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A CHRISTMAS VISION.

Methinks I hear the Christmas bells
Now ringing out their music sweet
And calling men from vales and dells
To worship at the Savior's feet.

Methinks I see that guiding star
That led the wise and holy kings
Across the desert from afar
To see so great and wonderous things.

Methinks I see the midnight cave
The ox, the ass, the crib, the straw,
The snow that falls, the palms that wave,
The earth itself in silent awe.

Methinks I see the mother maid
Caressing her beloved One,
St. Joseph, too, was there, 'tis said,
The guardian of his foster Son.

Methinks I see the God made man
In swaddling clothes, in rags, in cold,
Who there for us those woes began
Which prophets had foreseen of old.

Methinks I hear the Angels' song
Their "Gloria." their "Peace to Men,"
While o'er the cave their legions throng,
Their echoes ring from glen to glen.

I see the shepherds leave their flock
To greet the lowly new born king,
I see them at the hollow rock,
Adore their God, His praises sing.

From wicked men He came to save,
A Cold reception He has got,
For home they gave Him but a cave;
To His own He came, they received Him not.—*M. J. Mc.*

BEFORE THE ALTAR.

The notorious criminal band, which held sway in Paris nearly a century ago, and whose deeds were a national topic for several years, have long since been forgotten, but how and why they were disbanded was perhaps never fully understood. In poring over a collection of old manuscripts which my father brought from across the seas, my eye accidentally perceived the signature of a great sculptor of those days, and instantly its connection with this reign of crime was brought to my mind in a most forcible manner. Mayhap the legend has lost much of its detail, yet the plot recurs to me now almost as vividly as when my grandfather related the tale. If it throws any light upon the events of those days it is useless now, and since the principals are long since dead and all recollection of them lost, no harm may accrue from its recital.

Pierre and Jean were the sons of an humble peasant, reared from infancy in the simple surroundings of a French village and well instructed in those principles which render youth very apt to follow useful and honorable careers. Their father died when they were barely old enough to prepare themselves for the fight with the cruel world but Providence had favored them with a mother who was well able to face toils and troubles. Assisted by their uncle, who was a man of wealth, they managed to obtain a good living.

Pierre had evinced a great talent for carving, ever since he was able to hold a knife in his delicate fingers, and as it grew to be his constant aim to acquire a knowledge of art his mother was at a loss to know how she might encourage the boy. But the uncle had learned of Pierre's great talent. He had talked to the boy and marveled at his good task and evident genius. He told him of the great statues, the elegant paintings and lavish decorations of his magnificent home in the city and noted his eagerness for the beautiful. At length he persuaded the mother that the boy, who was now almost a young man, should go to Paris and enter a famous school; at the same time he would be a son to him, for the uncle had not been gifted with children. The mother acquiesced to this arrangement, feeling confident that she must sacrifice his companionship even though he might not soon return. She dreamed of the future triumphs of her son and was willing to bear the pangs of separation if he might obtain the fulfillment of his cherished objects. So he was brought to the great city, to the surroundings of wealth and luxury, and everything done to advance his talents. He studied with the most proficient masters and every advantage was given him that he might become an adept in his art.

But alas! We are almost forgetting Jean. Surely Jean was hap-

py in his brother's good fortune. Sad to relate, he was not happy. On the contrary, he was much chagrined, and being of an intensely jealous nature, he resolved to go himself as soon as the opportunity was presented. But not to his uncle's house. No. He would do as many had done before, trusting to fortune that the city would harbor them. His good mother as yet had gained no knowledge of the foolish thoughts which were forming in his crafty mind. True, she understood that he was of a wild disposition, that he frequented the haunts of companions who were of evil repute. Time and again she had striven to appeal to his sense of honor, to impress him with a loathing for such dire evils, and when the thought that success was crowning her efforts, she was less cautious. However, the germ of evil had been too strongly nourished by bad associations. "What a hero you would be in Paris! What a grand time you would have," said the tempter. "That is the place to enjoy life and not be tied down in this little village, losing your opportunities. Think what your brother is doing." Aye, there it was again, "the brother." "Yes," thought Jean, "I am as well there as here." And so it came to pass that Jean left his home, left his mother alone, relinquished all and escaped to Paris. But he found it a cruel city. There were none who cared even to notice him. Destitute and friendless, tired and famished he walked the streets, not knowing whither he might turn. Then he met those who are ever ready to aid if one will stoop to crime. He thought once more of the uncle, of his mother, whom he knew was spending her days and nights in sorrow and despair over his shameful act. He dared not return, he dared not look to his uncle, and dismissing all thought of ever again seeing the creatures who loved him best, he mingled with the wreck who thronged the cheap lodging houses and public inns. He became acquainted with crime, at first fearful of the consequence, but ever spurred on by the rogues who found him a tool of greatest use in their calling. He advanced until he was unable to dream of ever retracing his wicked steps, and finally became recognized with the most notorious ruffians of the city. Their crimes were the terror of all peaceful citizens and the authorities were in despair. Amongst such men, Jean gradually grew more cruel. He became hardened to deeds from which man shrinks in terror, and if he was not the worst he was rapidly becoming indifferent to consequences. He had even been intrusted with the leadership of this daring band, and many of their well planned escapades were the fruit of his excellent management. Thus he progressed in his criminal career. Ten long years passed and Jean had grown much older. He had learned how to evade the authorities, how his companions were feared, and had

grown able to enjoy the city and look about him with only an occasional fear of apprehension. But in these many years he had carefully avoided the uncle's establishment, and only now, as the desire of new things possessed him, did he seek out his brother. He had searched the city in vain for any trace of Pierre, but learned from servants at the house that he was abroad. Finally, by a generous donation to the trusted "majordomo," he elicited the information that Pierre had studied in Italy and was now executing a commission in a famous cathedral of France, in fact, if the servant's memory did not fail him, he would return at Christmas. He said that Pierre had not been in Paris since receiving the commission, some four years back, and what was more, he gave glowing descriptions of the growing fame of the young sculptor, couched in such exorbitant phrases that the jealousy of Jean could scarce contain itself. Furthermore, said the loquacious servant, "The uncle has willed his fortune to Pierre and his brother, Jean; or in case either of the brothers should die, the wealth will devolve upon the surviving one. But Jean left his home many years ago and as all trace of him has been lost, it is believed that he is dead. Consequently Pierre will acquire all this wealth, and I am sure, will use it to excellent advantage."

