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EDITORIAL NOTES.

As we enter the portals of the new year the joy and sweetness that are usually found in this experience will be saddened and softened by the thought that the whole world is at war. There is a gleam of light, however, in the thought that the world is in the throes of a great revolution, and that when this war is won by the right, as it must be, all nations of the earth will enjoy the sweet blessings of liberty and freedom for which our forefathers fought more than a century ago.

In shaping your resolutions for the New Year do not fail to include a resolution to study the Word of God more systematically and regularly. The daily reading of the Bible and daily communion with God, our Heavenly Father, are just as essential to our spiritual growth as daily food and drink are to our physical growth. Robust spiritual characters cannot be developed without constant communion with God through prayer, and the reverent study of His Holy Word.

It is the privilege of every one of us to make the coming year a year of real blessing and joy and helpfulness to others. There are some people whose very presence brings pleasure. While they may be neither very witty nor very wise, though they may never dazzle others with their intelligence, yet they brighten the lives of others by the very sweetness of their nature, their unselfishness, their cheeriness and their untiring kindness. Will it be your purpose during the coming year to bring greater joy and more of sweetness into the lives of others?

"The New Year comes with silent tread, New hope, new joy, new light to spread, It bringeth something new to each, And lessons old 'twill newly teach. It cometh, too, to take away Old griefs and woes which fain would stay! Oh, speed them, speed them, glad New Year! Come, cast out bitter doubt and fear, Speed in with silent, loving tread, New hope, new joy, new light to spread."

"An Address to the Church," drafted by the "War Work Conference," in Atlanta, December 11, will be found on page 15 of this issue, together with a report of the proceedings of the conference. An urgent appeal is made to the Church at large to appreciate the importance of the work that our Church must do for the men who are in training in the various army camps and cantonments of the Southland. Certain "key men" were appointed in each Synod to look after this work. What is done must be done quickly. It is hoped that by New Year's day the sum of \$100,000 for work among Southern Presbyterian soldiers will be secured. This is a work in which every home is vitally interested, and generous gifts should be made by our people without interfering with their regular gifts for the stated benevolences of the Church.

China is the subject assigned for study and prayer in the missionary societies of our Southern Presbyterian Church during the months of January and February. The work of our Church in China is so large that it has been divided into two missions—one known as the "Mid-China Mission," and the other as

the "North Kiangsu Mission." During the month of January the "Mid-China Mission" will be studied in all the societies and Sunday schools of the Church, while in February the "North Kiangsu Mission" will be the theme of special study and prayer. See pages 5-6.

Statistics of our work in both Missions in China are as follows: Population of our field, estimated, 18,950,000; foreign workers, 146; children of foreign workers, 117; native workers, 196; out stations, places of regular meeting, 164; organized congregations, 42; communicants, 4,247; additions in 1916, 735; Christian constituency, 9,458; Sabbath schools, 121; Sabbath school membership, 6,415; schools, 167; students, 3,798; income from native sources (\$70,156 Mex.) gold, \$35,078.

One of the potent factors in Presbyterian mission work in China is the Hangchow Christian College. This college opened the present term with seventy students in the college department, the largest enrolled in its history. It is the only institution, Christian or non-Christian, attempting to do work in higher education in the entire field. Of the 136 graduates of Hangchow College, forty-seven have entered upon definite Christian work, either as preachers or Y. M. C. A. Secretaries. Fifty-two are teachers, most of them in Christian schools, thirty-seven have gone into various lines of business.

The special foreign mission season for prayer and self-denial will be observed this year January 18-26. This date was fixed by the last General Assembly instead of a season in February which has been the date in other The conditions accompanying the world war have seriously affected the work of Foreign Missions in every land. The work of German missionaries has practically come to an end, as Germany has been unable to support its workers in any foreign land. This has thrown a heavy responsibility on other nations, and our Southern Church is facing unparalle!ed opportunities as we enter the New Year. A brief statement from the Executive Secretary concerning the work will be found on page 11.

The final call is now made for the names of all those who have memorized the "Shorter Catechism" and the "Child's Catechism" during the year 1917. The "Roll of Honor" will be published in the "Christian Observer" early in January. Pastors, teachers and those who have heard the recitation of either of these Catechisms, are urged to send in the names by return mail. Names should reach the "Christian Observer" by the first of January to insure their finding a place in the "Roll of Honor." Please send names promptly.

