

THE CLOSING YEAR.

What has the year now dying
Been to your soul and mind?
What have its golden moments
Brought from the store divine?
Were all the dreams of pleasure
Fulfilled in scenes of joy,
And has there been no sorrow
Thy soul's delight to cloy?
Have all thy days been sunshine,
Have all thy nights been rest,
Does all the looking backward
Fill out a vision blest?
And as I ask the question,
Listening I hear you say,
Whate'er the retrospect,
"I can but answer Nay."
But say, in clouds of sorrow
Did not His sun break through,
Has not the blessed Saviour
Walked side by side with you?
And when you prayed for blessing
That blessing was denied,
Came there not grace to trust Him
Who suffered, loved and died?
And have there not been joy days
Of which you had not dreamed,
And blissful, precious moments
When heaven the nearer seemed?
And then, I pause, and listen,
Your answer I can guess,
The year indeed was blessed,
My thankful heart says "Yes."—Selected.

BETTER THAN HE EXPECTED.

Rev. James L. Taylor says in the Pentecostal Herald:
"The writer has been surprised, disappointed, made glad, and ashamed, this summer, as we have been thrown with several of our evangelists of note, of whom we had heard from sad faces, and lamentable voice, that 'He has lost his power, has no juice, no unction, different ones have noticed it and he has sure lost out.' We have heard them preach, heard them shouted down, heard sinners scream while they preached, felt the unction, as they wept and told of Jesus. I thank God I have heard them and find the above was a mistake; but where it got me, was that good people talked to me and it seemed there must be some truth or they would not have said it. For God's sake, neighbor, swallow the 13th of I. Corinthians, but if you must 'backbite and devour one another,' please give the writer a rest, for I have 'caught on.'
It is about time that some one called a halt on the spirit of wholesale denunciation that exists among some who suppose they have the experience of holiness. These little popes out-pope the old pope himself in consigning to hell all who differ with them. They arrogate to themselves the wisdom and infallibility of him who alone knows the heart. Because they ride rough shod over the 13th chapter of I Corinthians, they have not destroyed it, and they will have to be judged by it. Jesus says, 'Judge not that ye be not judged, for with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged.' We have lived to see this true. Some little fellow rises up to stab others and then some one else comes after him to treat him in the same way.—Wesleyan Methodist.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF HAVING SOMETHING TO DO.

We may overcome depression by duty. It is a blessed thing to have something to do. Some disaster overtakes us or some great sorrow sweeps down on our spirit and it seems as though life can have nothing in store that is desirable. But life still has its wants, it still has its humble duties and we take them up, almost mechanically at first, but before long we find that they are medicinal. Thank God for something to do!
The depression of an active spirit frequently arises from enforced idleness. It was after John the Baptist was shut up in prison that he sent his disciples to say to Jesus: "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" Jesus did not reproach the prophet of the wilderness for asking such a question. His forerunner had not lost his faith, but his active spirit was depressed by confinement within the black wall of the mountain fortress of Machaerus.—Sel.
Mr. Moody heard a millionaire ask God to bless the poor, and said to him: "I would not bother the Lord with that, do it yourself."

ACCEPTING GOD'S DIRECTIONS.

We should be careful lest we have a large Bible for quotations and a small one for practice. We profess to believe the text, "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he will direct thy paths;" but as a matter of fact do we believe it? Do we consult God in any but a very general way? Do we not often go to Him after we have made up our minds? If this one text is true, no other is needed. Here is a text which can be proved or disproved—a text that need not remain among the uncertainties. With my whole heart I believe this text, and I have never known it to fail. I have acted upon it when the answer has gone absolutely against my inclination; when the way seemed clear in other directions, and when I have had to give up the most tempting prospects. Yet the text has vindicated itself. My loss has been my gain. If we do not test the text in this spirit, we cannot test it at all. The text is everything or it is nothing. It is not to be trifled with—taken up and laid down, partly believed and partly distrusted, admired as poetry and neglected as discipline. "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."—Joseph Parker.

GUARD THE BOYS.

"You can't keep boys quite straight, you know. They must have a chance to sow their wild oats." Must? A word from Satan's vocabulary! Look ahead a few years. There he goes—young boy swearing, swaggering, coarse, obscene! You hope he will marry and sober down? Yes, if some girl will pour the fullness of her sweet life into his, there is bare chance that he may be saved. How much better to have trained him right when you had him under your hands! In the outset he was not unlike his sister in morals. You hold her to proprieties and decencies, while you let him run at his own will in paths of misdeed. Now, in purity of life, they are many leagues apart. There are as many boys as there are girls in the infant classes of our Sunday Schools; but one half as many boys as girls in the Bible class. Women outnumber men in the church two to one. This sad proportion tells its own story!—Exchange.

