

The Catholic Record.

"Christianus mihi nomen est, Catholicus vero Cognomen."—(Christian is my Name, but Catholic my Surname.)—St. Faclan, 4th Century

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NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS.

The cynic looks askance at those who make resolutions for the coming year. We say cynic, but the proper word is cheap posour—he who puts himself on a pedestal of ignorance so as to stand higher than his fellows and so to achieve notoriety. But the wise know that the making of good resolutions is a sign of life—an attempt to breast the stream which sweeps downwards. It means that a man has not given up the fight and is strengthening the weak spots in his harness or readjusting it, or planning a new campaign. He looks also back over the year past and puts a danger signal at the points where he went astray. He fronts the New Year clear-eyed, with the hope of achieving success over self and of growing richer in kindness and purity. He sheds his hates and bitter thoughts and takes another grip on love and faith and is glad to be alive. Like a knight of the olden time—and let it be Sir Galahad, whose strength was as the strength of ten because his heart was pure—he goes forth to meet the New Year resolved to guard its fair pages from any deed unworthy of a Christian. But it is well to remember that the aspirant to a place in the ranks of chivalry spent some time in prayer before he gained his heart's desire.

OUR MISSION.

To steady us, let us recall some passages from Cardinal Newman's Discourses to Mixed Congregations:

"Every one who breathes, high and low, educated and ignorant, young and old, man and woman, has a mission, has a work. We are not sent into this world for nothing: we are not born at random: we are not here that we may go to bed at night, and get up in the morning, to eat and drink, and sin when we have a mind, and reform when we have a conscience, rear a family and die. God needs—He deigns to need every one of us. Each has his work—not to indulge his passions, not to make money, not to get a name in the world, not to save himself trouble, not to follow his bent, not to be selfish and self-willed, but to do what God puts on him to do.

"You think it the sign of a gentleman to set yourselves above religion, to criticize the religious and professors of religion, to look at Catholic and Methodist with impartial contempt, to gain a smattering of knowledge on a number of subjects, to dip into a number of frivolous publications if they are popular, to have read the latest novels, to be well up with the news, to know the names and if so be the persons of public men, to be able to bow to them, to walk up and down the street with your heads on high and to stare at whatever meets you; and to say and do those things of which these outward extravagances are but the symbol. And this is what you conceive you have come upon easier. Thousands are dying daily: they are waking up into God's everlasting wrath: and their companions and friends are going on as they did and are soon to join them. As for the last generation presumed, so does the present. The father would not believe that God could punish, and now the son will not believe: the father was indignant when the son gnashes his teeth and smiles contemptuously. And thus it is that this vast flood of life is carried on from age to age: myriads trifling with God's love, tempting His justice, and like the herd of swine falling headlong down the steep."

If we were created it was that we might serve God: if we have His gifts it is that we may glorify Him: if we have a conscience it is that we may obey it: if we have the prospect of heaven, it is that we may keep it before us: if we have grace, that we may save ourselves by means of it.

OUR YOUNG PEOPLE.

The Vicar General of the Diocese of Trenton said recently that women are dressing more and more extravagantly each year, and the cost of dressing deters young men from marrying. The minds of too many of our young women are filled with dress and style. This weakness is one of the many causes that have made marriage unfashionable these days. The rev. gentleman should score the parents who are responsible for those conditions. If from early years children hear much about the necessity of being as good if not better than one's neighbor, it will be difficult for them to forget later on that style is not the chief business of life. If a Catholic home be not different in its adornments and books and spirit from others, we fail to see how its inmates are to escape the contagion of worldliness. But, with all due deference to the Vicar General, the "girl of yesterday" has her counter-

part to-day. And the young need not go far afield to find her. To our mind some of the bachelors are deterred from marrying by selfishness, and by the fact that no sane girl would entrust herself to him.

OUR OPINION UNCHANGED.

Commenting on a novel, *Falsaise* of the Blessed Voice, which affects to portray the youth of St. Louis of France the book-reviewer of the *Messenger* says that the hero and monarch was not the idiot in his early days that *Falsaise* makes him out to be. Irreverent, that remark and devoid of academic dignity and at variance with the taste of the Catholic reviewers, who are laboriously polite when they have to do with a work from a non-Catholic pen. In reading these manicured and perfumed reviews we become sensible of our roughness and crudeness—in fact we look upon them as first aid to the impolite. And here by the way we cannot grow eloquent over Victor Hugo, and our impressions given in these columns remain unchanged. It may be due to our obtuseness, but then others a thousand fold better able than we can ever hope to be to judge in these matters, have been as obtuse as ourselves. For instance, the gentleman who referred to Lord Palmerston as "a gay gorilla" wrote of *Les Miserables* as follows: "Have you read 'Les Miserables' and heard what is said of it? This is another of the subjects in respect to which I find the human species below that of the gorilla. The world becomes more stupid every day."

