

**The Dirge of the Leaves.**

As the leaves are falling, falling,  
On the meadow and the lawn,  
Hear them in the twilight calling,  
Hear them in the frosty dawn—  
Farewell, summer, in whose morning  
We put on our primal green,  
Now in gold and crimson burning,  
Quivering in the autumn sheen.

As the leaves are falling, falling,  
Seem they pensive thus to say  
(White the tinted meadow palling),  
Farewell, summer, for decay  
Sends us to the earth to moulder  
'Neath our dwelling on the bough;  
Dimmer are the suns, and colder  
Is the breeze that fans us now.

As the leaves are falling, falling,  
Cometh, too, a triumph tone,  
As of stricken heroes calling  
After final victory won.  
Saith it: Mortal, can your story  
Witness, at the closing strife,  
On your shroud a brighter glory  
Than the fairest hues of life?

—E. W. B. Canning.

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**FOR THE YEAR 1887.**

**A Lesson from Nature.**

THE season through which we are now passing should teach us an important lesson for the higher life of the soul. In the autumn, the part of the earth on which we live turns away from the sun. The result of this is, after awhile, cold and frost and snow. The trees are robbed of their leaves, and the fields everywhere are bare and desolate. But, as the earth swings around once more toward its great friend, the reign of coldness and death begins to be broken. The snows gradually disappear, and the icy fetters of the streams are melted. By-and-by the trees show signs of renewed life; the grass taken on a deeper shade of green, and the birds come back to fill the air once more

with their melodies. At last the winter is over, and joy and beauty reign supreme.

What is all this but an analogue for our spiritual life? When we turn our faces away from him who is our Sun, coldness is sure to settle down upon our hearts; and, if we keep this position, soon the desolate winter-time of spiritual torpor and death will wrap us in. What we need is always to lay our hearts open to God, and wintry experiences are impossible. Oh, ye that are cold and dead to spiritual things, swing round like the earth towards the Sun of your souls, and you will know a spring-time which, like that of Nature, will be a prophecy and pledge of the yet grander summer sure to be yours.

**The Drinking Trough.**

(See next page.)

THERE is in London a benevolent association for the purpose of supplying fountains and drinking troughs for man and beast. Few things are more useful or give greater comfort and happiness. Oh the blessing of these wayside fountains. Let us think of him who, long ago, wearied with the way and the heat, sat by a well and taught a sinning woman how to draw water out of the well of Salvation, and who still says, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink."

**The Covenanters.**

IT was now that the cup of the suffering Presbyterians was filled to the brim. The Government eager to improve the advantage they had obtained on the fatal field of Bothwell Bridge, struck more terribly than ever, in the hope of effecting the utter extermination of the Covenanters before they had time to rally. Twelve hundred had surrendered themselves prisoners on the battlefield. They were stripped almost naked, tied two and two, and driven to Edinburgh, being treated with great inhumanity on the way, and on arriving at their destination, the prisons being full, they were penned like cattle, or rather like wild beasts, in the Greyfriar's Churchyard. What a different spectacle from that which this famous spot had exhibited forty years before! Their misery was heartrending. The Government's barbarity toward them would be incredible were it not too surely attested. These 1,200 persons were left without the slightest shelter; they were exposed to all weathers, the rain, the tempest, the snow, they slept on the bare earth; their guard treated them capriciously and cruelly, robbing them of their little money, and often driving away the citizens who sought to relieve their great sufferings by bringing them food or clothing. Some made their escape; others were released on signing a bond of non-resistance; others were freed when found to be sinking under wounds, or disease contracted

by exposure. At the end of five months—for so long did this miserable crowd remain shut up in the graveyard—the 1,200 were reduced to 250. On the morning of the 15th of November, 1670, these 250 were taken down to Leith, and embarked on board a vessel, to be transported to Barbadoes. They were crowded into the hold of the ship, where there was scarce room for 100. Awful were the heat, the thirst and other horrors of this floating dungeon. Their ship was overtaken by a terrible storm off the coast of Orkney. It was thrown by the winds upon the rocks, and many of the poor prisoners on board were drowned. Those who escaped the waves were carried to Barbadoes and sold as slaves. A few only survived to return to their native land at the Revolution. —Dr. Wylie.

