

MEMINISCENCES OF A RELIGIOUS.

A priest called at the convent to beg the sisters to visit, as soon as possible, a man living in his parish whom, he feared, was very near death; but as he would not see the priest and did not even wish his condition to be made known to him, the latter was not at liberty to mention the person who had sought his assistance, and consequently the sisters must try to work the affair out themselves as well as they could. The case was a difficult one, inasmuch as the man, who was well off, was a miser and had either abandoned his wife and children or they had been obliged to leave him on account of ill treatment, I fail to remember which. He greatly feared death, yet he had no desire to become reconciled to his family and was suspicious of all who came near him or showed him any kindness, thinking it was for his money's sake. He was cared for by a woman who had lived with him in the capacity of housekeeper, but it was greatly to be feared she was not doing much for his soul.

The sisters called immediately upon him and the report they gave was anything but encouraging; the man did not care to see them and his manner was most bearish, and, worse still, he had requested them to leave the house and never come back again. Consequently when I was asked the following morning if I would undertake the case it may be well imagined that it required some practical reflections on the great truths inculcated during my early catechetical instructions, viz.: the certainty of death, the inevitability of judgment and its consequences, as also the infinite value of a soul, to cause me to consent to the proposal. However, a short time after found my companion and self at No. — Blank street, to "beard the lion in his den, the Douglas in his hall."

No one answering our timid knock at the door of his room, the outer door being already open, we entered. The room was of good size, poorly furnished, and somewhat dark. Hearing the door open he turned his head to see who was coming, but at sight of the sisters an expression of intense disgust overspread his countenance. Turning his face again towards the wall he said, "Didn't I tell you not to come again? I wish you would go away," and resolutely closed the eye nearest the wall, the one towards us being sightless, and pulled the bed-clothes over his ear evidently quite determined to prevent our entrance through the avenue of his senses, even if he could not through the doorway of his house.

For a moment I felt dismayed. I had prepared myself for the worst possible encounter, but such a greeting from such an object quite staggered me for a moment, and it was but for a moment. I had come for an object and I was not going away without at least having made an attempt to gain it; and the poor soul rose above all its exterior. So collecting my dismayed and humbled forces I approached yet nearer the bedside, saying sufficiently loud to be heard even under the bed clothes, "I was never here before, but the Sisters who were here yesterday told me how very ill you were, and thinking perhaps that you did not have good care and that you might be in need of something I thought I would come to see you myself." They had told me that the mention of death seemed to irritate him so I thought it better to try different tactics. "Life, you know, is a great blessing—a very great blessing—in fact, the very greatest of all God's blessings." The word "life" I suppose had a pleasant sound to his ears; for the bed clothes moved a little as if he would hear more about it and as I had found my keynote I held on to it.

"We are obliged to do all in our power to prolong life to the last possi-

ble moment, for time is invaluable. With one moment of time we may purchase not alone eternity, but a greater degree of glory therein, and certainly I should be guilty if, thinking I might assist you in prolonging your life, I should let the opportunity slip, and it is for this reason partly that I have come to you. You seem very ill—I hope you have some one to take proper care of you, for much depends upon nursing, even more than upon the skill of the doctor. With proper care you may recover, or at least life may be prolonged. You must also keep up your courage—that is greatly conducive to restoration of health."

The bed clothes, which had been moving by degrees, left the ear quite uncovered by the time I had finished my homily; the eye, however, remained tightly closed.

"Now, I have some delicacies here for you and I will leave them on the table close by the bedside, that you may be able to help yourself without inconvenience. I think this jolly will be refreshing."

A partial turn in the bed. Just then the housekeeper entered and calling her to the bedside, as I wished him to hear what I was going to say, I gave her an exhortation of the great care that should be taken of the sick and the great importance of prolonging life, even in case there should be no hopes of a cure, and urged her to bear very patiently with him in case he should ever be cross as well. People little know the sufferings of the sick, etc., etc.; concluding by saying that I must go now, but that I might stop in some time as we had another call in the neighborhood.

Turning towards the patient, who had finally opened his eye and was taking a good look at us, and seeing nothing remarkable in our appearance one way or the other, had concluded to leave it open. I remarked that he appeared feverish and asked if his head ever ached. Upon receiving a growl for an answer I accepted it in the affirmative and promised to bring some bay rum when I came again. Possibly I might call in on the following day, if it would be any pleasure to him. A second growl I also interpreted affirmatively, and, bidding him good-bye, we took our leave.

The following morning found us again at his bedside, and my very hand bathing the lion's head whose growls seemed to assume sufficient form to convey some ideas; but I saved him all the trouble by carrying on the conversation myself. Finally taking some ice cream that we had brought with us—just a little at first on a spoon—I was on the point of handing it to him, when he suddenly opened his capacious mouth so widely that, recalling the legend of Red Ridinghood, I nearly jumped off the chair, which quite upset the gravity of my companion, and it was well for both of us that his eye was shut. He evidently expected to be fed baby-fashion, so I continued to feed him, until it was all gone, and we had become quite good friends.

Anxious to relieve his mind of any apprehensions, the sooner to begin in earnest upon the subject which brought us, I ventured to speak of his bearishness the day before and asked him what in the world caused him to act as he had done. But as his growl was not sufficiently intelligible to enlighten me I supplied the deficiency myself, telling him that I thought I knew the reason without his telling me; for a sensible man would never have acted so without a reason, and there was no reason certainly in ill-treating people whom he knew nothing about, unless it was that there was some danger to be apprehended from them. In fact, I supposed that he mistook us for the Little Sisters of the Poor in search of money, but as it was not according to our rules to go out to beg he need have no apprehen-

sions on that score, moreover, I added, "if you should offer us all you possess, we would not take it under the circumstances. We have come to you for your soul's sake alone."

