

The Christian Life.

THE OLD YEAR.

BY CLARENCE URM.

What is the old year? 'Tis a book
On which we backward sadly look,
Not willing quite to see it close,
For leaves of violet and rose
Within its heart are thickly strewn,
Marking Love's dawn and golden noon;
And turned down pages, noting days
Dimly recalled through Memory's haze;
And tear-stained pages, too, that tell
Of starless nights and mournful knell
Of bells tolling through trouble's air
The *De Profundis* of despair—
The laugh, the tear, the shine, the shade,
All 'twixt the covers gently laid;
No uncut leaves, no page unscanned;
Close it and lay it in God's hand.

HAIL AND FAREWELL.

To the New Year, Hail. To the Old
Year, Farewell. What eager expectation
in the New; what fulfillment in the
Old. Once the Old was New, and
speedily the New will become Old.

Life is a looking forward to the New,
a using of the Present, and a looking
backward to the Old. The apostle's
word about forgetting the things that
are behind and reaching out after the
things that are before is not the whole
theory of life. We naturally reach out
into the future, but we quite as naturally
remember and hold fast to the past.
For the past has its lessons: hard,
bitter, helpful; and its memories: tender,
sad, precious. If there were disappointments,
there were also joys; if there were sorrows,
there were also happinesses; if there were failures,
there were also achievements; if there were
cloud and fog and storm, there were
also rain and sunshine and the sweet
fragrance of flowers. The future—
who knows what its closed hand holds
for us? It is all shrouded in mystery;
and yet we reach for it without hesitation,
and with that eagerness of anticipation
which suggests the possession of secret
knowledge that is keener than instinct.
It may have disaster for us, but what of that?
We will go forward bravely and face whatever
calamity may confront us. And if there shall be
sickness, sorrow, sighing, and sore trial and
vexation of spirit; and though the burdens
to come shall weigh us to the ground,
and the sun be darkened, and the heavens
be black and no stars shine in our firmament,
yet the mysterious spell of the future is upon us,
and we shall go forward to wrest from its
grasp its varied and closely guarded secrets.

The Psalmist was impressed with the
brevity and vanity of this life, and cried out,
"Lord, make me to know mine end,
and the measure of my days, what it is;
that I may know how frail I am. Behold,
Thou hast made my days as a handbreadth,
and mine age is as nothing before Thee:
verily every man at his best state is altogether
vanity." But in spite of that men naturally
cling to life. While they may pray, "So teach
us to number our days, that we may apply
our hearts unto wisdom," yet they generally
desire that the number of their days may
be many. Nevertheless, be they many or few,
compared to the life that is to come, the days
of our years are as a twinkling of the eye,
and the breath of a summer's wind. Bernard of
Cluny, with his enraptured gaze turned

toward the better country, the golden
Jerusalem, sang:

"Brief life is here our portion;
Brief sorrow, short-lived care;
The life that knows no ending,
The tearless life, is there."

To some who read these words it may
be that during the New Year the walls
of that city, whose builder and maker
is God, shall become clearly defined,
and shall stand out of the dim visions
of the past with startling yet transporting
reality, and the gates thereof shall
silently move backward to receive another
pilgrim. To others the New Year may
decree continuance in the severe
grind of life, with scant measure of joy,
but with large measure of heaviness.
To some it may be a year of full and
glad success—the crowning of long-continued
exertion with the laurel of triumph.
But for all it will surely bring
some deep and significant message of
life, which, being received from the
Father of Lights, with whom is no
variableness, and being used for his
glory, shall bring contentment to the
heart, illumination to the mind, and
quickenings to the spirit.

As we take leave of the Old Year,
let it be with gratitude that we have
had it, and with regret that we have
not used it to better purpose. As we
face the New Year, let it be with a
prayer for courage, and for patience,
and for wisdom; so that we may bravely
meet its manifold events and experiences,
uncomplainingly endure its vexations
and disappointments, and wisely
discharge its multitudinous obligations.
Doing this, we shall say Farewell to
the New Year when it has become the
Old Year with fewer regrets than we
do this Old Year which a twelvemonth
ago we hailed as New.—*Chris. Advocate.*

The Christian Home and Family Worship.

The Christian home sustains a vital
relation to the morals, the peace, and
the prosperity of the nation. Hence,
if this home suffers or degenerates
intellectually or morally, the nation lapses
toward despotism and barbarism; but
if this home thrives and retains its moral
integrity, the nation can but advance
in all that is essential to the peace and
prosperity of its citizens.

It will, doubtless, be conceded that
family worship, as maintained by the
Christian fathers and mothers of three-
quarters of a century ago, was one of
the strongest, if not the very strongest
of the supporters and defenders of the
Christian home. Think of the benign
influence exerted upon both the parents
and the children by that staid, devout
Christian custom. Morning and evening,
led by father and mother, the children
were called together and sat quietly,
devoutly, while their father read a lesson
from the Bible, and then all joined
in singing an appropriate hymn, after
which all kneeled down, and the father
(and sometimes the mother), would
lead in a devout, pathetic, heart-touching,
soul-moving prayer to God—gratefully
recounting past blessings and present
mercies, and earnestly invoking the
divine guidance and protection for the
unknown future!

Ah, the impressions then and there
made on the tender hearts of the children
have, in thousands of cases, born
fruit a hundred fold, to the glory of

God, the moral health and prosperity of
the nation, and the salvation of precious
souls. And should not a custom, so
effective of the best possible results to
humanity, be reverently, ardently ad-
hered to and highly prized by all pro-
fessed Christians? Can such a custom
outlive its usefulness, or with safety be
permitted to fall into desuetude? Most
certainly not.