Jean had heard enough. He retired to his apartments with a vivid image of his uncle's magnificent house, impressed upon his mind. He thought of the great wealth, the spacious estates, which would eventually devolve upon his brother, and in his criminal mind looked only to personal gain. No doubt they thought him dead. None knew of his whereabouts. What a brilliant scheme! To kill the brother in the lonely cathedral and claim the estates in course of time, when the uncle died, and his own shame had been forgotten. Who would know whether Pierre had fallen from accident, or by the hand of a cruel assassin?

The plot developed and in the crafty mind of the hardened criminal seemed easy of accomplishment. Acting upon his pitiless plans, and seemingly determined, Jean left Paris for the scene of the crime, arriving finally to find the object of his journey busily engaged in the cathedral. At least he learned as much from the innkeeper where he lodged. The town was in festive array, old people as well as young were radiant, their countenances reflecting the gladness of some coming event. It was Christmas week, the cathedral was to be solemnly opened on the feast day, and all was expectancy and rejoicing over the promised fete. "Aha!" thought Jean, "his triumph will not be. It shall be mine. So he does not show himself outside the church, and is working night and day to complete the work. How useless are all

his hopes? How easily they will be crushed. Tomorrow, and all is o'er."

At nightfall Jean betook himself to the cathedral, stopping some moments in admiration at the massive structure with its towering spires, looming as giant spectres in the gathering twilight. He paused at the entrance, as well he might, and for a moment fear held him spellbound. It had been many a year since his wandering feet had touched the threshold of a church. Quickly dispelling such distractions, he entered the vestibule, then carefully crept into the main aisle. A single light burned within, revealing but in indistinct lines the impressive beauty of the decorations, transforming them, as it were, into wierd and fanciful spectres. An old man entered with a burning taper, carefully placing numerous lights in the sanctuary after lighting which he silently withdrew the door rattled behind him, and as its answering echoes died away, an oppressive silence followed. No sound to break the stillness, save now and then the echoing click of hammer and chisel, as the artist busied himself, here and there, putting the final touches to his work.

Jean viewed the scene as one in a dream. He had carefully concealed himself behind a marble pillar, and gazed with awe at the grand altar around which burned the brilliant lights, aiding the solitary workman in completing his task and what a noble achievement above the marble base elegantly wrought in figures of saints and martyrs, rose the delicate spires carved in wood, with wonderful niches in which reposed matchless reproductions of human and spiritual life, while festoons and garlands of flowers borne in the hands of angels, were draped about them. It was a masterpiece of handicraft, the work of years of patient toil, and the lone artist had given his time and genius for a noble aim, to erect a suitable expression of his love and fidelity to Him who had endowed him with noble talents.

The hours flew swiftly by. It was nearly midnight, and still Jean stood entranced with the inspiring work. As he looked the artist moved forward, gazing in a speechless transport of satisfaction at the completed work. The last touch had been given, the masterpiece was ready for the critical world. A resounding thud as hammer and chisel struck the floor, a pair of uplifted hands, and the sculptor knelt in prayer and thanksgiving. Yet in that brief moment years of agony had crossed the mind of Jean. He had recognized in the artist the companion of his youthful joys and games. The face had grown older, yet he saw in it but the thoughtful boy of former years. It brought memories of his mother left sorrowing and alone. What a sad day the morrow would be to her! The Christmas joys would be

but as memories to sadden and darken her life, when she would think of her erring son. All the shame and misery of sin rose in the mind of Jean, but as it rose there came also the knowledge of the foolishness of his deeds, and the sweet balm of repentance. Though the struggle was short it was none the less heartrending. He arose safely and tiptoed to where the artist knelt, and there rose to heaven a double thanksgiving, a double triumph, Pierre to pour forth his soul in rapturous gratitude; Jean in thanks that his spirit had awakened, in earnest repentance and hope of reparation.

A single look from Pierre's soulful eyes, a single gesture, but one joyful cry and the two brothers clasped each other in loving embrace.

In the grand belfry a hundred chiming bells burst upon the midnight air, proclaiming the love and sacrifice of the Savior, the birth of a new life for Pierre and Jean.

W. J. Cleary, '03.

THEIR FIRST LESSON IN CHARITY.

It was on a bright December evening, the weather was cold but fair; the moon was slowly ascending the heavens, spreading everywhere her chaste, mild light. A white mantle of snow covered the ground, the huge pines of the forest, and the mountain sides, the river alone marked its course by a winding black line across the landscape. On that night no cloud broke the serene of heaven, no sound filled the silent air; the icy atmosphere had chilled nature to its very depths. Amidst such pleasant surroundings lies the city of B——. The old clock in the steeple had just struck eleven, yet all the dwellings, from the superb mansions of the nobles to the cottages of the poor, were glittering with an unusual display of festival solemnity. But what was the cause of this general exultation and prolonged watch? It was Christmas eve and the inhabitants were joyously awaiting the last summons of the chimes to direct themselves towards their venerable old church and assist at the traditional midnight service which had been the custom for years and years. Not far from the church stands the splendid home of Count Fabriano, the subject of our sketch. How beautiful it is. All indicates comfort, happiness and ease. The Count is sitting near the fireside surrounded by his two lovely children little Bernardo and little Agnes, the former ten years old and the latter eight. He is telling them of Christmas; what a grand festival it is for Christians and the joy it brings to all hearts; how little children in particular are glad on that day to go and adore the infant Savior lying in the manger. Then he also told them that many on this day of universal rejoicing are sad and suffer from cold and hunger; how some

