

MESSENGER

OF THE

SACRED HEART.

Organ of the League of the Sacred Heart,

Apostleship of Prayer.



SECOND YEAR.

Montreal:

1892.



A MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND
HAPPY NEW YEAR.

A *Child is born to us, a Son is given to us!*” exclaims Isaias, Emmanuel’s prophet. *“Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace to men of good will;”* sing the angels in the midnight skies. *“The grace of God our Saviour hath appeared to all men,”* proclaims the Apostle of the Gentiles. What assurances, aye, and infallible pledges, of peace and happiness are wafted down through the ages and repeated to us each succeeding New Year! For us, no less than for patriarch and prophet, for shepherds and kings, “the desire of the everlasting hills” has been accomplished, the heavens have dropped down their dew, and the skies are filled with honey. Only, with the shepherds and kings “let us go over to Bethlehem and see the word which is come to pass,” and we too shall find Mary and Joseph and the Infant lying in the manger, and we shall wonder and ponder in our heart, and return glorifying and praising God.

But, alas, the world, even the Christian world, has forgotten the road to Bethlehem. Its sky has no angel’s song; its Christmas no Child, nor Mother, nor Crib, nor Manger; the “brightness of God” has vanished and given

place to doubt, error and unbelief. How empty its Happy New Years! how hollow the joy and deceitful the glare of its amusements, its pomps, and festivities! how meaningless its gifts and presents!

Far other is the Happy New Year of the League of the Sacred Heart, which the *Messenger* for 1892 heralds to every Associate and every reader throughout the land. He bears to them glad tidings of great joy that shall be to all the people. "For this day is born to you a Saviour who is Christ the Lord in the city of David." He rests his hopes and promises on "the sure foundation of God."

Whilst presenting his wishes of a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, he points with the Great Apostle to a well brimful of purest joy springing into life everlasting. It is no other than the Saviour's Heart opening to us the unfailing love, goodness and grace of God. "*The grace of God our Saviour hath appeared to all men.*" He likewise points out the sure way to the realization of his wishes, "*instructing us that denying ungodliness and worldly desires, we should live soberly, and justly, and godly in this world, looking for the blessed hope and coming of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.*" During the short span of earthly years, ours shall be the blessedness of hope, and we shall walk in the light of the glory to come till we meet the Saviour no longer then the little Babe of Bethlehem, but the "great God" coming in power and splendor and majesty. Let us begin a Happy New Year by welcoming the little God of Bethlehem in a worthy Communion of Reparation on the first Friday of January, 1892.



REVERENCE FOR THE DIVINE MAJESTY.

GENERAL INTENTION FOR JANUARY, 1892.

*Named by the Cardinal Protector and blessed by the Pope
for all the Associates.*

REVERENCE for God, strictly called adoration, goes so deep down in the human heart that, with his love, it must be considered the end of our existence. God could not have created man so gifted and noble but to be adored, loved and served by him. Alone in the visible universe he is capable of giving the Creator of all things the worship which is His due. So deeply is this conviction rooted in our human nature and so imperative the want of rendering worship to God, that the prince of ancient philosophers, truly interpreting the common sense of mankind, defined man as not only a *rational* but also a *religious* animal. The faculty and duty of paying worship to the Divinity is so essential that to fail in it is to baulk our common manhood and to lapse into a condition of atheistic brutishness.

More than that it is the greatest of crimes. Suppose an ungrateful son who, amongst his school-fellows, is brave, generous and clever, a born leader, but at home shows no mark of respect to the father of his days, meets

him with sullen look, treats him with scorn, and goes so far as to buffet him; would he not be rightly considered a monster in human shape? Change the comparison to a man who is kind, upright, liberal and patriotic, who wins the esteem and confidence of his fellow-men, is the man of their choice, and yet passes by his Creator without any mark of homage, scouts every religious obligation, scoffs at religious belief and religious profession. Is he not with all his commanding personal qualities the most misshapen of moral monsters, and before the bar of infinite rectitude the veriest of criminals? God is not only Lord of Lords but Father of Fathers, "from whom all fatherhood is named." He must exact the homage of His intelligent creatures, the love and obedience of His children. "The son honoreth the father, and the servant his master; if, then, I be a father, where is my honor? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the Lord of hosts." Malachias, the prophet, in these words gave utterance to the cry of human nature as well as to the commandment of God.

This obligation of adoring God and recognizing His supreme rights extends beyond the sphere of private life and the precincts of home and the walls of the church. It follows man into all his relations of social and public life. God is the Creator of society no less than of the individual person. Societies and nations as such owe honor and obedience to him who is "King of Kings," must bow in adoration to Him "before whom all nations are as though they were not." Even according to the maxims of pagan wisdom, to found and govern a nation, without inculcating respect for the Deity, is to build in the air and lay the foundations in ether. The reason is simple enough, all those forms of reverence and respect, which like cement hold in their place the various elements of the social edifice, are derived from the supreme reverence of the Divine

Majesty—the beginning and term of human greatness. Respect for parents, respect for neighbors, respect for magistrates, respect for the various forms by which the majesty of law reveals itself are all founded on the supreme reverence for the Majesty of God.

The Masonic sects, whose sworn aim it is to overthrow religion and society as at present constituted, and to lay the foundations of human happiness over again on another basis, could not take a shorter cut in their work of destruction than by uprooting from the people all reverence for God, His name, His priesthood and civil representatives. They would not only hush the mention of His name but efface the idea of Him. They substitute blasphemy for praise, and hate for love. The trend of modern thought and institutions under the inspiration of the Lodges has been to thrust God aside, ignore His claims, and deny Him every outward mark of respect. If it does not openly glorify, it accepts as respectable and worthy of consideration theories, such as gnosticism, pantheism and evolutionism, which are but thin veils for blasphemy and unbelief. It idolizes indifferentism, which sets God in contradiction with Himself, as founding, approving or accepting creeds and forms of worship that give the lie to one another; or it banishes Him to the clouds by representing all certain knowledge of His truth or any one sure way to Him as impossible and beyond our reach.

Likewise the institutions which go distinctively by the name of modern pass God by and condemn His claims. He is banished from conscience, from the Church and from the Bible itself, by the free and independent play of private judgment; from the family, by the lowering of marriage to a mere civil contract, and the breaking by divorce of the indissoluble seal which He set upon it; from the school, by a merely secular training, without the mention of His name during all these precious years when

the young life in its spring time ought to be plenteously sown with such seeds of truth and virtue as will unfold and ripen into its only immortal and supernatural destiny.

Of all the modern forms of irreverence for God the most dangerous is that of purely secular education. It has been truly said that to bring up a child in contempt of all that he ought to respect, it is not necessary to tell him to despise and mock, he has only not to be told to reverence and adore.

