

The Family Circle

THE HERALD OF SPRING.

My heart, awake! and sing with joy and gladness,
 Away with chilling care and brooding sadness,
 For winter's cold and darkness is away,
 And harbinger of Spring is here to-day.
 Hail! snow-white, glistening petals sweet,
 All drooping, as if half afraid to greet
 This world, and leave the bare, brown earthly bed,
 Where long has slept in peace thy tender head.
 Fair messenger, all diffident and shy,
 Ye come to gladden weary passers-by
 With mute but cheering words of hope and light,
 That banish swiftly sad thoughts of the night.
 Awake, my heart! and sing away with sadness,
 For lo! the snowdrop heralds joy and gladness.

THE HAIL MARY.

The following beautiful words occur in a book by the late Canon Sheehan, which is perhaps not so widely known as some of his other works. It is a collection of his early essays and addresses. The words are descriptive of the recitation of the Rosary by a number of exiles from Erin on board a liner to New York, and are as follows:—

"And what are they chanting? Not the 'La ci darem' of an Italian maestro of yesterday, but a certain canticle that was composed by an archangel some nineteen centuries ago, and his audience was a Woman, but blessed above all and among all. And the chorus is another canticle, composed by a chorus of 100,000 voices fourteen centuries ago, and on the streets of an Asiatic city, where the gates of the Cathedral were thrown open, and mitred prelates came forth, and the people anticipated the decision of their pastors, and proclaimed the woman of Nazareth to be the Mother of God. And these two canticles go on and are repeated in the musical murmur of human voices, until they conclude with the great hymn of praise to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, who are and have been and for ever shall be! The canticle of the Rosary is familiar to these poor exiles. They learned it at their mothers' knees—they sang it in the lonely white-washed chapel on the Irish hills—they will carry it in their hearts and on their lips, and like the children of Israel by the waters of Babylon, they will sing that song of Sion in a strange land!"

May God grant that their children and their children's children in a strange land never forget the Rosary which their Irish ancestors loved. Nothing that the strange land can give them in exchange is worth anything in comparison with one of its Hail Mary's.

THE LOVE OF GOD.

Those who have learned to love the Divine Heart are taught day by day to appreciate more and more the wondrous love that was manifested towards the human race when Our Lord instituted the Holy Eucharist. They learn, too, to form a right estimate of the coldness and indifference with which Our Lord is treated in this Sacrament of His love, and they are inspired with a desire not merely to cultivate a tender affection in their own hearts, but to spread the devotion to all mankind.

Attendance at daily Mass, and Communion, if possible, or a daily visit to the Blessed Sacrament, reading spiritual books, are means by which we may foster devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, and by the influence of our example bring others to a closer union with God. To numberless Catholics in our day the reproach of Our Lord might truthfully be repeated: "There hath stood One in the midst of you whom you know not." So many act as if they were unaware of the Sacred Presence patiently waiting in the tabernacle to receive the homage and love of His children.

His return to us on our altars at Mass, at Communion, is not simply that we might worship, but that the need we have of sweetness in religion might be amply supplied.

We must approach His presence, gather about Him, for the refreshment of our lives, to break down the hideous monotony of our work, to add the brightness of love to the gray streets and grayer skies. Not holiness alone, but the beauty of holiness is required to bind our hearts, our whole souls to God. The child, which with its wistful trust demands protection asks for something more than strong defence; it needs also the warm welcome of love. And in so far as we all children, we need the gentleness and mercy of God to be made manifest, else we shall be too frightened to go on. If religion is to mean much to me, I must approach the altar of the sweetness of God that giveth joy to my youth.

YOUR KINGDOM.

There is some place for you to fill,
 Some work for you to do,
 That no one can, or ever will,
 Do quite as well as you.
 It may be close along your way—
 Some little homely duty
 That only waits your touch, your sway,
 To blossom into beauty.

Or it may be that daily tasks
 Cheerfully seen and done,
 Will lead for greater work that asks
 For you and you alone.
 Be brave, whatever it may be,
 The little or the great,
 To meet and do it perfectly
 And you have conquered Fate.

GIRLS WHO ARE LIKED.

Everybody admires the girls who do their best to be pleasant and courteous at all times, who do not repeat unpleasing remarks made by others, who always look neat and nice, who are lavish with their smiles and reluctant to frown, who look out every day for the happy things of life, who try to jump over all the little ridges that break up the smoothness of their path, who are happy because they make people about them see the sunshine, who always have a good word for everybody, and who appreciate the fact that the world was not made for them alone, and who do not always expect the best it has to offer.

THE NEW LABOR PARTY.

(Lend-a-hand week-end parties are now being given by hostesses, at which every guest is expected to help with the housework.)

Guests in stately mansions staying have to mingle work with playing,

For it's not all tea and tennis when no servants can be got;

The duchess sifts the cinders, and the major cleans the "winders,"

And the Honorable Bertie acts as second footman—what!

An heiress, not good-looking, is told off to do the cooking;
 A peeress peels potatoes, and a countess gets the tea;
 One's hostess does the washing, and, with soapsuds round him sloshing,

The mangle's operated by an eminent K.C.

This notable unbending by the folks who go week-ending,
 In spite of all temptations these domestic jobs to shirk,
 Though it makes them feel much thinner, what an appetite for dinner.

Results from these exertions at the novel game of work!

—R. H. ROBERTS, in the Windsor Magazine.

NUTS TO CRACK.

What county in Ireland reminds you of a candle nearly burnt out?—Wicklow.

Why are so few horses needed in the Isle of Wight?—Because so many of the visitors prefer Cowes to Ryde.

Why is an elephant's head different from every other head?—Because if you cut it off you are not removing it from the trunk.

S. F. Aburn

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