poor mothers have to go through the streets and beg for food because they have none at home, and how also they have to go to the forest and gather up faggots of wood because they have no fire and are perishing from cold. Little Bernardo and little Agnes had been listening with the greatest attention, and their sweet faces so gay at the beginning were now grave, and tears could be seen running down their rosy cheeks. "O," cried Bernardo, "that I could console all these poor mothers and make their homes warm and happy! "Oh that I could also!" replied Agnes. The Count admired the kindness of heart of his children and kissing each of them tenderly said: "I see, dear children, that you love the poor and that you are disposed to help them, but if we cannot come to the aid of all there are some near us whom we can help and console. How glad they would be tomorrow if we should think of them and bring them food and presents!" "Father," cried Agnes, "we will not forget them." "Tomorrow" replied Bernardo, "we will visit them. How happy the poor children would be also to have toys like ours. We are rich and we have so many; let us bring some to them." "You are very kind, Bernardo," answered Agnes. "I will partake of your generosity." The dial now marked eleven and thirty, and the sacred chimes called the faithful to the midnight service. What a beautiful sight it was to see the whole city making its way to the church. It is the dread of night; the moon in her full-orbed glory softly rolls through the starry paths of heaven, casting in her flight fantastic shadows like phantoms usurping the solitudes of night. The clock now strikes twelve and at the same time the chimes are once more swung into music. People old and young, nobles and peasants, all are flocking to the church, whose old, gothic towers seem to tell them the story of many a Christmas night. Among melodious strains the holy service begins. How poetical, how sublime, how heavenly a spectacle! At an hour when all nature is plunged in its deepest slumber, how admirable to see mankind uniting itself to the choirs of Angels to sing the "Gloria Excelsis Deo" and welcome the new-born Saviour! With what interest little Bernardo and little Agnes gaze on everything they see; how their young hearts beat with joy and love when they behold the Infant Jesus greeting them from the manger; how poor and how cold he seems to be; and again they are filled with sympathy for Him and for the poor, whom they know He loves so well. The divine service being now over all are returning to their homes edified and consoled. Bernardo and Agnes are soon in their warm beds dreaming of Christmas and its wonders. The next morning the golden sun announced another lovely day. The whole city was early up to enjoy a longer Christmas day.

Count Fabriano now asked his children if they still adhered to their promise of spending Christmas day in helping and consoling the poor and he found that it was as sincere as ever. After some preparations they set out on their tour of charity, the Count taking along money and the children food and presents. Their promise was indeed a noble one and they were fulfilling it very gladly and sincerely, but it was not however, without a little tinge of sadness that they could see the other children skating on the crystal ice and sliding down the mountain side when they thought that their whole day would be spent in the interest of the poor; but they fully understood the worth of their sacrifice and knew that the day would not be lost, but that it would bring happiness on the faces of many and the blessing of Heaven on their own home. The first house they entered was that of a widow, the sole support of five children, the youngest of whom was only three years old and the eldest twelve. She received the Count with all the formality possible and inquired the cause that had directed his Excellency to her obscure dwelling. The poor children were gazing on Bernardo and Agnes without ever satisfying their curiosity, and by their sad look seemed to tell them how they envied their lot. What a pitiful sight it was indeed for Bernardo and Agnes, they who had always lived in a magnificent castle and enjoyed the sweetest happiness from the hands of kind and affectionate parent. It was the first time they ever entered so miserable a home and they could scarcely hold their tears when they saw the destitution of its unhappy inmates. The mother had but a small supply of food and was preparing a meager dinner for her hungry children who had not eaten any breakfast that day. Two small rooms were the narrow dimensions of the house. The sole ornaments of the first were a rude table, two broken chairs and a wooden crucifix hanging on the wall. In one corner an old brick hearth was blazing with the flames of a scanty fuel. In the other apartment six straw beds could be seen lying side by side and covered only by thin blankets; a chilly temperature penetrating to the very bones pervaded the wretched hovel. Three of the little children covered with rags, were sitting on the floor patiently awaiting their frugal dinner; the youngest was crying from cold and hunger, whilst the eldest was outside chopping wood with an ax, whose blunt edge evinced long and sturdy service. The Count soon expressed the purpose of his visit and spoke of the intention of his children. At that moment Bernardo and Agnes opened two large baskets containing food and presents while Count Fabriano placed a sum of money in the hand of the widow, who could scarcely believe her eyes. The food and presents were distributed among the family and the money was to

buy clothes and fuel. From this moment a gleam of happiness shone on those melancholy faces and with tears in her eyes the widow thanked Count Fabriano and his good children for having thought of them in their distress and ardently besought Heaven to spread upon her kind benefactors the most abundant blessings. Bernardo and Agnes were now happy; they had performed a noble deed, the remembrance of which they would never lose hereafter. They were now preparing to leave, but before parting they assured the widow that they would not forget her, but would continue to help her and she on her part with tears of joy, also assured them of her undying gratitude. They now resumed their march and after a short walk rapped at another door. An aged woman opened to them and again they found themselves in a wretched dwelling, small, cold and inhabited only by a venerable old couple, living on what casual bounty yielded them. On a wooden bed lay the old man, a sick cripple; his wife had just returned from her morning march: "a long and painful one," said she, "but almost fruitless; charity coldly given and often utterly refused," and with tears she pointed to her suffering husband, for whose sake especially she had undertaken "her long, painless and fruitless march." She talked much of his sufferings and needs and of all their woes. She told that once they were favored by fortune, that wealth, ease and happiness flourished in their stately home, but a sudden misfortune having come scattered all their property, leaving them in an extreme need, and that after many years of hard labor they were, on account of their old age, unable to keep up the struggle and compelled to beg alms. This sad narration again drew tears from the eyes of Count Fabriano and his kindhearted children. After a short silence, the Count moved to a profound pity at their desperate condition, proposed to have them taken to Santa Maria del Monte, an institution for the aged and infirm, Bernardo and Agnes besought their father to do so at once. Count Fabriano then consoled the aged couple by his promise and once more joy and hope cheered the drooping spirits of a poor family who had patiently borne the hardships of many long years to be at last relieved by the charity of a noble Christian father and the disinterestedness of his two warm-hearted children. After this visit they once more set out and marched till they came to another door; here again they consoled a suffering household by their kind words and alms. Keeping up their march of charity they had towards the end of the day visited and comforted six poor families, who now owed to them a peaceful and joyous Christmas day. Count Fabriano, Bernardo and Agnes now directed their steps toward their own dear home from which they had been absent most of the day. They were soon

in the arms of their loving mother who had willingly acquiesced to their noble idea, even at the sacrifice of being deprived of their charming presence on that festival day. Many things had they to tell her concerning the poor whom they had visited, adding that they could never forget them in the future. After a day totally devoted to deeds of charity these good little children had the happiness of retiring with the blessing of Heaven upon them and with the sweet hope of an eternal reward. So true is it that peace and contentment lie above all in the performance of good works and the practice of virtue.