What cure is there for these gaping wounds of modern society? Who can educate man from childhood up in the full and practical acknowledgment of all those claims on His respect which adhere together and rest on the adoration of God? The Church of Rome always has been, according to the famous saying of the Protestant Guizot, "the great school of reverence." The reason is because she is the infallible teacher of the religion of Emmanuel, God with us, of the Most High, who, without doffing His greatness and majesty, abased Himself and dwelt among us in human form. In the Church His Adorable Majesty is ever present to the world, in her temples, in her sacraments, in her priesthood, from the Vicar of Christ down to the humblest cleric, by supernatural power and life; in parents, in the magistracy, in the instructors of youth, by lawful authority. Thus through Jesus Christ she elevates all to God present in His images and representatives.

If men and nations will learn to fix their eyes on true greatness as presented to them by the Church, they will reflect and copy it in their lives. The edifice of the christian family and of christian society, which the enemies of God and of man are endeavoring to pull down, will thus be restored and renewed by reverence for the Divine Majesty.

FRIENDSHIP WITH OUR LORD.**FIRST ADVANTAGE OF THE HOLY LEAGUE.****I.**

FATHER, I have read in the small Manual of various advantages to be gained by joining the League. I should like a word of explanation. For instance, the first general advantage is that it gives a new right to the friendship of Our Lord. We are, as you know, a matter-of-fact kind of people, and care not to fix our habitation in the clouds. What am I to understand by Friendship with Our Lord whom I have never seen nor spoken to, who is as exalted above me as heaven is above the earth?"

Dear Associate, I am in perfect accord with you that a member of the Holy League ought to avoid being unreal. A devotion which rests on such solid grounds ought to be the last to draw in thought or expression from sentimentality. Nothing can be more real than the friendship which the Son of God came down from heaven to offer to every child of Adam. Behold Him at Christmas lying in the manger, presenting himself in the attractive loveliness of the Babe of Bethlehem, and listen to the great Doctor of the Gentiles unfolding *the mystery of godliness. The grace of God our Saviour hath appeared to all men. Why, if not that he might cleanse to Himself a people acceptable, pursuing good works, and that we, attracted by the charms of His miracles, truth and example, might give ourselves up to His friendship, that denying ungodliness and worldly desires we should live soberly and justly and godly in this world.* Here we see the Son of God lowering Himself to man's estate, in order to lift all men to a godly life, and thus bring about that equality of condition necessary for true friendship.

All through the thirty-three years, he ceased not by word, example and miracle to lavish upon men his win-

ning invitations ; but it was especially *at the end* that He exhausted His love in proofs of friendship such a man never before or afterward gave to man ; by dying on an ignominious cross ; such as reached the full length of the wisdom, power and munificence of God, by giving Himself to man as food in the eucharistic banquet, to be united to him in body, soul and life. How unspeakably low did He not descend, and cheap did He not make Himself to become man's friend !

These are mysteries if you will, mysteries of love and condescension, but also *facts* which have had eye-witnesses, and narrators and historians, some of them inspired from on High, and writing under the immediate enlightenment and motion of the Spirit of God, as certified by a host of miracles. They are facts which lie at the source of the great Christian tradition, having, even from a human standpoint and apart from any special claim of infallibility, the strongest testimony of any in history. On them have been founded the enlightened and deepest convictions of the wisest, best and most learned of mankind, the Church of the civilized world, which has never failed to hold the assent and compel the obedience of the good, the powerful and the great. Facts established on such proofs, and brought down to us through such channels, proclaimed by the voice of mankind as well as by that of an infallible Church, even though they be mysteries, are none the less real and truthful, and the practices of religion and devotion founded on them must be solid and true.

But Friendship with Our Lord has an inner and deeper foundation still in the very substance of our spiritual nature, in the soul elevated to a godlike level, lifted to a divine sphere and a supernatural order, rendered capable of divine acts, by the indwelling Spirit of God through sanctifying grace. It is the Holy Ghost dwelling in the soul who is the bond of friendship between it and the

Saviour. For "*the charity of God is poured forth into our hearts by the Holy Ghost who is given to us.*" It is the sanctifying grace infused by the Holy Ghost into the heart which cements the union with its God. Human friendship has nothing similar. It is founded only on external acquaintance and the emotions and feelings arising from it. Divine friendship knits the soul to the Saviour closer than was David's to Jonathan, by an inward link, the indwelling spirit of God, infusing the light of a divine knowledge, the glow of a heavenly love, and participation of the divine nature. As the junk of iron, however black, heavy and cold, when thrown into the ardent fire becomes so penetrated with its substance and endowed with its properties, as to appear one thing with it, even so the soul in which the Holy Ghost has taken up his dwelling, into which he infuses his light and love by sanctifying grace, is lifted above itself and the whole order of nature, is divinized, supernaturalized, made capable of divine acts such as faith, hope and charity, by which it directly reaches God and is united to Him. The Christian is first baptized in "*fire and the Holy Ghost,*" and afterwards each additional degree of grace, every fresh meritorious act, each new sacrament, is accompanied by a special infusion and a more intense indwelling, according to the word of Our Saviour: "*If any one love me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and will make our abode with him.*"

You understand, I hope, dear Associate, that no human friendship can be compared with the friendship of Our Lord, that the realities of earth sink from view when confronted with the realities of heaven, that the facts of time pale before the facts of eternity.

LEGEND OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE.

“ Please tell me,” a little one whispered to me,
 “ Who in the world had the first Christmas tree ?
 When our Lord was on earth as His birthday came round,
 Did a tree full of presents spring out of the ground ? ”
 So I answered the prattler, and as you will see,
 I told her the tale of the first Christmas tree.

’Twas the depth of the winter—the storm winds blew
 loud—.

The snow was encircling the earth like a cloud,
 And Mary and Joseph seek a lodging to find—
 In a mean little stable or cave of some kind.

Accepting the shelter its rafters afford,
 With angels they’re waiting the birth of the Lord.
 All creation is stirred at the coming event,
 And the voices find utterance within them long pent.

Set deep in the ground, just outside of the cave,
 Two stately old trees in magnificence wave,
 And near them a third, a small dark Evergreen
 Beside its companions looks stunted and mean.

The stately old Palm-tree looked down in disdain
 At the small Evergreen, unpretending and plain ;
 And the Cedar exuded its balm tear by tear,
 To see the poor Evergreen growing so near.

Said the Palm-tree, “ When cometh the Christ on this
 earth

My crown of green leaves shall o’er-shadow His birth.”
 And the Cedar, with flutter of vanity said :
 “ Its sweetness my balsam around Him shall shed.”

And, looking askance at the Evergreen plain,
 “ She has nothing to offer ! ” they cried in disdain.

“Her dark, ugly branches will fill Him with fear,
And His first infant hours quite sad will appear.”

The poor little Evergreen, patient and meek,
“He made me,” she said, “and no change will I seek.
I would wish to do something to welcome my Lord,
But I am contented in fulfilling His word.”

