannot tell. I know there is a clock on the wall, and that, at some time, it has been set going, and that at another definite period it will stop. I know too that the clock did not set itself going, and without its permission every hour brings it nearer to the point when the weights will run down, and it cannot help stopping. But I cannot say how many times it has yet to tick. It may be that for several hours longer the pendulum will swing backwards

and forwards, or, perhaps, the weights are nearly run down, and it has only a few more minutes to remain in motion.

"And I know just about as much and as little as to the duration of my own life. I was 'set going,' so to speak, without any consent or control of my own; I shall not be asked when I have had enough of life. We talk about time passing more swiftly as we grow older, and so it seems to do, though, in many cases the longer people live the harder it is for them to realize that they are coming nearer to the point when time shall be no longer. Yet we cannot really lessen the speed, or arrest the flight of our days. Some times we wish very much that they would pass quickly. Look at that sailor-boy, who is coming home from his first voyage. He hopes in a few days to be in port, and soon to meet his friends. How he wishes that the vessel would sail more swiftly, and the days fly more quickly, till he reaches his home! But "time and tide" do not haste, more than they wait for any one. Look at him again after a few weeks are over, and his holiday on shore is nearly spent. In a few days he must join his ship; he would give a good deal now to keep back the days from rushing on at such a rate; but he is just as unable to stop them now as he was to quicken their speed when he longed for the day to come that he should be free.

"Is there not something very solemn in the thought of the days that come and go swiftly and silently without asking our leave, and all the more so because such tremendous consequences depend upon the manner in which we employ them?"

The pendulum has ticked away many hours and days since that summer evening. The clock may be worn out now; but the lesson of that hidden clock has not been forgotten by either of us. The great clock of Time is *nearer run down* than it was then.

One bright New Year's morning a young lady paused in her country walk and entered a cottage where a good old woman lived. "A Happy New Year to you, Mrs. —!" was her cheery greeting. "The same to you," was the hearty response; "and I would like to say, Spend it to the Lord." This was quite a new idea to the young lady; the words kept coming up in her mind, till she began to wish to share the life that her poor old friend enjoyed; a life that could not be useless, because it was given to One who employs the least and the weakest, and better still, she sought till she found the way to live that life. What is the way? Do you really wish to know? Then wake up, and be in earnest, and come very humbly to God, asking him to help you. Ask Him, too, to forgive you for all the years you have squandered in idleness, or spent in open rebellion against Him; and for Christ's sake to receive you, and "create in" you a "clean heart." Then, if you thus put God in the centre of your life, so that His glory is the mainspring of your actions, you will not feel uneasy about the flight of time; for—

"It matters little at what hour of the day the righteous fall asleep, Death cannot come to him untimely who is fit to die."

Try every day of this year to make somebody better and happier.

CANADA'S "BEST INTERESTS."

REV. D. L. BRETHER, under date of Nov. 16th, writes from Milton to the *Globe* thus.