R. Richer, '03.

THE TRIALS OF EARLY SETTLERS.

At the beginning of the Seventeenth Century fabulous accounts of the new world were widely circulated in Europe and exercised a powerful influence in inducing many adventurous spirits to quit their native country and try their fortune, among new scenes and opportunities. Although in most cases their expectations of realizing large fortunes in a short time were not fulfilled, yet there were comparatively few who did not better their condition in the new world.

Among those, who were induced to come to this country shortly after the settlement of Jamestown, was a certain family, named Richardson, consisting of the father, mother and a young son, Robert. The design once formed, preparations were hastily made for the trip as summer was drawing nigh and this season was most favorable in those days for such a voyage. In the colonial days it took from forty to sixty days to cross the ocean, since mere sailing crafts were used, not possessing the conveniences that our modern vessels have for making such voyages.

On the 15th of April all being in readiness, Mr. Richardson and family, with a party of other emigrants took passage on the Somerset, which was one of the largest and swiftest vessels afloat. During the first two or three days at sea, some fear was felt when their native shore disappeared from sight and nothing met their eyes except the rolling waves and the blue canopy of heaven. But notwithstanding these fears and the few tempestuous nights that were passed, all were joyous, since every day brought them closer to that world, the glowing accounts of which had so filled their imaginations.

It was on the eve of the 13th of June that land was first sighted and instantly everything was hurry and hustle among the joyous passengers, some cheered, some knelt in thanksgiving for their safe voyage, whilst others made preparations for disembarking. On the following morning Mr. Richardson and family with a small party landed on the

coasts of Virginia, others remaining on board to sail for more distant parts.

What a grand panorama spread itself before them when they stepped on the shores of this favored land. Mr. Richardson and his fellow colonists were filled with wonder and admiration at sight of the beautiful scenery and luxuriant vegetation which everywhere met their gaze and to which they were so little accustomed. The landscape was diversified by every beauty that could please the eye or charm the imagination. In the distance they could discern the dim outlines of towering mountains whose snowy peaks glittered in the morning sunlight. A level plain, broken here and there by proud rivers and gentle streams, stretched away for miles to the foot of the mountains, whilst the air was vocal with the melodies of innumerable song birds. The happy emigrants felt that at least some of their bright dreams concerning the new world would be fully realized.

After spending some time in reviewing the surrounding country, Mr. Richardson and his family found a suitable location near a small colonial settlement. For a short time fortune smiled on all their undertakings and they were becoming accustomed to their isolated condition in their new surroundings; but in the early days of winter a severe misfortune fell upon the little household which completely destroyed their happiness. Mr. Richardson followed the occupation—so often adopted by the first colonists—of hunting and trading with the Indians.

Just at this time the Indians, at first friendly to the whites, were beginning to be suspicious of the white settlers and to treat them with dislike and hostility. In consequence of this the life of the hunter became still more hazardous and for that very reason more pleasing to many a hardy settler. John Richardson belonged to this class of men and on one of his hunting and trapping expeditions penetrated further into the interior of the country than he had been hitherto accustomed to do. When he did not return at the expected time his little family was filled with apprehensions for his safety. Weeks stretched into months and still no report from the daring hunter. The fears of his wife were increased a hundred fold when the report spread in the little settlement that several tribes were on the war-path and breathing vengeance against the whites.

The snows of winter were disappearing at the approach of spring and yet John Richardson did not return to dispell the cruel fears that were devouring his poor lonely wife and son. Who shall describe the anguish which prevailed in that small household during the long dreary nights of winter. Every night the mother took her young son in her

arms and whilst trying to comfort him she often mingled her tears with his. Many a night, after putting little Robert to bed, the poor mother sat alone by the fireside striving in vain to repress the scalding tears which sprang unbidden to her eyes. Yet she never ceased to pray for her husband and despite her well founded fears, never wholly despaired of seeing him again. Were it not for this slight ray of hope she would certainly have been unable to bear up under her terrible trial. Hunters had often been given up for lost who afterwards returned to their homes. Somehow or other she never rose after pouring out her whole soul in prayer without feeling a certain new strength and confidence.

Spring had now come, but the joyous aspect of nature and the singing of the birds, far from lessening her grief, made it more keen and insupportable by contrast. It recalled to her mind the happy days of the preceding year when the presence of her husband made these things delightful. She had now no source of earthly comfort and therefore she threw herself with all the fervor of her ardent nature upon the Supreme Father who cares even for the birds of the forest.

Though Mr. Richardson had left them well supplied with provisions before his departure, his wife knew that these would soon be exhausted if she did not exert herself to renew them. Accordingly, she set about cultivating the little plot of ground her husband had broken the previous year, and with the little assistance Robert was able to give her, she managed to grow sufficient corn and vegetables to sustain herself and son during the following winter. She was obliged to work early and late, but this was really a blessing for it prevented her from brooding upon her great sorrow so constantly as she otherwise would have done.

Summer and autumn had passed and winter once more spread the snowy mantle over the sleeping earth. But time had no power to heal the anguish of heart which that poor mother endured in her desolate and almost helpless condition. She felt that she would not be able to bear much longer the burden she was obliged to assume. During the past year she had aged visibly. Suffering and exposure had chased the bloom from her cheek and streaked her auburn locks with gray. Why should she try to sustain the unequal struggle? What was there now to live for? He, who alone could make life endurable in these lonely surroundings, was lost to her forever. It was only by fervent prayer that she dispelled these gloomy thoughts. She must not give up yet. There was little Robert who would be helpless without her. Yet nature has limits beyond which it cannot go and Mrs. Richardson

would in all probability have broken down had not a fortunate circumstance sustained her.

