

The Old and New Year.

No pause, no rest, no visual line
Between the years that come too go;
For some too fast, for some too slow!

Still on—as silent as a ghost!
Seems but a score of days, all told.
Or but a month or two at most.

For what it brought, for what it takes,
We love it, and for loved one's sakes;
Prized for its hours of happiness,

And so we sadly lay, Old Year,
Our love wreath or the snowy bier,
Our love wreath, moistened by a tear;

I Kicks Ag'in it, Sah!

BY REV. A. J. JORDON, D. D.

Such was the vehement exclamation
of Brother Moses, as I met him
one day in front of an aristocratic
mansion where he was busily at
work dusting carpets, trimming the
lawn, etc.

But before I rehearse his side
walk discourse, I must tell my
reader something about this ebony
sage, whom I have known now for
more than twenty-five years.

My first acquaintance with Moses
began thus:

Soon after the close of the war,
when a considerable influx of freed-
men had set in toward the North, a
Unitarian neighbor said to me one
day: "I wish you would call in and
see my colored man who has recently
come to me from the South. I
assure you he is a character. He
seems to take a great interest in the
welfare of my soul, and as he is of
your persuasion I would like you to
make his acquaintance. By all
means get him to tell you of his ex-
perience."

I called one morning according
to request, and found Moses busy in
the stable polishing the harnesses
and bequilling his labors with the
weird stains of an old plantation
melody.

After a pleasant introduction and
some interchange of Christian fel-
lowship, I said:

"Brother Moses, I wish you
would tell me your Christian experi-
ence, if you can spare time for it."

"I alters has time enough for dat,
sah," he replied, "and allers shall
till I puts off dis clay tabernacle,
and then I'll hab all eternity to tell
it in"—and then a shine came into
his dusky visage more brilliant than
that which he was imparting to his
master's leather.

"It was on de sixth day of Octo-
ber, 1853," he continued, "at three
o'clock in de morning, in massa's
cornfield, in ole Virginia, that the
Lord spoke peace to my soul. You
see I had been a mournin' for weeks,
yet all de while more or less confiden-
tial in myself, and settin' store
by de heaps of good works and pray-
ers and repentins I'd done. But at
last dese deceitful refuges begun to
gib way, and de foundations of de
great deep broke up in my soul, and
for three days and nights I could
neither eat nor drink nor sleep, a-
mournin' and a-wailin' for my sins.
At last, nigh sunrise in de third
day, out in de cornfield, I says,

"Lord, you must save dis despairin'
sinner, or he'll die. I knows I's
wicked and vile and rebellious, but,
den, you's all merciful and forgivin'.
Dat's your reputation, Lord, and I
begs you for de sake of your great
name to show mercy and not judg-
ment." And so I cried and pleaded
dare on de ground. Den de Lord
'peared to me in de visions of de
morning, and reached out his hand
to me. But he didn't reach it out
flat ways, as though he had any
bread of life to give my hungry soul.
Time hadn't come yet for dat. But
he reached out his hand edge ways

toward me; and if dat hand had
been a sharp two-edged sword, it
couldn't cut me open quicker'n it
did, separatin' de joints and de mar-
ner and layin' bare de corruption of
my heart. I never dreamed what a
heap of blackness dar was in dat
heart till dat mornin'. But just den
I heard a mighty noise, which made
me tremble from head to foot; and
I says, 'Lord, what's dat rumblin'?'
And he says, 'Dat's your sins a-fallin'
into hell.' Den, quicker'n I can
tell, he reached out his hand ag'in,
so kinder soft and tender, and closed
me up, and didn't leave a rent or a
scar or a sore place in my heart,
and he says to me, 'Son, dy sins
which is many, is forgiven dee.
Den I know'd I'd been born'd again'
dat old things was passed away, and
all things become new. Happed in
was I? From de rising ob de sun,
to de going down ob de same dat
day, it 'peared like I was in beben,
a-standin' on de sea ob glass, wid de
harp ob God in my hand and golden
slippers on my feet, singin' de song
ob Moses and de Lamb.

