

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS.

Compacts Made With Ourselves But Often Broken.

No matter how many resolutions that we make in the year, it is well that we should make them because it proves, as plainly as any act can, that we have a consciousness of our own imperfections, and that we recognize the need of amendment. It is not our secret sorrow for our defaults during the year just past, that, in some measure, we have to answer for the wrongs we may have done either to ourselves or to our neighbors and in the resolutions we make for the future, we are not confessing offenders, in the humble position of seekers for pardon for things we have done wrong doing. I repeat that it is a humiliating thing to come down to such a point, and in it there is hope of amendment of life.

The man who is confirmed in his ways, who has boasted in his misdeeds, would not humble himself to the point of admitting that he had done wrong. The hardened sinner will not confess to guilt or admit the necessity of penitence. If we are right in our premises as to the perverting of the course of persistent wrongdoing, we must conclude that the weak defaulter who strives sincerely to come back to the path of virtue, but who is unable to reach it because of his, or her, inherent frailty, is not on the reprobatum. They need, however, the compassionate helping hand of a stronger brother or sister to raise them up and set them upon their feet after they have stumbled and fallen under the crushing load of moral guilt. Nor is such an act of charity sought, for true Christian charity is ever on the alert to pour balm into wounded hearts, which, if left to wither under the galling humiliation of broken promises and unfiled resolutions, and increasing moral and physical weakness, might sink into utter and irretrievable despair. To restore tottering humanity at such a critical moment of impending ruin is the very essence of real brotherly love and charity combined. In this regard previous errors are sometimes made, even by the best meaning people, who, in their own confirmed strength and rectitude, are too apt to despise the weaker brethren, who, by their repeated professions of amendment, and repeated relapses, cause an affront to the dignity of human nature; the mistake is that the stalwart brethren are too prone to judge the weaker ones by their own standard of moral strength and unflinching fidelity to promise and principle, and acting upon this feeling they are apt to cut the connection with the weak stragglers, who are unable to control themselves and keep up their social respectability. In such circumstances there are texts in the sacred volume, which seem to fit in, such as "If I give all my goods to feed the poor, and my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing," again, "bear ye each other's burdens, for such is the law of Christ," and in the same sense we have to look at the netting of the Divine Master, who visited conversed with, and ate with poor, weak sinners, who probably never made a good resolution, nor could he lift it if they did; The Pharisees murmured at this fraternization, on the part of the Master, with the poor degraded outcasts, yet Christ answered the indignation by calling the accusers "blind and leaders of the blind." The plain inference being that he who has the light of the sun and the moon, no matter how high the rank and outward goodness of the pretended purist may appear. The practical aid given to the wounded wayfarer by the "good Samaritan" is in the great living lesson addressed to all of us, who make claim of a sincere desire to help others in distress. The actual helping hand must be stretched forth and some practical made if we would effectually help those who mean well, and are struggling to free themselves from the form of seductive temptation.

By following this line of thought, we didn't mean to imply that all men and women who make New Year's resolutions have fallen below the level of self-control, for that would be too sweeping. But we have the right to infer that many people of respectable character have made moral mistakes during the twelve months just past, either from lack of proper religious devotion and piety, or by depending too much upon their own inherent strength to resist the malicious temptations of the arch tempter—the world, the flesh, and the devil; and the good resolutions they make at the beginning of the next year in their unwritten declaration that they feel sorry for their faults of the past year, are determined to make amends for the future. Some enter into solemn and secret compacts with themselves, and ask God to be the living witness of it, others take the pledge at the altar, and others again make formal resolves using documentary evidence as a proof of their good faith, in which their personal honor is bound up and any suggestion of a likelihood of failure, would be regarded as an insult.

That such compacts are made in honor and sincerity cannot be doubted, but also, for the infirmity of all promises and things human. A week or even a month of solid steadfastness may follow, but at the end of that brief respite the tempter comes in hidden guise, and in face of the unexpected assault the previous good resolve fades away like a dream. And the stern battle between good and evil recommences with redoubled fury. This is the great error that men make; they are too confident of their own ruling powers, and too reckless in their plunge into the path of evil example. "The man who loves the danger shall perish therein." The great body of men and women who pass their lives in the midst of worldly allurements are exposed to temptations on all sides; and if they hope to escape the contagion of evil example they need a stronger resisting power than what comes from their own good resolutions, however worded their promise may be. It is not in the unaided power of man to determine the safety of his own course through life. Men are, at best, but stumblers and moral defaulters by reason of their inherent human feebleness and they absolutely need, at every step they take, the support and supernatural guidance of Holy Mother Church, her strengthening sacraments, her wise counsels and sound advice, her maternal solicitude for their spiritual and temporal welfare, and her infallible teachings. Without these superhuman prop men may resolve again and again to steer a safer course in the future; they may deplore their evil ways in the past, and firmly resolve to make amends for the time to come, but the well intended efforts will be in vain unless they comply strictly and faithfully with the same rules laid down by their pastors and spiritual guardians, who are their divinely appointed shepherds, whose duty it is to water over them, so as to give an account of their souls, who, from men affect to be able to independently govern themselves, and prescribe remedies for their own shortcomings; it is merely the result of overconfidence, conceit, and their best intentional schemes will come to naught.

