

The Years.

MARCHING onward, ever onward, like a
serried host appears
With its slow and measured footsteps, the
procession of the years;
Looking far adown the ages, one unbroken
line we ken;
Whither, whither do they journey? for they
come not back again.

On they go across the river, silent river,
deep and wide;
There the long procession halteth, marshalled
on the other side;
Waiting till the last one crosseth, till the
angel by the shore
Shall proclaim with voice of trumpet-tones,
that "Time shall be no more."

Each division is in order, for the discipline
is famed;
Every regiment is numbered, every company
is named;
"Eighteen eighty seven" has vanished, with
its blessings and its woe;
"Eighty-eight" is pressing onward, pausing
not for friend or foe.

January's snowy whiteness February melted
fast;
March came on with noise and bustle, and
its storm-clouds whirling past;
April skies looked down upon us, vales
blossomed by the way;
And while birds sang sweetest carols, April
glided in—*av.*

May, with all her happy voices, laughter in
the very air—
Fragrant with a thousand springing, bud-
ding blossoms everywhere.
Deeper grew the blue above us, tender grew
the song-bird's tune,
Life and joy and love exulted with the thrill
of blissful June.

While the breath of roses ravished all our
senses with delight,
Lo! the July sun was shining in its splen-
dour clear and bright;
And the gorgeous, golden, glowing summer
days went swift and soon,
As the ripened fruits of August shone be-
neath the August moon.

Now the cool September mornings show us
many a falling leaf,
And another summer leaves us only mem-
ories, sweet as brief;
Soon October with her rainbow hues will
bathe the maple tree,
And her brilliant colours burnish all the wood
from sea to sea.

Soon again, with garnered harvest, we shall
gather round the fire,
In Thanksgiving's glad reunion—maid and
matron, son and sire.
While November rains are falling, tenderly
we say good-night;
In the morning, lo! December's snows are
glistening pure and white.

Ah! December, with its Christmas, with its
watch-night and good-bye
To the Old Year—how the parting touches
every heart and eye!
So they leave us, while they journey onward,
whither we shall go;
Sweet the thought, we there shall gather all
their gifts to us below.

—*Boston Transcript.*

In one of the Sunday-schools the
teacher of a class of little boys in-
quired of each one if he thought he
had become a better boy during the
year. Each answered in the affirma-
tive except one little eight-year-old,
who was silent. The question was
asked him a second time, when, with
much earnestness, he replied, "I am
just as worse as I ever was."—*Sel.*

New Year's Wine.

It is unfortunate that a custom so
pleasing should have associated with it
suggestions of evil; but, though sad,
it is true that New Year's day is a
time of temptation. There are young
men and old men, whose smothered
appetite is roused by the smell of
liquor, and to whose good resolutions
one taste of wine is as dangerous as a
candle in a powder magazine. Ladies
who, in arranging their tables, have
supplied wine or stronger drink, can
do real good by correcting their bills
of fare.

The importance of this advice may
be illustrated by an incident which
occurred three years ago. A family
of this city served wine to their guests,
but when the two sons of the family
came the bottles were slipped to one
side. The boys started on their round
with the sisterly admonition, "Now,
you won't take anything!" To a
caller, who had just refused pressing
offers of sparkling liquor from this
same sister, the admonition had a
strange sound, and he said, "Do you
so much fear the effect of a little wine
on your brothers?"

"No; but when they begin they
don't know where to stop."

The door opened, and half-a-dozen
persons—two being mere boys—
came in. They all took wine; and
the afore-mentioned caller had not
even time to suggest that their sisters
might be anxious lest they would not
know where to stop. The caller saw
them later in the day, and they were
unmistakably tight. He saw, also,
the two boys whose sister's caution he
had heard, and they too were drunk.
He has seen them since in the same
condition, and knows that one of the
two is the slave of strong drink, and
physically and morally a wreck.

We do not know that New Year's
wine is responsible for this ruin, or
that it led to the ruin of the boys to
whom his sisters served it, but are sure
that many a young man dates his
movement on the downward grade
from liquor served on New Year's day.
We are glad to believe that the custom
of thus tempting men is on the de-
cline, and equally glad if any word-
blows we give will help it out of good
society.—*Herald and Presbyterian.*

A New Year's Thought.

BY AUNT HOPE.