It was Christmas eve. A Jesuit missionary traveling through that part of the country to minister to the spiritual wants of the few scattered Catholic families, stopped at the little log hut of Mrs. Richardson. The Richardsons were earnest Catholics, and great was the joy of the poor woman when she learned that her visitor was a priest. During the course of the evening she related to him her sad story and the kindly words and tender sympathy of the good missionary acted like a healing balm upon the bruised heart of this long suffering woman. He told her many stories concerning his experiences with the Indians. How he had once saved a man whom the Indians were on the point of burning at the stake. Instantly Mrs. Richardson was all excitement. Might it not be her husband? When was it? What is the description of the man? The Father informed her that it had been nearly a year ago. He could not give a description of the man since the event had occurred at night and he was not permitted to see the man. But he did not think it could be her husband because it was very far in the interior of the country. She was however encouraged by the assurance of the missionary that he had known several cases where hunters had returned after even a longer absence.

A trusty Indian had been sent to search out the Catholic families in the surrounding country and to inform them that mass would be celebrated at the house of Mrs. Richardson on the following day—Christmas. Accordingly a few Catholic families assembled on Christmas day, accompanied by several devout Indian converts to assist at the holy sacrifice. It may be readily imagined with what fervor Mrs. Richardson poured out her prayers at the foot of the rude Altar whilst the dread immolation of Cavalry was being renewed. So true is it that nothing so opens the deep fountains of the human heart as suffering.

After a short instruction on the festival of the day the devout worshippers returned to their humble homes, with far other feelings than they had come. After promising to do all in his power to ascertain the fate of Mr. Richardson and to visit her again in the course of three months, the missionary prepared to take his departure for a mission twenty miles distant where he was to say mass the same day. They heard a few creaking steps in the deep snow. The next instant the door flew open and John Richardson rushed into the room. With a cry of joy his wife flew to his side, cast her arms around his neck and in the ecstasy of her joy burst into a flood of tears. Little Robert was caught up in his father's arms and pressed to his heaving breast.

After a few moments Mr. Richardson was introduced to the mis-

sionary and began to relate the cause of his long absence. He had been captured by a hostile band of Indians who carried him far into the interior of the country. They were about to burn him at the stake, and, according to their custom, were holding a council of the braves to decide upon the manner of his preliminary torture. A missionary who was preaching amongst them at the time, heard of their design and procured his pardon from the chief. It seems that the missionary had once cured the chief's son from a severe sickness and to show his gratitude he had consented to spare the prisoner. They did not, however, set him free at once, although he had been in no way ill treated. It had taken him almost two months to reach home. "Why Father, you are savor of my husband," said Mrs. Richardson, when her husband had ceased speaking. "How can I ever be sufficiently grateful." "To me indeed, you have been an angel of God." The priest blessed the now happy family, bade them an affectionate farewell and set out for his mission. That was indeed a happy and a memorable Christmas for this family.

L. J. Finnigan, '03.



THE FIRST CHRISTMAS.

In the east the morn was breaking,
Still the dusk hung in the sky,
And the world was calm and silent!
As it slept beneath God's eye.

And the snow from heaven was falling,
And had settled on the ground
As if myriads of angels
From God's throne had circled down.

Down the hillside came the shepherds,
At their heels the sleepy fold;
And their eyes were fixed steadfast
On a star that seemed of gold.

In their face was seen excitement,
In their eyes were faith and love,
As they swiftly hurried onward,
Looking at that star above.

Soon they reached a little hamlet,
And their guiding star did stay
O'er a humble little manger
Where a new born infant lay.

And they saw a form there kneeling,
Of a woman fair and bright,
Round whose brow was placed a halo
Of a superhuman light.

She was clothed in snow white raiment;
She was shod in sandals soft;
By the cradle of a baby
Knelt she, looking far aloft.

In her face there shone a brightness,
Born alone of trust and love;
Through her lips a prayer she breathed,
Of her thanks to God above.

And this cradle was a manger,
And the child our sacred Lord,
And the mother was a virgin,
Mother of her own accord.

A. F. Hansl, '03.

ON CHRISTMAS MORN.

It is Christmas Eve. Far back from a country roadside, a taper burns dimly within a humble cottage and a mother watches tenderly by the bedside of her sick boy, anxiously awaiting the arrival of an expected one.

Within this lonely habitation no signs of wealth or luxury are visible, nothing is suggestive of other means of support than the savings of a mother, or the fruits of a father's honest toil. Yet within its bare walls love and affection reigned. It was truly the domain of peace and happiness.

But at last a misfortune enveloped it within its dark shadows. Cruel Fate forced a loving father apart from wife and babe.

Owing to a strike which prevailed in the neighborhood he was thrown out of employment. Day after day had he tramped the streets seeking work but to no avail. No prospect presented itself of obtaining even the hardest kind of labor, during the prolonged strike, until at length the household, once so bright and happy, was reduced to utter destitution, and felt the pangs of cold and hunger.

It was fortunate indeed that the family consisted only of the parents and a little boy with golden hair and a face tinged with the beauty of six bright summers, "Little Harry" as he was called, the pride and joy of the neighborhood. So small a family managed to gain a few of the necessities of life from kind neighbors. Yet they often experienced the greatest want and frequently retired at night unnourished by the meals of a day and destitute of the hope for them the succeeding day. Often had Little Harry cried for bread, his mother having nothing to give him but her tears. Thus they continued to live in the greatest poverty, objects of the world's charity.

But at length they witnessed the dawn of a better day. God heard a mother's prayer. The father broken in health, lean and gaunt, a mere skeleton, received the long prayed for opportunity of gaining a livelihood for his wife and child. A prospecting expedition was being organized in his native town, and having volunteered his service was finally accepted, more through pity for a starving family than for any value he might prove to the company. The father and mother were now radiant with hope. They saw the brighter and better days that were sure to come, though they were to cost the long separation of a kind and tender father.

At last the day of parting came. Everything had been placed in readiness, and after taking an affectionate farewell from his companions of many days of bitter sorrows and terrible sufferings, the father

boarded the train which was to bear him away to a seaport town whence he was to sail away to a distant clime.

After many days of sailing over rough seas, he landed on foreign soil, far from his loved ones, but with a stout heart and resolute in his determination to make a gallant fight for the lives of those from whom he was forced to part.