"From dat day I's been good de-
surer I's born'd again, dan I am
that I was born'd de fust time; for
I can't nowise remember my fust
birth, but de second I'll remember
for all eternity, and never cease to
praise de Lamb dat redeemed me.

"Dat's my experience. Some
folks don't believe it, but I knows,
it, for its what I's tasted and seen."

Now I dare say that my readers
having listened to this extraordinary
story, will conclude that one capable
of such highly wrought enthusiasm
as this would have very little sober
sense or solid judgment for the
affairs of the church of Christ. On
the contrary, Moses, becoming a
deacon in a colored church, not
long after my first acquaintance
with him, has used the office so
well, and gained for himself such a
good degree that by general consent
he is now regarded as a very pillar
and stay among his brethren. His
good judgment in managing the
affairs of God's house has constantly
surprised me; even more have I been
impressed with his fine discernment
of evangelical truth, and his deep
insight into the problems of Chris-
tian life and experience. Certainly
he must have been profoundly
taught of the Spirit; and I can say
sincerely that I am always spiritu-
ally refreshed by my wayside con-
versations with him, and that if I
should ever be in great affliction or
darkness of mind, I can think of no
one to whom I should more readily
turn for consolation than to black
Moses.

But now to the sidewalk discourse:
"Have you any special religious
interest in your church?" I asked
Moses, after his words of hearty
greeting on the occasion referred to.

"No room for any interest," he
replied. "De church is so lumber-
ed up wid fairs and festivals and
jollifications, dat de Spirit's got no
change to work among us. Least
wise dat's my solemn 'pinion, dough
some says I'se heady and s'ful.
But I'se sick of it, sah! I goes to
church Sunday, after prayin' to be
in de Spirit on de Lord's day, and
de fust thing de minis'er gets up
and reads a long programme of de
worldly doin's and goin's for de week
—de music and de supper and de
grammatic readin's and what not,—
twenty-five cents admission, and all
must come. I tell ye, I kicks ag'in
it, sah, and will, long's I hab bref in
my body."

"What do you mean by saying
that you kick ag'in it?" I asked.

"I re-buks it, sah, in de name of
de Lord. Last Sunday, I spoke
out in meetin' and said, 'Bredren,
what's ye been redeemed for, and
brought into de church? Didn't
de Lord tell you dat you's to be de
light ob de world, and de salt ob de
earth? Well! when I sees how
much time some of you gibs to fairs
and festivals, and den you can't
come to de prayer-meetin' 'cause
you's so busy, I says, 'If you ever
was de Lord's true salt, you've lost
your flavor, and if you don't look
out, you'll be cast out and trodden
under foot of men.'"

"But, Brother Moses," I asked,
wishing to draw out further wisdom
from this deep fountain, don't you
think these things are necessary for
making the church attractive to the
masses, and inviting to the young?"

"No sah!" he replied with great
warath; "no, sah, Christians is de
salt of de world, and dey is put into
de world to preserve it from corrupt-
ion. But some's got de ide dat you
must bring de corruption into de
church so's to preserve de salt; as
dough de gospel is going to die out
unless it's sugared and seasoned wid
carnal 'musements. Dats de pop'lar
notion. But I kicks ag'in it, sah."

"Yes; but people say there is no
harm in a social gathering, and a
plain supper, and a little music and
reading for entertaining the people,"