Now, the Angel who guarded the door of the cave,
Where the Palm and the Cedar their green branches
wave,

Heard the haughty remarks and the humble reply :
He raised his pure eyes to the glittering sky.

And the stars, fluttering down, covered Evergreen o'er.
And seemed to shine brighter than ever before.
To outshine the proud Cedar and Palm she was loth,
And tried by her brightness to purify both.

The hour had come for the heavenly birth.
And the Christ-Child was seen on this sin-covered earth,
The Palm-tree its branches waved over His head,
And the Cedar its balsam in fragrant drops shed.

He inhaled not the odor, He saw not the Palm's
Stately branches uplift ; but He stretched forth His arms,
To the poor little Evergreen, blazing with light,
And He smiled, the sweet Christ-Child, in joy and
delight.

And each year, when the bright Christmas-tide is at hand,
There goes to the forest a bright laughing band,
And they bring to their homes the dark Evergreen tree,
And from oldest to youngest, in joy and in glee,
They deck it with tapers and with gifts gay and bright,
In memory of that first glad Christmas night.

S. M. A.



TWO NEW YEARS.

ANNA T. SADLIER

IT was New Year's time, the season of good cheer, of good hope, of good resolution. Christmas had passed, with its memories, its associations, the green of its holly and the glow of its fires. Christmas with its holy thoughts and suggestions, bringing the beauty and grandeur of the Incarnation mystery once more to mind. Christmas with its story of promises fulfilled and of a Saviour revealed to men.

It was New Year's eve. Marion Phillips sat alone in her apartment. The room was fairly littered with costly tinkets. The air was heavy with perfumes. Luxury prevailed, and extended even to the figure of the young girl reclining in an easy chair in her rich dressing gown. She had just finished reading a letter from a friend absent in Europe, and was still pondering its contents. She was thinking, too, how this friend, young, rich, accomplished, whose talents and whose beauty had delighted society since she had left the convent, should be, as Marion Phillips put it to herself, so eccentric. She had married a wealthy man, and was what people called a social leader. Nevertheless, her delight was to labor among the poor and ignorant and afflicted. She rarely missed the daily Mass, she belonged to various charitable associations, she was a frequent communicant.

"Carrie Bolton might as well have been a nun at

once," said Marion Phillips to herself, with irritation. "That's what comes of shutting girls up in convents. Now, I am as good a Catholic as any one, but I say, if you live in the world you must be like other people."

She referred to the letter, and read in her friend's fine clear hand: "Be assured, my dear, that worldliness is heathenism, and that we must be in the world without being of it." She tossed the letter impatiently aside, and arising wearily, looked out upon the streets, covered with snow lying white in the clear starlight. There was a tap at the door. It was Miss Phillips' maid, Mary Farley. Now, Mary had received some education, and by an unhappy coincidence had been, like her mistress, at a secular school, for the sole reason that one met "a better class of pupils there." Mary was sharp, intelligent, tidy,—in fact, as her mistress said, "considerably above her station." To her as to Miss Phillips it was a matter of much surprise that Mrs. Bolton should be at once rich, fashionable and a devout Catholic. Mary was full of the subject just now.

"You would never believe, miss," she began, "that Mrs. Bolton has written Bridget a letter. Bridget down in the kitchen."

"Written Bridget a letter?" echoed Miss Phillips.

"Yes, miss. You see, Mrs. Bolton belongs to some society. She is what Bridget calls a 'Promoter whatever that means, miss. So she just wrote Bridget a letter and sent her a little pamphlet

"Indeed!" said Miss Phillips, thinking with more repugnance than ever of the "preachy letter" she had herself received. "By the way, that Bridget is a tiresome person. She brought my breakfast this morning, and began to speak of some Mission. Really, Mary, you must not let her come near me again. I am as religious as any one, and people should go to church on Sunday and that, if they feel able, but—why, you are pulling my hair, how clumsy of you."

When Mary had gone, Miss Phillips remained seated in her arm-chair, staring into the fire which burned upon the hearth. She was handsome, young, an heiress. The world lay stretched before her, a fairy prospect. Her parents had sent her to a fashionable school in England. She was heard to boast that her parents had left her free to choose her own religion, hoping that she would elect to remain a Catholic, which she did.

At school she had been taught to keep religion as much out of sight as possible. Discussion was out of the question. Since leaving school she had followed the same rule, and left religion practically out of her life.

As she lingered in her easy-chair, the sound of the New Year's bells, the solemn bells of that midnight which divides the old from the new, fell upon her ear. The sound made her uneasy, and like words set to their music, she heard the counsel of her friend, "worldiness is heathenism; we must be in the world but not if it."

"I hope God will give the master and mistress and Miss Mariou, too, a happy and prosperous New Year," said Bridget down in the kitchen, the next morning. She had just come in fresh and rosy from church. "They're too happy and prosperous," snapped Mary Farley, viciously. She had lain awake the night before, revolving the old problem, why she had not been born rich and a lady. "Things is badly managed in this world, I can tell you."

"They're managed as God pleases," said Bridget, cheerily; "and all's well if we save our souls. Did you go out to Mass, this morning?"

"Indeed, I didn't," said Mary. "I leave that to you."

"It's a bad way to begin the year."

"As good a way as preaching."

"Did you hear the bells, last night?" asked Bridget, changing the subject. "Those New Year's bells do give

me a queer turn, for I keep thinking, there's another year gone, and may be it's not many more of them God will give me to work for His glory."

"Where did you learn all that fine talk?" sneered Mary.

"Well, it was little schoolin' I got at all, by reason that I couldn't stay at school, but that little was with the Presentation nuns in Ireland."

"Thank heaven they didn't preach so much where I went to school. We learned more grammar and arithmetic and less prayers. But there's the bell, she's gettin' up, at last. About time."

And so another year had dawned for Marion Phillips, and she awoke to consciousness that it was New Year's Day.

II

Another New Year's eve, drizzling and dreary, with a cold sleet falling, and a wind which pierced even the thick walls of the Phillips' dwelling on the most fashionable street of the Upper Canadian city.

"Madam, if you know my errand you will offer no further opposition to my entering the sick room."

It was a priest who spoke, and he was addressing that elegant and refined woman of the world, Mrs. Phillips.

"But really, sir, I am afraid of the effect your appearance might have upon the child. I know your errand, for I am a Catholic; but the case is not pressing. The doctor tells me there is no danger."

"How can any one give such assurance in so deadly a disease?" said the priest.

"I assure you—"

"Assure me of nothing unless you can safely assure me of your daughter's salvation."

"Why, she has led a most exemplary life, though not what one would call devout. She was the best pupil at the Institute in England, and—"

"Has she been to the Sacraments lately?" interrupted the priest.

"Well, no, I can hardly say—"

"The case is more urgent even than I thought," said Father Moore. "Kindly permit me to pass."

