

## Our Refuge.

The Lord may seem to sleep on his hard, wooden pillow of the little fishing boat, and even while the frail craft begins to fill, may show no sign of help; but ere the waves have rolled over her, the cry of fear that yet trusts, and of trust that yet fears, wakes him who knew the need, even while he seemed to slumber, and one mighty word, as of a master to some petulant slave, "Peace, be still," hushes the confusion, and rebukes the fear and rewards the faith. We on whom the ends of the earth are come, have the same Helper, the same Friend, that "the world's grey patriarchs" had. The river is full still. The van of the pilgrim host did, indeed, long, long ago, drink and were satisfied; but the bright waters are still as pellucid, still as clear, still as refreshing, still as abundant, as they ever were.—*Dr. Alexander MacLaren.*

## Grieving Troubles.

The prayer of Jabez is full of encouragement for people whose lines have not fallen to them in pleasant places. He might be called a "child of misfortune." His very name signified trouble. But this only drove him to God and gave him a stronger claim on that Friend who has always been the Comforter of those that are cast down. Jabez did not ask that he might be so kept that "trouble would not grieve him." It is one thing to have troubles; it is another thing to be defeated by our troubles. Jabez asked that he might be kept like a ship sailing through stormy seas with hatches down, so that the floods cannot reach the interior or overwhelm the vessel.

What a comfort it is to read the simple sequel, "God had granted him that which he requested." May it encourage all our hearts to "ask and receive that our joy may be full!"—*A. B. Simpson.*

## A Christmas Wish.

By H. Isabel Graham; from "A Song of December and Other Poems."

A wish, a thought for one an' a  
On that glad Christmas day.  
As gathered 'round the ancestral fire  
The near and far away.

Meet once again in converse sweet,  
While everywhere the bells repeat  
A message frae the Mercy Seat.

A wish, a thought for one an' a  
When ye again maun sever  
May God's guid haun' protect ye a'  
An' keep ye safe forever.  
Aye lichtsome be yer lot an' may  
The memory o' this happy day  
Shed gawden gleams across yer way.

## Conflict Certain

Let no child of God for a moment imagine that his experience is to be without conflict. Some one has said that temptation is rather a compliment than otherwise, for in temptation the devil realizes what we are and seeks to become possessed of us. Conflict is also to be considered as a blessing, for in conflict we grow strong. The strongest oaks are found on the Northern coast, where the winds are the heaviest, for with every stroke of the wind the roots of the oak only strike the deeper. It is an encouragement to know that in our conflict we have one to whom we may quickly turn. When Jesus spoke with his disciples he said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation;" but at the same time he said, "In me ye have found peace." Conflict is one side of Christian experience, peace is the other side. Rev. J. Wilbur Chapman, D. D.

## Our Young People

## Jan. 1 Our Goals for 1905.

Topic. *Our Goals for 1905.* Phil. 3:12-16. (Consecration Meeting.)

## Some Bible Hints.

Four things are necessary for our success this New year and all New Years. First, forgiveness for the evil past—a clear start—the possibility of forgetting the things that are behind that are evil (v. 13.)

Second, for the present, humility. We have not yet apprehended, attained, become perfect (v. 12.) If we thought we had, there would be an end to our progress.

Third, for the future, a mark, a goal, a prize (v. 14.) The race is well worth running for its own sake, but God knows how to heap up inducements.

Fourth, Christ's help—we being "apprehended" "laid hold on" by the All-Powerful One! (v. 12.) Who could not win a race if he were carried along by the Lord of all strength?

## Suggestive Thoughts.

The road to heaven is paved with good intentions—kept.

Who does not like new things? And we may have a new start, a new life every day.

The main thing is to start, to get on board the train; the steam does the rest.

Write down your plans for the New Year, and check off your progress day by day. Ink is a wonderful fixative of good resolutions.

## A Few Illustrations

The racer goes back of the starting-line to get a good start. Turn backward in memory if you would get a good start in the year.