FRAUD OF SPIRITUALISM.

HOW THE PEOPLE ARE GULLED BY MIND READERS—"GHOSTS" AT A SEANCE.

"I suppose I have one of the queerest fads on earth," said the man on the hotel sofa. "My passion and hobby is mediums, clairvoyants, psychic card-readers and others of that ilk. Not that I'm a spiritualist. The great side of the medium business is what interests me."

"Most people suppose that mediums all profess to summon up real ghosts—that, in the language of the profession, they materialize. That is not true. Do one materializing medium in these days there are a hundred test mediums. The test medium holds forth usually in a cheap hall. The admission is low, for her patrons are poor. Usually it runs from ten to twenty-five cents."

"She starts off with a hymn. Then she borrows an article from each person in the congregation and begins her tests. For example, she'll hold up a glove and ask who owns it. When the owner has spoken up she'll hold the glove to her forehead, and say something like this: 'I hear the name John. Have you a John in the spirit world?'"

"If the owner of the glove has a John among the departed, the medium sends then tries to draw her out. With some beautiful communications, and cleverness born of experience, she pieces together his occupation, his troubles and his wants, and tells him all about them."

"He's paralyzed with astonishment, and so are the rest of the circle; for the people who go to seances are not critical, and they go with a great desire to believe."

"One of the hardest things for a test medium to do is to call at once the name of the dear departed in the spirit realm. If she starts off with John, and runs through Jane and Katharine and Lily, and none of them hits the mark, the most credulous seeker after spirits is inclined to pronounce her a fake. On the other hand, if she hits at once the name of the very spirit which the speaker most desires, she's pronounced a great success. Their best medium of getting at the names is a sort of Medium's Union, an organized society for mutual help which exists in every medium-reading town."

"Mrs. Fake the medium, has a new visitor. Before Mrs. Fake gets through she's learned further that the old lady has a dead sister named Annie. The old lady, remembering how long Mrs. Fake has been in getting those names, that can only be done by the legislative powers of the national government, by applying to the national divorce law, that can only be done by the legislative powers of the different States. If the Protestant Episcopal Church does as is reported to be the intention of the Conference—appoint committees from every State to consider a uniform law of divorce, and then present their petitions to the legislatures of their respective States, we may in this way reach some compromise, but I doubt if that will be accomplished in my day."

"Bringing in the Devil." "Some folk think that they must drink liquor themselves and give it to their friends, or they do not properly celebrate Christmas," says the Catholic Columbian. "They drink to excess and set before others the same temptation to drunkenness. They bring the devil into the feast of Christ."

In the eyes of modern society poverty is a crime, showing how thoroughly out of accord we are with the life and teachings of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

THOUGHTS FOR THE NEW YEAR.

The end of 1904 has been reached. When it was opening, we looked forward hopefully to the coming of its days. What have we done with them? If we had them to live over, would we make the same of them?

But they are gone into the Eternity of the Past. Their good and evil are indelibly recorded. Regrets are, in one way, useless. No remorse can wipe out what is done. The hands on the dial of Time cannot be turned back. Sorrow may win pardon, and suffering may expiate; but the deeds or the omissions that are bewailed remain forever as items in the history of a man's life.

And it is not advisable to brood too much on the dark side—of transgressions, of failures, of misunderstandings, of misfortunes, of maladies, or mishaps. There is no profit in the cultivation of melancholy. For sin—contrition, confession and satisfaction, with a firm purpose of amendment; for setbacks in business—a renewed determination to achieve success; for other trials—their proper antidotes; these must be applied. But, afterward, with a brave heart and a resolute face uplifted to the rising sun, we should look forward courageously towards the coming days and keep up our spirits for the battles that are to be.

A new year is now at our door. See 1905 comes to offer us its days. And while now is the only time that is surely ours, we can make plans to use them advantageously if the good God gives them to us.

First comes our work that relates to our temporal welfare. How shall we advance in it? What must we do to increase our chances for a home and a competence?

Next may be considered our social interests. How shall we make more friends? What opportunities for further kind deeds shall we seek out? How shall we still more promote happiness in our family?

And our own improvement, mentally and physically, may well demand some care.

Then, last of all to be mentioned, but first of all in importance, is the condition of our spiritual life. We must take new resolutions for that combat with the world, the flesh and the devil. We should study to possess a many piety. We must practice virtues—which are usually calls to self-denial and resist vice which are often summons to self-indulgence. Indeed self-motives to self-indulgence—that lower self that hates to be ruled by the higher powers of the soul. When shall we begin to crush it? When shall we care nothing for what 'they say,' when 'they say' something against our principles? When will we persistently avoid the occasions of sin? When shall we have a personal love for Jesus Christ and lead His love for us? The way to business success is by industry, thrift, energy, and enterprise. The way to social success is by gentleness, courtesy and affability. The way to spiritual success is by way of frequent Communion.

