

The Catholic Record.

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

VOLUME XVIII.

LONDON, ONTARIO, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1896.

NO. 949.

Bellman, Speed Three Up the Stairway.

Bellman, see: the hour approacheth—
Speed three up the stairway
Of the beauteous and solemn
And the bells of rapture waken

Bellman, tell them of the story
Wonderful, though entry seldom
Beautiful, though oft narrated
Through a thousand times recited

Spell them with the annual golden
Thrill them with the legend truthful
Of the jubilation—
Of the miracle of heaven.

Bellman, tell them of the Mighty
Of mankind the great Creator—
King of whom all things are fearful:
Of the Spirit eye existing—
Of the God of all the ages!

Tell them how this God all potent
Took the flesh of His created:
How with a stable manger
When the stars, like lamps suspended
From the firmament, glowed calmly
In the stillness of the night time

When the snow wreaths on the mountain
Glistened like the dew's trembling
On drift of spray and blossoms
How, when everything that bursters
How, when the world was new
Steam and leaf, and flow' and blossom
Wind and wave, and bird nocturnal
Heard that in the wild tracks
Provehed slow, at every motion
Brambles were and dry leaves crackling—
Seemed as silent as the nation

As it lay in fear prostrated
Waiting the Divine pronouncement:
Tell them how, when earth and heaven
Vibrating hung in expectation
Christ the Saviour was born—
He, the promised One, was born.

Then, the magic tale recited
Cry, O Bellman! full and solemn—
Cry in accents loud and ringing:
"O, ye bells! ring out your rapture
In a flood of music thrilling
In a psalm of heaven suggestive,
In a myriad vibrations!"

"Till they, from their trance of wonder
By thy tone, are breathing roused,
Ring in caustics delighted:
Or, as the work of God's hand!
He hath sent to all the nations
Peace long promised and redemption!

Blessed be this God who saves us
He hath sent His Son to save us
He hath sent the Child Redeemer—
Glorious to the world's redemption
Glorious to the light of Ages!
Glorious to the Aye Existing!"

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—T. C. Murray, in Cork Examiner.

A STARLED JOURNEY.

A little Maine poet had written a
star-song. A shimmer of stardust was
in it, perhaps—she did not know—but
she sent it to the local paper, as a
Christmas offering.

The editor, on receiving it, growled
out something a good way from grate-
tude. But then, there! Christmas
was coming and his readers expected
something for the season, he did not
care what! So down it went to the
printers. To say truth, his literary
larder was pretty empty, as its like are
apt to be.

The shabby hotel of this eastern
town had less its summer smartness.
Kept especially for tourists, its winter
patronage dropped with the mercury
to zero. Therefore, the sudden ap-
pearance there of a Philadelphian,
young, handsome and apparently
wealthy, with his fine clothing and
city ways, drew more notice in Decem-
ber than it could possibly have done
the preceding August.

"Name's Ashton. Been here be-
fore!" drawled the lean landlord.
"Business? Yes. — Ice business.
Goin' down the Kennebec." And a
puzzled lot of native inquirers were
pacified.

The young man had strolled into a
side room to avoid embarrassing in-
spection and look for a paper. The
Boston Journals were all old ones.

"A very ancient and fish-like smell,"
muttered the would-be reader, fling-
ing them down, disgusted with the
literal aspect of his quotation. A
cleaner sheet lay beside them. He
opened it—and lo! the Star Song!
His wrath rose; no news, no anything,
in this snow-buried hole! Trains can-
celled on the new narrow gauge road!

"Snewed up at Mattabumpus," they
told him. He raged inwardly; then,
suddenly, laughed at the mix of things.
What could he expect of a Maine
poet, snowed up at Mattabumpus?
But he had not come down into Maine
to be grinned at by the natives and
read local "poems." Not he! He
would drive over to the next station,
take Antoine, the silent Canadian, to
guide him, and foot it, if need were,
through the woods to the nearest point
on the Grand Trunk. English and
broad gauge that, with sure trains!

Comforted by this, he took up the
paper again, looking for time-tables.
Alas, time and trains were missing;
but there was the Star Song! This
time he read it:

The Star of Fame, it shineth out
Sharp on the wintry sky
Yet, through the pale rifts of doubt,
A fairer descends

For ah, the poor and lowly!
What softly blesteth them?
But the star Divine that to earth came down
And shone on the Babe of Bethlehem.

The Star of Love, it gazeth down
With sweet entrancing eyes
It proffers earth a passion-crown
Of roses born to die

Too soon their splendor fadeth:
O changeless didst thou
Thine I seek—I would journey on—
I too—'er the sands of Bethlehem.

The Star of Gold will never cease
To lead our steps astray;
The fount of grace, the palms of peace
Light up the narrow way
O'er desert's bare and burning
Lead on, celestial King

Till the earth-bells ring and the angels sing
"He hath bowed to the Christ, at Bethlehem!"

When he had finished, Paul Ashton
stood still a moment. Nor did he
laugh at the little poet.

He set out for the next narrow
gauge station as he had planned, not
without some natural discussion on the
part of mine host, who did not fail to im-
prove the occasion for the usual group,
gathered to see the stranger start.