He entered the room. It was bare and stripped of its ornaments. The air was heavy with disinfectants. Upon the bed lay Marion Phillips, her features distorted by disease, her eyes closed. A kneeling figure arose and advanced to meet the priest.

"Sure, Father, I'm glad you're come. I counted every minute an hour since I left the message for you. It's my belief she's going fast."

"Why was I not sent for before?"

The priest scarcely listened to the explanation. He was bending over the dying girl; she was unconscious. He turned to Bridget.

"Surely she has not been left alone?—Where is the mother?"

"She's in weak health, and though her grief's heart-rending, she can't stand the air of the room."

"We will say the prayers for the dying, Bridget," said the priest, kneeling down.

While they prayed there was a slight stir in the bed, and Marion Phillips opened her eyes.

"Who is there?" she asked, faintly.

"A priest, my child."

A slight shiver passed through her.

"Is there any one else?" she asked, again.

"Sure, it's me, Miss Marion; it's Bridget; don't you know me?"

"Bridget, I thought you had gone; where's Mary?" After a pause: "I remember, she went away when I took ill."

Father Moore now tried gently to tell the young girl of her critical condition.

"I am not dying," she shrieked. "I will not die. I am so young, God would not be so cruel."

She raised herself in the bed, but only to fall back helplessly. Vainly did the priest strive to calm her or to induce her to think of preparation for death. He could only wring from her a reluctant consent to his returning.

"In a day or two I shall feel better," she said, "and then I may think of confession. It is four years since I was there last, and I cannot collect my thoughts all at once."

"How came you, dear child, to be so long away from the Sacraments?"

"I was at a school where I could not easily see a priest, and since I came home I have been so occupied, and sometimes my health has been poor."

"Will you not try for our Lord's sake to make your preparation now," urged Father Moore; "I shall come back in an hour."

"Impossible," said the dying girl, "there is no hurry, I feel too weak;" then, with a faint smile, "do not be distressed, I won't die without the Sacraments. But death is far off, I shall be out in a fortnight."

"So you shall, my dear Miss Phillips," said a cheerful voice, "that is, if you do not overexert yourself."

It was the doctor who spoke, a most liberal-minded man who, though not a Catholic himself, had the greatest respect for the priesthood. Nevertheless, he was peremptory with Father Moore just then.

It was absolutely necessary that the patient should be kept quiet. The heart was weak. Excitement might be fatal. The young lady did not desire any religious ministrations, and her mother was fearful of the result. And there was no danger.

"After all," concluded the doctor, pleasantly facetious,

“she is one of your own flock, you know, Mr. Moore, and an excellent Catholic.”

“One of my own flock,” said the priest to himself, sadly, as he walked homewards, “how much greater may be the chance of salvation for those other sheep who are not of the Fold.”

III

It was midnight on that New Year's eve. The bells were tolling from every steeple the old, old message that another year was dead. Bridget knelt, beads in hand, beside Miss Phillips' bed. The night nurse had fallen sound asleep. Marion Phillips herself, to all appearances, slept, too.

“God bless her,” said Bridget, rising and stealing near, “she is having a beautiful sleep, if the bells don't wake her.”

No; Bridget, neither those New Year's bells nor any sound of earth shall ever wake Marion Phillips more.!!! Something in the deathly pallor of the face startled the faithful watcher. She touched the still face, and by her scream awoke the nurse

“Heart failure,” said the doctor, half an hour afterwards; “the disease often takes such a course. But, my dear Mrs. Phillips, it was a most merciful death. Absolutely painless and peaceful.”

“It is the punishment of my sin,” cried the mother, in an agony of grief. “I gave her a high education. She had every accomplishment, but she had forgotten her catechism. They taught her everything but her religion. I neglected sending for the priest, and when he was brought I did not want him to see her.”

Her husband entering the room, she took his arm and led him to the bedside.

“We have killed her soul,” she said hoarsely, and her husband made no reply.

In a dancing hall, Mary Farley was meantime dancing away the first hours of the new-born year. In answer to a remark made concerning her former mistress, she cried flippantly :—

“I’m never sorry for them sort of people. It’s time they had their share of suffering. But there’s no justice, she’ll get well, and be the same as ever. It’s made me pretty much give up my religion, seeing the poor down-trodden as they are. I hate that Marion Phillips, any way.”

“It’s New Year’s morning again,” said Bridget to herself; “thank God for another year of life. But my heart is heavy for the master and mistress, and poor Miss Marion. God rest her soul. Oh, if she had lived more for God, what a happy New Year this ’ud be for her.”

Mrs. Phillips found that morning in her daughter’s writing-desk the letter in which Mrs. Bolton had said, that “worldliness was heathenism, and that we must be in the world but not of it.”

“Oh, if I had sent Marion to the convent with Carrie Bolton,” moaned Mrs. Phillips; how she would bless me for it now!”

The jingle of sleigh-bells sounded merrily. The snow was upon the house-tops, the branches sparkled merrily with hoar-frost. It was an ideal Canadian New Year’s day. But no echo of the joy and merriment reached the dead. Marion Phillips had gone into that world which her education had taught her to ignore, where her accomplishments, her talents and the advantageous acquaintances she had formed at school availed her nothing.

THE ANGELS' CHRISTMAS GIFT.

Among the mysteries of the midnight skies
A full white moon was sailing,
Beneath its sheen of mellow silver light
The timid stars seemed paling.
The Church bells rang upon the frosty air,
Their Christmas tidings bringing,
As long ago when snow white angels came
O'er Beth'hem's Mountain singing.

"Peace! peace!" they wafted it upon the wind,
Their brazen tongues repeating
The song which will be sweet to human ears
While human hearts are beating.
"Oh mortals, raise your trembling voice," they cried,
"And join the choir that's swelling
O'er land and sea, o'er mountain, hill and vale,
Of praise and homage telling!"

And lo! the rapturous sounds of joy that rose
Wooded angels down from heaven;
With priceless gifts they came from Paradise,
Treasures to man God-given.
Swift through the silver, silent tranced air
On glittering pinions flying,
They came with mercy, love, and hope and joy
And smiles to banish sighing.

And one sweet guardian spirit clothed in white,
A halo of glory beaming
Around his rainbow presence, sought the place
Where a fair child lay dreaming.
In deep repose she lay, yet her white brow
With a radiant soul was shining,
And fringed lids could not quite veil
The light they were enshrining.

Enraptured, on th' ethereal face he gazed—

Where heaven and earth seemed blended,
Till on the moonlit air like incense sweet

His fervent prayer ascended :

“ Oh God ! ” like Æolian strains the seraph's voice :

Had a tone of pleading sadness—

“ What gift can I bring here ? What lustre add
To innocence and gladness ?

“ Fair child ; I fain would guard thy future years
And all thy path illumine.

I would surround thee with ideal joys

The heavenly more than human.