Thus he set to work. Days lengthened into weeks and weeks into months. Often had he sent the extent of a few weeks savings to those for whom he had come hither.

It was now over three years since his departure from home. His health had been completely restored and he had saved considerable money. He began to think of the happy day that would reunite him to the scene of his greatest joys. Letters from home told of the same prosperous circumstances. The humble cottage seemed to be imbued with a new life; all its former sadness and desolation had been expelled. The once unadorned walls were now ornamented with pictures, the bare floors were now covered with carpets, everything looked brighter and gayer. Little Harry advanced a little in years. A budding flower of youth was the delight of the household, making its life sweeter with his prattling tongue and joyous smiles. Nothing remained now but the home coming of the father to make their happiness complete. The mother thought that now their miseries in this world were at an end, but in this she was mistaken.

One cold morning Little Harry contracted a severe cold which gradually assumed new violence until it finally developed into a raging fever. A physician was quickly summoned, who pronounced it a most serious case of pneumonia and declared that unless the patient was given the greatest of care he would not recover.

Harry's mother saw the future without him who had made life dear to her. She also saw the past, the day that she longed for the time when Harry, then a mere babe, would say that sacred word "mother." She saw the day when she longed for the time when he would be able to accompany her in her rambles by the brook or wander in the fields and gather flowers. All this had been realized and more. Each day seemed to bring a new beauty to his cheek, seemed to make him purer and fairer, and then she saw but too plainly what the world would be without him. Still she hoped and prayed. God was good and surely would not deprive her of her greatest treasure.

A week of trouble, pain and anxiety have passed and still Harry did not improve. During that short period the mother seemed to have grown much older. She was pale, haggard and almost exhausted with grief. The father was far off, unacquainted with the new afflictions which had visited his fireside.

Two days more have dragged by and their effect told terribly on poor little Harry. There he lay, pale, apparently helpless, his locks of gold matted, his eyes sunk in their sockets, while beneath the pallid glare of his once fair brow the pale face of death is already visible. Another day came and went but with no improvement in Harry. The fever commenced to rage more furiously and Harry began to rave and call for his father.

The shades of evening deepen into night and during all that long and terrible night the fever raged and Harry continued to call for his father. It is morning; the doctor pays his visit and says that there will be a change in Harry's condition about midnight. He also says that if his father were near him his life might be saved.

The day is drawing to a close, and often during its long and sad hours had Harry's mother knelt in prayer asking God to spare the life of her boy. Oh the depths and fervor of her prayer.

It is Christmas Eve. A mother watches anxiously awaiting the arrival of her husband. The letters which arrived a few days before said that he would surely be home on Christmas Eve. Would he be faithful to his promise? If so Harry's life would be saved.

A few hours creep by. Suddenly the Christmas bells are heard ringing. The door of the lonely cottage opens; the father enters; the mother rushes in his strong arms. He hastens to the bedside of little Harry and presses a kiss upon his burning lips. Harry rolls his blue eyes in an empty, vacant glare, recovers consciousness, recognizes his father and holds up his little white hands to him.

The gray hours of morning had broken. The chimes of the little country church ring out sweetly on the morning air. Little Harry still lives and all notice his great improvement for he smiles and fills the room with the ripple of his laughter. Then all felt and knew that the Christ child had heard and answered a mother's prayer and that He came that Christmas night to save her child, as He came to save the world that night two thousand years ago.

James F. Sullivan, '03.

THE VIATORIAN.

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EDITORIAL.

The Christmas holidays begin on Thursday, December 20. The VIATORIAN wishes both students, professors and readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. When we meet again every possibility for a debate on the century question will be at an end. No one can then deny us the luxury of living in the Twentieth Century.

At no season of the year is the old proverb, "It is better to give than to receive," so readily admitted and so cheerfully acted upon as on Christmas day. Then it seems easy to believe that the greatest happiness here below comes from the thought of some good donor. Nothing can fill the soul with greater satisfaction or cause it purer delight than the knowledge that through our instrumentality the burden of some fellow being has been lightened or that a ray of hope has lifted the gloom from some sorely tried spirit.

No festiyl has such power to open the deepest fountains of love and sympathy in the human heart and to unlock the rich treasures of fraternal charity and generous action as that thrice-hallowed festival—Christmas. The compelling example of the Man-God has borne abundant fruit wherever His name has been preached, even though faith in Him does not exist.

Who will dare deny relief to the needy when the Babe of Bethlehem pleads in their behalf? Who will turn a deaf ear to the cry of the orphan when the voice of the Christ child is raised for them in supplication? Will sorrow be without consolation and suffering, without that active, kindly sympathy which robs it of half its anguish, when they present themselvss under the winsome form of the Babe of Bethlehem? There is therefore, no phase of human life which does not come under the immediate influence of this grand, Christian Holy day—Christmas.

What a fullness meaning of the mere sound of the word conveys to the devout Christian! When we shall have exhausted our vocabu-

ary and the mind shall have grown weary in its endeavor to find suitable expressions to qualify it, when the imagination shall have exhausted its bright images in a vain effort to lend color to a description of the beauties and glories of this day, then must the heart supply what thought cannot give and imagination paint.

'Tis really a season of heroic doing and giving. If divinity became human to save and uplift fallen man why may not humanity become God-like in the practice of genuine charity towards his fellow man? Not in the cold act of reaching out a mere gift or toy to gladden a childish heart, nor in the still colder formality of wishing a "Merry Christmas," but in the expression of genuine sympathy for which so many yearn and the absence of which makes more lives sad and desolate than could poverty, sickness, misfortune or any other material loss.

If there be one thing more than another that has endeared Christmas to men, it is this, that it has always been associated with family joy, reunion. Not all the whims and passions and false aspirations of men can rob the holy time of its legacy of joy. Be as inconsistent as we may, the feeling is born of the day, and every nation, every religion, even men without religion, look to it as a time when they can find happiness, peace and contentment by making others happy; though they see not or will not see that there must needs be something not of earth that lends enchanting glory to this first and greatest of days.

