

or boy goes to work, such as obstacles raised by employers, inconveniences of attendance on classes and at the confirmation service. After a quotation from Wheatley, which Churchmen will recall, the *Review* as to "What then is the proper age for Confirmation, having regard to its nature and purposes and the circumstances of our times? Certainly, at least, before a child has left school. No one who is acquainted with the temptations of the streets, and of the shops, and factories of towns, indeed of work in all places, would willingly let any one be exposed to them without the help of every available means of strength. As Mr. Grueber says, 'It would be a cruel thing to send the young into the battle of life and deny them the armour God has given them for their protection.' There cannot be a question in regard to the extreme urgency of, as it were, *fixing* the young at the age in which a sense of personal independence begins to dawn, by bringing them under definite Church teaching, and leading them intelligently and in the fear of God to become candidates for the privilege and blessing of Confirmation, so that they may fully realize that in Baptism they were made children of God, and so be armed against the teaching which proceeds upon the blasphemous idea that they are the children of the devil.

VISIT OF THE QUEEN OF GREECE TO THE PARIS HOSPITALS.

Extract from the *Times* of Oct. 14th.

"During two whole days of the past week the Queen of Greece was not to be seen, and it has not been easy to trace her steps during the 48 hours snatched from pleasure and amusements and bestowed on the sick and afflicted. Her first visit was to the Asylum St. Jean de Dieu, in the Rue Lecourbe, for deserted and incurable children. There are about 400 inmates, blind, lame, scrofulous, disabled in every way, beings miserable at the very birth and doomed to be miserable to the grave. The Queen offered that truest of alms, which consists in overcoming repugnance and drawing towards the unfortunate beings whom their own parents abandon to filth and squalor."

All honor to the lady,
The gently-nurtured dame,
Who proves herself so queenly
In more than royal name!

She left the courtly pleasures,
She left her regal state,
To visit Christ's own poor ones,
Who for His kingdom wait.

She sought the sick and crippled,
Nor shrink from ghastly sight,
But stood beside the dying
And those who won the fight.

In pain a wasted sufferer
Made pitiful demand:
"Oh touch me gentle lady,"
She clasped the loathsome hand

Brave woman, noble nature,
She seeks not self nor ease,
But follows Christ her Pattern,
Who ne'er Himself did please.

A crown on high is gleaming
More bright than earthly gold,
And heavenly pleasures wait thee,
In joy and peace untold.

For thou hast earned the blessing,
(That blessing full and free)
"In visiting my poor ones,
Thou can'st to visit me."

META GOING.

GROWTH OF THE CHURCH OF IRELAND.

The confirmations in the Church of Ireland during the Episcopate of the late Archbishop showed an excess of 250 over the annual average of the previous Episcopate, and this number has risen to 300 during the last two years. The attendance at the Holy Communion in the united dioceses at the Christmas and Easter Festivals show a similar improvement. The yearly average during Dr. Trench's Episcopate was at Christmas

15,072, and at Easter 14,425. Last Christmas it was 15,932 and last Easter 15,873, showing an increase of 860 on the one and of 1,148 on the other of these festivals. In noting the significance of these facts, the Archbishop of Dublin [Lord Plunket], at his visitation on Tuesday week, vindicated the claim of the Church to the title of Church of Ireland, contending that her Bishops derive their succession in a direct line from St. Patrick and the Bishops that followed him:—"Again [he said] the ancient Church of Ireland was free from Papal control, and was never committed to those dangerous innovations with which Rome has overlaid the Primitive Faith. The old Church, after passing through a season of bondage and darkness, returned to its former freedom and light; but it remained the old Church still. The new Church that then found place in the land was in reality the Church of Rome, which, after the Reformation, having adopted the novel creed of Pope Pius IV, introduced its Bishops, some from Spain and some from Italy, and placed them in sees already occupied by Irish prelates." It is permissible, therefore, to hope that one day the Church of Ireland will again be the national Church of Ireland.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

The New Year! A happy New Year! That means that the Old Year is gone. Gone! with all its joys and sorrows, its hopes and fears, its opportunities employed and neglected—its service and its sins!

And the New Year is come in; all before us,—to be employed as we please; to bring us joy or sorrow, to help us forward in the way of holiness, or to drag us farther back into the way of sinners. The Old Year gone, and the New Year come in!

We wish each other "A Happy New Year." There is some sense in wishing for the future. But what about the Old Year? Why don't we say something about that?

Some one will reply, "There would be no sense in that. Bygones are bygones. We can't alter them. Let them be."

True enough. But we may get good out of bygones; especially at such a time as this.

