

THE CHRONICLE

Our Curbstone Observer

On New Year's Calls.

SUPPOSE I am privileged to express my wishes of a "Happy New Year," to the hundreds of readers with whom I am absolutely unacquainted, but towards whom I naturally entertain the kindest of sentiments. In fact, I am vain enough to believe that they all are glad to wish me "many happy returns." At all events, if in my rambling communications, during the past four or five years, I have never done any of them any good, I have the consolation of feeling that I never did any harm to any them. And that is more than every person in the world can truthfully say today. I cannot shake the reader by the hand, so I will just shake my little pen in a most friendly manner at him, or her; I cannot pay a New Year's visit to each of them, so I will remind them all of my nameless existence by occupying their attention for a few moments with this very subject of New Year's calls.

IN OLDEN TIMES.—Although I am not yet a patriarch still I have seen years enough to recall a time when the New Year's calling was an institution in the land. As I glance into the past I recall one occasion, in my father's home, when the house was "kept open" not only on the first of January, but until the Epiphany. There were queer scenes in those days; and there was a deal of friendship that I fear has gradually vanished from society. I forget exactly the year; but I know we had no railway in our section of the country, and the telegraph and telephone were yet to come. New Year's Day was over; the stream of "callers" had dwindled away, and the household had retired to rest. About two o'clock in the morning we were all awakened by a furious knocking at the front door—we had an old brass knocker on the door, for electric bells were unheard of. My father arose, dressed and went down. A large double-sleigh stood at the door, and the person who had done the knocking, walked in, as soon as the lock was turned, "I have come," he said, "to wish you a happy New Year, and I have a couple of friends out here, who want to extend alike greeting." There was nothing to be done, save open the door and let them in. The lights were all relit, my mother had to get up and come down to entertain the visitors, and, of course, I had to creep out of bed to see what was going on. The first visitor—a Mr. H.—went down the steps, called his companions, and seemed to be giving them a series of instructions. In a moment the procession came in, walking in Indian file—the first being Mr. H., the second, a Mr. M., who had a key-bugle, the third a Mr. O.K., who had a lag-pipe, and a fourth, whose name I do not remember, who was armed with a boy's toy drum. You can imagine the racket they raised, when they filed into the parlor making a most infernal din of discord upon their queerly assorted instruments. But you can form no idea of the astonishment with which our household was stirred from slumber by that regular charivari. There was nothing for it, but to "face the music." And literally, as well as figuratively my parents performed that feat. To say that they enjoyed the circus would be an exaggeration; but what could they do? We lived half a mile from the nearest neighbor, so there was no danger of startling the community. It was nearly five o'clock in the morning before our serenaders undertook to go away—and it was a bigger undertaking than any one can believe. I will not attempt to describe that night. How or when they got to their respective homes I can never tell. All I know is that there was no account of the event in the next day's press. But probably journalism, like other evidences of national progress, was not sufficiently advanced at that period, and the reporters were not as ubiquitous as they are to-day. That was New Year's calling with a vengeance. It had its hospitable and sans ceremonie side that lent it a savor of romance. There was something very Bohemian-like about it, and there was certainly a great deal of sincerity in the friendliness that it indicated. But it equally had its demerits. In the first place, there was too much "spirits," and the results were inevitable. Last summer I again visited the scene of that night's ad-

ventures, and I paused, in the little cemetery down the road, to read the inscriptions on the head-stones. Many of the names written there I had neither read nor heard mentioned for over a score of years. And as I passed through that humble, lonely little section of the country side, I was not surprised, but very much struck, on reading the names of our three friends—the leader, the man of the key-bugle, and he of the lag-pipes—carved upon marble slabs that had resisted the winds of many winters and the suns of many summers. And as I gazed there, in silent contemplation, I could not help feeling that the celebration of that New Year's Day, must have hastened their respective journeys to that old-time "God's Acre." That was the great drawback that those former methods had. They were conducive to exuberant friendship of an hour; but they sowed the seeds of an ill that was inevitably mortal in its effects.