THE PURE IN HEART.

The Saviour said, "Blessed are the pure in heart." Then there must be some who are pure in heart. Who are they?

1. Such as enjoy the complete indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and are thus under a pure personal government. They are controlled, guided and directed by the purest power in the universe.
2. Such as have allowed their mental and spiritual powers to come into captivity to Christ. Their motives, desires, ambitions, affections, will and thoughts are all in subjection to the dictates of Christ. He is their ruler. They obey him as willing subjects.
3. Such as have come into the experience of internal peace, joy, love, and live in all their New Testament fulness and blessedness. Their souls overflow with emotions of gladness and good-will, while held in the pose of fidelity to God and earnest worship. They have the faith that settles things, the hope that anchors, the assurance that satisfies and the prospect that enraptures. No wonder Jesus called them blessed. If they are not blessed, then the human heart knows no blessedness on this side of its eternal rest.—Michigan Christian Advocate.

THE PRICE OF MANHOOD.

Into one of our college communities there came, last commencement, an old man of splendid presence and fine oratorical gifts. The boys, in their parlance, "went wild" over him. There was but one

sentiment among them, "That's the man I want to be like."

"Boys," said an old professor, "that's a fine ambition; there isn't a nobler man in the State than Judge R—. God bless him! But before you make up your minds to be just like him, let us count up the cost."

Then the professor told his eager listeners something of the private history of their hero from boyhood up: of privations, of thwartings, of misunderstandings, of losses, of crosses, of disappointments, aye, and of failures, all of which had gone to make up their man.

"You may be sure," he said, "God needed every one of these strokes; He never wastes workmanship. Are you willing to pay this price for noble manhood?" And the young hero-worshippers scattered, each hoping to receive his knight-hood, even at such cost, but making no more noisy demonstrations about it.

It is for you to desire the best gifts—you who stand at life's threshold; but remember that precious things are also costly. Hold yourselves ready, then, to pay the price of being strong, tender, successful, of being what includes them all, useful.

Your Master says to each one who desires to reign with Him, "Are you able to drink of the cup that I drink of?" And as that cup is offered to your lips, may He grant you grace to say in humility and faith, "Master, by Thy help we are able."

DEWEY'S STIMULANT.

The pupils of a Sunday school class at Canton, O., took exception to some parts of the temperance lesson by their teacher because, as they said, Dewey and his men had taken liquor while in the famous battle of Manila Bay. The teacher wrote to Admiral Dewey about this, as a large part of her lesson hinged on the use of liquor by the world's leaders, and most of its effect would be lost if the boys carried their point. She received the following reply direct from the admiral:

"Dear Madam:—I am very glad to have the opportunity of correcting the impression which you say prevails among your Sunday-school scholars that the men on my fleet were given liquor every twenty minutes during the battle of Manila Bay. As a matter of fact, every participant, from myself down, fought the battle of Manila Bay on coffee alone. The United States laws forbid the taking of liquor aboard ship except for medicinal uses, and we had no liquor that we could have given the men even had it been desired to do so.

"Very truly yours,
"GEORGE DEWEY."

BOYS, READ AND HEED THIS.

Many people seem to forget that character grows; that it is not something to put on ready-made with womanhood or manhood; but day by day, here a little and there a little grows with the growth and strengthens with the strength, until, good or bad, it becomes almost a coat of mail: Look at a man of business—prompt, reliable, conscientious, yet clear-headed and energetic. When do you suppose he developed all these admirable qualities? When he was a boy? Let us see how a boy of ten years gets up in the morning, works, plays, studies, and we will tell you just what kind of a man he will make. The boy that is late at breakfast, late at school, stands a poor chance to be a prompt man. The boy who neglects his duties, be they ever so small, and then excuses himself by saying, "I forgot; I don't think!" will never be a reliable man, and the boy who finds pleasure in the suffering of weaker things will never be a noble, generous, kind man—a gentleman.—Selected.

MR. HADLEY'S OWN CONVERSION.

I believe I got that look one night. I was sitting on a whiskey barrel in a saloon at the corner of 125th street and Third avenue. I had been in that place for five weeks, and I had drunk whiskey for twenty two years. It was the end of an awful spree; everything was gone, my mind, my money and my friends, and all, and I was wondering how I could get another drink, when in the midst Jesus came. I saw that look. I wasn't looking for Christ at all; I was looking for whiskey, and wondering where I could get a drink. I hadn't the courage any

YOUNG PEOPLE'S COLUMN.

