

Home Column.

OLD-YEAR MEMORIES.

Let us forget the things that vexed and tried us,
The worrying things that caused our souls to fret;
The hopes that cherished long were still denied us.
Let us forget.

Let us forget the little slights that pained us.
The greater wrongs that rankle sometimes yet;
The pride with which some lofty one disdained us.
Let us forget.

Let us forget our brother's fault and failing,
The yielding to temptation that beset,
That he perchance, though grief be unavailing,
Cannot forget.

But blessings manifold, past all deserving,
Kind words and helpful deeds, a countless throng,
The fault o'ercome, the rectitude unswerving,
Let us remember long.

The sacrifice of love, the generous giving,
When friends were few the hand-clasp warm and strong,
The fragrance of each life of holy living,
Let us remember long.

Whatever things were good and true and gracious
Whatever of right has triumphed over wrong,
What love of God or man has rendered precious,
Let us remember long.

So, pondering well the lessons it has taught us
We tenderly may bid the year "Good bye,"
Holding in memory the good it brought us,
Letting the evil die.

—Susan E. Gammons

THE YEAR THAT IS GONE AND THE ONE WE HAVE ENTERED UPON.

In considering the contribution to "Home Column" for this week, thoughts remembered from a sermon preached by Rev. Father Kasper, to St. Mary's congregation, the first Sunday of the year, January 3, seem most applicable. I feel satisfied the readers of Home Column will profitably read the part of that eloquent sermon as remembered by your contributor:—"The year 1903 has passed, and we stand on the threshold of 1904. 1903 has gone—gone with its pleasures and its pains—its sorrows and its joys—its laughter and its tears—gone beyond recall. We are today not the same beings we were a year ago—we are nearer the judgment seat; to all it has brought some experience that forever will stand monument-like in our lives to mark the birth of new capacities within ourselves, for good or evil, the awakening of some powerful influence for weal or woe. Twelve short months, and how much they mean. As we travel through the enemies' countries, we look back on all we have encountered, the failures we have met, the snares we have fallen into, and the victories we have scored. We have failures over which we may weep, and victories for which to thank God. Life to us, however, is not yet over, and we may gather up the lessons the past year has taught for application in the future. Let us consider the past year; it seems only yesterday we entered on 1903—how quickly it has passed, as last year has slipped by so every year will slip till time empties into the boundless bottomless sea of eternity. We should contrast time with eternity, eternity! eternity! Who can understand it? No numeral can express it, no words in our language can convey the slightest idea of it. Add year to year, multiply century by century, you will find yourself no nearer; add thousands and billions of years to your figures and multiply then till head and brain reel, and you will find yourself no nearer, even then eternity would be but beginning. Let us turn our thoughts

to time, "time" which the apostle says is so short, we are here today tomorrow we are gone. What after all are a paltry fifty, eighty, say even a hundred years. To look forward to them, they seem a great number, to look back they are very short. To a child fifty years seems an enormous period, when he reaches mature years it has shrunk to insignificance, and after he has stepped across the confines, and has been in eternity for a billion of centuries, then let him turn his gaze on these fifty or one hundred years. What does he think of them? They are but as a lightning flash. This thought has driven hundreds of monks and nuns to seclusion and prayer. It is not a thought upon which men in general care to dwell, such thoughts lead to regrets, to good resolutions, and most men are more anxious about temporal than eternal affairs, and would live forever in this transient world. Let us weigh well and seriously the true responsibility of life. If all ended with this life—then riches, pleasures, position, etc., would be of moment, but alas, they are but playthings, they have no intrinsic value; life would be but a comedy considered in itself alone. There is a grand fundamental fact that remains a surety in this seemingly vague life. Eternal issues are being fought out. Heaven and hell are in the balance. In the present life will be decided my eternal dwelling place, as long as God will be God. The future depends on me, and it grows nearer day by day; it lies with me, whether I shall spend an eternity of honor or dishonor, whether I shall spend an eternity of joy or pain. My attention to the laws of God shall decide. Most people drive those thoughts from them. They fail to understand, because they refuse to reflect. At the opening of the New Year let us enter into ourselves, examine our past in the presence of God; in the light of the judgment seat—to ourselves we cannot be too severe, to the faults of others, too lenient. By our own mistakes let us measure the misdemeanor of others, let us profit by the temptations we have met, returning thanks to God for the courage which has helped us to withstand some, from our failures gathering fresh courage for a new attack. Each heart knows its own bitterness. A deep stratum of sorrow often lies close to the fairest surface, of the knowledge born of experience we must be generous and deal gently with the failings hardest to understand in others. We must make better use of our moments to gain victories over self, and show earnestness in the service of God, as if the present year would be our last, then, indeed will it be the Happy New Year to all."

