

THE JOYFUL SEASON

(For The Register.)

Christmas has come again, with its wealth of memories. Memories of joyous celebrations of the feast in the past when we beheld the vista of the future as a long life of pleasure and happiness, and such is the inconsistency and egotism of youth - we made little provision for growing old.

his part toward the improvement of himself and the betterment of his fellows - the latter being the best means of improving ourselves - we must leave the rest to a higher power with a firm belief that in the end all will be well.

This is particularly the children's festival, the anniversary of the birth of the Christ-child Who came to teach us how to live. Do you remember the anticipations and hopes which accompanied the hanging of your stocking on Christmas Eve? When good little boys and girls must not attempt to sit up and wait for Santa Claus else they would be overlooked in the distribution of gifts, and the time when precocious playmates and happiness-destroying elders urged upon your unwilling ears the tale that "Sandy Claus is only your father and mother?"

Apart from its Divine origin Christmas is an excellent institution. Its regular recurrence causes the generality of men to think that they ought to have feelings of good-will and generosity towards each other, and though the disposition may not be permanent, it cannot but have a beneficial effect. If we consider the least in its spiritual or supernatural sense there is no standard by which we can measure its working. It is the beginning of the Christian religion, and we can hardly imagine what the world would be without that. It is the fulfillment of the Promise; the ray of light in the darkness which had encompassed the world for four thousand years.

W. O'CONNOR.

CHRISTMAS.

(For The Register.)

The mountains and the valleys are clothed in white snow; Mystic forms are leaping from the hearth-fire's ruddy glow; Little children sleeping await their Santa dear, While from the bells at midnight peals: "Peace, be of good cheer."

The stars, they twinkle brightly, as they did that night before, When they led the lonely shepherds to the humble stable door. To worship Him, the Infant, though God of strength and might, Whom Mary, ever Virgin, brought forth that Christmas night.

EDWARD J. MORIARTY.

CREELMAN AND HALL CAINE

The following letter has been addressed to The Editor of The N. Y. Daily World:

Sir-Hall Caine's powerful and characteristic letter discussing my new book, "On the Great Highway," raises two profound issues that lie close to the heart of men and women everywhere.

Leaving aside the great novelist's flattering opinion of "On the Great Highway," I cannot agree with him that the words of the "White Shepherd of Rome" convey no definite message to the world. Mr. Caine declares that the Pope's appeal for the return of the sick human race to the Christian religion "leaves undisturbed the great inequalities of rich and poor, which are the manifest causes of the world's unrest." Mr. Caine says:

"Perhaps it is too much to expect the Holy Father to be more definite. His obligations are too many, the claims upon him are too pressing; perhaps, if one may say so without offense, his own position is too perilous.

"For my own part, having none of these responsibilities, I do not hesitate to say plainly that the only solution I see of the grievous social and economic problems that weigh on the world at present lies in the direction of the triumph of democracy. But this means the downfall of all forms of arrogated authority, even when they come in the guise of a benevolent despotism having its only logical seat on the temporal throne of the Sovereign Pontiff.

But in what manner does this declaration convey a "definite message?" There in the United States, for instance, as many factions which differ as to what programme will produce "the triumph of democracy" as there are Christian sects. The "triumph of democracy" is a result, not a means. The "downfall of all forms of arrogated authority" is also a result, and not a means. Mr. Caine's criticism of that beautiful and tender treaty of Leo XIII. to Protestants and Catholics alike answers itself.

Although I am not a member of the Catholic Church, it seems to me that the august Pontiff speaks to the world distinctly and definitely in "On the Great Highway," pointing out both the means and the object when he says:

"I have watched the growing helplessness of the suffering working classes throughout the world with anxiety and grief. I have studied how to relieve society of this terrible confusion.

"Human law cannot reach the real seat of the conflict between capital and labor. Governments and legislatures are helpless to restore harmony. The various nations must do their work, and I must do mine. Their work is local and particular, such as the maintenance of order and the enforcement of ameliorative laws. But my work, as the head of Christendom, must be universal and on a different plane.

"The world must be re-Christianized. The moral condition of the workingman and his employer must be improved. Each must look at the other through Christian eyes. That is the only way. How vain are the efforts of nations which seek to bring contentment to man and master by legislation, forgetting that the Christian religion alone can draw men together in love and peace. As the wealth of the world increases, the gulf between the laborer and his employer will widen and deepen unless it be bridged over by Christian charity and the mutual forbearance which is inspired by Christian morals."

