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Our Poetry.

The Golden Year.

We sleep and wake and sleep; but all things move.
 The sun flies forward to his brother sun;
 The dark earth follows wheeled in her ellipse;
 And human things, returning on themselves
 Move onward, leading up the golden year.

Ah! though the times when some new thought can bud
 Are but as poets' seasons when they flower,
 Yet seas that daily gain upon the shore
 Have ebb and flow conditioning their march,
 And slow and sure comes up the golden year.

When wealth no more shall rest in moulded heap,
 But, suit with freer flight, shall slowly melt
 In many streams to fatten lower lands,
 And light shall spread, and man be liker man
 Through all the seasons of the golden year.

Shall eagles not be eagles? wrens be wrens?
 If all the world were facons, what of that?
 The wonder of the eagle were the less,
 But he not less the eagle. Happy days
 Roll onward, leading up the golden year.

Fly, happy, happy sails, and bear the press;
 Fly, happy with the mission of the cross,
 Knit hand to hand, and blowing heavenward
 With silks and fairs and spices free of toil
 Enrich the markets of the golden year.

'But we grow old!' Ah, when shall all,
 Men's good,
 Be each man's rule? and universal peace
 Lie like a shaft of light across the land,
 And like a lane of beams a hawthorn sea,
 Through all the circle of the golden year.
 —Alfred Tenneyson.

New Year's Resolve.

As the dead year is clasped by a dead December,
 So let your dead sins with your dead days lie
 A new life is yours, and a new hope! Remember
 We build our own ladders to climb to the sky.
 Stand out in the sunlight of promise, forgetting
 Whatever your past held of sorrow or wrong;
 We waste half our strength in useless regretting;
 We sit by old tombs in the dark too long.

Have you missed in your aim? Well, the mark is still shining;
 Did you faint in the race? well take breath for the next;
 Did the clouds drive you back? but see yonder their lining;
 Were you tempted and fell? let it serve for a text.
 As each year luries by, let it join that procession
 Of skeleton shapes that march down to the blast.

I tell you the future can hold no terrors
 For any sad soul while the stars revolve,
 If he will but stand firm on the grave of his errors
 And instead of regretting, resolve, resolve!
 It is never too late to begin rebuilding,
 Though all into ruins your life seems hurled;
 For look! how the light of the new year is gliding
 The worn, wan face of the bruised old world!
 —Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

Our Pulpit.

The Lord's Promise

JACOB'S VOW.

SERMON.

Preached in the St. Paul's Church Fredericton on Sabbath morning, Jan. 1st 1888 by
REV. A. J. MOWATT.

"Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land, for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."—GEN. XXVIII. 15.

"And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, if God will be with me, and will keep me in the way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God, and this stone which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house, and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee."—GEN. XXVIII. 20-22.

Jacob is leaving home, starting out to do for himself in the wide world. There has been a bitter family quarrel, and he was very much to blame, but there was more or less of it all round the home circle, and for the sake of the home's peace and his own safety he leaves. Family quarrels are not uncommon, even in the homes of God's own people. Abraham and Sarah had their bickerings. So had Isaac and Rebekah. The meek Moses and his wife Zipporah did not get along any too well, nor Moses and his brother and sister Aaron and Miriam. Samuel's home was troubled with unseemly quarrels. The family at Bethany again had their jars, and even the home where Jesus grew up was not different in this respect. And because of family quarrels there have to be home leavings, and home leavings are necessary both for the home's sake and the good of those who leave. It was Jacob's making to leave home, and it is the making of many a one to leave home.

Jacob is not what we would call a young man, for he is all of seventy-five years of age, but in those days he was a young man, as young a man as one of twenty-five or thirty to-day. You see him hurrying along, not stopping much till he has put all of sixty miles between himself and his home. Here he stops to rest and sleep. Gathering an armful of stones he makes a place for his weary head to lie. As a shepherd he would not be unaccustomed to sleeping out at night perhaps. But he is far from home and he realizes how wrong he has done, and feels that he is an outcast, and he is no little troubled. He tries to pray, but he knows not whether the God of his father is there to hear him. At last he sleeps, and dreams a dream. In his dream he sees a ladder rising up from where he is to the top of Heaven, and the angels come and go upon it, and high above he sees God himself and He has gracious words, sweet promises, for the weary sleeper. "Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."