For o'er the sky—blue light of such a soul

Ever the love Divine

In sunlike splendor, holy, pure and bright,

Should rest serene and shine ! ”

Then from his glowing breast he took a gem

That flashed a flame to heaven

Which pierced the skies on such swift wings

To the White Throne was driven.

And as he laid it on her tranquil heart,

He whispered softly, lowly,

“ From mine to thine, this seraph gift

Will keep thee always holy.

“ ’Twill guide thee bravely o'er a path of thorns

And smile through tears fast falling.

’Twill raise thy joys to holy heights beyond

The fear of fate befalling.

’Twill bind thee closely to His Sacred Heart,

Oh grace ! beyond all graces !

And woo thee favors from His tender love

At all time, in all places ! ”

The child awoke—the rustle perhaps of wings
 Had reached her spirit's hearing,
 But all she saw was the first rosy flush
 Of Christmas dawn appearing.
 No faint perception of a heavenly grace,
 No dreaming or divining,
 Though in the depths of her blue eyes that smiled
 The gift of *Prayer* was shining!

BELLELLE GUERIN.

SISTER MARGUERITE BOURGEOYS.

CALLED "THE LITTLE ST. GENEVIEVE OF CANADA."

THE ancient city of Troyes, in France, saw, on the Good Friday of the year 1620, the 17th day of April, the birth of Marguerite Bourgeoys. Her parents were in comfortable circumstances, and were noted for their piety and strict devotion to their religious duties. The after life of the illustrious Foundress of the Congregation de Notre Dame so abounds in interest, that it will be impossible to do more than glance at the episodes and incidents which made up the first years of her heroic life.

Between the time when, as a child, it was her delight to assemble her little companions, discoursing to them of the mysteries of faith and the beauties of a life of perfection, to that period which she called the date of her conversion, there was an interval of several years. On the Feast of the Rosary she had joined in the procession at the Dominican Convent, and had seen the face of our Lady shining down on her from the porch of the venerable Abbey aux Nonnains. Thenceforth her life attained a rare degree of perfection. Hitherto she had been fond of gay attire and of worldly society, as she tells us. Now she renounced the world and all its vanities.

She entered the Sodality of the Children of Mary in the Congregation Convent at Troyes, and was soon made president thereof, an office which she filled for twelve years. Under direction of her confessor, she sought admittance to the Carmelites and afterwards to the Poor Clares, but was in both places refused admission. Having then taken vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, she lived in community with three or four pious women, but their charitable undertakings completely failed.

By a series of providential circumstances she became known to the Governor of Ville Marie, M. de Maisonneuve. Through the efforts of M. Olier, Founder of St. Sulpice, M. de la Dauversière, and the members of the Society of Montreal, a settlement had been made on the shores of the St. Lawrence, and M. de Maisonneuve had led thither a devoted little band. On his return to France he visited his sister, a religious of the Congregation at Troyes, who, with others of her Order, expressed a strong desire to labor in the New World for the evangelization of the savages. He, however, was forced to decline their services; but having heard much of the wisdom, zeal and fervor of Margaret Bourgeoys, he asked for an interview with her. She had been meanwhile apprised in a dream of the coming of this stranger, who was to have a powerful effect upon her own life.

At M. de Maisonneuve's urgent request she consented to go to America, having first consulted her director and other ecclesiastics remarkable for wisdom and prudence. She was, however, subjected to an interior trial by the persuasions of certain friends, who believed her called to the Carmelite Order, and the action of the provincial of that community, writing to offer her admittance. In this extremity, she chanced to have recourse to a Jesuit who had been a missionary in Canada, and who unhesitatingly advised her to persevere in her holy intention and hasten to the white harvest fields of those distant lands

A vision which she had of Our Lady confirmed her in her resolve.

She embarked on the "St. Nicholas," on the 20th June, 1653. On board there were one hundred soldiers, one hundred and twenty intending settlers and a certain number of women. The voyage was at first so stormy that the little vessel returned to Nantes. On resuming the voyage, a pestilence broke out, of which eight men on board perished. Margaret Bourgeoys tended the sick with an admirable devotedness, sleeping upon a pile of cordage to be near them. She tasted none of the delicacies which were sent her from the Governor's table, but divided them all amongst her patients. Her influence upon the men, many of whom had been indifferent Catholics or who had led evil lives, was so great as to cause the conversion and happy perseverance of almost all on board.

The vessel reached Quebec September 22nd, and the party were there detained some time, for reasons too tedious to enter upon in detail. The most noteworthy circumstance of our heroine's stay in Quebec was her meeting with Jeanne Mance, Foundress of the Hotel Dieu of Montreal, and the beginning between them of a life-long friendship.

On All Saints' Day of the same year, when the Canadian landscape was still rich with autumnal hues, and a golden sunshine warmed and glorified all things, Margaret Bourgeoys first set foot in Montreal. The little settlement had suffered much in the Governor's absence, chiefly from the incursions of savages, and it required an undaunted heart there to take up one's abode. Margaret began there a life of toil, of privation, of self-sacrifice, of apostolic zeal and of public utility, which can be but briefly hinted at in these pages. Her influence with the Governor was unbounded, and, no doubt, his high and noble character, which made him the model of a

Christian and a gentleman, gained much from this humble woman, whose counsels he heard with reverence.

For the four succeeding years Margaret labored unremittingly. She nursed the poor and the sick; she instructed the ignorant; she made daily rounds amongst the scattered cabins and wigwams which then represented the present flourishing city of Montreal. In scenes the most repugnant to human nature, where poverty, dirt and misery were combined, she exercised her ministry fearless of danger, indifferent to disease. Often, at twilight, she was seen under the great trees which grew upon the slopes of Mount Royal, surrounded by a band of Indians, to whom, holding up the crucifix, she explained the truths of faith. During these years, says a biographer, "Margaret Bourgeoys was the worthy coadjutor of M. de Maisonneuve; and whilst he was forming a material city, she was establishing the spiritual reign of Our Blessed Lady in the hearts of youth." It would be impossible to give any adequate account of the growth and progress of her work as foundress of an institute for the instruction of young girls. From their rude beginnings in the stone stable on the banks of the St. Lawrence, to work accomplished in that spacious building, destroyed by conflagration, and afterwards rebuilt, Margaret Bourgeoys and her companions were the constant benefactors of the little colony in its struggle for civilization. More than once did this undaunted woman cross the ocean to bring out with her new helpers and assistants, till at last native postulants began to offer. "The results of Sister Marguerite's mode of education," writes Charlevoix, "are marvellous. We see at Ville Marie women dwelling in the midst of poverty and misery, perfectly instructed in their religion, ignorant of nothing that they should know, bring up their children in the love and fear of God, sanctifying their lives by the meek acceptance of daily crosses."

(To be continued.)

IMPORTANT TO LOCAL DIRECTORS AND PROMOTERS.