WARMTH.

And he was shivering—act-
ually and spiritually Blessed Mother!
That was purity—alone, here in the
wilds of Maine;—and it was all his own
fault, his own wilful fault and folly!
A pathetic figure seemed to rise be-
fore him and a voice, like none other,
cried in sadness—"Ye would not come
to me that ye might have life!"

Other men heard and came, men in
thongs. He thought of the English
cathedrals, the crowded churches in
Catholic Europe. "I, too, merciful
Lord! I cannot live alone, in Thy
universe. I, too, would come!" It
was his first soul aspiration, his first
cry to heaven.

Then other thoughts came, thick and
fast. They, the wise men, carried gold—
well, he had gold to offer! But he
was unworthy to present any sacrifice—
he knew his own past! Yet a re-
membered prayer came to his aid.
"We beseech Thee to accept this, our
bounden duty and service." Duty—
yes, he could do that! And what else
did the Christians say? "Not weigh-
ing our merits, but pardoning our
offences through Jesus Christ, Our
Lord." A swift Amen flashed out of
his heart and was caught by the re-
cording angel.

He turned to his companion with a
swift thought of human brotherhood.
They were journeying together toward
the Christ of the Christmas, perhaps
some of the gold might be offered now.
He remembered that his comrades had
called him impulsive—well, perhaps he
was!

A few kindly questions brought out
the tale of Antoine's patient endurance
of hardships and poverty. And the
telling brought quiet gold of swift re-
lief.

"It is for the blessed Christmas, An-
toine," said with native feeling the
guide saw that words were needless.

The rest and comfort of the little
inn, where he stopped for the night,
brought unutterable cheer. A strange
brightness had come over everything
and a strange, new warmth. "Yes,"
he said to himself, "I have indeed
journeyed!" How little he had
dreamed of this when he left home!

How little even when snow-bound in
the wilds! He knew the charm of the
Maine woods; but this was different;
to reverse his whole life, as it were in
a moment, in what seemed such an ab-
surd, improbable way looked at from
his old standpoint, but which now
came to him as a white, star-lit ex-
perience, not without power peculiar
to itself. He had journeyed, heaven
had led him on and the Christ was
found—as of one and sought! Him not!

The blessed Christmas had come to meet
him. Was it not beautiful and gra-
cious?

Early next morning he took train
for the nearest junction; thence, mak-
ing his way down the Kennebec. But
he finally reached the great white ice-
houses, sources of easy income to their
owners and representing well invested
capital. All around clustered small,
rough cottages for the permanent
hands; and big boarding-houses of
the rudest sort for the great gangs of
cutting and harvesting.

A couple of sharp lads drew near to
inspect the stranger, true New Eng-
land gamins, with a certain lean po-
verty clinging to them as if by right of
inheritance. The older one pointed to
his overcoat.

"Do see him, Bill! Ain't he a
daisy, though?" "Hush, don't you
know? I tell ye he's the Ice Company,
tho' chap is!"

Paul Ashton also took in details, on
his part, but with kindly scrutiny; the
shabby clothing of the lads, so poorly
protecting them from the sharp river-
wind, their worn shoes and pinched
faces.

"My pa's lame. Awful! Got hurt
on the ice," said the older, in reply to
a word of questioning. "And ma's
sick, too," chimed in the other, yet
without excitement, as if both facts
were of the sort to be expected.

"I'm glad I came," muttered Ash-
ton. "Our superintendent means well,
but I shall have to supervise these
cases."

It was again the call of human
brotherhood, and, this time it definite-
ly called him. This was his field;
these were his own men, his own direct
responsibility.

He went at once to the superintend-
ent, a genial man, whom he had met
before and been pleased with. "A
kindly optimist—a good manager and
money-maker for the Company" —
thought Paul as the personage in ques-
tion proffered cordial welcome, glad to
see him and glad to talk about the
men.

"We shall arrive, in a little mo-
ment," answered the man in his soft
patois. Then, by way of encourage-
ment, he shyly added, "And it ees soon
the blessed Christmas."

There it was again! The taciturn
Canadian had brightened at the word.
This poor fellow, in all his poverty,
knew its warmth and light. It was he—
the wealthy, the cultured, the elean-
t— who was suffering. Here was
physical cold, and gold would not
warm him! He jingled some coins in
his pocket with an angry sense of their
worthlessness. He had journeyed into
Maine for gold!

Much of his time had been spent
abroad. He remembered the Italian
peasantry and how the children's faces
glowed at the mention of the Crib and
the Bambino. It was a world-wide

THE ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS.

Among the pretty observances re-
corded in Mr. Janvier's *Century* article
on Christmas observances in Provence
is the adoration of the shepherds, which
is interpolated in the Mass. He says:
By some means only a little short of
a miracle, a way was opened through
the dense crowd along the centre of the
nave from the door to the altar, and up
this way with their offerings real
shepherds came—the quaintest pro-
cession that anywhere I have ever seen.