A KIND WORD, A SUNNY SMILE.

"It was only a sunny smile,
And little it cost in the giving;
But it scattered the night
Like the morning light,
And made the day worth living.
Through life's dull warp a woof it wove
In shining colors of hope and love:
And the angels smiled as they watched
above,
Yet little it cost in the giving.
"It was only a kindly word,
A word that was lightly spoken;
Yet not in vain,
For it stilled the pain
Of a heart that was nearly broken.
It strengthened a faith beset by fears,
And groping blindly through mists of
tears
For light to brighten the coming years,
Although it was lightly spoken."

BAD BREEDING.

Of all forms of bad breeding, the pert, smart manner affected by boys and girls of a certain age is the most offensive and impertinent. One of these so-called smart boys was once employed in the office of the treasurer of a Western railroad. He was usually alone in the office between the hours of eight and nine in the morning, and it was his duty to answer the questions of all callers as clearly and politely as possible.

One morning a plainly dressed old gentleman walked quietly in, and asked for the cashier.

"He's out," said the boy, without looking up from the paper he was reading.
"Do you know where he is?"
"No."
"When will he be in?"
"Bout nine o'clock."
"It's nearly that now; isn't it? I haven't Western time."
"There's the clock," said the boy, smartly pointing to the clock on the wall.

"Oh, yes! thank you," said the gentleman, "Ten minutes to nine. Can I wait here for him?"

"I s'pose so, though this isn't a public hotel."

The boy thought this was smart, and he chuckled over it. He did not offer the gentleman a chair, or lay down the paper he held.

"I would like to write a note while I wait," said the caller; "will you please get me a piece of paper and an envelope?"
The boy did so, and as he handed them to the old gentleman he coolly said:
"Anything else?"
"Yes," was the reply. "I would like to know the name of such a smart boy as you are."

The boy felt flattered by the word smart, and wishing to show the full extent of his smartness, replied:

"I'm one of John Thompson's kids, William by name, and I answer to the call of 'Billy.' But here comes the boss."

The "Boss" came in, and seeing the stranger cried out:

"Why, Mr. Smith, how do you do? I'm delighted to see you. We—"
But John Thompson's "kid" heard no more. He was looking for his hat. Mr. Smith was the president of the road, and Billy heard from him later, to his sorrow. Any one needing a boy of Master Billy's peculiar "smartness" might secure him, as he is still out of employment.—Youth's Companion.

JUST MY LUCK.

If the boy who exclaims, "Just my luck," were truthful he would say, "Just my laziness," or "Just my inattention."
Luck is waiting for something to turn up.
Labor, with keen eyes and strong will, will turn up something.
Luck lies in bed and wishes the postman would bring him news of a legacy.
Labor turns out at 6 o'clock and with a busy pen or ringing hammer lays the foundation of a competence.
Luck whines.
Labor whistles.
Luck relies on chances.
Labor on character,
Luck slips down to indigence.
Labor strides upward to independence.
"Luck," in the Bible sense, is a good old English word: "I wish you good luck in the name of the Lord." But "luck," with no thought of Providence, is a bad word.

ROT.

Amid rotting grains and rotting fruits
alcohol as birth. No wonder that his
work shows the traces of his origin!

Rot of barley, rot of corn,
That's where alcohol is born.
To his rotten nature true,
To rot is all that he can do.
Rotten men and rotten boys;
Rotten hopes and rotten joys.
Rotten fame and reputation;
Rotten politics in the nation;
Rotten ballots, rotten laws;
Parties with a rotten clause;
Nursed on nature's rotten juices,
Rot is all that he produces!

—Selected.

THE GIRL WE ALL LIKE.

The girl who is sunny.
The girl who has heart.
The girl who has culture.
The girl who loves music.
The girl who has conscience.
The girl who is tasteful and true.
The girl whose voice is not loud.
The girl who stands for the right.
The girl who lives for her friends.
The girl who sings from her heart.
The girl who knows how to say no.
The girl who belongs to no clique.
The girl who believes in her home.
The girl whose eyes are wide open.
The girl who talks to some purpose.
The girl who is loyal to her church.
The girl with no mania for features.
The girl who believes in her mother.
The girl who dislikes to be flattered.
The girl who is neither surly nor sour.
The girl who abhors people who gossip.
The girl who avoids books that are silly.
The girl who is frank with her teacher.
The girl who never worships fine clothes.
The girl whose religion shines in her life.
The girl who is especially kind to the poor.—Presbyterian.