The year has not always begun on January 1, but on very different days. So you may start on your new year of good resolutions any day—and the best day is to-day.

In a yacht race, when the boat makes a false start, they go back to the starting-line and try again. So let us do in our lives.

At the outset of a book is the title page, with the author's name. Whose name appears on the title page of your New Year?

## To Think About.

Am I entering this year alone, or with the Great Companion?

What can I learn from the past year?

What shall I make my chief purpose for the New Year?

There is no desert but in it God has provided a Nebo where the travel-worn pilgrim may look off into the land of his rest.

If we get no good out of the sermon we are more to blame than the preacher. If we had gone into the house of God in the spirit of worship, no matter what the sermon we would have returned to our homes with a blessing. The church is a place to worship God, not to hear what the preacher has to say. But when the sermon is listened to in the spirit of worship, God will always use it as a medium through which he will reach us and speak helpfully to us. If we approach it in the spirit of criticism we have shut the door of our hearts against the entrance of good. Even a child may tear the most beautiful rose to pieces, but, in doing so it has gained nothing and ruined the rose.—United Presbyterian.

## How To Sweeten Life.

Open all the doors to the religion of Christ. It will make this world a paradise. It will sweeten the everyday trials of life, the little perplexities and annoyances, little sorrows and trials, little disappointments and mistakes. Nature ever helps the tiny objects. A small flower blossoms at my feet. The clouds gather swiftly in the sky to water it; infinite chemistry works at its roots to nourish it; the mighty power of gravitation and other equally unconquerable forces hold it and guard it; the sun rises and shines to paint beauty upon its cheek; the winds are marshalled to fan it; everything is made to contribute to the comfort of this tiny flower. The religion of Christ is suited to tired men and women and children. It is suited to the office, the cradle, the sewing machine, the headache, the heartache, the nursery, the schoolroom, the lonely attic, the evening ramble. It should sweeten all the moments, thoughts, and feelings, the voice, the conversation, the toils and afflictions of life, the temper, and the heart; and all may have and enjoy it.—*Ram's Horn.*

## The Grace of Silence.

The grace of silence under trial is one of the more rare and difficult graces; but it is one of the most pleasing to God, and most conducive to strength and beauty of Christian character. None of us loves to suffer, and we all shudder at the sight of the probe or the amputation knife. But when the infinite Love is engaged in cutting off a diseased limb, our duty is to submit. "Keep still, my friend," says the surgeon to the patient in the hospital; "for restlessness may produce false cuts and aggravate the process." If the brave fellow is wise, he will say; Doctor, go as deep as you choose; only be sure to fetch out the bullet." Ah! the battlefield often requires less courage than the hospital! The onset of service, with drums beating and bugles sounding, does not so test the mettle of our graces as to be thrown wounded, or to be commanded to lie still and suffer. To shout a battle cry at the mouth of the cannon is easier than to put our hands on our mouths and be silent because "God did it." If he is silent as to explanations of trying providences, let us be silent in our filial submission. God knows what is best for us, that is enough.—*T. L. Cuyler, D. D.*

All formal religions are efforts to escape spirituality. It matters not what the form is—ritual, idols or doctrine, the essence is all the same—they are devices to escape spiritual worship. There is nothing a man will not do to evade spirituality. The supreme factor in arriving at spiritual knowledge is not theology, it is consecration.—*Henry Drummond.*

## Daily Readings.

- M., Dec. 26. Growth by feeding. 1 Peter 2: 1-5.  
T., Dec. 27. An "Increase Campaign" 1 Cor 3: 1-8.  
W., Dec. 28. Harmony with all. 2 Cor. 13 11-14.  
T., Dec. 29. A good example. 1 Tim. 4: 12-16.  
F., Dec. 30. A good witness. Acts 5: 29-32.  
S., Dec. 31. Victories. 1 John 5: 1-5.