

coming year? There are so many, richly indulgenced, which keep one very near to God, help to acquire a cheerful spirit, (which is a *positive* blessing) and which make us forget the world and its great, busy, thoughtless crowd which cares for nobody' and for which in turn nobody should care.

Long prayers are sometimes selfish prayers. Is that a strange thing to say? I fear it is true. People who spend a great deal of time in praying, *sometimes* (only sometimes mark you) forget other duties. Now, short loving aspirations have one *glorious* merit—no one knows anything about them but God and yourself.

Thomas Kempis in that wonderful book "The Imitation of Christ," speaks somewhere about the mistake it is to have one's virtue known and recognized by men, and our Blessed Lord also warns us about human respect and the necessity of doing things in secret, "that your Father who seeth in secret may reward you."

So now dear children set to work to be happy and holy—in secret.

Cheerfulness and piety make a delightful compound and do a world of good. I think our Lord loves a sunny warm-hearted piety better than any other kind, and I am sure that He too delights in prayer which is simple and short. Make your own prayers and let the prayer books go. Many of them are of no help at all. Ask your parents to buy you a copy of the "Imitation of Christ"—a cheap one will do, a small one is best. Learn to use it and read a *little*, only a little of it every day. The Secretary has an old copy in her desk in school and it is like a dear friend who is always "*right* here," when wanted and of whom one never tires—Learn to love the "Imitation." It will teach you more than all the

books and teachers in the world; and that is the very plainest kind of English without any nonsense.

I *couldn't* close without a word about St. Francis de Sales, the sweetest and gentlest of the Saints of God. January 29 will be his feast. *He* is the Saint over all others who was sunny-hearted and who made piety a delightful help to happiness. Take one of his sayings and chew the sweetness out of it, and when you have turned the delicious morsel over and over under your tongue it will never be dry or tasteless.

"God is satisfied with little, for He knows we have only little to give."

Who but St. Francis could say a thing as gracefully as that? So begin on the little loving aspirations. I laugh as you send them up gaily to the good God who is satisfied even with your little love.

Devotedly,
CARMEL'S SECRETARY.

MAXIMS FOR JANUARY, 1898.

1. No soul can be happy in trying to escape from God.—De Ravignan.
2. It is a blessing to have our purgatory in this world.—Fenton.
3. Love God and then do as you please.—St. Augustine.
4. Do you know that you are a poor little creature? Love to be such, glory in not being anything; be quite at ease, since your misery is the throne of God's mercy.—St. Francis de Sales.
5. This life is a plank to heaven.—St. Francis de Sales.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FOR THINKERS IN DECEMBER.

1. In the Bible. Pentateuch and book of Josue.
2. In Mexico—in 1533.
3. Chaucer.
4. Shakespeare.
5. 66 days by rail.