Announcement has been made by the Presbyterian Committee of Publication of our Church that Professor Edward P. St. John has been secured as one of the contributors to "The Earnest Worker" for the coming year. Dr. St. John delighted audiences at the summer conference on Sunday school work at Montreat last summer and his world-wide reputation as an educator peculiarly fits him for instructing teachers and workers in Sunday schools. The fact that Dr. St. John will

that Thy mercy has set our feet on the it while I am here. It is not a question as to threshold of the New Year, we pray that we may have a child-like faith that walks trustingly and unafraid; that we may have patience under trial and disappointment, in seeking the best things and in meeting the failures and tempers of our fellows; that we may be faithful in performing our daily task whether it be pleasant or irksome; that we may love everything in all the world save sin and that we may despise nothing except that which is shameful; that our minds may harbor no evil thought and our hearts no bitter grudge or unholy affection; that we may be strong to smile when we are hurt and not grow bitter; that our sympathies may find wholesome expression in the Christ-like ministry of lowly service, and that we may have some part in making this year sweeter and brighter and happier than any year before. Amen.—J. P. Marion.

A NEW YEAR.

BY AMOS R. WELLS.

I want a new year. New things are not patched. So would I start my year all finely whole, No gaps of dull omissions meanly closed With poorly fitting fragments of dispatch, No mendings of ignoble after-thought, But all one piece of steady warp and woof, A year entire, as all my years should be.

I want a new year. New things are not worn, Not thin in places, ragged here and there, And loose bits hanging down; no year all frayed, With fears and worries bare before its time; But firm and confident, a brave new year.

I want a new year. Do not new things shine? Do they not shimmer in the dancing light? Are they not smooth and gracious to the touch? Is it not joy to take them from the box, And shake them out in tumbling, happy folds, And hold them up for all men to admire? So, with a burst of joy, my glad new year.

I want a new year. Ah, but new things cost! Well, I will pay the price of this new year: The price of patience, and the price of time; era-ascending to the God Who was before all years began to be, And will be through the new years as the old; The price of partings from the lower aims, Of staunch adhesion to the rugged best; The price of life!

I cannot pay the price. Pay Thou for me, O Christ, my Brother Christ! Be Thou my Patience, and be Thou my Prayer; Be Thou my Strength of hard, laborious will. From out Thine endless ages with my God Bring newness to this little year of mine. So shall it be Thy year and not my own, Yet doubly mine, as I shall dwell with Thee; Yes, doubly mine, as through it I shall pass To Thine eternity forever new. -Christian Endeavor World.

"REMEMBER ALL THE WAY THE LORD THY GOD HATH LED THEE."

BY REV. STUART NYE HUTCHISON.

As we look back today over the way we have come in the year that has passed, there is one fact that shines brighter than all. It is the Lord's leadership. Sometimes our path has been along the uplands, where the sun shines and the flowers bloom, and there have been other times when the road has led down into the valley of the shadow, where clouds and darkness were round about us. But today as we look back we know that even then God was leading us toward the green pastures and the still waters of His love and mercy.

The future is a closed book to us. We cannot see one step beyond today. Fears and forebodings trouble us at times. But let us remember all the way the Lord our God has led us. The hand that guides us is the hand of One who loves us, and the form that walks beside us is the form of One who knows the way we take.

If we will remember the way He has led us, we will be more careful concerning the way that is before us. As Henry Drummond once said, "There is no room in life for the things that will not live when life and time are past."

It is not how much good I can get out of the world, but how much good I can put into

how much property I can accumulate, but how much treasure I can lay up in Heaven. It is not how I can use my friends, but how I may serve and bless them. These are the considerations that will retain their value when the year ends, whether that time finds us here or among the missing ones.

Norfolk, Va.

For the Christian Observer.

THE DEEPEST WELL OF JOY.

BY REV. PARKE P. FLOURNOY, D. D.

Many years ago a pastor entered the sick room of an aged saint who was thought to be drawing very near the river which all of us must cross sooner or later and in one way or another. He was told that at times she did not recognize her intimate friends. Soon after her greeting, for she recognized him, he was surprised to hear her begin to recite the twelfth chapter of Isaiah, and continuing it to the end, in such a way as no elocutionist could have done unless enraptured, as she was, with its glorious truths. No more exultant expression came from her lips than this: "Therefore, with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation," unless it was the concluding paeon of triumph: "Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee."