IN MODERN TIMES.—The old-time sociability has died out, and has been succeeded by a perfunctory, ceremonious, etiquette-bound manner of paying what society is now pleased to call "New Year's Calls." You start out on the afternoon of the first of January, with a list of your friends, or acquaintances in one hand, and a pack of visiting cards in the other. You ring the door bell, bow to a servant-maid, inquire if Mr. or Mrs. is at home, place a card upon a silver tray, low yourself out, and proceed to the next house. Or else, the lady of the house may be at home, and "receiving." Then you are introduced into a parlor, you shake hands, wish the compliments of the season, say that it is extremely cold, or very soft, or quite windy, as the case may be; possibly you go so far as to institute a comparison between this year's weather and that of last year. Finally you say goodbye, and you continue your pilgrimage to another oasis in that social desert. You feel intensely bored and you know that you have been boring others, but que voulez-vous? Society says that this is the correct form, and you must be both correct and in form. The whole is a veritable sham, a whole heap of vanity, and often a pantomime of humbug and hypocrisy. It was, however, its redeeming feature, and in that alone is it an improvement on the olden methods. The social drink exists no longer. The tiny cup of harmless coffee replaces the wine, a little lemonade replaces the grog, and you are sober, at least, when you get home. This certainly is a vast improvement, and the more this feature of the New Year's Day calling becomes general the better for the human race, and the worse for the undertakers. The pity of it all is that we cannot combine the old-time warmth of friendship with the modern temperate method entertainment. Surely it is not necessary to be tipsy in order to be friendly. If so, then, the friendship cannot be of a very sincere character. While I do not indulge in New Year's calls, for I personally abhor all shams and make-believes, still I am of those who admire the newer system of receiving a New Year's greeting without sending the visitor away intoxicated.

A BAROMETER.

A man's conscience is the best barometer of his ability.—Owen Kildare, in "My Mamie Rose."

HAPPIEST WAY.

The well-defined spiritual life is not only the highest life, but it is also the most easily lived.

SELF-CONFIDENCE.

Do not attempt to do a thing unless you are sure of yourself; but do not relinquish it simply because some one else is not sure of you.—Stewart Edward White, in "The Forest."

CATHOLIC CHARITY.

The annual report of the Guild of the Infant Savior of New York city, for the year October 1, 1902, September 30, 1903, shows that it cared for 244 infants entrusted to it by the Department of Charities. One hundred and seventy-seven destitute mothers with infants were sent to it from maternities and other places. It provided homes for 143 women with infants, where they receive from \$10 to \$30 a month; it prepared temporary shelter for 49 women and distributed 4,405 articles of clothing. One hundred and seventy-seven children were baptized. The total sum of money expended by the Guild during the year was \$11,936.31.

RANDOM NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

REV. P. FALLON, for many years stationed at St. Patrick's Church, Montreal, and up to the present pastor of St. Francis Church, Jerseyville, Ill., will, early in the new year, take charge of St. Mary's parish, Paris, Ill.

CRITICISM.—Mrs. John A. Logan, under the caption "Senseless Follies of the Smart Set," says:—

"I was talking recently to a very wealthy man who said: 'Affection is no longer the basis of marriage vows. It is simply a question of how much money the husband brings the wife, or the wife brings the husband, as the case may be. Having no real affection for each other, differences are sure to arise over the money. If not, they become so tired of each other that life becomes a burden.'"

IRELAND AND KING.—The London correspondent of the New York "Post" in his last letter says:—

The King and Queen go to Ireland again next year. A Nationalist leader, when asked what this second visit meant, answered me thus: "It means that the King is a friend to Ireland, as his mother never was. We drink the King's health now as we never did Queen Victoria's, and we drink it standing. We like him, that's all; and he likes us. He says and does just the right thing at just the right moment. We know, too, that all his influence is on the side of common sense and sympathy in British legislation. Yes, for the first time in a hundred years a British sovereign will get a real Irish welcome."

REPORTS from New York state:—When Rev. John E. Burke, rector of the Church of St. Benedict the Moor for Negroes, of New York, arrived from Europe, he would receive for church purposes a check for nearly \$20,000, most of which was made at the lecture by Father Chidwick in Cranegie Hall recently. The gift is in recognition of the quarter century of the missionary's work among Negroes. Bourke Cockran presided at the meeting, and introduced Chaplain Chidwick as "the champion of morality and the hero of the Maine."

In his address Mr. Cockran spoke optimistically of the future of the Negro in America. He referred to the work of the Church among them in this city as being "the most difficult and important mission of the day." Among other things he said: "I believe in the future of the Negro. Emancipation does not mean extermination for him. He is full of force, provided the moral development be encouraged. Here in our country a race of 10,000,000 is an important factor in the national life and one which should receive the consideration and wise aid of every citizen as well as every voter."