The Rev. Director General of the Holy League in a late number of the *Messenger* makes an authentic declaration which will immensely facilitate the organization of the League in colleges, convents, and academies. Circles may be made up not only of *fifteen*, but also of *ten*, *seven*, *five* members, to meet the wants of places and circumstances. The heads of the smaller groups, for instance of *five*, are entitled to diploma and cross and all the privileges of Promoters.

First, this declaration will prove a great boon to *colleges, convents, and lay communities*, in which grouping into fiftens would not be effective. The efficiency of a League organization depends first on the number of Promoters, and secondly on the influence exercised by Promoters over their associates. Now, it is clear that in schools both conditions must fail by a grouping in fiftens. There could be but a very limited number of heads of circles, and especially little or no exercise of influence. No child or youth apart from the general edification of good example could succeed in inducing *fifteen* companions to be more faithful to the practices of the League. On the other hand, by grouping the class, the sodality, the division, into *fives*, each including a Promoter, there will be a radiation of all kinds of good influences reaching every member of the school. A youth of character, who is good and virtuous, will easily pick out four amongst his friends who will submit to his unobtrusive supervision, his word of advice and, if need be, correction, who will in a word acknowledge his authority. The Council of Promoters held once a month, composed of all the ablest and the best, under the officers of their choice, will have a standing and interest that will lend it great prestige. The

few words of exhortation and advice given by the Director, concerning the League and its practices and the obstacles to be removed or the means to be adopted to advance the interests of the Sacred Heart, which are those of the school or community itself, will have a magnetic effect and reach every member. At the meeting, each booklet of Rosary-mysteries can be divided in fives among three Promoters. Arrangements ought also be made for passing the *Messenger*, that all the Associates may be interested in the intention for the month and the work of the League.

Secondly, this declaration is of great importance in the organization of the *Men's League*, for the reasons just alleged, which are all the more cogent when applied to men. It is a fact of experience that organization of men by fiftens has failed where fives have prospered. Even if the distribution of tickets and Rosary leaflets should be reserved to lady Promoters, the heads of men's groups will find it a noble and congenial task to induce their four friends or dependents to be faithful to their promises, to their communions especially, and the meetings preceding. This work they might do quietly and efficaciously at the beginning of the year, by securing the subscriptions of their associates for the little *Messenger*, if it is not already received in their homes. All who read the *Messenger* are sure to be faithful members of the League, and all at home are sure to read the *Messenger* when it is addressed to the head of the house, and is read by him.

Thirdly, the declaration has its application also in some measure for ladies' *parochial centres*. Not that there could be a better or more effective organization of a *parish* than by circles of fifteen, which meets the requirements both of Promoters and of families, and should by no means be interfered with, but it will allow each Promoter at the head of a circle of fifteen to have a *com-*

missioned officer for her aid, an assistant Promoter entitled to cross and diploma and indulgences, who will bring in fresh recruits, accompany her to meeting and take her place if ill or absent. Thus every family shall be more easily reached and have in its circle a promoter of the interests of the Sacred Heart.

ST. AGNES, JANUARY 21st.



YOUR young readers are doubtless familiar with the name and fame of the gentle Agnes, who, after the Immaculate Virgin, is looked upon as the special patroness of pure souls.

The daughter of a noble house, heiress to vast possessions, possessed of exquisite beauty and high mental endowments, and withal of a gentle, modest demeanor and most winning manners, Agnes was sought as a companion by the youth of the highest Roman society.

When she was yet at tender age the young noblemen vied with each other in endeavoring to win her hand, but to each and all the sole answer was that she had given herself to the God of Heaven and would accept no earthly lover.

The disappointed suitors, hoping to overcome her resolution by threats, and thus gain their prize, denounced her to the Roman governor as a Christian.

The judge, finding threats useless, displayed fearful instruments of torture before the eyes of the fragile maiden, but with no more result than before.

He dragged her before the idols, and commanded her to offer sacrifice, but her hand refused to move excepting to make the sign of the cross.

Finding her immovable, the cruel judge delivered her to the idolatrous spectators, with permission to insult her as they list. Picture to yourself that tender maiden, alone in the midst of a depraved rabble that think only

of lowering her ethereal nature to their own brute level. One young pagan assaults her with rude hands, and lo ! 'tis proven that she is neither alone nor unprotected. The Divine Lover comes to the rescue of His tender spouse, and the ruffian whose very touch would have been contamination, is stricken with instant blindness, and falls trembling to the earth. The rest were filled with terror. They raised their stricken companion, carried him to Agnes, and begged her intercession with her God on his behalf. The gentle, forgiving maiden immediately begged her heavenly spouse to restore him to sight and health, which was done.

Her Christian forgiveness, however, did not soften the hard hearts of her persecutors, who clamored for her death. The judge condemned her to be beheaded, which sentence was at once executed. Many of the spectators wept as they beheld the beautiful maiden thus cruelly martyred. She alone was full of joy at the thought of meeting so soon her heavenly Bridegroom.

Two churches are dedicated to St. Agnes in Rome : one without the city, built on the place of her burial, the other on the spot where she was exposed to the fury of the pagans.

Her relics are kept in the former, in a rich silver shrine. In this church, too, at the High Mass on her feast day two lambs are blessed by the abbot of St. Peter's ad Vincula. They are then carried to the Pope, who himself blesses them.

From their wool is made the Pallium, or distinctive vestment of the Archbishop, which is blessed and sent to the wearer by His Holiness.

Thus the heavenly purity and heroic constancy of the maiden has caused her to become an object of universal homage, while those of her house who were renowned, for merely temporal possessions and honors of earth have passed out of the minds of men.



THE LEAGUE ABROAD.

Italy.

It was not suspected that the fears expressed by the Holy Father when addressing the International Pilgrimage of Youth were to be so soon verified. A thrill of delight seemed to run through the Eternal City on the arrival of so many orderly groups of pilgrims and at the imposing ceremonies attending their reception, as though Rome's departed glory were once more returning with handfuls of money over and above. Press and people applauded the demonstrations. But it was not to be expected that the secret societies would share in the general enthusiasm, nor that the suspicious government of a usurping king would behold with indifference these spontaneous outbursts of sympathy for the dethroned and imprisoned Pontiff. The secret order had been passed from lodge to lodge, and at the signal given by an official of the government, a tumult arose in which Rome seemed to be handed over to an infuriated rabble. The Pope and pilgrims were openly insulted, and many acts of violence were perpetrated. The disorders spread like a fired mine train from the capital to the cities and towns of Italy, the government standing aside inert till its purpose was reached.

The disorders, however, gave place to an agitation on the part of the lodges for a repeal of the laws which guaranteed to the Pope safety and free intercourse with

the Catholic world. Then the Triple Alliance was threatened, and the government had to step in to defend and renew its pledges to the foreign powers by re-affirming through its Prime minister the law of guarantees—sham guarantees! which, as circumstances had just proved, left the Vicar of Christ and Father of Christendom a prey to the fury of his enemies as often as their combined hate and jealousy clamored for vengeance.