JAMES CREELMAN.

American Catholic Societies

Federation is no longer a dream among Catholic societies in the United States. It is no longer even a mooted question. It is an organized, active, potential reality. If there is any opposition to the movement, if any dissentient voice is raised against its purposes, it has not yet been heard at the meeting called in Cincinnati for the express purpose of putting the movement on a definite working basis. Its advocates from all parts of the country were present. They are all enthusiastic but conservative, their ardor tempered by calmness and wisdom. The strength of the movement, as represented by the ability of the men who compose it, has its surprises even for those who have espoused it from the first. The proceedings of the first annual convention of the American Federation of Catholic Societies opened on Tuesday morning at Cincinnati. The delegates attended Mass in a body at St.

Peter's Cathedral. Pontifical High Mass was celebrated by Rt. Rev. I. F. Horstmann, of Cleveland. The sermon, announced to be delivered by Bishop Messmer, of Green Bay, was preached by Rev. M. J. Lavelle, of St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York.

Dispositions for Faith

The Holy Baptist was sent before our Lord to prepare His way; that is, to be His instrument in rousing, warning, humbling and inflaming the hearts of men, so that when He came they might believe in Him. He Himself is the Author and Finisher of that Faith of which He is also the object; but ordinarily He does not implant it in us suddenly, but He first creates certain dispositions, and these He carries on to Faith as a reward. When He was about to appear among His chosen people, and to claim for Himself their faith. He made use of St. John first to create in them these necessary dispositions; and therefore it is that at this season when we are about to celebrate His birth, we commemorate again and again the great Saint who was His forerunner, lest we should forget that without a due preparation of heart we cannot hope to obtain and keep the all-important gift of faith.

"With good dispositions faith is easy and without good dispositions faith is not easy; and those whom our Lord praised for their faith, were such as had already the good dispositions, and those who were blamed for their unbelief were such as were wanting in this respect and would have believed or believed sooner, had they possessed the necessary dispositions for believing, of a greater share of them. By the Baptist's especial office of "preparing the way of the Lord" is meant the creating in the hearts of his hearers the dispositions necessary for faith. The same truth is implied in the glorious hymn of the angels upon Christmas night; for to whom was the Prince of Peace to come? They sang "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men of good will."

By "good will" is meant "good disposition;" the peace of the gospel, the full gifts of the knowledge, and of the power, and of the consolation of Christian Redemption, were to be the reward of men of good dispositions.

They were the men to whom the Infant Saviour came; they were those in whom His grace would find its fruit and recompense; they were those who by congruous merit would be led on, as the Evangelist says, to "believe in His name," and "to be born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."—Newman.

To End Camps of Horrors

London, Dec. 14. — The delay in the publication of the returns from the concentration camps for October and November issued to-day, was apparently due to the Government's desire to accompany the announcement of the high death rate with some kind of official explanation. The blue book this morning shows 3,156 deaths of whites in October, of which number 2,633 were children, and 2,807 deaths of whites in November, of which 2,271 were children. This makes the total number of deaths for the last six months 13,941, or a death rate approximating 253 per head per 1,000. Among the colored persons there were 1,308 deaths in two months. The blue book contains the Government's plans for breaking up the camps, as recently outlined in the speeches of the War Secretary.

Sacrilegious Theft of Relics of St. Ann

Fall River, Mass., Dec. 2. — The members of St. Ann's parish and the entire colony of French Catholics of this city are in a state of consternation over the loss of two valuable relics stolen last night from St. Ann's Church, on South Main street. The thief destroyed many sacred articles and damaged the gold chalices and ornaments, and placed robes used during service in a pile upon the floor and then slept upon them. It was the worst exhibition of vandalism ever seen in this city.

The desecration was, however, only a part of the work. The two relics removed were prized very highly, because of the associations attached to them. One, a relic of St. Ann, was a small piece of bone which was received about a year ago.

The other was even more valuable. It was a piece of bone from the right forearm of the patron saint of the parish. It was brought to this country from France last summer and installed at the church with great pomp, Canadian Catholics coming from many places to witness the ceremony. It was

kept in a small shrine of gold. The case, which required the efforts of four men to lift, was smashed and the bone removed. The glass in the case was made in France at a cost of \$600, and it was broken into pieces. The loss in money was a secondary consideration to the priests and congregation.