For the saved there are many wells of joy, even though their path should lie through a desert, and that perhaps would make them sweeter. At this time there are many sad hearts and homes, because from many a family circle the strong and well beloved, in the prime of their young manhood, are going forth at the call of patriotic duty. If there was ever a time when unfailing sources of joy should be sought for, it is now; and many an anguished heart crying "out of the depths" needs to find the deepest of all. And which one among the springs in the desert is it? I think we will find it if we will go to that well of which One is saying that Jacob drank thereof, and his children and his cattle, and listen and look, to hear and see and think of what is occurring there.

A poor sinful creature says to a Stranger, who asks her for a drink of water from that well, "The well is deep;" and He tells her of one which is infinitely deeper than that; and many have found that the water that is drawn from it gives purer joy than any famishing traveler ever felt in quenching his thirst at Jacob's well. "Whosoever drinketh of this water," He says, "shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into Everlasting Life."

What water is this? He tells her, and tells us, that it is the water of Life—Everlasting

And what is life? We do not know. We see its effects all around us and experience it in our own persons. Yet no scientist can tell us what it is. For one thing, we know that it is of many kinds and is manifested in myriad forms. The whole world is pulsating with it, beautified by it, rejoicing in it, suffering in it

Near me is a great tree of grand proportions, more than twenty feet in circumference near its base, and lifting its noble head to an unusual height, beautiful in the early summer with its wealth of verdure and shapely tulip blooms. Creeping up its side is a vine, graceful too, but poisonous, even to the touch. What makes the difference between the two? They grow in the same soil, are watered by the same rains, breathe the same air, and bask in the same sunshine. What makes the great difference in their size and the nature of all their qualities? It is not something in their surroundings, but something "in" them. That something is, so we must conclude, the difference of the kinds of life in the two.

Our Saviour tells of another kind of life which He is ready to give for the asking, even

to a poor wretch. Like 🚵 recipient, and yet transform effects. What beautiful and of character, what precious from cence it produces! We see springing from the dirt and filth in the invisible life within its seed been planted; we see the vine with clusters, the orchard with its luser all rising from common earth. M secret of it all? It is the kind of plant. What unfading flowers, whi trees of righteousness spring up wh corruptible seed" of this "Eternal planted in the sinful soil of humand

When this water of life is famishing human soul, to revert iour's form of expressing it herene springs up, refreshing, purifying and ing with a hitherto unknown joy. n is the source from which it flows words, "The water that I shall give him?" "With Thee is the fountain of

> "Oh Christ, He is the fountain, The deep, sweet, well of joy."

He who finds Christ, finds the deepest well of joy-a joy which welled up in the heart of this old saint after well-nigh ninety years of the troubles of this world, and springs up into everlasting life.

Washington, D. C.

TOWARD EVENING.

There is a line of Greek verse which for itself upon the mind as the shadows of Old Year close around:

"Evening, that brings all things hor

The words are all that remains of attributed to Sappho, who lived in century before Christ. This fragt vitality enough to survive the twenty-five hundred years. What of imagination and whatever throws the lost ode may have committed we shall know. But this one thought of simple universal beauty has proved imperishable

As the close of day brings the mither, the wee birdie to its nest," of the year brings the human soil as the eternal Love and the eternal abiding God is our Father and Heaven is countrie," and when we pause a mon the turn of the year, we will look in to the and over where the many mansions pling fast with those whom we have long since and lost awhile.

Evening marks the end of the days work. But it means home. The year's end marks the close of another stage of life's dusty foliate. But it brings to us thoughts of the thoughts Inn at the road's end, and of the company deal before has gone and found lodging the place the Master of the Inn has property for us.

"Evening, that brings all What meanings, that the paganton dreamed, can we who have read into the ancient words!

NEW YEAR'S GRE

On the first Christmas mor a star, and an angel, and a sou that today there is a star in yo ance, and an angel at your word of good tidings, and a your world to gladden the star, and the angel, and the every day of the new year you that in my world today music, and courage, because to others and to me.-John

A most necessary element the Master is a knowledge of God's Word. We must be to be ashamed, who can of Truth. The use of the vancing weapon for Christ. his Bible will constantly apply it in dealing with