

the strange valentine. Dresses were mended, or cleaned, and pressed and folded carefully in the box. A faded pink sweater of Betty's was brightened by a dip into a sudsy bath of one of the new quick dyes and spread to dry over a newspaper on the radiator.

Betty woke the next morning with another idea. "Mother," she called, as she ran down stairs, "I have nearly two dollars that I was going to spend on valentines for the girls to day. May I take it to buy a good dinner for the box instead?"

"Indeed, you may," answered her mother. "I'll make you out a list and you may run over to Sim's grocery with it right after breakfast while I do some cooking. And stop at Aunt Mammie's on your way home. I phoned her, and she'll have a suit and a sweater of Cousin Bob's that she thinks will fit Joe, ready for you."

When Mr. Roberts came home for his dinner the large wooden box was in place on the sled, filled with warm clothing and good things to eat. On top were, appropriately, heart-shaped chocolate cookies, part of his wife's morning work. It was the task of only a few minutes to nail the wooden cover in place and tie the box securely to the sled with strong ropes.

But Betty was not yet satisfied. With her wax crayons she drew a large red heart in the center of the cover. Below it she neatly lettered:

To My Valentine

and above it "Mrs. J. H. Brent."

Just before it was beginning to grow dark, Betty started on her journey across the town, dragging the valentine behind her. She had been too busy all day long to think, but now her thoughts returned to the one she had mailed the day before. Had it been delivered yet? At the thought, Betty hung her head guiltily. She did not notice the large limousine coming around the corner until a cry from its occupants roused her. She sprang forward, escaping injury herself, but the mud-guard of the large machine caught the rear end of the box, ripping it open at the corner and spilling its contents into the snow.

The car, which had slowed to round the corner, stopped a few feet beyond and a richly dressed woman stepped from its interior. Betty recognized Mrs. Blaisdell, a prominent member of her church, and soon had poured the whole story of the valentine into her sympathetic ears.

"Don't cry, dear," said Mrs. Blaisdell, for she saw that Betty was fighting hard to keep back the tears. "Gulbord can soon fix the box. See, it is hardly broken."

The chauffeur, with tools from the car soon had the box as securely nailed as before the accident. Just before he put on the last broken piece, Mrs. Blaisdell slipped an envelope into the pocket of the sweater for Joe.

Smiling she turned to the wonderful girl. "That twenty dollars will add to your valentine, Betty," she said. "If you'll give me Mrs. Brent's address, I'll see what I can do for them until Joe is around again."

Fifteen minutes later Betty came in sight of the Brents little home. A light burned in the living-room. As quietly as she could, Betty pushed the sled, with its cheery load, to the side door. Then, summoning her fast-falling courage, she knocked loudly and ran madly around the corner. A trolley soon bore her to within a few minutes' walk of her home.

Her mother met her as she entered the front door. "A man in a big car stopped and left a package here for you just a moment ago, Betty," she said. "Whatever can it be?"

Betty's fingers trembling undid the wrappings. A large heart-shaped box of chocolates emerged and an engraved card fell to the floor. Mrs. Blaisdell's name stared at her from one side, and in delicate handwriting, the other side bore the words, "For a heart-y little girl."

As Betty started to explain to her amazed mother, Mr. Roberts entered the hall with a large white envelope in his hand.

"Isn't this queer?" he said, holding it out to his wife and daughter. "Some one sent this here, addressed to Joe Brent. They must have known he was working on our roof!"

Betty glanced at the letter, and her heart gave a bound of joy. It was the valentine she had mailed the day before. In her excitement she had written her own address by mistake!

AN EDIFYING SPECTACLE

A devotion which has almost passed away in recent years is the making of the Stations of the Cross, individually, says the Brooklyn Tablet. About the only persons one sees performing this splendid act of true contrition, and developer of fervor and will-power, are elderly women. In fact, if a young person is seen in the act of going the rounds nowadays, even in Lent, any one else who may be in church looks on in amazement, perhaps with the thought that a penance for some terrible misdeed is being performed. For this reason we were given a real thrill last Sunday night when, after the good Passionist Father, had strongly recommended that each man make the Stations daily during the Lenten season, about five hundred followed the advice.

After service more than half of the congregation went around and the congregation was such that little headway could be made. There was a sight in 19.8 worth going miles to see. Imagine it, a block-up of men making the Stations of the Cross! One young fellow behind us noticed one of the boys some distance up and turning to the friend alongside of him said: "For heaven's sake, look at 'Red' McDevitt making the Stations of the Cross." Undoubtedly, many were giving a striking testimony of their faith who had never participated in this devotion before. And many like "Red" were a source of edification, as well as surprise, to those who never witnessed such a strange sight. Long may such thrills, which are the real ones, continue.

