#### THE HOLY NIGHT.

BY VIRGINIA MCSHERRY.

Shepherds on the plains of Juda O'er their flocks their night watch

keeping, Stars above, like flowers through snow Through the rifted clouds are peep-

ing-The crescent moon, a boat of silver Sailing down an azure sea, Earth and sky and plain and mountain, All are wrapped in mystery.

When a heavenly light beams round

Fills the silent plains with glory, And a choir of white winged angels In song and anthem tell the story Of the Infant in the manger Who came down from heaven to-night, Lying there so pale and helpless, A fair rosebud, pure and white.

Entering in the humble stable, Shepherds there their offerings bring, Lambkins white as snow from heaven, Tribute to the Infant King. Clustered close around the manger. In silence that no murmur stirs. Kneel Mary, Joseph, shepherds, angels, The Infant God's first worshippers.

Let us bend our knee and offer What gifts we have-none are tec

Though we own not, like the Magi, Of incense, myrrh and gold a store-On the straw that makes His pillow Rest our world-worn weary hearts, Outside, the winds of bleak December. Within, the warmth that Love imparts.

An Infant God, the world's Salvation' Evermore be childhood blessed, And motherhood be ever holy,

Forin a mother's arms He's pressed. Hail Bethlehem, thou House of Bread! Hail little Crib, all joy and gladness Hail Manger, throne of peace and lave!

#### CHRISTMAS;

Its Origin and Meaning.

(By Mary E. Smyth, in Annals of Our Lidy of the Sacred Heart.)

This is a long mooted question—Is the 25th of December the anniversary of Christ's birth? I cannot answer. I do not know. What does it matter to you or me? Is it not the holiest holiday in the Church's calendar, and will it not be the same, if history, spread out here at my elbow, tells me truly, it says, that "it was not until the third or fourth century that the present date was agreed upon, and that January 1, January 6, March 29 and September 29, were variously observed during the earlier centuries by various bodies of Christians." The fixing of the present date seems to have been accomplished by Julius I., Bishop or Pope of Rome from 337 to 352 A.D.

I see, too, that Christian holidays are oftentimes the followers of Pagan holidays, and that Christmas is one of these. I read of a feast called the Saturnalia, a winter feast, which it seems was not contined to the Romans. Many nations kept it I should think perhaps the Scandinavians, the Persians and the Phoenicians, for I learn that they all worshipped the sun as their giver of life, but each under a different name. At Rome we read he was worshipped as the father of the gods; among the Scandinavians as Odin, the father of Thor; with the Persians and the others he bore different titles, but all of these nations chose about the same time to celebrate the feast.

Again I see that another historian says that it was owing to the feelings of delight after December 21, because after that date the days commence to grow longer. But, anyhow, few writers care to go into details concerning the nature of the festivities, so I infer from that, that they were more in the nature of carousals than rejoicings. But this much they do mention: that all work was suspended, that could be so, that slaves were allowed complete liberty, that gifts were exchanged, evergreens displayed and I see special greetings for the season

And of course, it is inferred from these writings and accounts, that the young of both sexes must have been very prone to celebrate Saturnalia, and that its influence must have been very demoralizing; for I think, and am sure, that the early Christians of Rome must have tried to adapt the heathen rite to the cause of religion, and so render paganism subservient and not antagonistic, for it is recorded that "certain forms were retained and others forbidden or left out altogether, and it was a long time before the people and the clergy were of one mind regarding the observances of Christ-

And over in Britain the Druidical rites were almost the same as pagan Rome except that there were added superstitions, and after the arrival of the Saxons, some of the German and Scandinavian ceremonies were introduced. such as the burning of the Yule-log, and the superstition regarding the mistletoe bough.

In England the burning of the Yulelog still takes place. In the feudal times we read that "the bringing in of the ponderous block, and the burning it on the wide hearth of the baronial hall was observed with the greatest rejoicings. The dragging of Yule from the forest to the castle was an elaborate ceremony and as it passed every way farer lifted his hat, for well he knew that its flames would light up scenes of feasting and forgiveness of old wrongs, and that all would be welcome."

Then I turn overpage after page, chapter after chapter, and I see Rome of the Cassars, spreading far over the world. I see Jewand Pagan side by side. I see the promised land, and then a people forgetting they are God's chosen. The descendants of the conquerors become the unsettled, sellish Jew-patriots; the Jew-Pharisee comes up narrow-minded. bigoted. Jew is again t Jew. Gold is a mighty factor of corruption. Heaven must stoop to earth, nothing else can rectify matters.

