

LOVE CAME TO ME.

Love came to me one morning gray,
And begged that I would let him stay
And warm his little hands and feet,
Beside my fire. He smiled so sweet,
How could I tell the baby "nay?"

How could I send the child away
Forth through the wintry wind to stray
When from the cold and cheerless street
Love came to me?

Ah, No! I warmed the frosty fay,
But while against my breast he lay,
With twinkling eyes, the little cheat
Sent through my heart an arrow fleet.
And yet,—think you I rue the day
Love came to me?

—Gertrude Morton, in December Lippincott's.

THE CONFESSIONAL.

A Timely Tract Published by the Catholic Truth Society, London Eng.

How does Confession affect the moral of those who practise it?

It is generally admitted that the virtue which most clearly marks the moral condition of a nation the virtue which shows most distinctly the restraint of moral and religious principles upon the home life of a nation, is female chastity. Where this is held in honour, the passions and impulses of both sexes are held in check; where it is not held in honour, the result becomes apparent in the large proportion which illegitimate births bear to those which are legitimate.

Let us apply the test of the moral condition of a people to Catholic and Protestant nations.

Roughly speaking, we may call Teutonic nations Protestant, and Latin nations Catholic; and in a study on the moral condition of Europe, Dr. Fonsagrives of Montpellier says:

"It is proved that there is in Europe an average illegitimacy of fifteen to every hundred births. I thought it would be an interesting study to compare the extent of legitimacy amongst the European nations of Teutonic and Latin origin, and I found it 15 per cent. with the former, and only 6 per cent. with the latter."

In other words, the proportion of illegitimacy is nearly three times greater among Protestant than it is among Catholic nations. But we can get more definite statistics than these. Though perhaps no country can be quite strictly designated as purely Catholic, we are sufficiently accurate if we say, for instance, that Sweden and Prussia are Protestant, and Spain and Italy Catholic.

In Spain and Italy then, the great majority of women practise Confession, and are influenced by it, whereas in Sweden and Prussia it is practically unknown. Applying our test, we find the averages thus given by Mulhall:

Sweden	110 illegitimate per 1,000 births.
Prussia	80 " "
Italy	66 " "
Spain	55 " "

Moreover, in one and the same country, where there are Catholic and Protestant districts, the excessive ratio is always in the Protestant districts. For example, in Germany, the Rhine Provinces are mainly Catholic, whereas Prussian Pomerania is Protestant: the proportions in these two districts are:

Pomerania	9.95 illegitimate per 1,000,
Rhine Prov.	2.79 " "

Coming nearer home, we find the same results in the United Kingdom, classifying England and Scotland as Protestant and Ireland as Catholic. The same authority gives these figures:

Scotland	90 illegitimate per 1,000 births.
England	45 " "
Ireland	23 " "

In Wigtownshire, in Scotland, the proportion rises to 180 per 1,000, and in Norfolk to 85, whereas in Ireland, we find the same phenomenon as in the Catholic and Protestant districts of Germany. Dr. Forbes, a Protestant, says:

"It is curious to remark how strikingly the results here conveyed correspond with the Confessional theory: the proportion of illegitimate children coinciding almost exactly with the relative proportions of the two religions (i. e., Catholic and Protestant) in each province, being large where the Protestant element is large, and small where it is small. In Cornaught, where the proportion of Protestant to Catholic is only as 1 to 6.45, the proportion of illegitimate children to legitimate is only 1 in 23, but in Ulster, where the propor-

tion of Protestants to Catholics is as 1.42 to 1 (nearly equal) the proportion of illegitimate to legitimate children is 1 in 7."

Thus coming to details, we find Dr. Fonsagrives' proportion of 3 illegitimate Protestant births to 1 Catholic verified with singular persistence. Now what is the explanation of this uniform result? Let us quote another passage from Dr. Forbes.