\$2,940,000 INCREASE IN BUSINESS

NEW HIGH RECORDS ATTAINED BY HURON & ERIC AND CANADA TRUST COMPANY

A comparison of Huron & Eric and Canada Trust Company financial statements for 1923 with those of 1922 reveal combined increases which eclipse all previous records. Huron & Eric Debentures issued to Canadians increased \$800,459 while Sterling Debentures show a gain of \$562,850. At the close of 1923 Debenture investments totaled \$13,730,000. Savings Deposits stood at \$6,116,000—being an increase of \$4,800. The net profits for the year were \$370,036 an increase of \$4,488 over the preceding year. Assets are up \$1,655,000 and now total \$26,322,000. To the Reserve Fund there has been added \$150,000 bringing the total of that Fund and the Paid-up Capital to \$6,650,000.

There is a noticeable increase of \$1,586,000 in First mortgage investments which reach a total of \$18,283,161. In this connection the Directors of The Huron & Eric are able to announce for the sixteenth consecutive year that they hold no real estate, either directly or indirectly, other than office premises. That announcement is to be further emphasized in the Corporation's published financial report by the very definite statement that as in other years, the few properties which came into its possession during 1923 were sold outright to individuals who had no connection of any nature with the institution. In addition to making full allowance for actual losses the Corporation has, as in the past, made ample provision for possible losses.

Following an established practice, the liquid position of the Corporation has been maintained at a high point. Liquid assets, such as readily negotiable Government and Municipal bonds and debentures and cash on hand and in banks, were equal to 82% of Savings Deposits.

The Canada Trust Company under the control and management of The Huron & Eric, likewise has experienced outstanding success in marketing its Guaranteed Mortgage and Trust Certificates. At the close of 1923 funds invested by the public totalled \$4,347,281—an increase of \$1,464,587 in twelve months. The assets of estates under administration show a gain of over half a million dollars. Twenty-five thousand dollars was transferred from profits to the Reserve Fund which now totals \$725,000—being equivalent to 2 1/2% of the Paid-up Capital. The net profits for the year—\$108,278—were \$1,294 greater than for 1922. Total Assets have advanced from \$18,218,000 to \$15,253,000—a gain of \$2,035,000.

The past year has been recorded in Canadian History as one of financial crisis—the question of the security of Savings Deposits having provided a topic for conversation in home, factory and office. Throughout the whole period The Huron & Eric and The Canada Trust Company stood firm as rock. The splendid reports now being published will undoubtedly strengthen and increase public confidence in these institutions which throughout the past sixty years have established for themselves an impregnable position as safe depositories for the savings and investments of the public.

THE MAGI

TYPE OF PERSEVERING FAITH

There are few feasts of the ecclesiastical year which have touched the Catholic heart more profoundly than the Epiphany, recalling as it does the touching story of the Magi. There is a striking contrast between their simple unquestioning faith with only a star to guide them, and the modernist revolt which is stirring Protestant church circles. A revolt which closes its eyes to all the Christian light of 2,000 years. A mere star would not attract the passing glance of a real modernist.

We can well imagine the obstacles which the Magi encountered, before leaving home. The perils of the long journey across Syrian and Arabian deserts, the danger of losing the star, the folly of placing trust in an obscure Jewish prophecy about a star appearing out of Jacob, these and a thousand other objections must have been voiced by anxious friends or sneering enemies. Yet, in spite of them all, the Wise Men faced the hazardous trip across the weary leagues of Arabia's

sands because they had seen His Star and wished to adore Him.

The anniversary of their adoration is a feast of great solemnity, especially in Catholic countries (notably Italy and Ireland) because they were the first gentiles, the first outside of the Jewish fold, to do honor to the newborn King. Their appearance, with precious gifts, was the first homage of the outside world to the Saviour who was to die for all.

The faith and perseverance of the Magi stood many a test, even the disappearance of the guiding star. When they refused to be disheartened, but sought information from the Jewish priests, the latter interpreted the prophecies aright, but did not go themselves. The re-appearance of the star over the road to Bethlehem was the reward of the undaunted Magi.

The Wise Men disappear from the scene in obedience to a command of God that they return by another way so as to avoid Herod, for Herod wished to kill the Divine Babe whom the Magi had announced as "King of the Jews" to Herod. He immediately appeared as a possible rival to be removed, and the heartless Slaughter of the Innocents was his brutal effort to remove Him.

The Magi taught faith and perseverance in the eloquent language of self-sacrificing effort. A dim prophecy which they were certain was from God guided their faith. The taunts and pleas of those at home, the perils of a robber-infected trade route, the disappearance of the star, the order to return by an even more difficult route, all failed to dampen their perseverance.

Was God outdone in generosity? The sight and blessing of the Divine Child, the gift of divine faith, baptism at the hands of St. Thomas, the Apostle, the veneration of the Christian ages, a last resting place beneath the great altar of Cologne Cathedral, are the temporal rewards of the God with whom they are spending a happy eternity.—Catholic Mirror.