**A Boy's Decision.**

MANY years ago, Mr. Hall, an English gentleman, visited Ireland for the purpose of taking sketches of its most beautiful scenery, to be used in an illustrated work on Ireland, which has since been published.

On one occasion, when about to spend a day in the neighbourhood of Lake Killarney, he met a bright young Irish lad who offered his service as guide through the district.

A bargain was made with him, and the party went off. The lad proved himself well acquainted with all the places of interest in that neighbourhood, and had plenty of stories to tell about them. He did his work well, and to the entire satisfaction of the visitor. On their return to the starting point, Mr. Hall took a flask of whiskey from his pocket, and drank some. Then he handed it to the boy and asked him to help himself. To his great surprise the offer was firmly but politely declined.

Mr. Hall thought this was very strange. To find an Irish boy who would not touch or taste whiskey was stranger than anything he had seen that day. He could not understand it; and he resolved to try the strength of the boy's temperance principles. He offered first a shilling, then half a crown, and then five shillings, if he could taste that whiskey. But the boy was firm. A real manly heart was beating under his ragged jacket. Mr. Hall determined to try him further, so he offered the boy a golden half sovereign if he would take a drink of whiskey. That was a coin seldom seen by lads of this class in those parts. Straightening himself up, with a look of indignation in his face, the boy took out a temperance medal from the inner pocket of his jacket, and holding it bravely up he said: "This was my father's medal. For years he was intemperate. All his wages were spent in drink. It almost broke my mother's heart; and what a hard time she had to keep the poor children from starving! At last my father took a stand.

He signed the pledge and wore this medal as long as he lived. On his death-bed he gave it to me. I promised him that I would never drink intoxicating liquors; and now, sir, for all the money your honor may be worth, a hundred times over, I would not break that promise." That boy's decision about drink was noble. Yes, and it did do good, too. As Mr. Hall stood there astonished, he screwed the top on to his flask, and flung it into the water of the lake near which they stood.

Then he turned to the lad and shook him warmly by the hand, saying as he did so:

"My boy, that's the best temperance lecture I ever heard. I thank you for it. And now, by the help of God, I will never take another drink of intoxicating liquor while I live." —Rev. Dr. R. Newton.

**A Mother in Jail.**

"Did you put my mother in jail?" asked a little tot of a girl, while she pushed her sunbonnet back and looked from one officer to another, as she stood in the police-station. She was so young that she could hardly speak plainly, and so small that a policeman had to help her up the steps of the station-house.

The officers stared at the little waif. They had arrested a tangle-haired woman, who spoke four languages in her rage, and fought the officers like a fury. They did not dream that this was her child.

The little thing seemed so innocent and pure that they did not want her to see her mother caged like a wild beast behind iron bars; but the mother heard her voice and called for her, and so they swung open the corridor door, and let the little creature in. She went to the cell, looked in, and cried out, "Why, mother, are you in jail?"

The mother shrank back ashamed. The child dropped on her knees on the stone floor, clung to the iron bars of the door, and prayed, "Now I lay me down to sleep, and I hope my mother will be let out of jail."

The strong men had a strange moisture about their eyes, as they gently led the little thing away. When the case came into court, His Honor whispered to the woman to go home, and, for her child's sake, to behave as a mother should. Perhaps she will do so—unless she should meet with some one licensed to deal out, for "the public good," that which makes fathers act like brutes, and mothers forget the suckling child. Perhaps she will prove a true mother, unless some honourable and respected citizen gets her crazy on a dram, on which he makes a profit of six cents. Strange things are done in this world, but few are more strange than the wonders wrought by the devil's draught, which in an hour turns love to hate, calmness to frenzy, quiet to confusion, and a mother to a fiend.—Selected.