Then God sent His Christ. Christmas !

Warring enemies clasp hands, firesides Drainage and Ventifation a specialty. Telephone 1834

the Yule-log reflects faces that have been absent for a year or years, and joy begets

pleasure and mirth. Christmas! The beggars are fed, the sinner is consoled—his nursed passions leave him; the righteous are hopeful, the monarch kneels with the cream of his riches. Pride forsakes the Proud and Shame, it. twin-sister, is locking up to Humility. And the infidel, the blus-phemer!—O Christ, how we need Thee!

Everyone goes to the manger, the cold, the tepid, the fervent, the elect. And away into atmospheric exiguity goes the agnostic, with his sophistries epicurean, his researches scientific. He, now, is travestied in turn by the heart cries of the mankind he would not idealize, and his world of molecules bubbles itself into naught, like his genius, and he is drowned out in the epinicions of a race that have their God in their midst.

#### 4 MARVEL OF THE CRIB.

By E. DE M., In Annals of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.

NEVER had there been a merrier or more joyous Christmas Eve in the town of Chartres than that on which occurred the events which this little story will recount. Every one seemed imbued with the spirit of mirth. There were soldiers, fiddlers, young men and boys from all quarters of the town, carrying torches and lanteras. They marched joyously through the streets, now and then pausing beneath the windows of the rich to chant their sweet Christmas carols, and receive the coins which were dropped into their purses. The bells of the eleven parish churches of the town and the mai stie chimes of the Cathedral mingled their triumphant times with the hoarse voices of the weather-beaten soldiers, the sweeter and clearer notes of the poor children, and the somewhat harsh music of the violins and bagpipes as they accompanied the gay Christmas refrain Keep us to-night from sin and sadness. which all were merrily chanting. But there were some to whom this joyous Christmas Eve brought only sad and bitter memories, and amongst the number was Madame de Barmainville, who sat alone in her elegantly-furnished room. She was gazing with tearful eyes at a little cradle, prettily decked with rosecolored silk, which was standing near her bed, draped with rich and sumptuous hangings and bearing the noble escutcheon of the house of Barmainville.

Two years had sped away this Christmas Eve since her cherished babe had been taken from this downy nest and celebrated to the end of time? But, just laid in his tiny white coffin. Many a tear had Lady Margaret shed since then, but to-night her heart bled more deeply than usual, for Christmas is the feast of little children and happy mothers, and she was childless and desolate. The distant hymns which came floating up from the streets below spoke to her of the joyous maternity of the Virgin Mother, and when she opened her missal she saw only the canticles of joy in which the Church greets the coming of the Infant-God. She glanced at the large fireplace where the Yule-log was brightly burning, and her tears fell faster as she thought of the tiny stockings which her little Gaetan had once hong there. "If I could only have him to fondle and caress," thought she, "how happy I should be. But, oh my God, why should part of the world—at Charties, perhaps there are many unfortunate mothers who have neither food nor clothes to nourish and dress their children

This evening the Cathedral was splendid and gorgeous sight, for Midnight Mass was about to be celebrated. Hundreds of wax tapers gleaned amidst fragrant flowers on the high altar, near the Crib, and along the galleries; hundreds of lamps covered with crystal globes from which depended sparkling tustres, hung from the majestic arched roof of the stately building. The vast have resounded with the harmonious notes of the organ as it pealed forth its hymns of praise, whilst clouds of perfume

> Look at the people you pass on the street. Their faces tell the story of their lives. They tell the story of penury or plenty, of re-finement or coarseness, of health or disease. Three-fourths of these people are not "exactly well." They are not all sick," perhaps, but many of them are, and few are quite hale and hearty. Consumption has set its stamp of pallor and ema-ciation on many of them. Dyspepsia has drawn lines of fretfulness and worry about their eyes, and mouths. Impure blood is showing itself in blotches and pimples. One man has 'a little trouble' with his kidneys. Some of the stipation and the other ills that constipation brings. The most pitiful of all faces is the consumptive one. Very likely it has been through the other stages and has at previous times shown dyspepsia, sallowness and bad blood. Consumption doesn't come sallowness and bad blood.
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prostrate crowd.