SUPERSTITION

We live in an age when superstition rightly carries the odium of lack of good sense, and it is well that it is so, for among the many senseless characteristics of human-kind, superstition has done its share of mischief. It is an idiosyncrasy founded on ignorance or a practical denial of God and His providence; yet while it is severely condemned, the fact is that many who affect to despise it, are not free from its baneful influence.

Superstition commenced in the days of paganism, in places where it was impossible for mankind to know anything about the attributes of Almighty God; and so the wind, the sea, the sun, moon and stars were looked upon with veneration as deities. From this sort of grievous error many strange beliefs and customs were spread over the world, some of which are not entirely eliminated at this time, even among intelligent Christian people.

We see men who would condemn superstition as strongly as they would condemn a burglar, and yet were they to sit down to table in a company of thirteen, their faces would blanch with fear.

You would not be liable to think that a hard-headed business man had any tinge of superstition, but when did you know of a shipping company to send out one of their ships on a Friday?

Oh, yes indeed, there are many remains of the old pagan nonsense still with us, and it will be very hard to root them out. The peculiar thing about it is that persons placing faith in such foolishness, will get very indignant if you tell them they are superstitious.

Persons who tell you they have more common sense than to place faith in astrologers, will get mighty scared if the astrologer tells them anything disagreeable. Then there are those who tell you they don't believe in fortune-tellers, but rarely such and such a thing came true. Of course it did; the fortune-tellers and most other people, can tell many things that will happen or something so very near it that no doubt remains in the mind that the fortune teller "told the truth," etc.

A woman breaks a mirror and she "knows" this means some mishap to her. She watches very carefully for the mishap, and something always happens of course, to everybody; but the moment that the slightest accident happens after the breaking of the glass, that accident is put down as the sure result of the glass incident. No doubt of it; it all "came true" just as she expected, though her neighbor Mrs. Jones had much more serious accident happen to her, and she never broke a mirror, nor did anything happen that caused her to look for misfortune. But the superstitious woman is confident in her superstition, and the little accident that may occur at any moment to any one, and which came to her after a time, long or short, confirms her for good in her belief; and it would take much argument to disabuse her mind of the delusion. Thus the evil grows, and it is found rooted in the minds of many who ought to know better.

the providence of God; and all superstition is therefore the work which Satan (to use a common expression) takes delight in; or rather which he furthers to the extent of his power. It is often the cause of much anxiety, bad feeling among those who should be friends; very often it is the cause of the loss of one's fortune; always of misfortune.

There are many kinds of superstition, and they all tend towards evil results, because they are founded on an evil principle.—D. in The Guardian.

WAY OF HAPPINESS

"If you want to be miserable, always think of yourself. If you want to be happy, think of others first." How true is this quotation, because if we were always thinking of ourselves we will become selfish, self-centered, seeing and magnifying every other person's fault, yet being blind to our own. There is not one among us who is perfect. We are all sinners. Therefore, it behooves us to speak kindly of our neighbors, always remembering that if we are kind and courteous to others they in turn will prove to be our friends. How very often we come in contact with people who are always complaining, always grumbling, refusing to see the good things of life, not having a kind word for anyone. These people make everybody near and connected with them miserable. How much better it would be to be cheery and kind-hearted, to bestow a smile upon all we meet. A kind word and a smile mean a great deal to someone who is not so well favored with this world's goods as we are.

We can all do something in our way according to our means, to help others less fortunate. We can help with our sympathy and kind words to shed joy around us. To be really happy we must, instead of being miserable, do all we can to help others by our sympathy, cheerfulness, and kindness of heart, and so win for ourselves a host of friends, for a friend in need is a friend indeed.—The Monitor.

When you have conceived and promised friendship, impress its duties on your heart. They are many! they are nothing less than making yourself worthy of your friend all your lifetime.—Pellico.

GAS IN THE STOMACH IS DANGEROUS

Recommend Daily Use of Magnesia to Overcome Trouble Caused by Fermenting Food and Acid Indigestion

Gas and wind in the stomach accompanied by that full, bloated feeling after eating are almost certain evidence of the presence of excessive hydrochloric acid in the stomach, creating so-called "acid indigestion." Acid stomachs are dangerous because too much acid irritates the delicate lining of the stomach, often leading to gastritis accompanied by serious stomach ulcers. Food ferments and sours, creating the distressing gas which distends the stomach and hampers the normal functions of the vital internal organs, often affecting the heart.

It is the worst of folly to neglect such a serious condition or to treat with ordinary digestive aids which have no neutralizing effect on the stomach acids. Instead get from any druggist a few ounces of Bismarck Magnesia and take a teaspoonful in a quarter glass of water right after eating. This will drive the gas, wind and flat right out of the body, sweeten the stomach, neutralize the excess acid and prevent its formation and there is no sourness or pain. Bismarck Magnesia (in powder or tablet form—never liquid or milk) is harmless to the stomach, inexpensive to take and the best form of magnesia for stomach purposes. It is used by thousands of people who enjoy their meals with no more fear of indigestion.

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