

A Hymn of Praise.

January 1st, 1891.

BY MRS. LIZZIE FINNER BAKER.

"As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing"

WHAT can I bring to thee, Master,
With the year that is dawning to-day?
A heart which thy rod has sore smitten,
A heart which rejoiceth alway;
Eyes that look ever up to the Healer,
Tho' dim with the earth-gathered tears;
Hands that hold fast thy treasures of promise
In the tempest of trouble and fears;

Feet swift to run quick at thy bidding,
A tongue thy pure praises to sing.
O, Jesus, my Rock and my Refuge,
To thee will thy loving ones cling.
Strong arm, which hath never forgotten
Thy child in its love-clasp to hold—
How tenderly now art thou leading
The sorrowful sheep of thy fold.

How sweet to my soul is thy chastening,
How lovely the smile of thy face—
O, year that is new, thou art dawning
Upon me in glory and grace;
For with me in patient abiding,
The thrice-blessed Three deign to dwell,
And the peace of my soul passeth knowledge,
Its comfort no angel could tell.

O, year that is new! to their guiding
I give thee from dawn until end—
Life and death in the hands of the giver,
My God, and my Father, and Friend.

The New Year.

WHAT do you mean to do with this bright, white, beautiful year that God has now put into your hand? It is a book of three hundred and sixty-five pages—all blank pages yet, pure, clean, unsoiled. You are to write something on each page while it lies open under your hand. Then the leaf will be turned over and sealed down, and another one will spread out its white face before you. At the close of the year your book will be written full, and then it will be carried away by the Angel of Time, and preserved until the last day, when it will be opened to show how you have lived this year.

What are you going to write in this book? You know that everything you do writes itself down. One of the wonderful inventions of these late times is an instrument which preserves the words that are spoken into it. You talk beside it, and every word is caught. It may be carried thousands of miles, and laid away for years; but when the wonderful machinery is set in motion, the words come out just as they were spoken, and you hear the very tone of voice of the person who uttered them.

This is a little illustration of the way our deeds and our words go down on the pages of the book each one is writing. We do not always think much of what we are doing as the days pass. Sometimes we do careless things, or even very wrong things. We speak words that are not gentle and kindly; we show tempers and dispositions that are not sweet and beautiful. We forget these things soon afterward; but let us remember that they have all gone down, day by day, on the pages of our book, and are not lost. Some day we shall have to see these pages opened again, and shall have to look at what we have written on them; some day we shall have to hear our careless, bitter, unkind or untrue words again in the very tones of voice we used when we spoke them.

This ought to make us very careful what we do and what we say. Now is a good time to begin in the new. How was last year's book filled? What did you put on the pages? Perhaps they were

blotted, some of them, or stained by sins or follies. Perhaps there were whole pages with nothing beautiful on them—only idle words and idle acts. Well, you cannot change anything now in last year's pages. The things written you cannot blot out; the words said you cannot unsay.

"Never shall thy spoken word
Be again unaid, unheard.
Well its work the utterance wrought;
Woe or weal—what'er it brought—
Once for all the rune is read,
Once for all the judgment said. * * *
Rue it all thy living days,
Hide it deep with love and praise;
Once for all thy word is sped:
None invade it but the dead. * * *
Spoken words come not again."

The past you cannot change, but now a new book is in your hands, with pages white, clean, unsoiled. What will you write on these pages? Will you stain them, too? Does not every young person who reads these words desire most earnestly to fill the pages of this new year with beautiful things?

Begin, then, on the first morning of 1891. Begin with an earnest prayer to God for help. Then watch your acts and your words, that you do nothing and say nothing which you will be ashamed to see or hear again years hence. Fill the day with gentle things, and useful, helpful things.—
Forward.

Self-Control.

THERE is a story told about Alexander and his horse Bucephalus, which may well "point a moral."