"Well, dats de question," replied
Moses. "I takes de Scriptures for
my stand-pint of faith and practice,
and I have searched in vain to find
where de 'postles and elders ever
got up suppers of turkey and chick-
ens and sandwiches and co'd tongue
and den invite de bredren to come

to church and eat 'em, at twenty-
five cents a head. No, brudder,
'musements in de church is unsancti-
fyin, howsomever folks may think
'bout it. We had a festival in our
meetin'-house, two weeks back. I
looks in a few minutes and sees the
crowd dere, and de doin's. Fust de
pianny and de fiddel strikes up, and
den all de young folk's feet begin
to shuffle and scape under de seats,
like de unthinkin' horse rushin'
into battle. And, sez I, 'take off
de 'straint, and how long 'for dis
whole company'd be a dancin' and a
waltzin' in de house ob God?' Den
dey had de guess-cake, and de waffles
and waffled off a calico-quit to de
one dat drewed the prize; and sez I
'what's dis but eddicatin' people to
gamblin' and lotteries?' Den de
grammatic reader comes on, all
dressed up wid ribbons an' furbelows
an' when I see her roollin' her eyes
an' pintin' her fingers, sez I, ag'in,
'what dis but jus' nussin' our young
'uns for de stage and de theater?' I
tell you, I kicks ag'in it, sah, and
allers shall."

"Well, next night was prayer-
meetin'; only twenty out and all as
mum as if de Lord had never open-
ed der mouths, and when I warns
'em 'bout it dey says, 'Brudder
Moses, de Spirit didn't move us.'
And sez I, 'de spirit moved ye fas'
'nough last evenin' at de festin',
but I'se 'fraid t'was de spirit dat
works in de children ob disobedience.'
Brudder, I reads it, dat dey
dat's goin' to wear de crown must
'bar de cross; but what's we doin'
in dese days but 'bolishin' de cross
and puttin' eatin' and drinkin' and
'musement and 'dulgence in de place
ob it. And what's it goin' to end?"

Here Moses pointed furtively to
the residence in front of which we
were standing and in a confidential
tone said: "De folks dat liba here
was once 'fessors of religion, but I
reckon dey's back-slid, for dey don't
had no prayers in de family now,
and dey's all taken up wid theaters
and card-playing and balls and
parties. Oh, brudder, I has great
sorrow an' travail of soul, when I
sces how de debil prouls round
and steals de Lord's sheep right out
ob his fold."

"Don't you think, Moses," I asked
that the devil works harder to lead
Christians astray, then he does to
destroy the people of the world?"

"Don't I thinks? I knows it, sah.
Why d'ye spouse I works, and tugs,
and sweats, beatin' dese carpets and
doin' dese chores? T'aint de dollar
doin' in my pocket dat I'se workin'
for. I'se got dat already. It's de
dollar dat's in my employers pocket
dat I'se workin' for. So if de
Lord has a real shure 'nuff saint,
one dats plain stamped with the
image and s'cription of de King, and
shines like a new silber dollar, de
debil he'll rise up early and sit up
late to get hold ob dat one. But
your 'bandoned sinners, and your
high-steppin' ones dats all taken up
wid dere moralisms and self-righte-
ousness, he doesn't trouble himself
'bout—he knows he got dem already."

Here our report of the sidewalk
discourse might properly end, but
I would be an injustice to Moses to
leave the impression that he is only
a sour and censorious critic, who
takes satisfaction in pointing out
the faults of Christians. On the
contrary, with an indescribable pas-
sion and tenderness, he thus con-
cluded his talk: "Well, brudder,
I'se praying bout it night and day.
It's 'cause the Lord's childrens don't
think, dat dey does so. You re-
member how he says, 'My people
don't consider.' Well, I'se on de
way now, nigh onto forty years,
and it's been my 'perience dat a
day's considerin' is worth more than
a year's workin'." "Cause when we
takes a day for considerin' now and
then, we gets 'quainted wid de Lord
and finds out his secrets, and de
Lord tells us jus' what he's doin',
and what he's goin' to do. And,
brudder, he tells me in my soul I'se
a goin' to see a great ou'-pourin'
of de Spirit afor I die. Den when
Christians gets dere tongues a fire
as dey did on de day of Pentecost,
how our dross will be burned up
and what a cracklin' der'll be in the
hay, wood and stubble we're buildin'
into our churches in dese days! But
brudder, 'twon't easy. We'se got
to get low before de Lord, and be
of one 'cord, and in one place. Trouble
is now, dat ebery one ob a different
'cord; one wants one thing, and
'nother wants 'nother. But when
we gets where we all wants the same
thing so we's satisfied to lib all our
days on a crust of bread, if he can
hab the Lord and de fulness of his
Spirit, den he'll come down like rein
on de mown grass; and dat day's a
comin', brudder!"