child, a beautiful, tair, rosy boy. Sorrow and misery had done their work, and for some time the widow had known that she had not long to live. But this evening her weakness and weariness were extreme. Just before the close of the services her strength failed her, and, withdrawing into a corner of the church, tive cries of her child, recovered her ceived her, concealed, as she was, by a night Mass, but now and then a vague to the Imperial Parliament. and trembling light for a moment lit up the gloom. Some lamps suspended near the Crib gleamed like mysterious stars, some difficulty Gehendrine arose and approached the Crib with her baby in her arms. It seemed to her that the holy Virgin signed to her to draw near, that

St. Joseph smiled at her, and the Infant Jesus stretched His tiny arms to her child. She, therefore, stopped and pressed her baby's lips to the sweet image of the Intant-God. But a mist passed over her eyes, her feeble arms let fall their burden, and behold! her baby lies beside the Divine Infant amid the straw of the humble Crib. It recalls tomind St. John the Biptist near the Infant-God.

For some time the poor mother remained prostrate beside the Crib, then she tremblingly arose to seek her child. she put out her hands and seized hold of the babe nearest to her, took a few tottering steps, then fell again upon the hard pavement floor. Delirium then took possession of Gehendrine, strange visions, which are often the forerunner of death, floated through her brain. She thought she saw a procession in which ngured the white stone statues of the Cathedral and the saints depicted on the stained glass windows. There were patriarchs with long flowing beards, prophets of the Old Law, popes, cardinals, martyrs with their palms, emperors with their sceptres, queens with their crowns, knights with their armor, all solemnly passing and inclining their heads before the Infant-God. But, suddenly, as a venerable bishop paused to prostrate himself, the Virgin Mother showed him the pillar near which the poor woman had fallen. The prelate arose and advanced gravely towards I condemn myself to weep all my life beside an empty cradic, when in some part of the world—at Clearties perhaps bent down and blessed her. She heard, he is honestly sincere in his convictions. vaguely, a voice which murmured over But the French people are not ripe for her the prayers for the dying. She tried such religions reform as he would give o respond, a feeble sigh escaped her lips, them.' then all was over.

> The old clock in the steeple had just struck five, when gentle Lady Margaret de Barmainville took her missal and repaired to the Aurora Mass at the first flush of dawn. She was sad; her pale cheeks still bore traces of the tears she had shed during the night whilst calling up sad memories of her lost child. When she drew near the Crib she was filled with amazement. Upon the bed of straw, instead of the waxen figure of the Infant Jesus, was a fair-haired babe, who stretched forth his little hands, gazed ther with his bright blue eyes, while his sweet red lips were parted in a happy

Madame de Barmainville feared at first that it was all a dream, then she smiled backed at the child, murmuring as she did so: "O my God! how much he resembles mine!" Then the faithful began to flock around the Crib wondering at the strange and beautiful sight. Chapter hastened to behold the child in the manger. "Poor little cherub," said he, "who could have brought it there?" A few minutes later one of the sacristans to it. liscovered near the pillar the dead body of poor Genendrine. She held tightly in her arms the waxen figure of the Infant Jesus of the Crib, which was not whiter than her own dead face, with its beautiful unearthly smile. "God has her soul in His keeping," said the priest, "but what is to be done with her child?" "O," cried Lady Margaret, "give him to me; I will adopt him as my son,"

And so it was. Before the close of of Barmain ville, and since then no tears of Lady Margaret, for on that Christmas morn the Divine Infant brought to her sorrowing heart—peace.

### ORANGE BIGOTRY IN IRELAND.

The Orangeman in his native lair is as much of a religious and political bigot as he is when transplanted to the free shores of America. The city of Belfast contains a population of about 273,000. There are over 70,000 Catholics in the enumeration. Yet not a single representative of this minority holds a seat in the city council. The Catholics of Belfast have absolutely no voice or vote They pay their proportionate share of the public taxes, but they are wholly excluded from participation in the expenditure of the money thus raised. Here is a case of "taxation without representation" similar to that which drove the American colonies into revolt over a cen-

tury ago.
With the exception of Derry another stronghold of Orange am no other city

escaped every moment from the golden in Ireland presents so flagrant an exhibicensers, as if bearing to the highest tion of religious bigotry. In Dublin, heaven the prayers and homage of the Cork, Limerick and other large centres of population where the Catholics have Amid this multitude of people was a large a majority as the Orangemen poor unfortunate widow named Gehend-have in Belfast, the Protestant minority rine, who carried in her arms her only are freely accorded an adequate repre

