

The Passing of the Year.

"The year has passed—
Its mark is on the brow, its shadow on the heart.

A year—an atom of time—a speck on the broad page of the history of the universe.

It seems but yesterday since the bells ceased to toll a requiem for the dying year, and the dead century—mightiest of all the ages—hoary and crowned with majesty and glory followed by the plaudits of innumerable generations, went out to be pulchered in the hidden sarcophagus of the universe.

But yesterday since the clanging bells rang out a welcome as the young year came out from the cycles of Eternity, and stood upon the threshold of the new century to take up its unwritten tablets.

And now the year is dying—the record is written—the books are closed.

The dawn of the year broke upon the world dull and gray—dark clouds hanging low in the horizon—the rush and roar of battle, the thunder of cannon, the clash and clang of armed hosts in deadly conflict and the Empire mourning her slain sons.

"Duke's son, cook's son, son of a belted earl," lying side by side in their far-away graves and the gray-haired Queen weeping with her suffering people. And then, a trembling whisper smote the startled world, for she, the great Queen, loyal woman, Mother of her people lay dead in her castle home. Then was seen such a spectacle as the world had not yet seen, the teeming millions of the mightiest Empire on the globe. Prince and peasant, Royal Lady and humblest serving maid, the rulers of all lands, the Majesty of all nations, all kindreds, tribes and peoples mourning the loss of one little white-haired woman, yet loved and crowned above the most notable personages of this wonderful nineteenth century.

Oh, great Queen! thy long well spent day is done—
The dawn of thine eternal life begun,
Lo! at that high Altar where thy lost prince awaits thee,
Thy God hath crowned thee, and if thoughts of earth
Mingle there with the Eternal thou shalt watch o'er
writains still.

Amid the tears of the world,
The sons of the seas bore her reverently away,
Guarded by the monarchs of the seas
Along her silent way, and the cannons' roar
Thundered a long farewell forevermore.

Scarcely had the bells ceased their tolling when at the call of the nation, Edward the Seventh ascended the throne of his ancestors, and even in its grief the heart of the Empire gave a great throb of joyous welcome to the newly throned king.

The war in South Africa which unhappily darkened the last days of the late Queen's life, still hangs a dark cloud in the sky of the nation's prosperity. But its even has its "silver lining"—its purpose for the fulfilment of a greater good—its lesson for the world. To the unhappy people suffering from the horrors of war will come a higher civilization, and that truer freedom which ever follows the unfurling of the British flag.

In this time of the nation's need the sons of this globe encircled empire have risen up as one and reached out strong hands to defend, the Motherland, thus strengthening the bands of the united Empire, and teaching the world that we "Abide by our Mother's house though we be mistress of our own."

In no part of the Empire are the principles of patriotism and the spirit of loyalty to our ancient traditions stronger than in the Dominion of Canada. We have heard them from the lips of our mother's and they have been nurtured and strengthened by the deeds of our fathers, and when the call came "to arms for Queen and country," her sons stepped fearlessly and gladly to the front, not impelled by any newly created sentiment, but with the unflinching purpose that only awaited fitting opportunity for expression.

In the midst of many stirring events and the difficult solution of many puzzling problems, the year throughout Britain has been one largely occupied with the doings of royalty. Almost as if to divert the mind of the nation from its grief, and to carry out the expressed wishes of the Queen, the eldest son of the King accompanied by his wife set out on his extended visit to the colonies and dependencies of the Empire. From the time when they stepped on the shore greeted with floating banners, thundering cannons and the welcoming cheers of thousands of delighted people, until the last vestige of the gallant ship which bore them back to their old world home was lost to view, their progress was one triumphant ovation.

What must have been the thoughts of that young king to be, as he traversed those wide spread dominions with their great granaries, vast storehouses crowded with the products of every clime, its mines burdened with yet ungathered treasures, its wealth of land and sea, above every foot of which floats the flag of the kingdom over which he will one day in all probability rule, cannot be imagined, but that he bore himself with the quiet dignity and grateful appreciation which is to the "manner born" is universally admitted.