In the opening New Year of the 20th Century, when the annual reckonings take place, and people discover their follies and frailties in the past, they will, no doubt, determine with more than ordinary zeal to enter upon the new century with a strong purpose of amendment, but, if they desire to succeed they are in duty bound to submit themselves to the laws and precepts of holy church, for there is no other safe rule to follow, nor any other safe road to travel.

William Elliott.

At the meeting of the trustees of the Marquette Monument Association held in Chicago, a motion made by President Franklin MacVough to raise \$30,000 with a view to erect a memorial in honor of Pere Jacques Marquette, was unanimously adopted.

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THE CHURCH IN ITALY.

In spite of numberless difficulties and obstacles, for the most part due to the determined opposition of the anti-clerical party, to which nearly all the Government employees and officials belong, the rapid progress of Catholic enterprise and organization in Italy may be described as a veritable triumphal march, more especially during the last ten years. The fight against irreligion, ignorance, and poverty, and against the attendant evils, both moral and material, which follow in the wake of that sorry triad, is extending over the whole Peninsula, and becoming every day more stern and determined. Although the vineyard is large and moreover infested with poisonous weeds which have in many cases almost strangled the healthy plants, brave and willing workers are not wanting, and their task is slowly but surely nearing its completion. I have said that Italian Catholics are waging a desperate fight against three principal evils which have for many years sapped the vitality of their country, foremost amongst these being irreligion. To successfully destroy this monster, the leaders of the Catholic movement have gone to the school-room, in order to prevent its insidious, poisoning the healthy young minds and hearts often confined to the care of men who are the enemies of the faith, rendering the importance of the step taken by the Catholic party, offered a desperate resistance. But light has finally triumphed and religious instruction, which had formerly been banished from the Government elementary schools, has now been re-admitted as a part of the programme. Another episode of the battle against irreligion and ignorance is the Catholic University extension system, already successfully introduced in many provinces, with the aid of Catholic professors and students. Then the Catholics have founded no fewer than 1,800 popular banks to help the struggling tradesman and keep the poor peasant out of the clutches of the usurer, and his children from the tentacles of the insidious propaganda; clever young lawyers and cultured gentlemen have placed themselves at the disposal of the poor, who have only to apply to the "Catholic People's Secretaryship" to obtain gratuitous assistance in the law courts, advice and instruction. By means of religious education, financial aid, and moral guidance, the Catholic party has already done very much towards remedying the evils which afflict the masses in Italy, and their Heaven-blessed work is, I am glad to say, progressing in a most satisfactory manner. I have only given the faintest possible idea of the magnificent organization of the Catholic party in Italy, for to describe it worthily would be impossible within the limits of this letter, as the subject deserves to be treated in a volume, which would form edifying and interesting reading.—Catholic Times.

MARQUETTE STATUE.

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MOCKERY NEARLY FATAL.

Because religion was publicly mocked in a masquerade there was a riot in West Hoboken, N.J., last week, and had it not been for the promptness of Councilman McCarthy in notifying the police there would have been bloodshed and probably lynching.

Five young men, members of the Italian Philhellenic Club of that town, caused the trouble. They were Victor Belfanti, Alfredo Porto, Lomb and Morio Pochettino and Alberto French, all of West Hoboken. They are all held under bail to await the action of the grand jury.

Four of them were masquerading as nuns. They wore flowing gowns and a headress of black calico. To complete the imitation they had now pieces of hempen rope tied around their waists.

The fifth resembled an original knight of St. John, although it was supposed that he intended to masquerade as a Cardinal Bishop. He wore a red turban, a black calico robe and had a sword suspended from his left side, with a rope tied around his waist and a cross of his breast.