Father Chidwick in his lecture, "The Catholic Church in the Far East," touched upon the condition in the Philippines and sustained the position of the friars. The best test of their good work, he said, was the 300 years of their labor in a savage country with no military protection. "The opposition of the American forces to the friars," Father Chidwick said, "was policy, not principle. In order to gain the friendship and confidence of the insurgents they expressed such sentiments frequently against their sense of justice."

A.O.H. AND MGR. FARLEY.—The Hibernians of New York presented Archbishop Farley with a gold chalice costing \$2,500, last week, in honor of his anniversary, as Metropolitan of New York.

The Rev. Dr. Charles McCready, rector of Holy Cross Church and chaplain of the Hibernians, made the presentation, and spoke of the Archbishop having reconciled the two factions in the order. He thanked the Hibernians for having been the first prelate in America to recognize the order as a factor in the Church. "Wherever there is collected a body

of Irishmen, one of them should not feel ashamed to stand up and express the feelings in his heart." The Archbishop, in thanking the organization for its gift, said: "Ten or twelve years ago I was asked by the late Archbishop to assume the responsibility of reconciling the two factions that divided the order. The conditions I had laid down then had not been fulfilled by both sides. But I felt confident the day was not far distant when your hearts would unite again for that noble end for which your order was organized."

In speaking of what Ireland has done for the Church and America, the Archbishop said: "We are all hoping, striving for the day when her rights shall come. The spirit is in the air. Truly has John Morley, the prophet of Ireland in England, spoken. And when that day shall come her industries, her arts and literature will place her at the head of the nations."

The chalice presented to the Archbishop is nine and a half inches high and the paten six inches in diameter. Thirty precious stones adorn it. It is modelled after the "Ardagh chalice," and is meant to be an abject lesson in the beauties of Irish art.

ST. MARY'S PARISH.

(By An Occasional Correspondent.)

The parishioners of St. Mary's have reason to rejoice, as they behold once more their Church which was destroyed by the devouring elements, two years ago, re-appearing clothed in a new garb and appearing more beautiful than ever. The Midnight Mass of 1903 will be memorable one in the annals of the parish. Twenty-five years ago last November, the cross which marked the site of the present Church, was blessed. Twenty-five years ago next March the parish received the Episcopal sanction. Twenty-five years ago next June the cornerstone of the present Church was laid, in the presence of a numerous concourse of clergymen, several Bishops, and about five thousand of the faithful.

Twenty-two years ago, on November 6th, the late Archbishop Faure blessed the Church. The Church and the parish since the foundation of both have undergone many changes. From a Father Simon Lonergan to Father J. J. Salmon, D.D., to Father P. F. O'Donnell, to the present pastor, Father P. Brady, all have made many sacrifices for the good of dear old St. Mary's and their works have been singularly blessed. Many trials and tribulations beset this young parish at its foundation. The summer of 1885 brought sorrow to many homes in St. Mary's, and witnessed many a bleeding heart. The smallpox epidemic, while choosing its victims from all quarters of the city, seemed to turn its hand in particular to the East End. Yet the noble pastor and his assistant promptly carried to the dying the helps of our holy religion, and cheered up those whom the heavy hand of trouble had fallen, bidding them to bear patiently their trials like true Christians. The month of November seems to have a special predilection for St. Mary's parish. For on the 11th Nov., 1885, St. Mary's lost their first pastor, Rev. Simon Lonergan, cut down by the grim reaper death in the midst of his zeal, activity and sacrifice.

Rev. Father Salmon, D.D., now chaplain at the Hotel Dieu, Kingston, Ont., became St. Mary's second pastor. The Academy of Our Lady of Good Counsel stands to-day as a monument to his zeal. He was succeeded by the late Father O'Donnell, whose memory is still fresh in the minds and hearts of a grateful and loving people. Shortly before going to his reward, Father O'Donnell had the little Church beautifully decorated with the artist's brush. Yet a year after his demise the parish suffered its greatest blow when the Church was destroyed by an awful conflagration.

And to-day after many noble sacrifices by the present pastor, Rev. Father Brady, and his devoted people, they arrive at the crowning of their labors—the entrance into their beautiful temple like Josue and Caleb into the Promised Land. Many a good parishioner, many a brave soldier of the cross, many a staunch supporter of the Faith even in the short space of two years, went down into the grave, in sight of the restoration of their sacred edifice, but doomed, like Moses to view it only from afar.

