

more seen among us—fled. Some one had said of — that he frequented the Meeting House at A.; and others said of — that he was just as bad as ever—daily at the public-house, drinking himself drunk; and I remembered of — that she had gone to service, and was rejected by a good master after repeated trials, because she fell back and back into evil habits of the worst of sins. And all this the year now dead had seen, and much more. Oh! disappointed hopes—frail, fleeting glimpses of what might be. Why sing ye so merrily ye false bells! It is all but mockery. *All in vain—all in vain. Toil and trouble—all in vain. The Old Year is but a memory, and the New Year but a dream.*

Then my thoughts went wandering on again. Where is Dobson, the aged farmer full of years. How many of these joyous peals has he heard? Full fourscore and five now. Yes. Alive and well, he still clings on in life. And old Margery at the lodge, down by Jackson's gate, she also—numbering even ninety winters—she also drags life along, though sorely tried. And there is George Hislop at the Union, bed ridden, and with many sad infirmities—still he brings his burthen to another year. Do the bells ring merrily for him? And old Flanigan—half Irish, half Scotch—begging his bread from house to house—a privileged old soldier, to whom not one in the parish but gives a crust or a penny: he too works on—begs on—tells his old stories of old battles, and lives for another year. And one there is—a sad relic of fallen fortunes—gentle by birth, and once of honor among men—now a cast-away. He crawls from room to room, and crutches scarce support a tottering weakly frame, paralytic and half-dead. But only in the body—the mind lives, and, dwelling on past scenes of sin, he pines away in conscience-stricken fear—hardly daring to look up to God. Threescore and ten have done their work for him, and yet he lives—lives on but for misery and an impending judgment, which in a disbelieving heart he would deny: did not reason whisper *There is a God.* Well. These all still alive! Aged—paralytic—poor—bed-ridden—miserable—dragging out into another year an existence which they would fain lay down were it but God's will. What do they hear thus again these merry joyous bells? No joy to them. Sadness and sorrow. No joy to them.—*All in vain. Toil and trouble. The Old Year is but a memory, the New One but a dream.*

Then I turned and looked another way. I left the sinful, the aged, and the miserable, and beheld on the other side a vast plain of memory studded all over with strange dark spots. They were of a somewhat different hue—but still dark spots—and full of tears. I saw in the memory of the past year—(how strangely in-

harmonious now were the New Year's bells)—I saw a youthful, gentle, holy spirit passing away as a flower of the field; and gone far, far into the distant land of Paradise—while lying by her side an infant was left—a living child, the mother fled.

I saw two little babes, the dear ones of a young mother—her first—her only ones;—twin children of a father who had gone before. I saw them gently pining away in her arms, and laid softly, with hands intertwining with each other, in their little grave;—flowers strewed around, and the holy sign upon their breast—emblems of their virgin innocence and of their salvation.

I saw a youthful maiden in her first fresh love, betrothed; and in her unsuspecting joy, joined at God's Altar in Holy Marriage: I saw the bridal party go forth in their glad festivity, and laughter and mirth filled their hearts. But I saw the beloved one go forth within a month for his country's cause, clad in the arms of a warrior. I followed him from plain to plain—I heard the loud cry of leading on of soldiers in the shout of battle, and I saw him slain—slain ruthlessly in the battle-field. Then I hurried swiftly back from the bitter scene, and I saw the widowed bride failing and pining hour by hour, until she lay a corpse beside her husband.

And this is life, thought I. How strange and incongruous it is! Why do fathers carry on their days from year to year, and the children fall? Why do they, whose life is a very burthen of pain, still suffer on; and they, whose joyous happy hours of youth would give promise of long life and health, suddenly pass away into the cold grave? It is a disjuncting of the natural order, that the old should live and the young die. One would say with David, "Wherefore hast Thou made all men for naught." Ah! false and faithless New Year bells. *It is all vain. Toil and trouble. Death and sorrow. Be silent and sound no more. The Old Year is but a memory, and the New One but a dream.*

"A DREAM!" said a voice, whispering gently round about me—A MEMORY!—Yes: verily, all is but a dream—all is but a memory, *as far as this world is concerned.* But is that all that we have to think of? What are all these souls that have perished? what are all these souls that still live struggling on? Visions—shadows—phantoms—if *this* be all. They have come. They have gone. They are born. They die. They lay hold on this and on that. The objects which they grasp, melt away and elude them. They grope about in a vain attempt for a few years and die, and are no more heard of. Glory—the battle-field—coronets—mitres—crowns—royalties—kingdoms—empires; what are they all but a memory and a dream?—fleeting shadows without substance—sand