This masquerade of the young men started a riot on the night of their performance on the 10th inst. The rioters were not satisfied with the masquerade, and they went on to do some fun, and had no idea that they would cause a disturbance. As they marched through the streets it is said they transferred "blows" to persons and made various mock plays and gestures. Protestants were in no way concerned as an outrage. In the demonstration the water forced there was nothing of a sectarian character. When Councilman McCarthy first saw the masqueraders they were followed by a large crowd, which was threatening violence. McCarthy hurried to the police station. Accompanied by the Councilman, Sergeant Fillmore took the masqueraders giving a mock religious performance near the monastery church in West street. They were then surrounded by about five hundred persons, and seemed oblivious of the fact that the crowd was in an angry mood and was closing in on them, while many shouted, "Let us hang them with their own ropes." Breaking his way through the threatening crowd, Sergeant Fillmore compelled the five "funmakers" to take off their religious costumes. They then started to walk up Monastery street. Before they had reached Summit avenue, Sergeant Fillmore heard that the five men were again putting on their masquerade costumes. Near Summit avenue the crowd rushed back to avoid a fusillade of stones which the Italians were compelled to throw to prevent the crowd from attacking them. Captain Usher and a platoon of police arrived, rescued the five men from the crowd and arrested them. On the way to the station house they were followed by hundreds, who threatened vengeance and fought the police to get at the men. At the police station the fury of the crowd broke out anew and Captain Usher had to lock the doors. One of the prisoners said in his cell that he would murder the man who caused his arrest. Rev. Andrew Kony, pastor of St. Anthony's Italian church, in West Hoboken, said that the Italian Philhellenic Club, of which the five masqueraders are members, is composed of men who are not affiliated with any church and that some of the plays they give are calculated to produce an injurious effect on the minds of an audience.

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OBITUARY.

FATHER LARGE.

Father J. B. C. Large, for some years past procurator of the Seminary of St. Sulpice, and one of the priests of the Holy Trinity church, Montreal, passed away last week, after a comparatively brief illness at the priory of Notre Dame. He was born at Lyons, France, in 1822; was ordained at Paris, France, in August, 1852; and came to Montreal in September of the same year. For four years he was professor of literature at the Montreal College, later becoming professor of first dogmatic and moral theology at the Grand Seminary. He then went to Rome, where he remained until 1872, when he returned to Canada and was appointed procurator of the Seminary of St. Sulpice. His funeral took place in the parish church of Notre Dame, on Friday morning at 9 o'clock. His Grace, Archbishop Bruchési was present.—R. I. P.

Miss Bertha Doyle, sister of Rev. Father Doyle of St. Patrick's church, died at St. Joseph's Hospital, Hamilton, last Wednesday. Four months ago Miss Doyle came to Hamilton from Chicago. She was not well then and sought change in the hope of regaining her health, but grew rapidly worse until the end came. She was a sweet dispositioned young woman and had a large circle of friends. She remains with St. Patrick's church till Friday evening, when they were taken to Calabro's, and were home of the family, for interment, leaving on the early morning train.

JOHN MATTHEW WHELAN.

A particularly brilliant young life was lost to the world; and to the Church in the death of John Whelan, of St. Paul's parish, last week. Only twenty-one this young man had already shown remarkable talents, graduating from De La Salle Institute, the highest honors. After a long and patiently borne illness he died last week and was buried a week ago yesterday.

The young man, always an exemplary Catholic, died as he had lived with all the strict and exactingness of the Church to smooth his pathway to Eternity. The funeral took place from his father's home, 21 Oxford avenue, to St. Paul's church. A solemn Requiem Mass was sung for the repose of his soul by the brother, Rev. Father Whelan, of Calton, assisted by the Rev. Father Trilling as Deacon and the Rev. Father Canning as sub-Deacon. The other priests present were: Revs. Father Doyle, St. Patrick's church; Hamilton, a cousin of the deceased; Fathers Hand, O'Donnell, W. McCann, Beach, Carberry, (Schonberg), and Finnegan, (Sarkisville). The choir was assisted by Revs. Fathers Lannarache, Murray and McCallan and Mr. Blain-Hopie. The funeral proceeded to Mount Otter cemetery. The pallbearers were six brothers of the deceased; Father Whelan, J. P., E. W., and A. The father, mother and two sisters bore six brothers, and were the chief mourners.—R. I. P.

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A Prize Offered.

We take great pleasure in announcing that a prize of fifty dollars (\$50.00) will be offered by this office for an essay upon the following subject: "History of the Catholic Church in Canada during the Nineteenth Century." The conditions governing the essay are as follows:—

- (1) No essay to consist of more than seventy-five pages of foolscap, or less than sixty pages. Writing to be made on only one side of paper.
- (2) All authorities quoted to be named in margin, so that they can be verified. Authorities must be given for facts stated.
- (3) The essays to be sent under seal to this office on or before the 1st of Feb. 1901. Each essay to be signed with a pseudonym. In a second envelope the name of the writer, and his or her pseudonym, will be sent to the editor and marked confidential.
- (4) The decision of the prize will be left to a committee of three gentlemen with whom we are in correspondence, and will be announced when their acceptance has been made known to us.

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