In the midst of the festivities, from across the border the shot of the assassin rings out, and a great Ruler gave

up his life in the midst of his people. True to that sentiment of sympathy which so characterized the late Queen, came the command of the King, that marked tribute of respect to the slain President and sympathy with the great Republic thus sadly stricken with grief and horror be publicly expressed; and everywhere in all His Majesty's vast dominions was the command willingly obeyed, and nowhere was it more reverently observed than in mighty London and within the gray old walls of its time honored Abbey.

The year has developed largely the force of the power of accumulated wealth to control the important interests of the commercial world. Great trusts, unlimited combinations or monopolies, behind which sits the power of accumulated millions gathering to itself and absorbing their ever increasing millions. Let us hope that these great business centres which search out and control the vast interests of financial prosperity with such dominant force, are founded in honesty of purpose and integrity of action, that may lead the way to that true success which is for the common good.

During the year the discoveries of modern science and the skill of inventive genius have accomplished still further triumphs than hitherto. Man has long had dominion over land and sea. He has searched out the hidden mysteries of the universe, grasped the secret forces of nature and taught them to obey his will. He has chained the lightnings' flash and bound it to his chariot wheels to accomplish his purpose. A thought flashes to his brain and no ocean's depth or highest mountain peak prevents its swift transition to the ear of his brother man thousands of miles away.

It remained for this year, the beginning of this century, to end the long drawn out contest between man and the fitful power of the air, in the victory of the former. At last the Brazilian aeronaut, M Santos Dumont, has successfully launched his air ship so constructed that it can "be accurately steered, swiftly propelled with or against the wind, also it can be easily launched, and can be made to descend safely."

Thus saith the account of the trial made between St. Clonel and the Eiffel Tower, and the prediction follows, that the perfection of air ships is assured. In a few years we shall see a fleet of air ships sailing through the air as easily as they now traverse the ocean.

The year in this country has been one of unbounded prosperity. Seed-time and harvest have fulfilled the highest promise of a beneficent Providence. Summer's heat and winter's cold do but bring us alternate blessings.

"Lord God of hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget."

In spite of the pessimistic utterances that emanate from certain sources, it is plainly evident that the progress of the world is not only toward greater things, but also toward those attainments which may be called higher things, the spirit of evil is yet abroad in the world, active, insidious and alert, but the light that shone upon the world when the angels came with the tidings of Peace and Good Will to man, illumines the way to infinite blessings, and the dawn of the sun of righteousness is fast dispelling the darkness and leading upward to a brighter day.

The great army of literary workers increase and multiply, prophecies, opinions, theories and predictions, are poured out upon the world until the ordinary mind is bewildered, finding no foundation sufficiently secure on which to rest.

The Westminster Review publishes a clever paper written by Mr. Francis Grierson in which he sets forth his prophecy of the coming future. Whether or not the vision which his clearer eye perceive be or be not realized, the cheerfulness of his anticipations and his evident faith in his own convictions are refreshing.

"This he declares is pre-eminently the age of mind. In the great future the nation most keenly alive to intellectual force will triumph. Material riches will play but a secondary part. Mammon will be forced under by intellectual pressure. Brute force will succumb to soul force."

Of making many books there is indeed no end. Many of them are but the weak expression of a feeble fancy in the highly wrought flights of speculative imagination, short lived, quickly laid aside and soon forgotten, yet many there are strong and purposeful, bringing lessons of wisdom to the waiting world.

Over and above them all, the Divine Light of the one Old Book shines above the rugged way, leading upward until absorbed and lost in the light of the presence of God.

SARAH I. H. HEALY.

The Lord's Day Alliance.