With such ideas considered and such resolutions adopted for the New Year, 1905 may well be greeted with joyous salutations.

It will bring blessings. It will speak of victories. It will make a good record. It will go into the Past, when its last day is over, bright, beautiful and beloved.

Hail, New Year! Welcome 1905! We who hope to make good use of thee, salute thee!

The final test of a state or a city or community is not its outward appearance, prosperity or numbers, but its quality and character of its men and women; the virtue and intelligence, the ethical and spiritual perfection of its people.—Rev. F. L. Phalen.

CHURCH ALONE CONSISTENT.

Judge James Blanchard of the New York Supreme Court, speaking on the divorce question, paid the following tribute to the Church:

"It is reported that I have tried fifty-six divorce cases since the opening of the fall term. There is one fact in my opinion which is of deep thought. Of those fifty-six cases only one was brought in which the principals were Catholics. The Catholic Church is consistent in the stand it takes, and the members of that Church apply for divorce less frequently than those of any other denomination. It is no sense this talk of obtaining a national divorce law by applying to the national government, that can only be done by the legislative powers of the different States. If the Protestant Episcopal Church does as is reported to be the intention of the Conference—appoint committees from every State to consider a uniform law of divorce, and then present their petitions to the legislatures of their respective States, we may in this way reach some compromise, but I doubt if that will be accomplished in my day."

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THE GREATNESS OF JOAN OF ARC.

New World. The Maid of Domremy unintentionally is creating a stir in France of late. A fortnight ago a Socialist professor in one of the State schools spoke foul words against her character and her mission, and Paris rose in anger and the government changed the professor, whose name is Thalmas, to a school elsewhere. Then Jaurès, the Socialist leader, similarly assailed the Maid in the French Chamber of Deputies, and was promptly challenged by Derouette. Nobody was hurt in the duel that followed, but the entire affair has furnished a sensation to the newspapers of all countries.

A striking contrast to the infamous language of Thalmas and Jaurès is Mark Twain's estimate of the Maid in Harper's Magazine for December. The article is placed as a leader in the periodical; and is remarkable as the appreciation of an American Protestant. After declaring that the official record of the trial of Joan of Arc is the most remarkable history that exists in any language, the world-famous humorist and novelist says:

We can understand how Joan of Arc could be born with military genius, with heroic courage, with incomparable fortitude, with a mind which was in several particulars a prodigy—a mind which included among its specialties the lawyer's gift of detecting traps laid by the adversary in cunning and treacherous arrangements of seemingly innocent words; the orator's gift of eloquence, in clear and simple and winning and noble; the advocate's gift of eloquence, and finally, something recognizable as more than a mere trace of the statesman's gift of understanding a political situation and how to make profitable use of such opportunities as it offers; we can comprehend how she could be born with these great qualities; but we can not comprehend how they became immediately available and effective without the developing forces of a sympathetic atmosphere and the training which comes of teaching, study, practice—years of practice—and the help of a thousand mistakes. We can understand how the possibilities of the future perfect peach are all being hid in the humble bitter almond, but we cannot conceive of the almond without the intervening long seasons of patient cultivation and development. Out of a cattle pasturing peasant village lost in the remoteness of an unvisited wilderness and atrophied with ages of stupefaction and ignorance we cannot see the Maid of Arc equipped to the last detail for her amazing career and hope to be able to explain the riddle of it, labor at it as we may.

It is beyond us. All the rules fail in this girl's case. In the world's history she stands alone—quite alone. Others have been great in their public exhibitions of generalship, valor, legal talent, diplomacy, fortitude, but their previous years and associations had prepared for these things. There have been no exceptions to the rule. But Joan was competent in a law case at sixteen without ever having seen a law book or a court house before; she had no training in soldiery and no association with arms, yet she was a competent general in her first campaign; she was brave in her first battle, not even the educated had no education; she was not even the educated had no education; she was not even the educated had no education.

Whatever worthy hearts' desire is yours put your mind on it and keep it there day after day, month after month year after year, if necessary, and your heart's desire will be achieved if you use the means that will come your way to attain it.—Eliza Archard Conner.

VIRTUE OF PRUDENCE.

First in the enumeration of the cardinal virtues is Prudence; first and most important, too, in reference to the needs of society. It is the virtue which safeguards us against ignorance, inclines us to truth, saves us from error, prompts us to good and diverts us from evil. Thus, directed to discern that which is right, we are fortified against deceiving ourselves or our fellows.