sentation in municipal affairs. A strong and effective effort is, just now, making to correct the scandalous abuse of numerical power in Belfast. A committee representing the Catholic minority has held several meetings and formulated a plan of procedure. The for the barracks, the exercise of their remembers of this body laid their scheme she sank down from exhaustion. When before the city government and demandthe poor woman, attracted by the plained recognition. This was refused. But de Fourvieres, that, on the Feast of St. the gentlemen who are intrusted with Martin, forty-six seminarists left the senses, the Cathedral was empty. The the conduct of the case did not cease grand Seminaire of St. Ireneus. On this sacristans, who were charged with the their agitation because of the rebuff occasion a most touching ceremony took duty of closing the doors, had not per- which they met at the hands of the place in the sanctuary of Our Lady of arrogant and intolerant Orange majority. Fourvieres. All the students of the col large pillar. Darkness had succeeded They resolved to appeal to public sentilege, numbering two hundred and fifty, the splendid illumination of the Mid-ment, and carry the case, if necessary, assembled at the foot of the image of

Eventually, we feel confident, the brutal and illiberal policy will be reversand as they shone upon the diamond-shaped window-panes of Venetian glass, ledicated in the claims and the injustice of the Catholic ledicated who were to serve in the army to take the heautiful, varied colors gave a fanceurse. They are incapable of acting tastic appearance to the scene. With fairly or equitably in any place where some difficulty Gehendrine arose and apthey have power. Whether it be in good odor of Christ, and to learn, as they have power. Whether it be in good odor of Christ, and to learn, as Beliast, Toronto, Manitoba, Boston or laithful children of Mary, in their exile Chelsea, their policy of religious proscription is always the same. Yet they impudently claim to be the promoters of non sectarianism and the advocates of a total separation of church and state.

#### FATHER BOULAND'S VIEWS

What He Thinks of Father Hyacinthe and His Atttinde With Regard to the Jesuits.

(New York Herald, Dec. 8.)

The Rev. Leon Boulaud's submission to the Roman Catholic Church, which he abandoned seven years ago, was published exclusively in the Herald on Tuesday, December 1. On the Saturday preceding I interviewed Father Bouland at his residence, and took his statement of his position in shorthand.

Father Bouland expressed his apprecia tion of the Herald's article last week. but added there were two important points upon which he might be mis-understood. The first was in reference to Father Hyacinthe, and the second in regard to the Catholic Church and the American constitution. In each instance the priest was correctly quoted In using the word "Jesuitical" he smiled and added that he quoted the word as used by the enemies of the Church and the order, and that he had the highest respect and admiration for the Jesuits. Father Bouland wrote the following statement in explanation of his views on these two points:

"The Herald quotes me as saying:
"As to Father Hyacinthe, I believe

FATHER HYACINTHE.

"This is the very contrary of my ideas concerning him and the French people, for, if I feel bound in charity to entertain nothing but sentiments of compassion, and even tenderness, personally toward every fallen sinner, and more to him, for he fell from so high an estate, I nevertheless disavow and reprobate his errors and deplore his unfortunate attempt at so-called reform in France, which, I now thank God, has proved a signal failure.

"After having lately passed two years in assiduously examining the religious wants and the aspirations of France, I have come to the conclusion that, despite all the efforts that have been and will be made to un-Catholicize my beloved native France, she is still and will ever remain 'the eldest daughter of the Church.' The workmen of its cities, as well as its peasantry, are Catholic and ever will be. I would even venture to say that among those who govern that in a few moments the Dean of the much harrassed country are many who, while apparently making most strong opposition against the Church, are nevertheless in their hearts cordially attached

ADMIRES THE JESUITS.

"I am also quoted as saying :-" 'I believe that the Catholic Church s the supporter of the American constitution, not in a "Jesuitical" way, as some would have you believe, but honestly, sincerely, patriotically."

"According to this phrase, it would seem that, alongside the Catholic Church. which so fairly, sincerely and with unhat Christmes Day the orphan child of | flinching patriotism sustains the Ameri-Schendrine slept in the silken cradle can constitution, there is a Jesuitical adorned with the noble arms of the house | Catholicism,' which acts in the opposite direction. I declare that this distinction, of regret have dimmed the beautiful eyes as false as it is perfidious, never crossed my mind. Too long and too well have I known and admired the sublime devotedness of the Jesuits to the Church and to the Sec of St. Peter not to regret profoundly the calumnies which its enemies unceasingly and maliciously

against it. 'The Jesuits, as all other religious communities assembled loyally around our Holy Father, have no other end in view, no other ambition here or elsewhere, than valiantly to aid the Church in carrying out its divine mission among men, in seeking to extend the kingdom of God upon earth, which is one of peace to men, of good will and of real prosin the management of municipal affairs. perity to the nations, in all justice and charity."