It was New Year's morning, and
the snow, that had been falling fast
all night, lay thick and white on the
streets. Merry sleigh bells rang out
their "Happy New Year;" bright
faces passed and repassed; joyous
laughter chimed in with the glad day;
and as I gazed out from my window
upon the passing crowd, I could not
help comparing it with the snow—
pure and fresh in the morning, but
trodden under foot ere nightfall. I
thought, "How many of those merry
voices will be smothered in drink, and
what a heart-burden there will be car-

ried to many a father and mother!
It makes one shudder to think of
the sin committed at the beginning
of the New Year—the time for good
resolutions, and a day to put them
into practice. How freely the wine
flows! and how few young men resist
the tempter in the form of a hand-
some lady, who, with bright smiles
and coaxing eyes, says, "Just one glass
in my honour!" And fast on to that
glass follows many glasses, until the
glorious New Year becomes a blank
to them.

Oh, why is the woman so often the
tempter! She who was made the
man's *helpmeet*, but who, too often,
proves his curse. Oh! you tempters,
think of the end; think of what you
are doing against your God, yourself,
and the world; think of the homes
you are helping to blight, and hence-
forth be a blessing to your *sex*, and
never curse your high position of
womanhood by using it to help the
devil in his work. Rather help every
one to keep good resolutions made on
the coming of the New Year, and let
your merry voice and bright eyes, and
happy encouraging words, be the only
stimulants offered by you on New
Year's Day.

The New Year.

The year in silence dies away,
And softly o'er the snow
Another comes with outstretched hands,
Whose face we do not know;
Yet must we rise and walk with him
Wherever he may go.

Perhaps through waters deep and dark,
Perhaps by sunny rills,
O'er rough and thorny mountain sides,
Or pleasant sloping hills,
The stranger closely grasps our hands,
And leads us where he wills.

But high above the passing years
We know the Lord is King,
And every day of all the months
Some gift from him shall bring;
We trust him, and are not afraid
The while his love we sing.

He never has forgotten us!
The story of the years
Is full of his great goodness
Through all our hopes and fears;
And he will bless us every day,
And wipe away our tears.

After the darkness comes the dawn,
And though the past was sad,
The sunshine will break forth again,
And all the world be glad;
Where death has been, the flowers shall
bloom,
In summer beauty clad.

And so we lift our eyes to thee,
O thou who changest not;
Thou keepest us within thy heart—
We shall not be forgot;
And light from thee shall bless the way,
Whate'er our earthly lot.

We thank thee for thy tenderness;
We praise thee for thy grace;
We fear not anything that comes
Before we see thy face.
Lead thou us yet another year
Nearer thy fair home place.

—*Selected.*

DIFFICULTIES are the stones out of
which all God's houses are built.

1887—1888.

Few there are to whom the bound-
ary line between the old and the new
year does not become something like a
milestone on life's journey. To some
—especially the very young or the
very old—the steps of their pilgrimage
are measured off by birthdays. Those
who are more actively engaged in the
struggles common to humanity, often
have special periods from which they
reckon for a season. The young man
and woman who have agreed to make
this journey united in the holy bond
of wedlock, for a few years measure
their progress by the return of the
day when they first went forth to-
gether. Would that the years might
always continue to come and go noted
only by the return of such a happy
period! But, alas! death is abroad,
and soon one or both may be found
measuring the years by the return of
the day on which a grave hid from
sight the form of a loved one, for whose
absence time can offer no healing balm
to the bursting heart. Then may be
heard a voice often impatiently crying,
"Quick, time, with these cyclical years
of earth, and give me the cycles of
eternity in a realm where partings are
not known!"

Others there are whose sad lot it is
to remember that, so many years ago,
on such a day, their life was darkened
by some great calamity, such as being
plunged into poverty, or suffering from
disgrace of character.

But the year which we close up with
the joys of Christmas festivities may
serve to mark periods in our life's re-
cord disconnected from any association
with these sadder experiences. If the
dying year speaks of any solemnity,
it should be the solemnity of eternity.
Let it sink deep into every heart—the
thought that the year does not come
back. Soon the last one will be
measured out to us, and the book
closed forever.

Never Say Die.

MUNGO PARK, stripped and plun-
dered, sank down in despair. It was
in a wilderness in Africa, five hundred
miles from any European settlement.
A little moss was at his feet in flower,
and it inspired him with the thought
that he who planted, watered, and per-
fected in the desert that tiny blossom
could not be insensible to the sufferings
of one formed after his own image.
So he went on his way encouraged and
rejoicing, and soon came to a village.
Yes, little things are of great import-
ance, though it seems a mere truism
to write it. They are the last links in
a long chain of effects, or the first in
a chain of causes, or they are both.
They make the sum of human things.
They test a man's character every
hour of the day, and, as the jutting
and curving of the bank regulates a
river's flow, so do they, directly or in-
directly, determine the course of our
existence for good or for evil.