The Rev. J. G. Shearer, the Field Secretary of the Lord's Day Alliance of Canada, has just completed a five weeks' campaign of Nova Scotia in the interests of the preservation of the Lord's Day. Some things reported by him will be of interest to our readers. Some fifteen months ago Mr. Shearer visited twelve Nova Scotia towns and cities. In ten of these, Alliances were organized and were united in the Lord's Day Alliance of Nova

Scotia. His recent tour has included twenty-five centres, in everyone of which the people have organized in defense of the Christian Sabbath. In some few of these, owing largely to inclement weather, the attendance was not large. In all the interest was gratifying. In many cases, notably in Louisburg, Lunenburg and the Sydneys the attendance was very large. As compared with his former visit Mr. Shearer found the interest in the work of the Alliance very largely widened and deepened. He believes the explanation of this is to be found in the fact that the work of the Alliance is now much better understood and hence prejudice or indifference, born of misconception or lack of information have given place to cordial approval and hearty co-operation; and in the fact that the people generally have had special reason to see that the inroads on the integrity of the Lord's Day in the forms of Railroad construction and traffic, Sunday Steamers, Pleasure Excursions, labor in connection with the development of the Province's Mineral Resources, etc., are becoming increasingly frequent, bold and serious. In one institution alone no less than seven hundred and fifty men are working twelve hours a day and seven days a week.

Some of the gratifying features of this growing interest in the protection of the Lord's Day against the inroads of greed, pleasure, irreligion and general selfishness are noted. The various branches of the church are all uniting in the Alliance movement—the Protestant branches with practical unanimity—and to a considerable extent the Roman Catholics as well. The Archbishop of Nova Scotia himself nominated one of his clergy as a Vice-President of the Provincial Alliance, and two others as members of the Executive Board, while in several local organizations Roman Catholic clergy and laymen are heartily co-operating.

Among the prominent laymen who have accepted office in recently formed organizations are:—D. D. McKenzie, K. C., M. P. P., Mayor of North Sydney; M. H. Fitzpatrick, Ex. M. P. P., New Glasgow; Judge McLeod of Pictou, C. S. Wilson, Ex. M. P. P. Windsor; W. H. Chase, Wolfville, Albert Gatien, Ex. M. P. P. Yarmouth; C. E. Kaulback, M. P. P. Lunenburg; Hon. Senator Wood and Judge Emmerson, Sackville. Others who have warmly commended the work and serve on Executive Committees are:—Hon. J. N. Armstrong, M. L. C., North Sydney; Hon. Angus McGillivray, Antigonish; Hon. H. R. Emmerson, M. P. P., and Hon. Justice Hanington of the Supreme Court, Dorchester, N. B.

The organized labor forces also as represented in the Provincial Workingmen's Association and the various Trades and Labor Unions, have, in the industrial centres of Nova Scotia, as formerly in Ontario and the far West, joined hands with the Alliance. It should be no matter of surprise that workingmen prize their Weekly Rest Day. The law of the Sabbath is "The Magna Charter of Industrial Liberty." Moreover, apart from all higher considerations experience uniformly proves that seven days-in-the-week toil receives in the long run only six days' wages. But it is none the less gratifying to learn that the workingmen so generally are recognizing the fact that they have special reason to be interested in the work of such a movement as the Lord's Day Alliance. Mr. Shearer has visited Sackville, Dorchester and St. John in New Brunswick, where branches have been organized of the New Brunswick Provincial Lord's Day Alliance. He returns East early in January to visit the main centres in Quebec, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island holding a Provincial Convention in each and attending also that of Nova Scotia in Halifax early in February.

My Promise Holds.

A little rill was tinkling near,
Me thought; I saw it curve and fret;
The light of morn was shining clear;
And with the dew my feet were wet.

A song on every wind was brought,
And balmy fragrance breathed around;
The powers are asleep, I thought,
And pleasure all my spirit bound.

A sudden shadow fell, I turned
And, lo! the face of things was changed;
An angry sun mid darkness burned
And lightning through the heavens ranged.

A breathless calm did reign on high,
And silence, till an awful roar
Of thunder filled the very sky,
And shook the land from shore to shore.

An eye was on my soul, and low
Upon the trembling earth I bowed;
Submissive to the hands that sow
The lightning and the thunder loud.

And then a voice, my promise holds,
Nor break thy heart against my law,
Nor dim the light thy bosom folds,
And I thy soul to me will draw.

Up looking then I saw my goal,
And everything that I could claim;
And brightness smote upon my soul
As heaven's fields were turned to flame.

ARTHUR D. WILMET.