France.

In Rome the insults and acts of violence were levelled no less against Frenchmen than against the Pope, and the world was expecting there would be a demand for reparation, but it was soon discovered that the rulers of France and the rulers of Italy, the French lodges and Italian lodges, were united in a common hate of the Church, its Head and true children. Instead of reparation there was tacit approval; and when a patriotic Bishop lifted his voice in protestation, he was cited before a court of correction, and heavily fined. Then there was an outburst of sympathy from the French Episcopate, joined by the highest and best of the land. The indignation of press and people against the government reached a crisis in which it barely escaped an overthrow

Ireland.

It is consoling to return from the Nations of the South to a land retaining all the vigor and freshness of its early faith. Whatever breezes may ripple and agitate the surface of the national life of Ireland, there can be no doubt as to the genuineness and depth of the tide which flows beneath. We shall give an extract of a letter from the Central Director of the League in Ireland to the Director General.

“We number at present 505 affiliated centres. It is impossible to tell all the fruits of the League in Ireland. There is a marvellous spread of the devotion of the *nine First Fridays*; an enormous number of Associates who go to communion every Sunday, and in many places every day; pictures of the Sacred Heart, with lights burning around them all day, are everywhere seen in the churches. Thousands and thousands of the faithful wear the badge of the Sacred Heart. The Treasury of good works offered to the Sacred Heart in the schools gives wonderful returns. The Juvenile League is in vigorous operation in our colleges and boarding schools. The Apostleship of Temperance, peculiar to Ireland, has enrolled over ten thousand names of men and women, who have made the heroic offering to the Sacred Heart of abstinence from all intoxicating drinks for their whole life, in order to set a good example to the unfortunate victims of intemperance, without needing such a pledge for themselves. Thanks to the Sacred Heart, the vice of intemperance is on a rapid decrease in Ireland.

“We have a monthly circulation of *thirty-seven thousand Messengers* of the Sacred Heart. To sum up, never in our poor Ireland were faith and piety more ardent nor our hopes for the future brighter.”

United States.

The Central Director in a letter to the General Director writes: “We number in our great Republic 1,200,000 Associates of the First Degree, 705,000 of the Second, and 100,000 of the Third. They are marshalled by 15,000 Promoters. Our little *Messenger* has a monthly circulation of 23,000. The Holy League is established in all our large cities and in all our dioceses with the exception of one.

"Its fruits have been precious, namely, increase of faith, habits of prayer, numerous conversions, return to the sacraments, frequent communion, renewal of Christian life in parishes where it was dead."

NEW MESSENGERS.

Two new *Messengers* are announced for 1892, one Albanian in European Turkey; the other which will interest us more deeply, being nearer home, is French Canadian. The latter will be edited by the Rev. J. B. Nolin, S.J., known to many of our Associates for his Apostolic zeal, which he confines at present to the French-speaking population of Canada. With the large number of centres already formed, and a population of two millions waiting for his consolations, the Canadian French *Messenger* has a vast field for his zeal and enterprise.

Now there shall be twenty-seven *Messengers* in fifteen different languages, bearing the glad tidings of the League to all parts of the globe.

THE LEAGUE AT HOME.

Quebec.

RECEPTION OF PROMOTERS.

"The most edifying sight," says the *Quebec Daily Telegraph* of Dec. 9th, "ever witnessed in St. Patrick's Church since its foundation was observed by those who happened to be in attendance at the early masses yesterday, feast of the Immaculate Conception. The members of the League of the Sacred Heart, Holy Family, St. Vincent de Paul and St. Patrick's Total Abstinence Societies received Holy Communion in a body, and 2,300 approached the communion rail." There had been a solemn Triduum

in honor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, preached by the eloquent Redemptorist Father Currier, which was "as good as a mission," so abundant were the fruits. The powerful influences of the Holy League in bringing in the careless and the hardened were manifest to all.

The great League demonstration, such as has been rarely if ever equalled in our Northern Land, took place in the evening. One hundred and sixty Promoters—ninety-six ladies, all heads of circles of fifteen, and sixty gentlemen, centres of groups of five—were to receive the diploma and indulgenced cross of their order. Associates without number proudly wearing the badge of the Sacred Heart flocked at an early hour to St. Patrick's from all directions. At seven o'clock the seats, galleries and aisles of the spacious church were thronged, the Promoters holding reserved seats in the aisles. Mgr. Hamel, Apostolic Promotary, presided at the ceremony as representative of the Cardinal Archbishop who was suffering from illness.

The sermon was preached by the Rev. Central Director of the League in Canada, whom Rev. Father Oates, C.S.S.R., had invited from Montreal for the occasion. He spoke of the Devotion to the Sacred Heart as a revival in those latter times of the memory of the Saviour's love and benefits, shown especially in the Incarnation and Redemption, and latterly presented to the world under a sensible form in the manifestation of the Sacred Heart of the Redeemer. Its fruits are a more thorough and loving oblation of our life to God, and the spirit of reparation and zeal. They are gathered especially in the Holy League by its triple practice of Morning Offering of the heart, daily decade of beads, and multiplied Communions of Reparation. A main feature of the Holy League is the body of lay promoters, who are charged to spread the devotion and induce others to adopt the practices. The church has recognized their services, and re-

warded their zealous efforts by bestowing the diploma and cross, accompanied with her most precious indulgences.

After the sermon, followed by an appropriate hymn from the choir, Mgr. Hamel proceeded to the altar-rail to bless the crosses and decorate the Promoters, who advanced two by two to receive them. It was a most edifying spectacle to see the Rev. Rector and Fathers of St. Patrick's go first to receive their crosses. How nobly they had won them was best evidenced by the long double line of Promoters who followed their example, who had been selected and trained by them, and by the two thousand five hundred Associates who looked on, and who since May last had been instructed by them in the solid practices of the League.

The ceremony, which went on like clock-work, was followed by the congregation with intense interest, being the first of the kind ever witnessed in Quebec. At the close, Mgr. Hamel made a brief but happy address. He had been sent by his Eminence the Cardinal, who regretted exceedingly that he could not be present to manifest his affection for St. Patrick's parishioners and the interest he took in the work of their League. Mgr. Hamel felt grateful it was his lot to be sent to preside at such a magnificent ceremony and to address such a large and devout congregation. He congratulated the Directors and Fathers on the success of their work and the consoling recompense they were reaping from it.

At the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament which followed from an altar literally ablaze with lights, Father Maloney, C.S.S.R., solemnly pronounced the Act of Consecration to the Sacred Heart, after having first prepared the devout assemblage by a short though feeling exhortation to join him in heart and intention.

The ceremony, and particularly the Benediction, was accompanied by music such as is rarely heard even at St. Patrick's, Quebec.