But brethren, sisters, is it not a fact
that in the majority of homes of the
members of the various Christian de-
nominations, the family altar is al-
ready and has been for years broken
down? Look around, make inquiry,
and ascertain the facts in the case.
Pastors, speak to the fathers and mo-
thers in your membership and find out
what the condition is. You can, and
you ought to do it. The spiritual wel-
fare of your people, and the moral train-
ing and the salvation of the children in
their homes are at stake; and diligence,
and kindly admonition on your part
right at this point may convert or turn
many an indifferent church-member
from the error of his ways, save many
a soul from death, and hide a multi-
tude of sins.

It is our candid opinion that a genu-
ine revival throughout the churches in
the way of setting up the family altars
in all the homes of all our church
members, and a loyal return to the
grand old custom of devoutly observing
family worship each and every day,
would be, in effect, in reality, and in
wholesome results, the greatest, the best,
and the most important revival that it
is possible for the church to secure. It
would be a Pentecost that would endue
the membership with such power from
on high as would send them forth
among their neighbors flaming lights
and irresistible witnesses for Jesus.
Their testimonies to the power and the
joy of salvation would be so vivid, real,
and melting, that the careless and indif-
ferent would be aroused, convinced, con-
victed, and would cry out, "Men and
brethren, what must we do to be
saved?"

The religion that makes parents
strong in their religious home life is
the religion that makes them strong for
Christ and his cause in their influence
upon their unconverted neighbors. And
the revival that is needed to-day is a
revival in the hearts of professed Chris-
tians that will make them strong to
bring their unconverted neighbors to
repentance and salvation through faith
in Christ. And this is exactly the kind
of religion that family worship begets,
fosters, and makes both enjoyable and
effective.

Oh, for a great revival of this vital,
soul-saving religion in the Christian
homes of this country! How badly it
is needed!—*Rel. Telescope.*

CHRIST OUR GUIDE.

We have often to travel solitary ways.
Some of us have perplexed paths to
tread. Some of us have sad memories
of times when we journeyed in com-
pany with those who will never share
our tent or counsel or steps any more,
and, we sit lonely by our watch-fire in
the wilderness, we have aching hearts
and silent nights.

Some of us may be as yet rich in
companions and helpers whose words
are wisdom, whose wishes are love to
us and may tremble to think that after
a while they or we shall have to tramp
on by ourselves.

There is a Presence which never de-
parts, which moves before us as we

journey and hovers over us as a shield
when we rest; a cloud to veil the sun
that it smite us not by day, and a pillar
of flame as the night falls, being ever
brightest when we need it most and
burning clearest of all in the valley at
the end, where its guidance will only
cease, because then "the Lamb that is
in the midst of the throne will lead
them."—*Alex. McLaren.*

BURIED TALENTS.

There always are those who wrap
their talent for service in the napkin
of not-worth-while. They feel that
they could not do much because their
ability is so small, and therefore they
do not try to do anything. They sup-
pose that they are practising the much
prized virtue of humility, while really
they are evading duty and responsi-
bility and thus incurring blame and
guilt. The truth is, no one, however
small his ability, need live uselessly.
God bestows no talents which he means
to be wrapped up in napkins of any
kind. Of course we cannot give always
what we have not. We are never to say,
"There is no use in my giving, for I
have so little. It can do no one any
good." We have nothing to do with
the matter of larger or smaller. We are
responsible only for what we have. If
it is but one little talent, one little tal-
ent is all we shall have to answer for.
But we must answer for that, and if
we fail to use it we shall not only lose
it in the end, but also shall incur the
penalty of uselessness.

When Your Appetite Fails.

And it makes you dizzy to even think of eating,
you need Ferrozone the greatest of appetizing
tonics. It builds up the whole body, the taste
becomes aware of new flavors in food you never
noticed before. A relish and after-satisfaction
in eating is another result from Ferrozone which
improves the digestion and converts everything
eaten into nourishment for the blood, and brain
and nerves. Just one Ferrozone tablet after
meals, easy to take and pleasant. Try Ferrozone.
Price 50c. at druggists.

At least one prefers doing a hard duty
to grimacing with a pretence of pleas-
ure in things that are no pleasure.—
George Eliot.

SCALD HAND.—Some years ago I
scalded my hand very badly, then took
cold in the burn, my hand swelled and
was very painful, but half a bottle of
Haygard's Yellow Oil cured it com-
pletely. Mrs. Wannamaker, Frankford,
Ont.

A man begins to go down the moment
he ceases to look up.

They are a Powerful Nervine.—Dys-
pepsia causes derangement of the nerv-
ous system, and nervous debility once
engendered is difficult to deal with.
There are many testimonials as to the
efficacy of Parmelee's Vegetable Pills.
In treating this disorder, showing that
they never fail to produce good results.
By giving proper tone to the digestive
organs, they restore equilibrium to the
nerve centres.

Behavior is a mirror in which every-
one displays his own image.

Do Not Delay.—Do not let a cold or
a cough fasten upon you, as it will if
neglected. Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil
will break up a cold and cure a cough,
and should be resorted to at once when
the first symptoms appear. It can be
disguised so that any unpleasant taste
it may have will be imperceptible to
the delicate. Try it and be convinced.