The pilgrim awakes, dream-ladder and the white-winged angels are all gone. It is a lovely morning. Over the odorous mountains of Gilead rises gloriously the morning sun calling Jacob to his long journey. But he lingers to pray, for to pray well in the morning is to put oneself in a position to make the best of the day. He recalls the wondrous vision, and he is sure the God of his father has spoken to him. So he sets up a rude cairn to mark the sacred spot, anointing with oil the stone he made his pillow, and he calls it Bethel, God's house. Then kneeling down he solemnly vows and resolves. This is to be a new starting-place in his life-career, and his experience at Bethel, is to be the key-note of the future for him. "And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, if God will be with me and will keep me in this way, that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God, and this stone which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house; and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee."

Now, we have two things here, the Lord's promise to Jacob, and Jacob's vow to the Lord.

First, then, the Lord's promise. "Behold, I am with thee, and will keep

thee whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."

Jacob was not quite sure whether he was doing right in setting out to go where he was going. The Lord had called his grandfather Abraham to leave Padan-Aram, and his father Isaac was not allowed to go there on any account, and now he was going there. It was about the only thing he could do in the circumstances perhaps, for he had to go somewhere, but it was his own wrong doing that was making it necessary, and one wrong act usually leads to another, and so on down to ruin. Thus, Jacob, when he lay down to sleep, I have no doubt, was no little perplexed as to whether he was in the way of duty in undertaking this journey. He questioned the wisdom of it and the righteousness of it. But the dream-vision he had, set the matter at rest. The Lord made it clear to him that He was with him, and that He would go with him, and would bring him back to his own home, and would never leave him.

What a blessed promise that was for a man to take with him in starting out to do for himself in the world! It was better than gold. To have God with him, to feel and know that He was with him, to have Him with him in his undertakings, and to have the assurance that he would get back home again:—all that was so comforting, cheering, helpful, inspiring. And Jacob was not any too good. He was a poor weak man, such as we all are. He could do and he did do, some mean things. He was a bit of a sharper, a keen business-man. Still, he was a man of faith and prayer. He wanted to do right. He was a child of promise, one of God's people, and so the Shepherd of Israel took care of him, and led him, and blessed him.

The promise made to him at Bethel was grandly fulfilled. The Lord was with him. He had only his staff in his hand when he reached his uncle's at Padan-Aram. His staff was his sole stock in trade. But he knew how to herd sheep, and he went to work, and he worked hard. Day and night for twenty years he was at it, and the Lord prospered him, so that when he came to return to the Land of Canaan, he was a wealthy sheep-owner, a man of might and means.

I am addressing some this morning who have set out to do for themselves, or who are setting out, and they are not without their anxieties on the matter. In order to a successful start in life it is not always necessary to leave home as Jacob did, and as many are doing. Sometimes it is; sometimes it is not. We must weigh that matter for ourselves, and decide. It is important, however, to have the Lord with us, to feel and know that wherever we are, we are in the path of duty. Unless the Lord is with us we cannot hope to succeed as Jacob succeeded—in the best sense. We should make it a subject of prayer, and faithful earnest seeking to find out what our duty is. We need not expect a night-vision to make it plain to us, nor a voice from Heaven. But the path of duty is made plain to him who wants to know it. Not always so plain indeed that he can be very sure, and not always so plain that he may not make mistakes, but sufficiently plain for all practical purposes.

