

## Christmas in Other Lands.

How the Catholics the World Over Celebrate This Most Glorious Feast.

CHRISTMAS is celebrated by Catholics the world over as the most glorious feast of the year, says an exchange. How it is kept here at home we all know, from the moment when, in the early, frosty morning, we start out for the midnight Mass, till the time when, tired out with pleasure, our hearts glad and our palates surfeited, we seek our bed. But let us give a glance at other lands and see how Christmas is kept there.

AT BETHLEHEM.—Before the approach of midnight the Church of the Nativity was crowded to its extreme capacity by Syrians, Russians, Germans, and representatives of other nations. And when the chimes of the parish church sounded through the still air, announcing the commencement of the midnight Mass, there were sounds of fervent praying and rejoicing from the great throng. The same Mass was being sung in St. Peter's, Rome, beneath the mighty dome of Michael Angelo; in the Madeline, Paris, and in St. Patrick's, New York, and in all the Catholic churches the world over, with the greatest possible éclat, pomp, and devotion, but the realization of being present at a ceremony on the very spot where Christ, the incarnate God, the Way, the Truth, and the Light, deigned to take the form of man in a humble stable, was a moment of the purest joy and unalloyed faith experienced but a few times in life. Every one was happy and joyous, and the beauty and tenderness of each soul was reflected on the countenances of the devout gathering. There was one motive noticeable in the congregation—to love the little Christ Child, and we were particularly made glad seeing the attachment and devotion of the natives of Bethlehem to their faith.

The priests were vested in the finest silks, and on this day they used vestments embroidered by queenly hands. The cope of the guardians was regal in wealth, gold and precious stones gleaming everywhere from it. The altar of the three wise men, where the Mass was in progress, also was appropriately adorned with lights and the mementoes of European kings. The ceremonies were over before daybreak, and the Oriental morning, crisp, cool, and bracing, was gliding in and leaving behind a night that was holy and blessed. But the people remained at the holy grotto long after the white sun arose and sent a halo of light over Bethlehem, and then went to their homes in general merry-making.

AT ROME.—In Rome the principal ceremonies of Christmas are held in the Church of St. Mary Major. It is in this church that the relics of the crib in which our Saviour was laid are preserved; these relics were brought from Bethlehem in the seventh century, under the pontificate of Pope Theodore I. On Christmas eve they are taken from their repository and placed on the altar in the sacristy chapel, and there are offered for the veneration of the faithful. The doors are thrown open at 4.30 on Christmas morning; after the singing of the matins and lauds, a procession marches to the chapel where the sacred relics are exposed, and bears them through the church, where they are placed on the Papal altar. At seven o'clock the first High Mass is celebrated, and after it the relics are held up to view. From early morn till night there is an unending stream of people in the church. From five in the morning to dawn the church is illuminated and again, latter on, in the evening. In the Franciscan Church of Ara Coeli the Santissimo Bambino is venerated by thousands, and there little children, boys and girls of four and five years of age, tell in simple language of the new-born God. The streets are gay with people in picturesque holiday attire, the air, balmy as June, is filled with confetti (tiny seed candies), and there is a general appearance of happiness. There is no Santa Claus in Italy, but instead there is Befana, a corruption of Epiphania, supposed to be a very cross old woman. Children are told that she was invited by the Magi to help them in their search for the Christ Child, but she waited for put her horse in order, and when at last she was ready the wise men

had gone, and ever since her life had been spent in a vain search for the Infant God. For His sake she cares for little children and rewards the good, but punishes the bad. There is a somewhat similar legend in Russia, but there the old woman, who is called Baboushka, only rewards the good.

Santa Claus, as is generally known, gets his name from St. Nicholas, a dear saint, the patron of children, of virgins, and of sailors. He was an archbishop, and many stories are told of his care for those in his charge. In Holland, where Santa Claus comes from, the children do not hang up their stockings; but put their wooden shoes out, and leave a window open for him. Sometimes he comes as a bishop, clad in appropriate vestments, and with him comes a colored servant, who carries a rod for naughty children; occasionally the bishop rides through the streets on a gayly-carapasoned steed while his servant following on foot scatters cakes and candies among the children who troop after.