"The result of all my enquiries is that.....this instrument of confession is, among the Irish of the humbler classes, a direct preservative against certain forms of immorality.....So far from corruption resulting from the Confessional, it is the general belief in Ireland—a belief expressed to me by many trustworthy men in all parts of the country, and by Protestants as well as Catholics—that the singular purity of female life among the lower classes there is, in a considerable degree, dependent on this very circumstance," viz., that they practise Confession.

A like result points to a similar cause. In countries where Confession is practised, statistics show that there is greater purity of life, and there is also a marked absence of that crime so common in England and Scotland, namely, infanticide. Mr. James Anthony Froude, in a lecture delivered in New York in 1872 (see Times, Nov. 16, 1872), says: "In the last hundred years at least, impurity has been almost unknown in Ireland. This absence of vulgar crime, and this exceptional delicacy and modesty of character is due, to their everlasting honour, to the influence of the Catholic clergy." An influence, we must add, exercised through the much abused Confessional.

In the plan of Divine Providence, Confession was intended as a preventive of sin. Confession of sin is not a new idea. In Numbers v. 6, we read: "When a man or woman shall commit any sin that men commit.....then shall they confess their sin which they have done," and when St. John the Baptist was preaching in the desert, the Jews came out to be baptized by him "confessing their sins" (St. Matt. iii. 6). Just as our Lord took the ancient ceremony of pouring water in the sign of spiritual cleansing, and endowed the ceremony with grace-giving power in His new Sacrament of Baptism, so he took the ancient practice of confession of sin, and raised the informal practice into the grace-giving Sacrament of Penance. When did He do this? When He breathed on His Apostles, and said to them: "As my Father has sent Me, even so send I you.....Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose-soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whose-soever sins ye retain, they are retained" (St. John xx. 22, 23).

Here a twofold power is given, the power to remit, and the power to retain. These powers are not to be exercised anyhow, but with judgment and discretion. Therefore, judgment is to be exercised upon sin. But the majority of sins are known only to the person who commits them, and how can these be known, so that judgment may be passed on them, in order to their remission—"whose sins ye remit"—unless they are made known by Confession? The Apostles, the Bishops and priests of the Church, as ministers of Christ, can only exercise a ministerial power; they cannot forgive or retain sin according to their own pleasure, but must use their judgment. Hence the minister of Christ must know the sins of the person seeking forgiveness, and this knowledge can be obtained only by Confession.

Pope Leo Approves the Plan.

Miss Eliza Allan Starr, of the Queen Isabella Society has received from Cardinal Rampolla a letter acknowledging the receipt by Pope Leo XIII. of a communication informing him of the society's plans for the erection of a statue of Queen Isabella. Cardinal Rampolla says:—

It gratifies me to announce to you that the Sovereign Pontiff, Leo XIII., has received with great satisfaction the information conveyed to him through your ladyship's missive that a numerous association of ladies has been formed which has taken the name of "The Queen Isabella Association," and that it has in view to honor that illustrious patron of Columbus, by erecting a statue of bronze in Chicago near the place of the Exposition. The Holy Father, justly appreciating the noble mind and the piety of that exalted woman and the merits she acquired toward religion and the entire

human race by seconding the great discoverer in his designs, cannot but approve the purpose of the association over which you preside, and it is therefore in rendering to you (whom he paternally blesses) and to all the associates the merited praise he wishes with all his great heart that their enterprise may have a splendid and happy success,

In conveyed to your ladyship the above sentiments of the Holy Father, I rejoice to express the sentiments of my own esteem, with which I am your ladyship's most devoted.

M. CARD. RAMPOLLA.

MAGAZINE NOTICES.

DONAHOE'S MAGAZINE for December contains Mr. Gladstone's paper on Home Rule from the North American Review; and an interesting one on "Hon. Edward Blake in Boston," with a portrait. The opening article, "The opening of the Columbian Celebration," by the Rev. Joseph V. O'Connor, is both timely and interesting and should be read attentively. A Christmas story for the elder readers, a very jolly little Christmas romance for the youngsters, and other matter appropriate to the season, make this an excellent holiday number. (Boston: Patrick Donahoe.)