Let no young man say too positively and definitely as if the Lord had nothing to do with him and his life-plans; "I am going to such a city, and I am going to be this and that. I am going into business. I am going to buy and sell and get gain. I am going to devote myself to the legal profession, enter parliament, climb to the top of the ladder of fame, and so on." It is well enough to look ahead and plan, and it is well enough for a young man to have his dreams as to the future. But it might be so unwise for a young man to launch out on the world's sea, and attempt the great things he dreams of. His doing so might be clear away from the path of duty, and God might not be with him. If a young man has only his staff in his hand and his Bible in his pocket, it is for him to take hold of the work that lies close to him, providing it is honest,—keeping sheep or caring for cattle, bucks wing wood, working on the railroad or in the woods, doing what he can do. If he is willing to work and work hard, and if he can be trusted, there will always be work for him to do, and the more he can do, and the better he can do it, the more there will be for him to do, and the better the pay for his work. But let him make it the rule of his life, let his wages be little or much, to save something out of what he earns to live within his income, and to honor God in all he has and all he does, and with God's blessing he will succeed, for God will bless him, and be with him.

But you will say perhaps, "I have no such promise as Jacob had. Here I am

with my two hands, and nothing more. But no ladder rises for me to Heaven. No angel comes to me with a sweet message. No voice from Heaven speaks to me." And so you grumble at your hard lot, and let your years waste in idleness and sin, and you do nothing, and come to nothing.

Now, I want to say to you this New Year's morning, that there is a promise for you as well as Jacob. The promise that did so much towards making Jacob is here for you. The Lord is no respecter of persons. He is as willing to be with me in my undertakings, and you in your undertakings, as with Jacob in his undertakings. All the promises of the word are for me, for you. Here is a wide pastureland, and I may fill my hungry soul anywhere. For me and for you rises a ladder whose top reaches Heaven as well as for Jacob. And the foot of the ladder is not yonder in New York City, or yonder in Boston, or away yonder in the far west; it is here in Fredericton. Then the messages of Heaven, and the angels of God, come to you where you are, and you have your blessed opportunities to-day as well as Jacob in the long ago. Read this promise over as your own. Hear God saying to you: "Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee whithersoever thou goest." It makes all the difference in the world how you read the Bible and its rich promises. You may read it away from yourself, or you may read it home to yourself. Let the *thee* here be yourself, and what a preciousness to you it gives the words, and what a blessed helpfulness there is for you. You rise up with a new light in your face, and you ask: "Does the Lord mean me?" And you read over what He says as to you: "Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee whithersoever thou goest."

Secondly, Jacob's vow. "And Jacob vowed a vow." You will observe, the promise of the Lord did not come to Jacob till he had set out to do for himself. So long as he was wasting his years trying to get round his brother, cheating him out of the birthright by worldly methods, taking advantage of his need to get beyond him, and so on, there was no ladder at his feet reaching up to Heaven, and no angels coming to him with messages of mercy. But as soon as he started out to be a man, to climb the ladder of success in life for himself, God blessed him.

And here, let us learn a lesson. If we lie lounging about, there will never be anything for us either here or hereafter. If we waste our years in ungodly ease and indulgence, making no effort to be anything, the Jesus will come and go, and we will be what we have always been cumberers of the ground, in the way of our own good and that of every one we have to do with. But if, like Jacob, this new year's morning, we rise up in the strength of a holy resolve, and go forth to do better, to live a new life, to break with our old way of doing things, we will find that God is with us. "Behold, I am with thee."

Many shrink from responsibility. They fear to step out of the beaten path where like a gin-horse, they have been going the round of their duties through the years. And yet, a break, however it may come to them, whether by choice or compulsion, is sometimes necessary to their true making. There was danger of Jacob living his life out in his quiet home in Beersheba without being anything, or realizing the grand responsibilities of living and doing. But he was rudely flung out to do for himself, and now he had to do or die, and he did, grandly did. Like a true man he took hold of his responsibilities, and they made him. On his knees he made a solemn vow to the Lord, to the effect, that he would serve the Lord as he had hitherto served him. "If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God, and this stone which I have set up for a pillar shall be God's house, and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee."