He seemed more at home after this declaration and there seemed to be hopes of broaching the subject of religion which I had tried to smuggle in occasionally. A few days after, upon knocking, the door was opened by a well-dressed person, who said he was the invalid's brother, and that it was he who had spoken to the priest about him, but he thought it better for us not to speak to the sick man to-day, as he feared he would be uncivil on account of a stormy time they had just had when advising him to go to the Sisters' Hospital, as he was much opposed to the plan. We entered, however, and the doctor as well as himself looked much as if they never expected to see us again alive, but upon witnessing the (under the circumstances) civil greeting, took their leave.

I had intended in this visit to urge him to see the priest and set his affairs in order, but of course this was no time to do so, and it seemed most inopportune that they should make this proposition just at this precise time; but I tried to console myself with the thought that it entered into the designs of Almighty God, and I afterwards fear it indeed did.

Calling the next morning quite early, thinking to see him once again before he would leave, I found him already gone, and some time after when passing the hospital I called in to learn something of the poor man's fate, feeling sure that he had a good end, if he had already gone to his account. But what was my sorrow to learn from the Superior that he had died the evening of the very day that he had gone there. She told me of a similar case, but one in which the chaplain had almost extorted a confession from the moribund, hoping against hope that the absolutely necessary qualities might be therein—but when he raised his hand to pronounce the words of absolution, they faded completely from his memory. Vainly trying to recall them he was finally obliged to call in another priest, but by the time they reached the bedside the soul of the miserable man had taken flight. Although the chaplain had been many years in the priesthood such a thing had never happened to him before and he was at a loss to account for it except that, on account of the abuse of former graces, Almighty God had withdrawn that saving and final grace so necessary for the salvation of the sinner—a sad warning to those who hearken not to the still small voice pleading while there is yet time.

"To-day if ye shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts."—*Buffalo Union and Times*.

For Friends Away Over the Sea.

The Christmas number of the Montreal STAR is coming out in a few days. The bare announcement was sufficient to create widespread rejoicing, for it is safe to say there never was in any country a Christmas paper that was received with such applause as the Christmas number of the Montreal STAR in past years. To this day letters are received from Great Britain expressive of the admiration of the Christmas STAR, called forth throughout England, Scotland and Ireland. The Christmas STAR is a thing to be proud of, and in sending it away to friends one is conscious that it is sure to give immense pleasure to those who receive it. Lucky will they be who can secure a Christmas STAR when there is such a clamor for them.

Detective Constable Quin, William street station, and Constable Hoasley, Thomondgate, having passed the competitive examination, have been promoted to the rank acting-sergeant. Constables Brennan, Boberbuoy, and Carrick, William street, have also been promoted.

"You may speak," said a fond mother, "about people having strength of mind; but when it comes to strength of don't mind, my son William surpasses any one I ever knew."

Advantages of a Cold Climate.

"Cold climates are always productive of a vigorous animal existence," said Professor Morton Bidwell to a *Globe-Democrat* man. "I know this to be a fact from recent studies that I have made of various climatic conditions and their effect. Now, I have found that the life of a people living in a tropical climate is comparatively short. Not only their physical life, but their life as a nation is affected by this curious law. In evidence of this latter assertion, I can point to all the short lived governments that have arisen and fallen in the heated zones of this new continent. Everybody is aware of the constant revolutions and uprisings in Mexico, Central America and the South American republics. Whereas, North America, throughout the temperate regions, has remained for a hundred years but little disturbed. Africa is a constant battle-ground for the blacks, and Southern Asia and Southern Europe have ever been the scene of internecine conflicts. On the other hand, Russia has remained undisturbed for centuries, the people being apparently calmed by the cool climatic conditions. So, too, with Sweden and Norway, Denmark and the North German provinces. These are not easily moved to resentment, except where the burdens imposed are of the most tyrannical nature. So it happens that the governments have lived on for centuries, their kings tracing their ancestry back through the ages, until they lose their record in the barbaric period of the Roman domination. The Scandinavians (which term comprises as a type-name most of the inhabitants of Northern Europe) are long-lived, many of them reaching the extreme old age of one hundred and fifteen years. The Scandinavian records are full of the names of men who lived to exceeding old age, while the remarkable names of the southern nations are always coupled with the statement of an early death."

Fraternity.

Fraternity has too long been the corner stone of every beneficiary society, yet how few of us, comparatively, fully understand the full scope of its meaning, or even put into everyday practice the little we do understand. Fraternity means friendship, and judged by their practice, we fear there are many who never had in reality any violent attack of this valuable doctrine. It is quite easy to make profession but quite a different thing to carry that profession into practice. It is true there are times and occasions when it will require much self denial or self abnegation to enable us to carry into active practice our profession in this regard, but this fact will not excuse us for shirking our responsibilities as a friend and brother. No grander recompense can anywhere be found than the consciousness of having rightly done our duty, and one of the most important of our duties, one most pleasing in the sight of the Most High, is to exercise perfect charity, in other words fraternity, one towards another. If we would fully and honestly carry into our every day life our obligation in this particular, what a vast amount of discord would be avoided, how much happiness would be diffused around us. Let us resolve, then, not only in name shall we be brothers, and friends but in practice also.

Constipation is the parent of innumerable diseases, and should, therefore, be promptly remedied by the use of Ayer's Cathartic Pills. These pills do not gripe, are perfectly safe to take, and remove all tendency to liver and bowel complaints.

An inquest was held, recently, at Avalon House, Eastbourne, England, on the body of Mrs. Emily Rose Stonoy, of Boswick Castle, Westport, Mayo, who had committed suicide, by cutting her throat in a fit of jealousy against her husband, on October 30th. She had previously made other attempts on her life. The jury returned a verdict of suicide while temporarily insane.