And when the basement was blessed, and opened for service the first Sunday in Advent, many an old parishioner was seen there, who had

seen the struggles, the victories, and the blessings, and prosperity come to the East End Catholics through their chequered career of thirty years before they had a church of their own to worship in, and twenty-five years since the happy day dawned when that long wish was to have been granted. And at 11.30 when the bell of the restored temple rang out its tones, summoning the faithful once more to worship in their own Church. What a throng assembled inside the chaste and neat Church, with its myriads of electric lights. The main altar and a part of the sounding board above the pulpit remain as mementos of the destroying elements. In the large congregation were the young and the old, the rich and the poor, and among them the "Patriarch of the Parish," Mr. Denis Murney.

Right Rev. Monsignor Racicot solemnly blessed the Church, and then celebrated High Mass. The choir, under the direction of Prof. James Wilson, an organist and musical director, and Mr. T. C. Emblem, as leader, and Prof. Wm. Sullivan, as leader of the orchestra, rendered the musical portion with telling effect. The solo at the Offertory, "Nato Nobis," as sung by Mr. T. C. Emblem, being a gem. His voice was scarcely ever heard to better advantage. Mr. W. Kelly rendered "Adeste Fideles" in a very creditable manner. The other soloists were: Messrs. A. Emblem, J. Emblem, P. Phelan, L. Prevost, J. Connolly, J. J. Rowan, and J. B. O'Hara.

At the ten o'clock Mass, Christmas Day, Rev. Father Condon, C.S.C., was the celebrant. The choir rendered "Messe de Ste. Therese," by Th. de La Hache, The "Credo," "Sanctus" and "Agnus Dei" being very pretty selections. After the singing of the Gospel, Rev. Father Brady ascended the pulpit, and thanked the congregation for their attendance at Midnight Mass, and the piety evinced throughout the service. He thanked them in particular for their generosity in giving to the collection, and felt proud that the Church had been restored to them again. He advised them to always take an interest in parochial work, and their parish Church. He prayed God to bless them for their good will.

At the end of the Mass the choir sang "Angels we have heard on High." The duet being sung by Messrs. R. J. Louis Cuddihy and Alfred Emblem.

In the evening at 7 o'clock, harmonized psalms were sung, and solemn Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament imparted, during which the choir sang a choice selection of pieces. At the end "Adeste Fideles" was sung. Rev. Father Cullinan officiated. Two side altars yet remain to be completed.

The crib was a beautiful one, and occupied the place where the altar of Our Lady of Good Counsel stood before the fire. After the services many of the faithful knelt at the crib to adore the Infant Savior, as I watched them my thoughts wandered back to four years ago, when the late Father O'Donnell was pastor of the Church, but now his remains lie under the crib, and many a silent prayer went up to the Throne of Mercy for one the people loved so well.

William O'Brien's Retirement.

Mr. John Redmond, leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party, according to the Dublin "Freeman," has written the following letter to Mr. Roche, of Cork:—

"Dublin, Dec. 10, 1903. "My Dear Mr. Roche,—I have seen the resolution passed in Cork urging me to summon a special National Convention immediately to discuss the cause of Mr. O'Brien's retirement, and to appeal to him to return to his place in the movement and in the party.

"The summoning of a National Convention does not rest with me, and even if it did, I cannot say I consider the suggestion a wise one. Mr. O'Brien has, to the great regret of the whole country, made it quite clear in his reply to the resolutions of the Directory and the party that at present he is unwilling to withdraw his resignation. He has also made it still more plain that nothing could be more repugnant to him than to see controversy continued in the country with all its attendant dangers to National unity.

"To summon a special National Convention to re-start such a controversy just at the opening of a session of Parliament likely to be full of valuable opportunities for a united Irish party, and when we are, in all human probability, on the very eve of a general election, is a proceeding which does not commend itself to me.

"It is about six months only since the last National Convention was held. As soon as we know the policy of the Government, when we have their promised Irish legislation before us, and when we are in a better position to form some idea of the date of the general election, then a National Convention will be necessary, and will, of course, be summoned.

"For these reasons I cannot improve of the suggestions contained in your resolution. Very truly yours,

"JOHN E. REDMOND.

"Augustine Roche, Cork."

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