#### THE PRIZES AWARDED.

The final awards in the literary competition offered by the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., of Brockville, Ont., have just been announced. The decision as to the order of merit of the five stories selected was left to a vote of the readers,

and that great interest was taken in the and that great interest was taken in the matter is shown by the fact that 16,728 votes were recorded. "A Night on Crookback," by Dua (Mrs. R. S. Smellie, Toronto) received 4655 votes, the largest number cast, and is awarded first prize. "The Lady of Beauce," by Othmas (Thos. Swift, Ottawa), comes second with 4403 votes. "The Fall of York," by Allan Douglas Brodie (T. Herbert Chestnut. Toronto) takes the third with 3004 nut, Toronto), takes the third with 3004 votes. "The House of Eulalie," by Margery Tooker, (Mrs. C. F. Fraser, H ditax, N.S.,) has the fourth place with 2500 votes. "The New Eden," by Iagoo, (C. B. Keenleyside, Brantferd), 2166 votes, is awarded 5th prize. The prizes are \$100, \$75, \$60, \$40 and \$25. The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co. deserves much credit for so liberally assisting in developing a Canadian literary talent.

#### The French Seminarists and the Military Laws.

Every year, at this time, the seminarists all over France are obliged to interrupt their studies, exchange their cassock for the soldier's uniform, the college ligious functions for drill and manœuvres. Mary; they were robed in surplice, heard Mass and approached Holy Com-munion. The Vicar-General, who presided, then addressed the students in from the college which they love, to appreciate still more, if possible, the blessings of their holy vocation. After the ceremony the parting took place with many tears. Similar scenes are witnessed all over this unhappy country, now ruled over by the Freemasons.

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MISS C. HOPPENHAUER.

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#### WIT AND WISDOM.

Teacher: Define "gentleman." Boy: to mind what his mother said.

He: Nicedog-very. Have you taught it any new tricks since I was here last? She, sweetly: Yes; it will fetch your hat

if you whistle. Landlord: I'll have to raise your rent. Tenant: For what? Landlord: They've changed the name of this street, and it's

now an avenue." Master to class: "Now, Frederick, tell me how many seasons there are."
Frederick: "Two." "Only two? Name them." "The cricketing and football

seasons." "Professor," said a graduate, trying to be pathetic at parting, "I am indebted to you for all I know." "Pray do not mention such a trifle," was the not very

flattering reply. Caller: Is your mistress in? Maid: Did you see her at the window as you came up the walk? Caller: No. Maid: Well, she said if you hadn't seen her to say that she was out.

A Sea View.—Passenger: Captain, how far are we from land? Captain: About two miles. Passenger: But I can't see it. In what direction is it? Captain : Straight down, sir.

Servant to hotel manager: The old gentleman in No. 35 fancied he saw a ghost last night. Manager: All right-Charge him 10s. extra on his bill. We can't supply apparitions for nothing.

Economy-Mrs. Isaacs: Vake up. Isaac; a burglar is trying to get in. Mr. Isanes Vell, vait till he opens der vindo, undt den I shoot. Mrs. Isnaes: Vy don't you shoot now? Mr. Isaacs : Vat! undt break a bane ov glass."

Thoughtful—Very.—Judge: You say you went into the room at night quite unintentionally? Why, then, had you taken off your boots? Burglar: Because, your Lordship, I heard there was somebody lying ill in the house.

George: I say, Gus, what's happened? You strut along the street as if you owned the whole city. Fallen heir to " fortune? Gus: No, but I've been dodg; ing my tailor for eighteen months, and to-day I've got the money in my pocket

to pay him. A teacher, having requested each of her class of small boys to bring in three items of information about the Thames that they could prove to be facts, received from a bright seven-year-old the following: "I have lived neer it. I have saled over it. I have fallun into it. Facks."

#### ARUN DOWN CONSTITUTION.

"I suffered great weakness and was in a run down condition after having the grip and I began taking Hood's Sarsa-parilla and found it to be just as recommended. My son has been relieved of rheumatism by using Hood's Sarsaparilla." Mrs. R. Meyer, Zephyr, Ont.

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