In the lead were four musicians, play-
ing upon the tambourin, the gaitanet,
and the bagpipe like *carlasmus*; and
then, two by two, came ten shepherds
wearing the long, brown, full cloaks,
weather-stained and patched and
mended, which seem always to have
come down through many generations
and which never by any chance are
new; carrying tucked beneath their
arms their battered felt hats browned,
like their cloaks, by the long warfare
with sun and rain; holding in one
hand a lighted candle and in the other
a staff. The two leaders, dispensing
with staves and candles, bore garlanded
ribbons: one filled with fruit—mel-
ons, pears, apples and grapes—and in
the other a pair of doves, which with
sharp, quick motions turned their
heads from side to side as they gazed
wonderingly on their strange surround-
ings, with their bright, beaming eyes.

Following came the main offering—a
spotted lamb. Most originally, and
in a way poetical, was this offering
made. Drawn by a mild faced ewe,
whose fleece had been washed to a
wonder of whiteness and who was
decked out with bright, colored
ribbons in a way to unning with
vanity her sheepish mind, was a little
two-wheeled cart—all garlanded with
laural and holly, and bedizened with
knobs of ribbon and pink paper roses
and glittering little objects such as are
hung on Christmas trees in other lands.
Lying in the cart placidly, not bound

A CANADIAN RELIGIOUS ORDER.

Final Approval of the Order of the
Sisters of the Precious Blood—Cele-
bration in Toronto.

The unusual sight of a convent
illuminated from every window might
have been witnessed by the wayfarer
whose steps led by the convent of the
Precious Blood on St. Joseph street,
Toronto, on the evening of December
3, the feast of the Immaculate Concep-
tion.

The illumination was but a small
part of the manifestation of joy over
the most important event that can
occur in the existence of a religious
order—the final approval of its
Rule by the Holy Father.

Most of our readers are aware that
the community of the Sisters of the
Precious Blood is—as all things Cana-
dian—of comparatively recent origin,
having been founded in 1861 at St.
Hyacinthe, Que., by the present
superior of the order, Rev. Mother
Catherine. Of those associated with
Mother Catherine at that time there is
but one left, Mother St. Joseph, superior
of the order in Toronto. It seems a
special mark of divine favor that the
rule of this community should have re-
ceived so soon the final approval of the
Supreme Pontiff, and it is a great
happiness to the members to receive
the Rule almost as it was presented to
His Holiness.

Three days of special prayer, of
praise and thanksgiving have been
devoted in every house of the order to
the celebration of this auspicious
event—at the mother house in St.
Hyacinthe, Que., at Toronto, Montreal,
Ottawa, Three Rivers, Brooklyn, N.
Y., Oregon, U. S. A. and the last
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The triduum began on Sunday, Mass
being celebrated with Exposition of the
Most Blessed Sacrament, Benediction
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Conception, at 9 o'clock, solemn High
Mass was celebrated by Rev. Father
Kelly, C. S. B., with Rev. Father Mon-
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Immediately afterwards a procession

A Flower of the Manger.

Did you ever hear the story
Of the little Morning Glory
How it always bloomed on Christmas when the
world was young and fair,
White its choice was, and slender
In whose depths a dwelling place
Nestled, waiting for the advent of the baby
morning air.

Just one day it bloomed—then faded.
But that happy day it shined.
Drooping o'er the baby's cradle where the
Fate first laid his hand,
Planted there by angel fingers,
Watched by lightest wind that flutters
Just between the earth and Paradise, when
summer days are dead.

Happy task and happy dower!
Blooming there to make a flower
For the highplace of the Saviour—just one
little day of earth.
Then to fold its silver chalice
Leave a world of sin and malice.
To return a gain to Paradise where beauty gave
it birth.

But an all a win came stealing
Whispered to the sleeping child of the world
So wide and fair,
And the soft, luminous story,
Touched the little Morning Glory
And it wished for one brief instant, that its
place might, too, be there.

Just a wish! The answer meets us,
Where the Morning Glory grows us
Variegated in its splendor, now no longer pure
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And the dainty winds, whose story
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Kiss no more its tender blossoms as they open
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A Flower of the Manger.

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Nestled, waiting for the advent of the baby
morning air.

Just one day it bloomed—then faded.
But that happy day it shined.
Drooping o'er the baby's cradle where the
Fate first laid his hand,
Planted there by angel fingers,
Watched by lightest wind that flutters
Just between the earth and Paradise, when
summer days are dead.

Happy task and happy dower!
Blooming there to make a flower
For the highplace of the Saviour—just one
little day of earth.
Then to fold its silver chalice
Leave a world of sin and malice.
To return a gain to Paradise where beauty gave
it birth.

But an all a win came stealing
Whispered to the sleeping child of the world
So wide and fair,
And the soft, luminous story,
Touched the little Morning Glory
And it wished for one brief instant, that its
place might, too, be there.

Just a wish! The answer meets us,
Where the Morning Glory grows us
Variegated in its splendor, now no longer pure
and white.
And the dainty winds, whose story
Lured the little Morning Glory,
Kiss no more its tender blossoms as they open
to the light.

—Stella Moriarty in Catholic Columbian.