Reader, Moses is a real character
and not a myth. He was born in
slavery, and if he is able to read, it
is only a recent acquirement. But
his mind is saturated with the scrip-
ture as he has caught its phraseology
from the rude preachers of his race.
May it not be that he is one of the
"babes," to whom the Father has
revealed some things which he has
'hid from the wise and prudent?"—
The Watchman.

USE SKODA'S DISCOVERY
The Great Blood and Nerve
Remedy.

The Departing Year.

Happy are we, if these last hours
of another year find us in the enjoy-
ment of genuine Christian experi-
ence! Whatever may be the occa-
sions of humiliation on account of
our many past deficiencies, the
knowledge of God's acceptance at the
present moment encourages us to
turn our faces toward the unknown
future with feelings of joy and hope.
For we may safely reason that the
conscious gift of divine love at any
one given point in our earthly pil-
grimage is the pledge of God's con-
tinued faithfulness, however dark
and winding the remainder of the
journey.

As the year departs, is it not
better to dwell upon the tender
mercies of God than to feed a mor-
bid sense of our unworthiness?
Personal demerit, on account of sins
of omission and commission, every
one who has a just understanding
of himself must freely acknowledge.
But such acknowledgement, much
as it becomes us, should only open
our eyes to behold the long suffer-
ing, the patience, and the tenderness
of God. Have we, at any period of
the year, fallen away from his love?
Have opportunities for usefulness
come, only to find us indiffer-ent?
Have bereaved hearts, well-nigh
crushed beneath earthly woe, turned
to us in vain for sympathy? Have
hungry, starving souls surrounded
us daily without bearing from our
lips a single word concerning the
bread of life? Have our own steps
heavenward been marked at times
by unsteadiness, halting by the
way, seeking forbidden pleasures,
turning from, not toward, the bliss-
ful goal? O! let us rather, in review-
ing all this, look through our blind-
ing tears, and see the goodness of
the Lord.

How kind he has been during all
these months! When his love has
failed too woo us away from sin,
how has he permitted faithful chast-
ening to ensue! When he knew that
we needed nothing so much as a
deeper knowledge of spiritual truth,
how the actual withdrawal of his
conscious presence became to us the
signal of our distress and want! O,
let us recount these mercies;
never ceasing to confess our sins,
never losing sight of his perfect law,
but, in the very same moment, ex-
claiming: "O, how great is thy
goodness!"

Rejoicing in all that God hath
done for us, we will be conducted
across the threshold into the New
Year with a firmer purpose and a
braver heart. Great changes await
us? Possibly. But gladness "in the
Lord" will conquer all. Because of
this we will go forth in the coming
conflict in the strength of the Lord
God.

USE SKODAS DISCOVERY
The Great Blood and Nerve
Remedy.

Calling a Spade a Spade.

Rev. Mark Guy Pearce tells the
following story: A member of the
church once got drunk. He sought
to go back to God and get his peace
restored. He could not find the
Saviour, so he sought again. His
minister called upon him. The
minister said to him: "You pray
again." They knelt down together.
"O God! Thou knowest thy servant
in a moment of unwatchfulness was
overtaken by sin." "Nonsense!"
said the minister: "tell the Lord you
got drunk." That was another
matter he could not bring that up.
He began again: "O Lord! Thou
knowest Thy servant in his weak-
ness and frailty was overtaken by a
besetment." "Nonsense! tell the
Lord you got drunk." At last the
poor fellow said: "O God! have
mercy upon me; I got drunk. Then
very speedily that man was at peace
with God again.—Sel.

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was by my son's advice I took B. B. B.
as B. B. B. is our family physician.

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