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THE YEAR'S DEPARTURE.

By ISAAC C. PRAY.

The city sleeps. There are no watchers up
To note the passing of this awful hour
That tells of wreck and ruin. Thus, they slept
Who dwelt among the cities of the Plain
Ere felt the hail of fire, ere rose aloft
The Sceptre of Destruction on his wings
Of pestilential power to blight the doomed.
The heart-flung moral of the fleeting year
Unheeded passes as some oft-told tale.
The gilded wretch, pillowed on wealth and ease,
Wrung from the labour of yon needy man,
Whose limbs e'en now are nipped with gathering frost,
Wakes not to see the memory of his deeds.
The felon in his cell, dreams, as of yore,
Of gold, by craftiness and stealth obtained;
And turns, unquiet, on his scanty straw,
Smiling to think he holds a heavy load
Of an ideal purse. That loathsome curse
Of social life, the man who feasts with pride
Upon the fall of virtue, day by day,
All reputation deeming but a name,
Lies like one dead, by sleep still gaining strength
To reap continuance of appetite
That he may riot in his victim's shame!
What madness! Wake, O wake. It is the hour
To think of penitence—to feel it, too.
Wake! Let the life to come, unto that past
Bear no resemblance. Lo! each moment goes
Back on unwearied pinions to that God
Who at the beginning sent it forth for man.
Lo! now the dead are clustering at the Throne
Of the Eternal. So have gathered there
Forever, all that ever trod our earth.
Some shall congregate, ere many years
Are gone—those waves upon the stream of Time
Ourborne on the boundless, endless sea
ETERNITY.

O, wake! This sacred hour
Should never fly unnoticed. Let its voice
Speak in thine ear and in thy memory dwell,
Not like the cadence of my hurried song,
But as the whispering of the living breeze—
The gurgling of the rapid river's waves—
The solemn thunder of the cataract—
The moan of ocean rolling to the shore—
The utterance of Nature as she cries
From God I come, to God I shall return."

MARK:

BY PATER ABRAHAM A SANCTA CLARA.

In two parts.—part two.

The eloquent Pater, after the colloquy between Death and the soldiers of Vienna, as given in a former number, turns from Mars, and, by an easy transition, passes to Venus, and begins his homily to maidens. He mentions the miracle wrought by the prophet with the widow's oil, and draws from it a reflection we do not recollect to have yet heard 'improved' in the pulpit.
Now, when this widow found no help in her trouble, she thought herself of the prophet Elisha, to whom she told her story with tears in her eyes. Elisha was moved by the widow's tears, and asked her, what she had in her house. Think, for the love of heaven, what it was! Upon she answered, I have nothing in the house but a little oil, to anoint myself withal. To anoint herself. Only think, in the midst of her poverty, she still took pains to be a pretty creature, even if a poor creature. In a word, beauty is the only aim of woman-

'How many long timbers, how many short timbers, how many large timbers, how many small timbers, how many thick timbers, how many thin timbers, how many round timbers, how many square timbers, how many straight timbers, how many crooked timbers, were used in building up the tower of Babel! How many large stones, how many small stones, how many round stones, how many square stones, how many rough stones, how many smooth stones, how many white stones, how many red stones, how many common stones, how many marble stones, were needed to build and adorn the tower of Babel! It is nearly the same with a woman. What taffeta stuffs, what silken stuffs, what worked stuffs, what embroidered stuffs, what flowered stuffs, what wide stuffs, what narrow stuffs, what colored stuffs, doth she not require; and all to be beautiful, to be thought beautiful, to be called beautiful!

But Death is blind to all their beauty:

'This rude fellow saith, 'I never learned respect for beauty, I never practised it, I never used it! He who will look for modesty in a peacock, honesty in a fox, and fasting in a wolf, may look for respect in me; not a pound, not a half a pound, not a quarter of a pound, not an ounce, not a grain of respect is to be found in all my stock!'

From the maiden we pass to the matron, under which we find an unhappy married life described with a pungency which savors rather of an experienced husband, than of a bare-footed bachelor:

As odious as is a lyre, wherein the strings do not accord, so is marriage where tempers do not agree. What is such an union but a disunion, a battle-ground, a school of affliction, a scolding-match, a grind-stone, a nest of hedge-hogs, a rack, a briar-bush, a clock always striking, a mental harrow, a pepper-mill, a summing up of all wretchedness.