IN GERMANY.—In Germany, Christmas is essentially a gala day for children. It is the feast of the Divine Child, and for His sake the feast of all children. The German mother thinks nothing a trouble which will add to the pleasure of the home circle. If on ordinary occasions she devotes herself to her family, how much does she exert herself when Christmas comes! Of course, the Christmas tree fills a prominent place in the festivities, and every one is remembered and represented in that tree of love. There is one feature of the Christmas celebration in Germany which deserves special notice. On Christmas eve two quaintly-attired figures make their round among certain houses. They are Knight Rupert and Santa Claus. At the door of the house a bag handed to Knight Rupert. Then he enters and inquires about the conduct of the children, and if there is a good report from the parents. Santa Claus, who wears a white gown and a gilt belt, orders the contents of the bag to be emptied on the floor, and, during the scramble which follows, the two figures make their escape.

IN FRANCE.—In France the Christ Child Himself brings the gifts for the children. In the villages of Alsatia He goes from house to house ringing a little bell and distributing gifts to the little ones. In Burgundy, the young men and women of the parish meet some weeks before Christmas and practice carols until Christmas eve. Then there is a supper at which every one goes in for enjoyment. After supper a circle gathers round the hearth, on which there is an enormous log, called the *suiche*, and the children are told: "See now, if you are good this evening, Noel will rain down sugar plums for you," and at the proper time the little ones find parcels of candies under each end of the log. Carols are sung to Noel (Christmas). Noel! Noel! Noel! is heard on every side. The merry-making and feasting are prolonged into midnight; then the bells ring out in the frosty air, and the company go in a body to the midnight Mass. After Mass they return home, salute the *suiche* log and resume their feast until morning, when they separate.

IN SOUTHERN EUROPE.—Among the mountaineers of Serbia and Montenegro each family chooses a young man as a guest for the Christmas festivities. He is called the *poloznik*, or Christmas guest. As he approaches the door of the house he calls out "Christ is born," and throws some corn inside the house. "Welcome," calls the housewife, who stands ready to meet him. "Of a truth He is born," and she throws at the same time a handful of corn in his face. Then he enters the house, and going to the hearth picks up the remains of the largest log, knocks it against the crane so as to make the sparks fly, saying as he does so: "So may your household have all good luck and happiness." This he repeats, with another good wish, and then places on one end of the log an orange with a small coin on it, which the housewife takes. In return she presents him, before he leaves, with the leggings and socks worn by the mountaineers, and with a Christmas loaf. The Christmas

guest next asks his host what kind of a Christmas he has, to which he answers: "Christmas has come as a kind guest, my brother; all have enough and all are merry." Then the kiss of peace is exchanged with the family, the guest takes a seat at the hearth, and the day is passed in innocent pleasures and feasting.

## Thanksgiving Day At St. Laurent.

(From a Correspondent.)

Amongst other essential things, St. Laurent loves to nurture in the hearts of her youth the seeds of patriotism, and with this view encourages the righteous homage to a gracious king, to the memory of a beloved Louis or an immortal Washington. At present writing, we are American paying due tribute at Heaven's court for the blessings of a dying year.

Thanksgiving Day, looked forward to by some with joy and expectation, awaited by others with an indescribable feeling of excitement and pleasure, stole upon us with the accustomed stealthy tread of Father Time, tarried with us the while, and is even now numbered among those periods which are the milestones of our passage through life. But it has not disappeared totally in the darkness of oblivion. It has left behind it a luminous train of pleasant recollections; memories that we shall ever cherish, that will ever throw a light of pleasure over our idle moments when the darkness of old age enfolds us.

It was the occasion of adding new laurels, of imparting a new lustre, bright, golden and glorious to the crown of success which has ever encircled the brows of St. Patrick's Literary Association. That evening's achievement is one that will stand upon the records of this Society as one of the best, the most glorious that adorn its historic pages. The nature of the celebration was characteristic of the earnest work which the students of St. Laurent, especially the members of St. Patrick's Literary Association, exhibit in all their undertakings, the principal feature of which was contained in the following programme:

Musical and dramatic entertainment, by St. Patrick's Literary and Dramatic Association.

Overture, orchestra.  
Oration, "Columbia the Gem of the Ocean," John D. Dineen.  
Solo, Galvary, Aloysius McGarry.  
Comedy Sketch, Alphonse and Gaston, T. J. Kearney, J. L. Kennedy.