THE ILLUSTRATED CATHOLIC FAMILY ANNUAL for 1893 is now ready to assume its place on the tables and desks of Catholics ready for consultation and for reading. It contains a biography of Cardinal Manning, by the Rev. John Talbot Smith, and of Daniel Dougherty, by Mr. Charles A. Gillespie, with memoirs of the other distinguished dead of the year. Brother Azarias contributes a paper on Blessed John Baptist de la Salle, and Dr. Maurice F. Egan a poem in memory of the late John Gilmary Shea, but these are only the beginning of the book. The "Annual" shows a very pleasing superiority to the "year books" issued by the various Protestant denominations. (New York: Catholic Publication Society.)

CURRENT LITERATURE makes up a very admirable Christmas number with a page from this holiday book, and a bright passage from that and pictures from all, and adds to these a great quantity of unusual material. This magazine is making some noteworthy offers to story writers. (New York.)

The CALIFORNIAN has a pretty Christmas cover in brown and cream color, with a spray of the pepper tree printed upon it in gold. The table of contents is uncommonly good. "Some Heads of Napoleon," by Dr. P. C. Remondino, by a happy arrangement of portraits and masks, gives one a very vivid idea of the Corsican and "A Passionate Pilgrimage," by Miss Grace Ellery Channing, contains many interesting touches. It is an account of a journey to Shelly's grave and is accompanied by a portrait. "California Wild Flowers," by Bertha P. Herrick, has some charming illustrations. "Payable to Bearer," by Miss Marion Hill, is a rather fine story. "Early California Millionaires," by Mr. George Hamlin, is illustrated with portraits which seem, as one looks at them, to explain the State, and the same thing might be said of an

illustrated paper on "Methodism in California." Mr. Thomas Crawford Johnston continues his papers on the possible discovery of America by the Phoenicians, and very interesting they are. There are ten or twelve other articles, all good but one, "Two Great Jews," which seems rather out of place in a Christmas number. (San Francisco.)

The lists of contributors to the Christmas number of THE CATHOLIC WORLD includes some of the best-known and most highly esteemed names among Catholic writers. "How to Solve a great Problem" urges broader and more practical methods in our convent schools. Christian Reid gives in her Mexican sketches a charming description of the city of Zatecas. This article is beautifully illustrated. The question of the canonization of Bishop Neumann of Philadelphia, is demanding considerable attention. Father Wust, a brother Redemptorist, gives a sketch of his life, and testifies to his personal sanctity. George McDermot, in a closely reasoned article on "Ulster Taxation under Home Rule" disarms its enemies and turns their weapons on themselves. The stories and lighter portions of the number are very readable. All together make up a Christmas number of uncommon interest.

The holiday number of the CENTURY, besides a special cover in olive and gold, gives full-page engravings of works by Americans on religious subjects; other Christmas stories by Thomas N. Page and other writers, with poems relative to the season; stories by Edward Eggleston and Hopkinson Smith; Mrs. Harrison's second part of "Sweet Bells Out of Tune"; chapters from the autobiography of Salvini; a paper on Browning by Stopford A. Brooke, one on Jenny Lind by Ronald J. McNeill, a contribution from Archibald Forbes, and Mrs. Van Rensselaer's "Picturesque New York," which is the leading paper of the month and to many readers will be the most charming of all.

The twenty-fifth issue of the ILLUSTRATED CATHOLIC FAMILY ANNUAL abounds in historic and biographical sketches. The sketches of Bishop Loughlin, Dr. Shea, Daniel Dougherty, Cardinal Manning and Bishop Wandnams, are full of valuable historical information.

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"Does your wife take much exercise?" asked Fenderson of Fogg, whose wife is at the seaside. "Exercise!" exclaimed Fogg, "I should think so. She changes her dress six times every day."

"I suppose you visited some of the most famous galleries when you were abroad?" Mrs. Quickrick: "Yes, an' here is some tintypes me an' Ezra had took at one of 'em."



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