

The Family Circle

THE OLD PLAYGROUND.

Our schooldays they come to us
Like shadows through the haze;
We view the kindly faces, and we
Mind the kindly ways
Of all the little boys and girls
We played with long ago,
Upon the old school playground,
Those curly heads of tow.

And too the bright and laughing eyes
Are looking through the mist
The years have flung about us,
That we forget I wist;
But all the old-time friendships
Learn to linger if we say,
"I'd love to take you romping
Out upon that ground to-day!"

I'd love to take you romping out
Upon the old broad walk,
I'd fain go with you arm in arm,
To have an old-time talk;
I'd like to see you hustle at
The tap of recess bell,
A topsy-turvy one and all—
I'm weary as I tell.

A sad old sight 'tis some would make
Upon that ground to-day,
With bleared old eyes and memories
That lead them far away;
Of home ties sadly torn, alack:
The world were none too kind
I'd walk with you and tell it all,
If you, old chum, don't mind.

How many paths that led away
From that old hurtling spot:
How many faces die in mist,
How many joys forgot!
How dear to us 'twill ever be,
The feast that youth hath spread:
Alas! how many of our throng
All silent, now lie dead!

OUR LADY OF SORROWS.

Catholics are wont to consider that significant appellation "Mother of Sorrows" as ranking next to Our Lady's most glorious title, "Immaculate Mother of God." Every true mother participates in a marked degree in her children's sorrow. So Mary, who was the best of mothers, was permitted by her Divine Son to feel the bitterness of Calvary's Sacrifice. Sorrow purifies a mother's love.

The Man of Sorrows, in confiding Our Lady to the beloved St. John's care, would have us to take His Mother of Sorrows to our hearts and hold her as our very own.

Who has not known the healing power of Our Sorrowful Mother during sickness, trials, and gloomy days? Whose consolation was more soothing than the Blessed Mother's when death's angel deprived us of a loved one? Who can sympathise like a mother? If we but seek Our Lady of Sorrows' intercession when disconsolate, she will prove a veritable "Mother most amiable."

Years have passed since we knelt at love's dreary shrine called a mother's grave. How we thought then that our cup of sorrow was indeed filled to the very brim. But we said the "Hail Mary," which mother, now cold in death, had placed on our baby lips. And as we left the dead, courage was renewed in our sad heart, courage to take our place among the living and fight life's battles, confident of Our Lady of Sorrows' daily guidance.

—FATHER JEROME GROSS, O.P.

POPE BENEDICT XV.

The *New York World* correspondent was recently received in audience by Pope Benedict, with other American journalists. In giving his impressions of the personality of the Holy Father, he says:—

I had a very good opportunity a few hours before to meet his Holiness in the same chamber where he received the President, and I have no doubt that he made very much the same impression on the President that he made on me. Within three minutes I made up my mind that the Pontiff was of an unusual type of men. In stature he is probably 5ft 5in. His figure was concealed by the long white robe of most exquisite texture that reached from collar to the ground, concealing the low-cut shoes of white leather in which his feet were encased.

His only ornaments were a belt of white satin richly embroidered in purple and gold, and of course the Fisherman's ring.

The small, round, well-shaped head, set squarely on the narrow, sloping shoulders of the Pontiff, was surmounted by a cap of the sort worn by the humblest monks of the Trappist Order, though it was of white velvet. The only word that could accurately describe the face of the Pope was that it is "sprightly." The features, though small, are exceedingly well chiselled. The nose is of the pronounced Roman type. The forehead is high and broad, the cheeks full and round, with a healthy glow, and the jaw strong, almost aggressive.

The severity of the lower part of the face of the Pontiff, however, is softened by the firm, full lips that incline upward at the corners and through which flash an unusually regular array of small milky white teeth. The ears, fringed by coal black hair in which there gleam fugitive skeins of silver, are almost perfectly modelled, and stand generously away from the head.

But by far the most attractive feature of the Pontiff's face is his eyes. They suggested at once the student and dreamer, "the eyes of introspection, that look in as well as out." They are of dark brown, and there is in the conformation of the brows almost a suggestion of the Oriental. And how they sparkle with kindness and animation! I do not believe I have ever looked into more friendly or patient eyes than those of Pope Benedict, nor into any two in which there lurked so much good humor. They are the sort of eyes that register the keenest appreciation of a good story.

When he talks, the face of the Pope lights up with wonderful mobility, his eyes seem to emphasise with exact appropriateness each point he seeks to make. His voice is soft and musical, but firm and of great carrying volume. His enunciation is delightfully clear and distinct. For a full five minutes during the interview that he accorded a score of American newspaper correspondents and officers who were granted a special audience, the words of welcome uttered by the Pontiff flowed in a mellifluous flood, always in splendid control.

NOT GOOD ENOUGH!

Little Jackie had just finished his tea.

"Oh, mother," he sighed, ecstatically, "I do love cake! It's awfully nice!"

But mother didn't like her son's habit of using fervent language.

"You shouldn't say you 'love' cake, sonny," she reproved gently. "You should say you like it. And 'awfully' is the wrong word. You should use 'very.' Now, dear, say the sentence over again, correctly."

"I like cake; it's very nice," repeated Jackie, obediently.

"There, that's much better," said his mother approvingly.

But Jackie looked disgusted.

"Sounds just as if I was talking about bread!" he muttered.

NO VISITS FOR THEM.

The kirk was in urgent need of repair, and Sandy McNab, a very popular member, had been invited to collect subscriptions for the purpose.