It was to this virtue our Lord exhorted His disciples when He said: "Be ye wise as serpents, and as simple as doves." To the same virtue St. Paul encourages all Christians in his epistle to the Ephesians, verses 15 and 16: "See, brethren, how you walk circumspectly: not as unwise, but wise; redeeming the time: for the days are evil." And again in Ecclesiasticus, chapter 32, verse 24, we are admonished: "My son, do thou nothing without counsel; and thou shalt not repent, when thou hast done." Hence we may conclude that it is the precious key which unlocks the priceless treasury of all true knowledge.

A necessary guide, we have formed it, for religion and modern conditions of society. Christ's mission on earth was for the redemption of mankind. To perpetuate that mission for the benefit of future generations He established His Church and commissioned her to teach. Man's supreme business upon earth is the attainment of his eternal salvation. To-day, however, the world witnesses a multiplication of creeds, and many men are confused by the false teachers and the errors of the times. Prudence, therefore, is necessary—necessary to destroy existing prejudices, necessary to search for a careful search for the truth; prompts them to withhold their opinions and seek the judgment of others.

Furthermore, there is great need for prudence in modern society. See the number constantly stepping aside from the path of honor, of honesty, of virtue and of justice for false pleasures and personal profit, "for the days are evil." The tongue runs unbridled to the profaning of God's name and the slander of the neighbor. How different if Prudence reigned. Judgments would then be tempered with deliberation; actions would be weighed by their consequences, and proper caution and the counsel of others would protect from many errors. Hence we should constantly pray that God would bless us with this great virtue.—Church Progress.

A VALIANT ATTEMPT.

In the interesting reminiscences of a long missionary career which the Rev. L. C. P. Fox, O. M. I., has contributed to Donahoe's Magazine, the following incident is related:

A telegram arrived from Aldenham one Saturday to announce to Father B—that one of the two Fathers there, the only one who could preach in English, had been stricken down with fever, and to beg him to send another Father to help him over the discharge of the Sunday duties. Father B—without hesitation, said: "I will go myself." "But," they replied, "you cannot preach in English." "I will try," said he. So he took the train for Bridgworth, carrying with him a copy of the *Reveries* of St. Bernard and a Holydays. He studied the sermon appropriate for the day and committed it to memory on the next day delivered it to the best of his ability. After his thanksgiving he went to the beautiful little cottage where the Fathers resided, not far from the Hall, to get his breakfast and prepare for his return to the palace, was but a boy with fever. He belonged to the well-known Cardinal Action. After his father's death his mother, who was the daughter of an Austrian duchess, was re-married to Earl Granville, a celebrated British Minister. They generally resided at Aldenham, not alone because it was a spacious and beautiful house, but because it possessed the finest private library in the empire. Lord Acton, whose lamented death took place but lately, left this library to his friend, Mr. Morley. At the time of our Father B's sermon the hall was full of visitors, at least half of whom were Protestants, but they all came to Mass. At the luncheon, a little later on, a discussion arose about the preacher and his sermon. Lord Granville declared that the sermon was not in English, for he could not understand a word; Lady Granville said it was not Spanish; the old Duchess was certain that it was not German; the young Sir John could not recognize it as Italian; and Lady Georgiana Fullerton, the sister of Earl Granville, pronounced that it was not French. "But," added she, "I don't care what he said, nor in what language he spoke. I am convinced that he is a saint, and after luncheon I mean to go over and have a talk with him before he returns to his home." She carried out her intention and had a full hour's conversation, in French, of course, with Father B—. Not long afterwards she became a Catholic, and it that interview was not the immediate cause of her conversion, it was at least its remote cause, as she herself often acknowledged.

THE D'YOUILLE READING CIRCLE.

The meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 20th, was the last for 1904. A brief summary of current events of the year was made. The second book of "The Light of Asia" was finished. The lines read describe Buddha's home and the happiness of his early married life. His father took every care to shield his son from all knowledge of sorrow or pain, hoping thus to make his life one long joy.

This poem of Sir Edwin Arnold's is interesting merely as a literary work, but our constant guide in the serious part of the study must be the well known authority on Eastern questions, Dr. Aiken, of the Washington University, whose book is in the library.

"A Ladder of Swords" by Gilbert Parker, was reviewed by Miss Kohoe. It is a story of Elizabeth's time, and the chief interest centres round the queen. The book lacks some of the good qualities of "The Right of Way" or "Sons of the Mighty."

A few opening lines from "The Light of Asia." A sweet, quaint little Christmas poem from Ben Johnston closed the evening's work.

B. DOWDALL.

To decide between love and duty has caused hours of worry to men as well as to women.

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God delights in joy; it is one of the most certain means to secure His favors. But in order to rejoice in the Lord the soul must be purified, for the joy which pleases God must be that of a good conscience.