When Alexander was but a boy he was present one day when a Thessalonian brought the horse Bucephalus to Philip, offering to sell him for thirteen talents. But when the fiery animal was taken to the field to try, he proved so unmanageable that none of Philip's men dared so much as to venture near him. Philip bade them lead him away as useless; and as they were about doing so, young Alexander said:

"What a fine horse do they lose for want of address and boldness to manage him!"

At first Philip did not notice the boy's remark; but when it was repeated, and he saw how sorrowful he was to see the horse taken away, he said:

"Do you reproach those who are older than yourself, as if you knew more, and were better able to manage him than they?"

"I could manage this horse," replied the lad, "better than others do?"

"And if you do not," said Philip, "what will you forfeit for your rashness?"

"I will pay," said Alexander, "the whole price of the horse."

The men who stood by laughed heartily, but the wager was accepted, and the bold youth hastened to the horse, and, taking him by the bridle, turned him towards the sun, having noticed that the animal was afraid of his own shadow. Then, stroking him gently, he watched his opportunity and sprang quickly upon his back. Gradually, and with great gentleness, he drew in bridle and curb, and presently, when the fiery creature found that he had a master, the bold youth let him go at full speed, speaking to him with the ringing tone of command, and even spurring him on to increased speed.

When he came back presently, flushed and triumphant, but with the horse under full control, Philip, who had been deeply anxious for his son's safety, is said to have shed tears of joy, and to have declared, as he kissed him, that Macedonia was far too small a kingdom for so great a spirit as his son possessed!

Alexander could never have conquered the horse

if he had not had control of his own spirit. Impatience, fretfulness, lack of self-restraint, thwart themselves, for they prove weakness in the one who exhibits them, which even a dumb animal can feel.

How great a pity that one who, as a boy, could thus control himself and others, when he became a man could yield to his lower appetites to such a degree that he is actually said to have died the death of a drunkard!

Alexander did not know the true meaning of the word "conquer," for he never learned to conquer himself. To conquer nations is a small thing compared to the conquering of one's self; for "greater is he that ruleth his own spirit than he that taketh a city."

1890.

Into the mid-night cold and drear,
Sadly the old year goes,
Bearing a burden of memories,
Of sins and joys and woes.

The load he carries, each human soul
Has helped to heap it high;
Many to see him go are glad,
Many there be who sigh.

He goes to the years of the Past—
A stately and solemn band,
Each crowned with the rue and rosemary
They passed to the silent land.

Those who were blithe to see them go,
And those who have grieved full sore,
Shall meet and greet these years again
Where conflict and strife are o'er.

There we shall take with a trembling hand
Our share from the burdened years,
Our morning's hope and our noonday's toil,
Our night of regret and fears.

The dreams and plans of our spring-tide fair,
That have long forgotten lain,
The thoughts and deeds of our summer-time,
Our autumn's scanty gain.

O! heavy the heart and sad the face
That must meet the past alone;
O! blessed who feel a nail-pierced hand
Is clasped around their own.

1891.

Over the snow the New Year comes
With a step that is light and free.
Give to him goodness, and love, and truth,
To bear to Eternity.

Bits of Fun.

—"I shouldn't care to marry a woman who knows more than I do," he remarked.

"O, Mr. DeSappy," she replied with a shake of her fan, "I am afraid you are a confirmed bachelor."

—One day Julia Ward Howe was introduced to Sitting Bull by that full name, and the gentleman remarked "How" with his usual urbanity. "Ah!" said Mrs. Howe, with quick apprehension, "the gentleman has heard of me, I see. He is really a very intelligent aborigine."

—At the Water Cure.—Governess—"Elsie, see how that gentleman springs up the steps. Early this morning he walked quite slowly. The change comes from drinking mineral water."

Elsie—"Isn't it from drinking spring water, Fraulein?"

—"How many birthdays do you think I have had?" one person was heard to say to another in the horse-car.

"O, about forty-seven," hazarded the person addressed.

"Only one birthday. The rest have been anniversaries," was the explanation, and the car suddenly stopped.