He vows three things, that the Lord would be his God, that he would have a house of God, and that he would give a tenth of all he had to the Lord. His vow is such a vow as the man makes who makes a profession of religion, and that is what it was. He solemnly resolved to be true to the Lord, to make the Lord his God, to build up in his own way the Lord's house, and to consecrate his wealth by giving the tenth of it to the maintenance of religion.—He did not carry out his vow as faithfully as he should have done through the succeeding years. He forgot his obligations the claims of God upon him, but upon the whole he was faithful. He never got away very far from the vow he took upon himself, during the twenty years he was in Padan Aram. There was little of true religion there, but Jacob was able to keep alive the coal of vital

godliness in his own soul and in his household. And no doubt his vow helped him. He acknowledged the Lord, and the Lord acknowledged him.

There are those who make no professions of religion, who vow not to the Lord, like Jacob, and they think they can be as good and faithful as those who do, and as religious. But while many vow and fail to pay, and in that case it is better not to vow; still, a vow, and especially a religious profession, are a help to a man. We cannot know how much Jacob's vow did to keep him amid the temptations to idolatry he found where he went, but we have every reason to believe, under God, it was the means of his salvation. It kept him from many a wrong thing, and near the foot-stool of the divine mercy. Our Lord insists strongly upon a profession of religion. He calls upon His people to profess Him before men, and He solemnly warns them as to the consequences if they fail, either in making a profession or breaking it. If, then, profession is so much in His eyes, it ought to be much in our eyes. To live without it is to live at loose ends, and to expose ourselves to all the temptations of the world around us. A young man starting out to do for himself in the world, without taking the Lord to be his God, without solemnly binding himself to be true to the Church and the Church's Head, is in the broad way, not in the strait way, and the end will be death.

Now, my hearers, we are beginning another year, and we are beginning it here. We stand on the threshold of the future, and we know not what lies before us. But we know that wildernesses of temptations of different kinds are to be met with, dire calamities perhaps, losses and crosses, bitter alienations and where we would not look for them, false friendships, dangerous companionships, disappointments, discouragements, difficulties. I do not think it is wise in us to look forward to a year darker than other years, but looking back over the past, and judging from the past, is it wise in us to go forward to the year too hopeful? Other years have tried us. Other years have disappointed us. And 1888 will be no exception. Indeed it may bring us the trial of our life. How then shall we meet the year's trials and successes, its ups as well as its downs? Not by shutting our eyes and ears and going it blindly and deafly. Not by stealing our hearts and rushing recklessly, not caring how it may happen to us. No. The best way to meet all there is in the year for us, its good as well as its evil, is to do as Jacob did—Take the Lord to be our God, make His house our home, and serve Him with all we have.

Jacob made a consecration of himself there at Bethel, and with a soul full of the Lord's spirit and power, he was able to meet temptation, cope with difficulties, and succeed where others would have failed. And how fitting to-day to get away alone with God somewhere, and low at his feet devote ourselves more than ever to His service. God with us as He wants to be with us can make the year one of great joy to us, its very disasters a blessing, its losses the means of prosperity to us, and bring us through it, and through all the year, more than conquerors. I hope we all want to be something, and not the merest and meanest something. I hope we want to succeed in the best sense. Now, to be something, to succeed, let us more than ever be the Lord's, and he will be more than ever ours. Let us not spare ourselves. Diligence in business and fervency of spirit are consistent the one with the other. Hard work and the true fear of God will crown the year into goodness for us. Ask the men who are succeeding in all the many departments of effort, in the professions, so-called, in business, in shop or field; and, east or west, you will find, that honest hard work, day and night at it, all the week at it and every week at it, for years and years, is the ladder that reaches up to the throne, to worldly success, to heaven. Make a vow then. Enter into a solemn compact with the Lord to be His, and then rise up in His name and strength, and go forth to realize it. If, like the prodigal, you find you have wandered far from the right, and have been throwing yourself away in a life of beastly indulgence, rise to-day and with a cry to God for help set out to go to Him. Come to his arms of mercy. Cast yourself at his feet. And he will lift you up, and do you good. Let your word be this; Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be thy Son! And let your resolve be a reality, and this day will indeed be the beginning of days to you.