It seems impossible for men to lock themselves up in their selfishness and to refuse sympathy and encouragement to the afflicted on Christmas. Students should take the greatest care to divest themselves of their proverbial self-seeking and spend one day at least in seeking to promote the happiness of those around them. Let them not believe that everything is due to them and nothing due from them to others, especially to parents. This generous, manly conviction will best show itself in act. Let us strive, then, to make our home-coming a source of pleasure to those around us.

ST. CAECILIA'S DAY.

To the lovers of music and the beautiful in art, a more delightful treat could not be given than the program delivered on the eve of St. Caecilia's Feast. On that occasion an enthusiastic audience gave ample testimony of the exquisite pleasure derived from the admirable rendition of both the Operetta and the Sacred Concert.

Owing to its gratifying success at the commencement exercises of Jun
eretta, "The Young Martyrs" was again brought

forth upon the stage by its distinguished author, Rev. M. J. Marsile, C. S. V. Following we give the

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

Domitiare Emperor,	- - - - -	Mr. A. Hans
Clemens Martyr,	- - - - -	Mr. D. Feely
Perennis Martyr, }	Sons to Clemens, - - -	Mr. J. Monahan
Lavinus Martyr, }		Mr. Leo Phillips
Cimber A Courtier,	- - - - -	Mr. W. Cleary

Dancers, Courtiers, Pages, etc.

The role of emperor was admirably sustained by Mr. Arthur Hansl, who more than once has given proof of his brilliant abilities as an actor. In dramatic tone and gesture he is indeed a master. Mr. Feely, likewise, the impersonator of Clemens, showed himself in this art quite proficient. The solos also were beautifully executed. The beautiful soprano of Master Monahan, together with the richly melodious voice of Mr. Feeley were truly at their best. The other soloists, as also the chorus, likewise deserve especial praise.

On the whole, The Operetta was, in the opinion of competent judges, a great success. Apart from its dramatic excellence, which was surpassing, its presentation in every way reflected well deserved praise and honor upon all those who partook in it.

Immediately after the Operetta, the audience moved from the College Hall to the Roy Memorial Chapel. Here was delivered a Sacred Concert. The program was as follows:

Organ Solo,	"Triumphal March"	Buck
	PROF. JOS. KELLY.	
Violin Solo,	"Cavatina"	Raff
	MISS G. NUGENT.	
Vocal Solo,	"When to my Vision"	Gounod
	MRS. N. B. CARLTON.	
Chorus,	"Credo"	Ballmans' Mass
	COLLEGE CHOIR.	
Vocal Solo,	"Ave Maria"	Millard
	MRS. DR. MOREL.	
Violin Obligato by	MR. G. MARINEAU.	
Vocal Trio,	"Veni Creator"	L. Wache
	REV. E. L. RIVARD, C. S. V., MR. D. FEELY, REV. BRO.	
	ST. AUBIN, C. S. V.	
Vocal Solo,	"Il Guarany"	A. C. Gomes
	MISS NILEA MARCEAU.	
Chorus,	"Gloria"	Farmers' Mass
	COLLEGE CHOIR.	

The violin solo by Miss Nugent was much enjoyed. Miss Nugent showed extraordinary ability in her performance. The beautiful clear voice of Mrs Carlton won the audience and she responded with a beautiful Italian song to an appreciating encore. Miss Marceau with her surprising range of voice, entertained the delighted audience by an Italian solo. Millard's "Ave Maria" was well rendered by Mrs. Dr. Morel, whose ability as a singer is of a marked degree. The various selections executed by our own choir were by no means last either in excellence or in execution. Especially will we mention the trio "Veni Creator" by Rev. E. L. Rivard, Mr. Feely and Rev. Bro. St. Aubin. Indeed, the Sacred concert was in every way creditable to all partaking therein.

And now we would sincerely thank all those through whose earnest efforts the entertainment was rendered so successful in every way. Above all, the untiring devotedness of our zealous organist Prof. Joseph Kelly, contributed more than all else to make the evening a success. Also must thanks be rendered in particular manner to Rev. Fr. Legris D. D., the director of the orchestra, and to all those who distinguished themselves by their earnest efforts to make all a success.

C.



EXCHANGES.

The *Notre Dame Scholastic* brings the sad news of the destruction of their big gymnasium. The students have our sincere sympathies.

The *St. Mary's Sentinel* contains an article on Brownson which has considerable literary merit. The writer seems to know his subject well and the paper has a many ring of conviction.

The *Criterion* has a lengthy article entitled "*Tennyson's Message to his age in 'In Memorium.'*" It is evident that the article was carelessly written. There was a great lack of unity in the whole article, and even in some of the sentences the author at the end seems to have lost sight of the thought with which he commenced the sentence. The following is an example: "*But he who through his heart's music, through his doubts and sorrows, his struggles and fears, has poured out his soul's grief to the ears and hearts of men who suffer ever as he—who by his song of sorrow and mighty triumph, have restored their faith and soothed their sorrow—such men have done more for their kind than the mightiest statesmen or bravest warrior.*"

And the following sentence: "*and to his age he through his own experience given in memoriam to the thousands that snffer as he did, guided and uplifted them to that triumph over death and grave.*" Why is "*to his age*" there. Some of the thoughts are beautiful but carelessly expressed.

"*A few stray memories of the Exposition of 1900.*" is a pleasing article; the writer gives his impressions in a very pleasant style; there seems to be no effort but still the right expression comes up in the right place.

The *Mercury* is the possessor of a learned article on *China* and a pleasantly told story entitled "*The Ghost of all Halloween.*"

We were sorely disappointed after spending a great deal of precious time and still more of our scanty patience in opening the "*Peddie Chronicle*, which was done up in a cigarette like package, to find that it contained very little besides Locals, Personals, Athletics and Advertisements.

"*The Managerie in Spics*" is a miserable attempt at humour. We do not see anything witty or humorous in comparing students to flies, worms, dogs, etc. We have noticed that the writers in this paper frequently confound humor and stupidity.