A Close Shave.—A roaring farce in one act.  
Jotham Crusty, generally considered a mean man, J. Bent.  
Tonsorial Parlor, Fran. Hinchey.  
Heavy, a Hypochondriac, Jno. Maxwell.  
Simper, a Willy Nilly from over the "Pond," D. P. Loughran.  
Mike and Neb, bad boys from La Peck, Jno. Dineen, Sam. Magee.  
Concluding with sensational specialties by Mike and Neb.

Selection, orchestra.  
The trial scene in the Merchant of Venice, act IV., cast of characters.  
Duke of Venice, Jno. Cooney.  
Antonio, Merchant of Venice, Geo. Kane.  
Bassanio, Gratiano, Salario, and Lalerino, Friends of Antonio, C. Maher, A. McGarry, Jas. McCarthy, Jos. Kennedy.  
Leonardo, servant to Bassanio, T. A. McDonnell.  
Nerissa, as a Lawyer's Clerk, Ed. Butler.  
Portia, in the guise of a young doctor of law, W. McDonagh.  
Shylock, a Jew, T. Kearney.  
Grand Finale, the Star Spangled Banner, Colledge Band.

The oration of Mr. Dineen was a well-delivered and finely worded production. It was brimful of patriotic sentiments, exhibiting in its every stage the growth and prosperity of our nation. His swinging and well-rounded periods full of life and fire, his poetical elegance, his graceful gestures, all bespoke the oratorical genius.

Following close upon the oration came the comedy sketch entitled Alphonse and Gaston, which had a very pleasing effect upon the audience. Their "make-up" was excellent.

The grand climax to the evening's entertainment was the Shakespearean

representation. The very fact of attempting to stage a play of Shakespeare is commendable; but when staged and played with success it is an achievement worthy of the highest praise. This true only a small extract from one play was presented, but even that was a very brilliant illustration of what the whole might be.

The spectacle of a stage draped with all the magnificence of a Venetian Court, of the gorgeous costumes rich in velvets and brocades and seeming to sparkle with a thousand glittering jewels, of the animated countenances and situations of the actors, was a tableau worthy of the brush of an artist. The Duke, clad in his scarlet cloak edged with ermine, and seated in the chair of state was admirably impersonated both in word and in gesture by Mr. Cooney. Everything about him had the air of royalty. Mr. Kane, as of purpose, Mr. McDonagh revealed sympathy, whilst he was at the mercy of the Jew. And when he exulted in victory and in life, we rejoiced with him. Messrs. Maher and McGarry, as Bassanio and Gratiano, the friends of Antonio, gave us a picture of true friendship; both gentlemen acted their respective parts very creditably. Mr. Kearney, whose histrionic abilities are already well known to us, in his impersonation of Shylock, showed us the character of a man absorbed in and eaten up by two intense passions; his greed for filthy lucre and his hatred of the man who scorned his race, insulted his creed, and deprived him of the "prop that sustained life."

But he was not the low, mean, cringing Jew of the present day in stage, rather there was something noble in his passion, in his tenacity of purpose. Mr. McDonagh revealed to us in Portia a woman of high intellectual powers. Portia was well acted. The minor characters in that scene acted their parts equally well. On the whole the entertainment was a grand success, and gave promise of a bright future for St. Patrick's Association and for St. Laurent College.

## A LARGE PARISH.

William E. Curtis says in the "Record-Herald" of Chicago, that the largest church parish in the world is in that city. There is no religious organization in London, Paris, Rome or any of the great cities that will compare with it in membership. At the last enumeration, on Easter Sunday, 1902, there were 31,300 communicants, representing 4,500 families. Adding what may be called the floating population of the parish, the comers and goers who apply to the priests occasionally for spiritual guidance, the total number of this great flock will exceed 33,000. The parish covers about eight square miles of territory, including the larger part of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Wards.

It is the Catholic parish of the Polish Church of St. Stanislaus Kostka, situated at the corner of Noble and Ingraham streets, in the midst of the Polish colony.

## Miners Give Evidence.

Pathetic stories of lives spent in the mines were told last week at the hearings of the Anthracite Strike Commission at Scranton, Pa. John Gallagher, an old man, who has worked in the G. B. Markle & Co. mines since 1871, said:—

"In eighteen years I never got a cent of money. I was always in debt to the company. When I was in debt the company would give me a pretty fair place, where I could earn as much as \$60 and \$70 a month, and if I worked hard and was careful I could almost clear myself of debt. But when I was almost clear I would be put in a poor place, where I could not make \$25 a month, and back into debt I got again."