Recently a deputation from the Licensed Victuallers' Association, consisting of Mr. Hodge, the President of that Association, and some other prominent members, waited upon Sir John A. Macdonald at Ottawa to seek his help in the direction of legislation in behalf of the traffic of which he is guide, counsellor, and friend. He assured Sir John that the legislation he and his friends sought would be "for the best interests of the country as well as the trade." I thank Mr. Hodge for this statement. "For the best interests of the country," says every citizen of this Dominion, and if "the trade," i. e. the liquor traffic, is not inimical to any of the interests of this country, but identical with and helpful to them, then we also say, "for the best interests of the trade." Legislation that seeks the best interests of the country cannot be against a legitimate, necessary, and honourable trade, but must be helpful to it. One of the points on which Sir John's aid was sought was to use his influence to secure the removal of the Saturday night restrictive clauses from the "Crooks Act." Can Mr. Hodge show that it would be for the best interests of the country to keep saloons and tavern bars open until eleven o'clock every Saturday night? What are the best interests of the country? Are not its social, moral, and religious interests among its best? Would it help any community socially to have the saloons open on Saturday nights? Would it make home happier, socially, for the husband, and father, and sons, to drink several glasses of beer or whiskey? Would it keep innocent laughter and mirth and song in that family? Would husband and father, and sons, spend the balance of the evening at home more contentedly because of it? Opening these saloons on Saturday evening, would it improve the morals of a community? Is a man more moral during his indulgence in and after drinking of liquor than he was before it? Does it make a family more moral to have the father or son come home under the influence of drink? Would it help a man to go to the house of God on Sabbath and worship more devoutly by drinking liquor on Saturday nights? Would his children be cleaner, better fed and clothed, and more interested in the study of the Sunday-school lesson on the sacred subject of the Crucifixion? Would the home service of prayer and song be more devout and spiritual because the husband spent an hour in a dram shop on Saturday night? Would this legislation help the pecuniary interests of the country? Let us ask, would it help the finances of the family? By how much would it not lessen the proceeds of a week's hard and honest labour, and for no profit? The money spent for beer or whiskey would mean so much less food, so much less clothing, and less home-comforts of many kinds. Whatever touches the homes of a nation touches the nation in its vital parts. The natural and necessary tendency of drink is to make the home poor and immoral and irreligious. This demand for legislation is an attack upon the homes. The best interests of "the trade" then are antagonistic to the best interests of the country. Just as "the trade" prospers, poverty

and crime increase: The ratio of its growth measures the ratio of the increase of sorrow to a people. Let every citizen aid in seeking legislation for the best interests of the country, and he must perforce aid in obtaining the passage of a law that will entirely suppress the traffic in all intoxicating liquors. "The best interests of the country" are all in the direction of temperance and prohibition. "The best interests of the trade" are in the arrest of these moral forces. Let us protect our country and our homes from the grasp of the liquor traffic, for whosoever it puts its fingers it leaves blood marks.

THE YEAR HAS GONE.

THE year has gone, and with it many a glorious throng  
Of happy dreams. Its mark is on each brow,  
Its shadows in each heart. In its swift course

It waved its sceptre o'er the beautiful,  
And they are not: It laid its pallid hand  
Upon the strong man, and the haughty form  
Is fallen, and the flashing eye is dim.

It trod the hall of revelry, where thronged  
The bright and jovous, and the tearful wail  
Of stricken ones is heard where erst the

And reckless shout resounded. It passed  
O'er  
The battle-plain where sword and spear and

Flashed in the light of midday, and the  
Of serried hosts is shivered, and the grass  
Green from the soil of carnage, waves above  
The crushed and mouldering skeleton. It

And faded like a wreath of mist at eve;  
Yet ere it melted in the viewless air  
It heralded its millions to their home  
In the dim land of dreams.

George D. Prentiss.

"NAKED, AND YE CLOTHED ME."

We have met with a beautiful story, how a Russian soldier, one very cold piercing night, kept duty between one sentry-box and another. A poor working man, moved with pity, took off his coat and lent it to the poor soldier to keep him warm; adding, that he should soon reach home, while the soldier would be exposed out of doors for the night. The cold was so intense that the soldier was found dead in the morning. Sometime afterwards the poor man was laid on his death-bed, and in a dream saw Jesus appear to him. "You have my coat on," said the man. "Yes, it is the coat you lent me that cold night when I was on duty, and you passed by. 'I was naked, and you clothed Me.'"

A WASHINGTON correspondent was going through the basement of a public building in that city recently, when an official directed his attention to an old man who was employed looking after the engine that runs the elevator. This man was once prominent as a member of the House of Representatives. Afterwards he was Lieutenant-Governor of his State. Then he was returned to Congress. During the war no member did more to get large appropriations for the soldiers, and he had probably more connection than any other one man with the present internal revenue laws, and the repealed income-tax laws. He could have made millions when the tax was put on whisky, but he did not, for he was in the secret. To shorten the thing up, he drank himself out of Congress and all the way down to this cellar, where he receives eighteen dollars per month, as a substitute for the regular engineer.