On the other hand, take his description of a happy marriage:

'It is known how vast was the temple of Solomon. In the first place, there were assembled there seventy thousand laborers, eighty thousand masons and stone-cutters, three thousand overseers. But the most wondrous part is that during the work, not a stroke of steel or hammer was heard; *neq ferrum audie batur*. This was a miracle! Some say that this was clearly through God's work and aid; others, that Solomon caused to be got a store of the blood of a certain beast, by which the hardest stones were split in twain, without need of hammer or steel; be this as it may, true it is, that in all the work, neither blow nor stroke was heard.

'To this house of God can we compare the house of two loving spouses, where no sound of strife is heard, but every thing fits itself into place without struggle or labor. Such an union is a clock which always stands at *one*; a garden wherein nothing grows but hearts-ease; a grammar in which nothing is conjugated but *amo*, and *riza* is declined; a calendar, whose chiefest saints are St. Facifucus and St. Concordia.'

The necessity of holding the rod over children, he thus illustrates:

'So long as Aaron, at Pharaoh's court, held the rod in his hand, it remained a rod; but when he cast it on the ground, it became a serpent. Remember this, ye parents and cast it not away.'

Next comes the turn of the rich man, at whom our worthy apostle hammers away without mercy:

MARK—RICH MAN.

'If it were allowed to Samson to propound a riddle for the delectation of his guests, it will perhaps be not ill

taken in me to question my hearers as follows: What is it? It hath no feet, yet travelleth through the whole world; it hath no hands, yet overmasters whole armies, it hath no tongue, yet discourseth more eloquently than Bartolus or Baldus; it hath no sense, yet is more mighty than all the wise-men of the earth: 'tis a thing which, both in its German and Latin names, comes near to God. Well now what is it? Crack me this nut, if you can. It is nothing else than gold. Take away the *num* from it, and we have God, and in Latin *num* is God, and *mus* money, which two names are near akin.

'Here can I not omit to berate the miser a little. Dearest reader! thou hast doubtless seen somewhat beyond the hedge of thy father's garden, and wandered through many provinces and regions; tell me then, if thou hast ever seen a living purse of money? Such a rarity you have scarcely encountered. Bartolus, in Matthew, xvii. 23; it is described, how our blessed Lord and his disciples arrived at Capernaum, and the tax-money was demanded of them, and as neither our Lord nor Peter had any silver, he ordered the apostle to cast into the sea, and in the mouth of the first fish he caught, he would find money—as indeed it happened, and thus the fish's mouth became a living purse. It is with misers as with this fish, they have nothing but gold, in their mouths. They snap at gold, they talk of gold, they fight for gold, they sing of gold, they praise gold, they sigh for gold, they forget not gold, even on their death-bed. Yea, we have an instance in that bold scoffer, who, when the priest visited him in his last hour with the solemn rites of the church, said to him: 'Sir parson, I need not what the cup contains, but if you would have me loan you money on the golden cup itself, I am at your service;' and with these wicked words, gave up the ghost. So that we see that gold, gold is the miser's only thought. O ye fools! ye toil and ye moil, ye chase and ye race, ye sweat and ye fret, ye hurry and ye worry, ye wear and ye tear—and all for gold! Ye drink not, ye eat not, ye sleep not—for gold; till your eyes sink in your head like two hollow nut-shells, till your cheeks are pale as a lawyer's parchment, your hair ragged as a plundered swallow's nest, your legs covered only with skin, like an old drum-head!

After despatching the misers in this style, he draws to a conclusion, and apostrophizes the world at large, telling them that all their misfortunes arise from sin, a text which he illustrates in this wise:

'I seem to see in fancy holy Bachomius in the wilderness, where he chose him a dwelling among hollow clefts of rocks, which abode consisted in nought but four crooked posts, with a transparent covering of dried boughs. And he, when wearied with singing psalms, resorting to labor lest the old serpent should catch him unemployed, and weaving rude coverings of thatch, sits by a rock, wherefrom flow forth silver veins of water, which make a pleasing murmur in their crystal descent, while around on the green boughs play the birds of the forest, who with their natural cadences, and the clear-sounding flutes of their throats joining *pleno choro*, transform the wood into a concert; and the agile deer, the bleating hares, the chirping insects, are his constant companions, unharmed and unharmed, all which furnishes him with solace and contentment. But it seemeth to me that our devout hermit delighteth himself more especially in the echo which sends him back his loud sighs and petitions, as when the holy anchorite cries, 'O merciful Christ!' the echo, that une: bodied thief, 'Christ! Christ!' the words, and returns them back to him. But is he not sorely tempted, and doth he exclaim, in holy impatience, 'O thou accursed devil!' the echo lays aside its devout