

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN.

The end of 1903 has been reached. When it was opening, we looked forward hopefully to the coming of its days.

But they are gone into the Eternity of the Past. Their good and evil are indelibly recorded. Regrets are, in one way, useless.

And it is not advisable to brood too much on the dark side—or transgressions, or failures, or misunderstandings, or misfortunes, or maladies, or mishaps.

See 1904 year is almost at our door. See 1904 comes to offer us its days. And while Now is the only time that is surely ours, we can make plans to use them advantageously if the good God gives them to us.

First comes our work that relates to our temporal welfare. How shall we advance in it? What must we do to increase our chances for a home and a competence?

Next may be considered our social interests. How shall we make more friends? What opportunities for friendship kind deeds shall we seek out?

Then, last of all to be mentioned, but first of all in importance, is the condition of our spiritual life. We must take new resolutions for that combat with the world, the flesh and the devil.

Like the softly attuned musical glasses seemed the music out of which rose the carol. The family heard it with delight. The song was repeated:

Oh, happy home, to heaven highest, Wherein Thou, Little Stranger, liest.

The music drifted away as in a cloud of light, higher and higher, and was lost in the air. In the morning the Little Stranger woke, and said that he must go.

They are glad to be told that the way to spiritualize their life is to live it for God's sake; to offer Him every morning all their thoughts, words and deeds; to have His will as the motive of their existence.

They are willing to be reminded that their flesh with its softness and concupiscences is an enemy in the way of their salvation. They will be brave when they are told that they should train themselves to put it in pain, to deny it a share of even lawful gratifications.

They will rejoice to learn how to keep themselves in the consciousness of the presence of God, by means of frequent ejaculatory prayers: "My God and my all." "My God, I do this for Thee." "My Jesus, mercy." "Lord, I give Thee my life." "O Sacred Heart of Jesus, we implore that we may ever love Thee more and more."

It will bring blessings. It will speak of victories. It will make a good record. It will go into the Past, when its last day is over, bright, beautiful and beloved.

Hail, New Year! Welcome 1904! We who hope to make good use of thee, salute thee!

The story of Christmas is one of which the world never wearies; for it is the story of the dawn of that new day, whose brightness ever increases, and of the new dispensation fraught with salvation for all mankind.

Think of your own faults the first part of the night, when you are awake, and of the faults of others the latter part of the night, when you are asleep.—Chinese Proverb.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS. THE LITTLE STRANGER.

There is a popular household story that is repeated year after year to German children at the beginning of the Christmas holidays.

In a little cottage on the borders of a large forest there once lived a poor wood chopper, with his wife and two children. He was a good and pious man, but was scarcely able to earn enough to provide food for his family.

One snowy evening when the wood-chopper came home, he brought with him some green houghs, and after the evening meal began to hang them over the mantel-piece.

"Christmas is here," said he, "and I have no presents for you; but we will offer to the Lord the beautiful altars of grateful hearts. God will bless us."

"Who is there?" asked the wood-chopper. "A homeless child."

"Who are you?" asked the wood-chopper, kindly. "Whence do you come?"

"I am a Stranger and have no home," answered the Child.

"Come to the table, little stranger," said Marie. "There is not bread enough for us both; you shall have my supper."

"And I will let you sleep in my bed," said Valentine. "There is not room enough for two. I will sleep on the floor."

The family sang their evening hymn—The woods are all silent, and the little Stranger fell asleep in Valentine's bed.

At midnight the family was awakened by the sound of music without the door. The storm had abated and the stars shone clear in the cold sky.

"Hark!" said Marie. "It is the song of children. What do they sing?"

"Listen!" said Valentine. The family was still and the voices sang:

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It was the first Christmas tree.—The Guardian.

THE LIFE OF THE CHILD BEFORE HIS DIVINE MISSION.

He was striking at the world's salvation. He was striking at human liberty. He was striking at the everlasting justice of the everlasting God.

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CHRISTMAS THOUGHTS.

Christmas comes every year, but it is always new. His name is Emmanuel, because He is the Saviour of His people.

When Jesus was born, God came down to live among us in a visible manner. Only those who will receive holy Communion on Christmas will adequately celebrate the day.

Have you no room in your heart for Christ? Think of the gloom His coming will dispel if only you receive Him in the right spirit.

Christmas is properly the soul's festival, and offers a grand feast for calm meditation and rapturous joy.

The cradle of Bethlehem was the cradle of liberty. For the truth alone can make men free.

Better is 50 cents a week given to the poor-box on every Sunday for the next four months than a \$5 bill at a special collection.

This is the feast of the children. Let every Catholic family see to it that at least one poor child is glad on it. So shall joy abound!

In many a home Christmas this year will naturally be a sad day on account of some recent bereavement.

Let the troubled hearts be comforted with the reflections that the dead who died in the Lord are happier where they are and that they do not desire to see their surviving relatives in grief because of them.

Christmas belongs of right to the poor. Mary and Joseph were poorest of the poor when they wandered through Bethlehem seeking shelter, and found every door closed against them.

Let the poorers be privileged to be the first worshippers at the manger of the new-born King—poor shepherds hidden thereunto by angels. In every age the thought that Christ made poverty holy has been the mainstay of the poor, and has been a star of hope for the wretched.

Therefore it is right in this holy time to remember Mother Graves' Worm Exterminator is the best to take; sure and effectual in destroying worms. Many have tried it with best results.

A LINIMENT FOR THE LOOPER.—Looper leads a life which exposes to many perils. Wounds, cuts and bruises cannot be altogether avoided in preparing timber for the drive and in river work, where wet and cold combined, are daily experienced, coughs and colds and colds are not infrequently the result.

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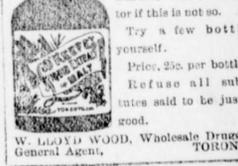
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