He was asked if he was ever hurt in the mines.

"Hurted!" he exclaimed. "We don't consider a man is hurt until he is half killed."

"How often have you been half killed then?" Attorney Darrow asked.

"Twice," he said.

"Then you were killed entirely," said Judge Gray.

"Aw, no," he exclaimed. "The first half was healed when I got the second half."

"I don't know why Mr. Markle evicted me," he continued. "I was not active during the strike. Perhaps it's because my boy is secretary of a local. Twelve others were evicted. We were put out in the rain. Mrs. Collins, who was sick, caught more cold and died. Her mo-

ther, who is 101 years old and blind, was carried out by the deputies."

"The twenty-five hundred employees wanted to strike to keep the thirteen of us at work, but we said no. No victory was ever gained without a sacrifice, and we were willing to be sacrificed. So we were, too."

Gallagher explained that while the men did not have to buy clothes and similar things at the company store, they had to buy provisions there, paying ten to twenty per cent. more than at other stores, while clothing was twenty per cent. higher. He did not think much of Mr. Markle's arbitration contract with the men.

"He never arbitrated anything," he explained. "The agreement and the lease of the house are on one paper. We sign the lease, and that is signing the agreement, too."

Little Andrew Chippea, a breaker boy for the same company, was the next witness. He is a slight, undersized little fellow, on whose tiny shoulders rests the responsibility of aiding his mother in providing for his two brothers and little sister.

His father was killed in the mines shortly before the strike, and after a year in the schools the little fellow was put in the breaker.

His father owed the company \$54.94 and the boy started to work it out. But he has never received a cent of pay. Instead, the debt has increased. The first month it went up to \$60.09, the second month to \$88.17. He is still working.

## THE FAMILY PEW.

Every young man who is at work should hire a seat in a pew in church and assist at the High Mass on Sundays. That is the parochial Mass. That is the Mass at which the most instructive sermons are preached. That is the Mass that every member of the parish, not prevented, should attend.—Catholic Columbian.

## PUBLIC ACCOUNTS.

The public accounts of Canada for the five months of the current fiscal year up to Dec. 1, show a balance of \$9,748,682 over the expenditure. As compared with 1901 the revenue shows an improvement of \$2,762,599, and the expenditure a decrease of some fifty thousand dollars.

Following is the detail for the six months:—

	1901.	1902.
Revenue—		
Customs .....	\$13,262,089	\$15,045,470
Excise .....	4,700,182	4,952,911
Post-Office .....	1,355,000	1,530,000
Public Works and Railways .....	2,758,539	3,114,504
Miscellaneous .....	1,066,163	1,261,688
Total .....	\$23,141,976	\$25,904,575
Expenditure .....	16,200,837	16,153,898
Capital Expenditure—		
Public Works and Railways .....	\$8,721,666	\$2,402,354
Dominion Lands .....	106,688	107,039
Militia .....	32,228	28,942
Railway subsidies .....	1,067,606	773,595
Iron and steel bounty .....	222,837	101,193
South Africa contingent .....	134,426	165,698
N. W. T. Rebellion .....	127	692
Total .....	\$5,285,225	\$3,578,126

"No, sir, my daughter can never be yours. 'I don't want her to be my daughter!' broke in the young ardent. 'I want her to be my wife.'"

## Colonial House, PHILLIPS SQUARE.

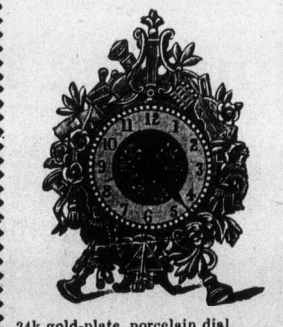
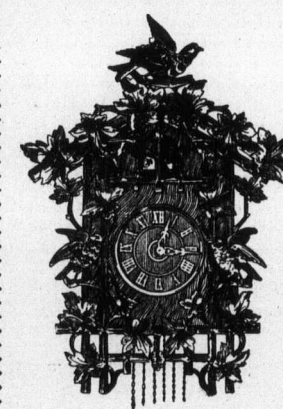
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