The Holy League was inaugurated in June last by the Rev. Father Oates, C.S.S.R. He has proved how easily and efficiently a large and scattered parish like St Patrick's, comprising the whole city and suburbs, can be organized through the simple application of the statutes of the League. Each of the twelve departments into which the city is divided for League purposes has responsible Councillors, and under them a band of Promoters who reach once a month every member of every family in the department, and keep all to their promises which are the solid practices of a Christian life. At the Monthly Meeting of Promoters, each Councillor confers with her Promoters on the work, and wants of the department, and all together on the general interests of the Centre. The Rev. Director takes a deep interest in the welfare of each member, and is always at hand when required.

Glennevis.

On a grove-crowned hill gently rising from the C. P. Railway stands the beautiful and solidly built church of Glennevis. It is the pride of the parish and the centre where the quiet industrious farmers, descendants of Highlanders, sprinkled with a goodly number of French Canadians, meet on Sunday to say their prayers and offer the acceptable sacrifice.

It was not many weeks since a successful Mission had been given, and Father McRae wished to perpetuate its fruits. He had seen the League in action at Cornwall, and desired its benefits to be extended to Glennevis. Therefore he called the Central Director from Montreal on Nov. 22nd. The farmers, notwithstanding the wretched condition of the roads, came long distances, accompanied by their families, to assist at the Sunday mass and to inaugurate the "new League." Father McRae had taken

pains to prepare them, circulating the small League Manual by the hundred over the parish.

Before mass the Juveniles organized, accepting the three degrees with an enthusiasm that quite awakened the older folk,—the boys, who doubled in number the girls, lifting the hand to pledge abstinence from drink and the use of tobacco till twenty-one.

At mass the sermon was on Devotion to the Sacred Heart and the Three Degrees, and closed by an exhortation to join the League. Three hundred of all sexes and conditions eagerly advanced to the altar rail to receive the badge and manifest their desire to be enrolled. A branch of the Men's League was then formed, seventy lifting their hand and giving down their name to pledge temperance and communion five times a year. The ladies organized apart, thirty of the brightest and most active of the younger sort offering their services as Promoters, and proceeding to elect their officers. The work of enrolment began at once, and numbers of tickets, rosary sets and *Messengers* were distributed at the church door.

The Glennevis League promises soon to rival the Cornwall and St. Raphael branches. Father McRae writes that "volunteers to the grand army of the League are increasing rapidly."

Brantford.

The success that has thus far attended the League of the Sacred Heart in St. Basil's has been a source of joy to our Rev. Pastor, our Director and Promoters, and a subject of edification to the whole parish. The membership has been steadily growing.

The Men's branch, with which I am more especially concerned, now numbers close on two hundred. We have our meetings regularly every month. Rev. Father Feeney, our zealous Local Director, always succeeds in interesting

as well as instructing the members more particularly concerning the practices of the League. We have had since June last three general Communions of Reparation, the fourth will take place on Sunday after Christmas. The number of men who went together to Holy Communion with their badge on the first Sunday of November was one hundred and seventy. The day before, the confessionals were crowded till a late hour by men only. It is a source of great edification to the parish to witness so many who heretofore were seldom seen at the altar rail now become regular communicants.

SECRETARY OF MEN'S LEAGUE.

Toronto.

"The little Juvenile League book must be a grand success if it is as popular elsewhere as here. No doubt they must move around by the thousand. You had better send me another hundred, as the last lot is nearly gone. No excuse now for being at Mass without a Prayer Book."

BROTHER ORBANUS.

Montreal.

"I thank the Sacred Heart of Jesus in His goodness to me for getting a good place, which I had promised to acknowledge by the *Messenger*. I am a young Catholic girl who joined the League in Ontario last January, and received regularly my books and tickets till I came here in August. Since then I have not received them, though I say the prayers just the same. Oh, how lonesome I feel without those dear books! I am very anxious to renew my subscription. I have great faith in the League, it has done me so much good already."

ASSOCIATE.

— Ont.

A Good Promoter.

“One of my Associates in the League is leading a very bad life, and I cannot do anything with him. A petition has been sent in every month for him, and I am getting discouraged. Shall I take his name off my list and put on another? Father, I will try him a while longer, perhaps he will change and become good again.”

PROMOTER.

IN THANKSGIVING.

INGERSOLL.—For a great favor obtained in August.

ST. CATHARINES.—For the cure of a certain person whose case seemed hopeless. He was recommended to the League, and is now working steadily.

WYOMING.—For a temporal favor, namely, the sale of a team which realized \$200. After two months it was given back, and the poor man has now another offer of \$200, so he shall have \$400 for his team, for the sale of which a novena and a mass to the Sacred Heart had been offered.

MONTREAL.—For the cure of a severe sprain in the side received in a machine shop. Not being able to move during the night for pain, I made up my mind to go the Hospital if I lived till morning. I applied my League badge, and immediately felt some relief. I awoke in the morning without pain, and instead of going to the hospital went to my work.

MONTREAL PROMOTER.

GALT.—For a temporal favor received by a friend.

GUELPH.—For a very great temporal favor received by a Promoter.

MONTREAL.—For three favors received.

For a great many favors received during the year 1891, by Promoters and Associates.

PROMOTERS' PAGE.

Friday, January 1st, is not only a good day to begin the year well, but it offers a beautiful opportunity to begin the devotion of the Nine First Fridays. This devotion is founded on the following promise made by Our Lord to the Blessed Margaret Mary: *I promise thee, in the excessive mercy of My Heart, that Its all-powerful love will grant to all those who receive communion on the FIRST FRIDAY OF EVERY MONTH, FOR NINE CONSECUTIVE MONTHS, the GRACE OF FINAL PERSEVERANCE, and that they SHALL NOT DIE UNDER MY DISPLEASURE, nor without receiving their sacraments, and My Heart will be their secure refuge at that last hour.*

Eternity hangs on the last moment of life. It will be too late then to prepare, so we must *keep prepared*. The grace of final perseverance, the most precious of all, cannot be merited, but it can be secured by prayer which, if persevered in, will obtain for us a chain of graces reaching to the moment of death. Holy Communion is the most powerful of prayers, and has for its special fruit and end to put us in possession of *everlasting life*, according to the promise of Our Lord in the Gospel (St. John, vi), on condition that we correspond to the grace given. Not that holy communion, even on nine successive Fridays, grants an impunity to sin, but, as St. Bernard teaches, "This Sacrament produces two effects in us: It diminishes the inclination to slight faults, and it takes away our consent to grievous sins." If this is the effect of one communion, what shall we say of nine in succession to comply with a *special desire* of Our Lord confirmed by a *special promise*.

It is a fact of experience, that those who have made the Nine First Fridays are not less careful to avoid sin than they were before or than others who never made them. Many derive such fruit and consolation from the practice that they repeat it many times in their life, and not a few become regular and *frequent* communicants.