SQUIRRELS CROSSING RIVER.

Have you ever seen a squirrel migrating across the Mississippi river, from the Wisconsin to the Minnesota shore? It is an interesting sight. When Mr. and Mrs. Squirrel find that the supply of acorns and other nuts upon which they feed, has become exhausted, they are obliged to seek another abiding place, and it is not an uncommon occurrence to see them making their way across the river to a locality where the nuts may be found in more abundance. The squirrel can handle himself in the water but is not an expert swimmer. The rodent manages to climb up on a small board or piece of driftwood floating in the water, and, using his tail as a sail to catch the passing breeze, soon lands on the opposite side of the river. Sometimes the little fellows lose their wind and drown before they can get across the water, but they are usually successful in getting hold of a piece of floating wood, and with the aid of the current and the breeze, they cross in comparative safety. It is really an amusing sight to see squirrels migrating in this manner, with their long furry tails stuck up in the air, and presents a remarkable and interesting exhibition of animal instinct.—Ex.

A man who tries to reform his life on the instalment plan generally gets behind in his payments.

BLIND PERSECUTION.

(By Paul Villiers).

If you look for a specimen of blind persuasion, read the following:

Paris, December 12.—Though President Loubet personally is as beloved as ever by the French people, there is every indication that in the present ministry Combes will not remain in power very long.

By his harsh measures against the Catholic Church, and especially against the Sisters of Mercy, whose splendid services during the Franco-Prussian war the French people can never forget, the Prime Minister has made himself extremely unpopular with the majority of the nation, which remains faithful to the church.

General Andre, the Minister of War, has never been popular in the least, and by insulting Colonel Marchand, the hero of Fashoda and the military idol of France, he has lost the last vestige of respect with the nation.

In his petty jealousy of the popular hero, the Minister of War excluded Marchand's regiment from all participation in the recent French manoeuvres, and when Marchand wrote to General Andre and asked for an explanation he was sentenced to thirty days arrest.

Marchand immediately sent in his resignation, thinking that the services he had tendered his country deserved a better reward.

Too late the Minister of War recognized his mistake in offending the most popular soldier of France, and though he succeeded in persuading Marchand to remain in the army, the storm of public criticism almost forced him to flee from Paris.

Unable to forget that Marchand had made him beg for mercy, he revenged himself by sending him on a most dangerous expedition into Upper Congo, where there is every prospect that he will succumb to fever.

Should this happen General Andre might as well make up his mind to leave France before he is ostracized by the nation.

BLESSING OF A NEW CHAPEL.

The 6th of January, 1904, will long be remembered by the happy inhabitants of Thibeaultville, near St. Anne. Thanks to the persevering efforts of the Rev. Father Defoy, and the generous assistance extended to him by parishioners and friends in the east, a neat and cosy little chapel was erected under the titular of "Chapelle de L'Enfant Jesus" and now stands open to the pious worshippers of the locality.

The blessing took place on the feast of the Epiphany. The Rev. Father Defoy himself presided at the imposing ceremony and gave an eloquent address to the members of his flock. High Mass was celebrated also, commencing at 10.30 a.m.

We do not exaggerate when we say that the new chapel speaks highly of the Rev. Father's artistic taste. It is a credit to the place and the generous donors of the province of Quebec have reason to rejoice for having helped in such a noble enterprise. The Child Jesus, who is the Eucharistic God of our Altars, will soon, we hope, take his permanent abode in his new sanctuary to bless all who have contributed to the erection of this neat house of prayer and blessing.

Willie and Tommy are two Michigan youngsters who are pugilistically inclined. The other day the following conversation took place between them.

"Aw," said Willie, tauntingly, "you're afraid to fight—that's wot it is."

"Naw, I ain't," protested Tommy, stoutly. "But if I fight, my ma'll find it out and lick me."

"How'll she find it out, eh?"

"She'll see the doctor goin' to your house."

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In his early days, Lord Russell, Chief Justice of England, had a good deal to put up with from older men who thought to prune his exuberance. One day, Sir Digby Seymour, Q. C., kept up a flow of small talk when Russell was speaking. "I wish you would be quiet, Seymour," said Russell, with his Irish accent. "My name is Seymour, if you please," replied the learned gentleman, with mock dignity. "Then I wish you would see more and say less," was the rejoinder.

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