Thus, in conclusion, we see here that we must set out, if there is to be any good for us, and we must go on seeking it where it is to be found. Before us to-day stretches a future full of all the good we can want, great attainments, a life of usefulness, the glory to come, but if any, or all of them, are to be ours,

we must come forward and make them ours. They will not seek out us, we must seek out them. Skilled workmanship is not a gift. It does not come to a man asleep. He has to seek it for ten years or more before it is his. So with an education. And so with all the good there is for us. "Seek and ye shall find." Jacob succeeded, but he was at it for twenty years, as hard as he could, night and day at it.

Looking forward to another year, then, let us go at it harder than ever—I mean doing the good, the useful, the right. Let us be more faithful in doing our duties, more earnest at the footstool, more attentive here, more devoted to the Lord's service. Let us have more faith, more of the Divine Spirit within us, and let us put more hard work into all that we do. Let us not be satisfied here with the crumbs, the smallest amount of God's good, but let us seek the fullness of grace and glory. The ladder that rises from where our feet are, reaches to Heaven, and that ladder we must climb, round by round, step by step. Thus even angels would seem to go up, winged and wondrously gifted though they be.

And, like Jacob, let us devote ourselves and ours more than ever to the Lord. The past year has been one of steady, quiet progress, real growth. Let this one be still more so. We can help so much to make it so, or we can stand in the way. The promise of the Lord is here for us to make it ours, but it wants our vow, and our earnest resolves to complete it. The Lord is near to bless us, and be with us.

Lead kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,
 Lead Thou me on;
 The night is dark and I am far from home,
 Lead Thou me on;
 Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see
 The distant scene; one step enough for me.

Missed Their Calling.

A late number of the Boston Transcript refers to the large number of young ladies from the Provinces as well as from the States who have failed in success while attending the Conservatory of Music. At the close of last term many of these failed in securing prominence.

The Transcript says the conservatories especially are filled with these students, disheartened and desperate, yet working earnestly against fearful odds. How much wiser if they would but discover before starting whether or not they possess any true musical talent or only an educated taste for music. At home, in their own little artistic circles they shine like stars of the first magnitude, but over there they will find the atmosphere alive with brilliant native comets, whose very tails will switch them into space. The Germans are born to music. It's in the air. The population is such that far geniuses than the average foreign student are unable to succeed financially, and for that very reason they swarm to our country and demand but a pittance for their services. Look at your one year of conservatory life. If you intend to do earnest work you enter your name in the higher school, which is divided from the primary section and devoted only to would be professionals and teachers. You must commence with a "method." That you have Bach and Beethoven before counts for nothing. Your presumption will be one of your first discoveries. You must even promise to practice none of your old favorite pieces, whose melodies will waft you back to the "land of the free!"

The Socialist paper, of New York, Volks Zeitung, on Dec 30 published the following circular in German and English, copies being distributed along the lines of railroads and docks:—

"FELLOW WORKMEN: The hour has come when the agencies of science must play a part in the struggle of the future. Yesterday it was the slaughter of our comrades at Chicago; to-day it is the assassination of 60,000 of our brothers on the Pullman and Reading railroad system. It delphia & Reading railroad system. It is true the sword is a weapon of circumstance, but their victims perish all the same. Do not waste your force on "scabs"; they are only the effect of the present damnable commercial competitive system. Destroy by all agencies at your command the direct representatives of the system—the Corbans, Maxwells, Goulds. Let fire torch and bomb or bullet strike them now. Let all they possess to the flames be given; hound them night and day. This strike must be made a war of the classes against the masses. Brothers, remember Chicago and your oath!"

The circular was read at several meetings of workmen in the city last night. It is said to be the intention to distribute it extensively throughout the country.

—The Serbian Ministry has resigned. The resignation has been accepted by King Milan. The retirement of M. Ristic is considered a check to Russia.