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## Sunday School Banner.

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## The New Year.

TRAVELLERS among the Alps are often so hemmed in by mountains on every side, so enshrouded by fogs or blinded by snow-storms, that they cannot well discover how far they have journeyed or in what direction. But when they climb some lofty hilltop, above the clouds and storm, they can trace all their pathway through the valleys, and see how every turn and winding of the road was necessary to overcome some obstacle or to escape some danger.

So these anniversary seasons of the year are hill-tops, as it were, which we may climb, and looking back with gratitude, see all the way which the Lord our God has led us, and looking forward to the unknown future, implore His guidance and trustfully fare onward in our life journey.

What to us is darkness, to Him is day;

And the end He knoweth,

And not on a blind and aimless way

The spirit goeth.

As we look back upon life's pathway during the past year, or during the whole of our past lives, we shall doubtless find that God has led

us by a way that we knew not, by a way that we might not have chosen for ourselves, but a way that has been wise and good and true. And when, at last, from the vantage ground of the higher, nobler life of heaven, where our souls

"Shall summer high in bliss upon the hills of God."

with clearer vision, and with eyes purged by spiritual euphrasy, we shall look down upon the present life and shall find that every "crook in the lot," that every winding of our mortal career has been wisely ordered by Divine Providence to save us from peril and bring us safe home.

These anniversaries are also mile-stones by which we may measure our progress to the celestial city. Some of us may have passed but a few of these, and the miles may seem very long; but others of us passed very many, and as we look back the distance between them seems very short, till in the remote distance they blend indistinctly into each other, just as in looking down a pillared colonnade the columns seem to approach closer and closer, till at last, in the distant vanishing point, they blend into one. And some of us may be near the end of our mortal journey. For us there may be few mile-stones left, or we may have already passed the last one, and it may be recorded in the book of doom concerning some of us, "Set thy house in order, for this year thou shalt die."

## New Year's Stock-Taking.

It will be well for us all, as do merchants of their worldly goods at this season of the year, to take stock of our spiritual possessions: to ask, Are we holier than we were a year ago? Are we happier? Have we more power over sin, or has sin more power over us? What usury have we gained of our Lord's talent entrusted to our care? Let us remember that now are we nearer to our salvation or to our condemnation, to our endless happiness or woe, than we were a year ago.

We ought to be much wiser in the things of God. We have been sitting for another year at the feet of Jesus, learning the lessons of His love, listening to the words of Him who spake as no man ever spake. Have they been engrafted into our hearts? Have they brought forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness in our lives? What result have we seen from our labours? Have any of our scholars been brought to God? Have any gone home rejoicing to the skies? Are some upon the road thither who a year ago were on the downward path? Thank God, our labours as a Church on behalf of the children committed to our care,