The relic was regarded as sacred and people from all parts of New England made pilgrimages to it. The feeling is allayed somewhat by the belief that the robbery was the work of a man insane or nearly so. After forcing open a window he was obliged to drop eighteen feet to the floor and he preferred the relics to the chalices and ornaments of gold that could have been removed easily and later turned into cash. The police were informed, but a careful investigation gave them no clue, and they do not know in what direction to turn to find the relics.

House of Providence and Home for Incurables

Dear Sir—I have read with interest your article in reference to tuberculosis and am quite in sympathy with you on the lines contained therein. I know the good work that is being done by the "House of Providence," and I know also of the good work being done by the "Home for Incurables," both of which institutions are at all times open to the afflicted who may be incurable. I am a director of the latter and have visited the House of Providence on two if not three occasions, and know of the good work done therein as well as at the Home for Incurables. Whatever action the hospitals throughout the city may take I trust that the two institutions I have named will continue on in the good work they are doing with this unfortunate class of afflicted ones, and I feel certain that the other hospitals throughout the city will assist in every way that they possibly can to help on the good work.

Yours faithfully, GEO. McMURRICH. (Ald. McMurrich is right in giving every credit where it is due. The Register, however, signaled the House of Providence because there no questions are asked as to creed, race or class. The House of Providence admits all—Ed. C. R.)

C. M. B. A. in Stratford

As is usual at each anniversary of the establishment of Branch No. 13, C. M. B. A., of the city of Stratford, the branch has made preparations on a more elaborate scale than usual, in consequence of its being the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of that branch.

The form the celebration will take is the production of a Juvenile Comic Opera, composed by local authors, Miss Copus and Mrs. T. J. May, of the city of Stratford. Neither are novices in the business, the former having composed a similar production, called "Mother Goose and her Relations," now owned by Oliver Ditson & Co. of Boston, Philadelphia and New York. Mrs. May being the composer of many excellent musical productions, which are as yet unpublished.

"The Lost Princess" is one of the brightest, funniest and pleasing productions yet seen, immensely quaint situations being woven into it, and yet not interfering in the plot. The words and music are entirely original, the former being the work of Miss Copus, as well as about half the melodies; while Mrs. May has arranged all the music, composing many of the melodies, and composing and arranging the overtures and choruses. The opera is in four acts, contains 30 airs, and will employ about fifty children in its production.

Branch No. 13 is famous in the West as an association which has made a success of everything they have undertaken as yet, and they hope that their latest undertaking will be as successful from a social and financial standpoint.

Virtues of the Cross

Everybody desires to possess the splendid and striking virtues which are attached to the summit of the cross that they may be visible from afar and admired of men. But few seek to gather those which like the sweet thyme, grow at the foot and in the shadow of this tree of life. And yet these are the most fragrant and have been more abundantly watered with the Saviour's Blood, who taught Christians as their first lesson, to learn of Him who was meek and humble of heart.—St. Francis de Sales.

A correspondent wants to know "how skin can be tanned?" He must have been a remarkably good boy when he went to school not to have learned that among other branches.

CORNER STONE WAS LAID

Sunday last witnessed the laying of the corner stone of the new St. Leo's Church at Mimico. The impressive ceremony was performed by His Grace Archbishop O'Connor, who was assisted by Very Rev. Father McCann, V.G.; Father McIntee, Father James Walsh, Father Gibbons, and Father Coyle, who is to be the first pastor of the new church. The weather was cold, with light flurries of snow, but the attendance was nevertheless large. This church, which is named after the present illustrious Pontiff, is an indication at once of the growth of the village and district and of the Catholic body living there. The lake shore as well as the village itself is constantly attracting home makers in addition to summer sojourners, and the new church will be a great advantage to all. Not Catholics alone but persons of other denominations also attended the impressive ceremony and listened with deep interest to the words of the Archbishop and to the instructive discourse of Vicar-General McCann, upon the words of our Lord: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church." The church will face south on Church street. It will be completed early next summer and will seat about 250 persons.

Among the laymen who attended the ceremony of Sunday were Mr. Edward Stock, Mr. George P. Magann, Mr. Patrick Woods, Mr. James Gormally, Mr. H. T. Kelly, Mr. J. V. McBrady, Mr. James W. Mallon, Mr. J. W. St. John, barister; Mr. Edward Hartnett, Mr. M. Cullen, Mr. H. Boland.



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