We suppose it is hardly necessary to inform them that these two

things have no necessary connection, unhappily for such writers. If their theory were correct "Judge" and "Puck" would be obliged to abandon their business. No one can question the ability of our friend "Spice" to say foolish things. We have a striking proof of this in an article "Some Aspects of Education" in which we find this asinine assertion "The church long repressed freedom of thought." It may perhaps be news to the conceited scribbler to learn that there is no such thing as freedom of thought and that consequently it cannot possibly be repressed. The mind is by its very nature a slave to the data presented to it and has not the semblance of freedom. If you tell me that John owes you \$5. and Henry \$2 and ask me how much is owed you by both, it is not easy to see what freedom of thought is admissible in the case. The same is true of the process of reasoning; given the principles or the data as a starting point, the mind is bound to draw (think) the necessary conclusion contained therein. Let me give my flippant friend, Spice, another example founded on one of his false and groundless assertions. The church has always favored universal education, but an institution which has always favored universal education cannot possibly be opposed to "scientific advance" therefore the church has not, as you assert, "prevented scientific advance." After reading this, please inform us where you find room for freedom of thought. Either what I assert is true or it is not. If it is true you are not free to reject it. If it be not true, you are just as little free to think it true. So in either case you have not the semblance of freedom of thought. You see it is just as we told you at the outset, there is no such thing as freedom of thought and your assertion that the church "represented the freedom of thought" is just so much nonsense with which you have certainly been liberally endowed by nature.

No doubt you have met this phrase in the frothy writings of some infidel, but you must not receive as infallible truth everything you see in print. A little more modesty in the selection of subjects would certainly do you no great harm. What qualifications have you to write on such a comprehensive subject as education. There is ample evidence in your essay that you have absolutely none except unlimited gall. It is generally thought by rhetoricians that the first requisite for good writing is some knowledge of the subject treated. If our friend would only keep this elementary principle in mind in future he would not fall into such laughable blunders.

The Sacred Heart Collegian presents an excellent number to its readers. "A Thought" is poetic both in conception and expression. "Rebecca in Ivanhoe" and "Types" are well written and thoughtful essays.

"*The Niagara Rainbow*" contains an interesting but rather

voluminous article entitled *Goat Island*.

It is well written and illustrated by many beautiful cuts and scenes but we think it is queer that the article which was not written by one of the students, should occupy about twenty pages in a magazine which contains about thirty-four pages of reading matter and which is "Published by the Students."

"*Oliver Goldsmith*" is an article that deserves much credit, it shows much careful study and deep thought.

In *St Joseph's University Record* there is an article headed "*For Indolent Students*." The writer asks two questions which are very practical and which should be pondered on by those students addressed. The questions are: "*Why am I at College?*" and "*Who has sent me here?*"

A Girard, '03.

VIATORIANA.

- Christmas.
- Amateurs.
- Going home.
- Quack! Quack! Quack!
- Who shot the duck?
- Close the door open.
- Come get it. Come get it.
- The junior hero. Who is he?
- The poop's mysterious rat.
- Dey all good men.
- Support or non support.
- Video scabellum pedis.
- Demos, the feeling quotationists.
- You said this Mr. F. DID YOU NOT?
- Mystery of the lunch. Who stole the pictures?
- O! Mc. S. don't hit so hard.
- (During game of billiards) Picks on the balls.
- V. Gee! you run fast, you can catch cold.
- Experiment in science class. Teacher. How can you fill it.
- Stu. Pour it in.
- H. To hunter. What did you kill? Hunter. I killed time and got back on it.
- No more show for the nonsmokers to smoke.
- After foot ball game. S. How many money's did you take in.
- Teacher. How much does water evaporate? Bright Stu. Three pounds per hour.
- During billiard game. Cut your nails and stop your scratching.

—To student who prompted his classmate. Keep your two cents till I ask you for it.

—There will be many celebrations in this department before long, if it keeps on.

—The Republicans won the campaign but it was a moral victory for the Democrats (?)

—R. Are you going for rabbits, Jack? J. No, I am going for Jack rabbits.

—The second team can boast that no outside team crossed its good line.

—New waiter. We got chicken pie last night. Old waiter. That's nothing, we used to get humming birds' eye brows every night.

—St. A. I went to St. George and brought back eight chickens. R. What kind were they? St. A. seriously: Two legged chickens.

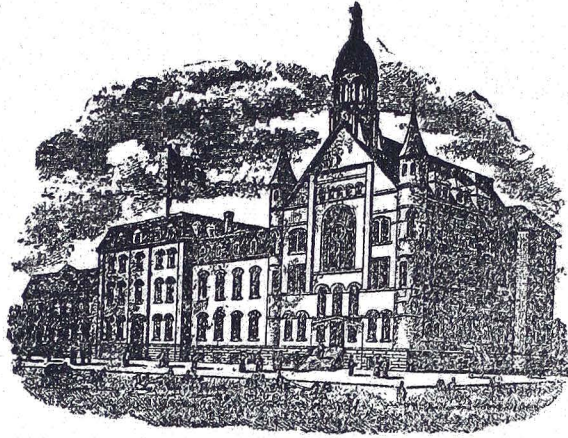
—Teacher. The canine teeth have two roots. Lam. Well how is that, I got one pulled and it had three roots. Teacher. Well it was a freak of nature.

—No doubt you can play a good game of billiards, but take your scratches out and your record won't be quite so high.

—After election. S. Was Washington a Democrat? P. No. S. Well Bryan ought to have known better, he should have followed the example of his father.

—On Thanksgiving day the President had the pleasure of entertaining one of Chicago's best pianists and most successful teachers. It was indeed an intellectual as well as a musical treat for all those who heard Madam. Weiss play. Of the large number of piano players, there are comparatively few, who possess the many qualites, which go to make the pianist. We are so accustomed to hear the mere finger pianist, though his techinque may be good, that it is a delight to meet not only a finger musician, but first in heart, then in head and fingers. Madam. Weiss' technical powers are very good, but she possesses a quality which is much more necessary for the good pianist. Expression, her technique is only a means to an end. She played compositions of Mozart, Listz, Paderewski and Maszkowski. Her touch is soulful, at times vigorous, her playing is clear and intelligent. In the afternoon Madam Weiss visited Notre Dame Academy, where she won the admiration of all by her charming manners and artistic playing. The pianist studied in Europe under Vienna's most celebrated teachers, she was a classmate of the queen of Spain, and a personal friend of Straus, who is at present on a concert tour in America. We will anxiously wait for another visit of the artist. To come in contact with such people is always instructing and refining.

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