We are all inclined to think a little seriously, as we say good-bye to the Old Year, and greet the New Year. It is a solemn time.

Yes. It seems a time to turn over a new leaf; does it not? A fresh beginning, into which we would rather not bring old faults, and old unhappinesses. A time to make some good resolutions for the future.

Well. Before we do that, let us look back a little. Let us see what we have done with the Old Year, and what it has taken away of ours.

We have received so many *Mercies*.
How have we shown our thankfulness?

We have had so many *Afflictions*.
What lessons have we learnt by them?

We have committed so many *Sins*.
How have we repented of them?

Has the Old Year brought us nearer to God?

Or has it carried us farther from Him? What has it written about us in the books of the Lord?

How do we stand in comparison with last New Year's Day?

We must think seriously of these things, and pray God to blot out, for Jesus' sake, the faults of the past year. So far for the past.

And, then,—What of the New Year?

We wish it may be a happy one to our friends, and to ourselves.

Of course. But in what way? Do we only wish to escape all trials, and be filled with worldly prosperity?

Such a wish is not worthy of the Christian. We ought to wish something better, something more lasting; even that God's will may be done perfectly, in us, and by us.

For he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.

Now is the time to make resolutions accordingly, now that we are beginning a New Year, and turning over a new leaf. For example:

God helping me, I will make my *rule* in everything The Will of God; my *motive* in everything, The Love of God; my *aim* in everything, The Glory of God.

We cannot recall the Old Year. It is gone. Gone for ever. But the New Year is ours; that is, as much of it as God gives us. We shall live it away, day by day, week by week. By and by it will be the Old Year; and we shall be so much nearer death; so much nearer eternity.

O Thou Eternal God, with whom a thousand years are but as yesterday, teach us to so number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

O Loving Jesus, teach me so to redeem the time that I may serve Thee eternally, when time shall be no longer. Amen.

Lord, for Thy grace and patient love,
Unwearied, still and still the same,
For all our hopes of joy above,
We laud and bless Thy Holy Name.

We bless Thee for each happy soul,
Throughout another fleeting year;
Or by Thy quick'ning grace made whole,
Or parted in Thy faith and fear.

Still bear with us, and bless us still;
And while in this dark world we stay,
O let us love Thy sacred will,
O let us keep Thy narrow way.

So, when the rolling stream of time
Hath opened to a boundless sea,
Loud will we raise that song sublime,
"All power and glory be to Thee!"

THE OLD BELL RINGER.

The old cathedral white and silent lies,
Its slender towers pointing to the skies,
Crowned on each pinnacle with heavenly light;
The morn looks down and smiles her silver smile,
Touching the world to loveliness the while,
Yet breathing such a silence from her height
That we could fancy even an angel's tread
No holier calm upon the air should shed
Than this sweet silence of the moonlight night.

'Twas on this day, just thirty years ago,
And all the land lay warm beneath the snow.
(See! higher still the shadows softly steal!)
They laid my darling in her narrow bed,
While I upon its brink felt cold and dead,
Bearing a sorrow which no time could heal;
(For a few moments with my weakness bear,
I scarce to-night can cross the snowy square,
Though I must join you in your midnight peal.)

Remember? I remember it so well,
Each tiny snowflake kissed her as it fell
Upon the lowly mound that stood alone:
For hours I humbly knelt, but could not pray,
And then I turned and went my lonely way—
Missing the hand that used to clasp my own,
Missing the dear face ever at my side;
I had but her in all the world so wide!
What wonder that my heart seemed turned to stone?

That night the Old Year died. Someone had said
That I—whose love lay still and dead—
Should ring the birthday chime of the New Year;
So from my loneliness I rose and came—
Would not my grief be everywhere the same?
Ah! you remember now. So full and clear
The joyous chime flew on the frosty air!
You wonder I your laughter did not share;
How could you guess this was my wordless prayer

And that I knew at last my God could hear.
Alone and still her grave lay far below,
Covered so softly by the quiet snow,
But far above she dwelt in whiter dress,
In brighter joy and purer loveliness!
And toward this home our happy peal arose;
What wonder I could lift my eyes at last,
And, lifting them, the darkest hour seemed past;
I'm coming, friends: how dim the morn light grows

Just thirty times, with every new born year,
Have I been one among the ringers here,
And now each tone has grown into a friend,
A faithful friend, whose happy voice I love,
The friend who bore my first weak prayer above,
In that great grief my father choose to send.
Now my last peal some lonely heart shall cheer,
And then, though dying with the dying year,
I shall have borne His message to the end.