

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

CHEER UP!

Why don't you smile a little bit?
I know you're feeling blue,
But when you look at me like that
You make me gloomy, too.

I know, of course, it's very hard
When things are really black;
But you are not the only one
With troubles in your pack.

There's not a soul that you may meet
But has some secret care,
Supposes they all behaved like you!
Life would be hard to bear—

If every face were dark with frowns,
If not an eye were bright,
If every mouth just drooped and drooped
From morning until night.

So turn the corners up a bit;
If fate's unkind, deny her
The chance of scoring over you;
She yields if you defy her.

FORGET THE PAST

The constant looking backward to
what might have been instead of
forward to what may be, is a great
weaker of self-confidence. This
worry for the old past, this wasted
energy, for that which no power on
earth can restore, ever lessens a
man's faith in himself, weakens his
efforts to develop himself for the
future to the perfection of his possi-
bilities.

Do in the best way you can the
work that is under your hand at the
moment; do it with a good intention;
do it with the best preparation
your thought suggests; bring all the
light of knowledge to aid you. Do
this and you have done your best.
The past is forever closed. No worry,
no struggle, no suffering, no agony
of despair can change it. It is as
much beyond your power as if it
were a million years behind you.
Turn all the past, with its sad hours,
its weakness and sin, its wasted
opportunities and graces, as so many
lights in hope and confidence upon
the future. The present, and the
future are yours; the past has gone
back, with all its messages, its history,
its records, to the God Who
loaned you the golden moments to
use in obedience to His law.—True
Voice.

TRUE AND FAITHFUL FRIENDS

Friendship is a word, the very
sight of which in print makes the
heart warm. How eloquently these
words express what friendship means
to one and all of us in our voyage
over the sea of life! Without the
pleasure and comfort afforded by
true friendship the years would be
empty indeed. A contemporary writer
says that having a friend to share
our joy doubles it for us, and having
one in whom we may confide our
sorrows, halves its bitter pang. If
any great happiness, success or pros-
perity overtakes us, the very thought
that there is a friend who will be
delighted with our success increases
our own joy immensely. On the
other hand, if we have tasted of the
bitter fruits of life and some trouble
or adversity, great or small, has come
like a cloud to darken the hitherto
bright horizon of our hopes, and to
us that cloud seems black as night
and threatens to overshadow the
sunshine of our whole life; but our
friend comes to us, uninvited if he
is a true friend, or true friends visit
us in prosperity only when invited,
but in adversity they come without
invitation, and point out to us the
silver lining to that cloud of sorrow,
and instantly the trouble seems
deprived of half its bitterness, not
that it is any less hard but because
a friend has come to bear half the
burden on his own shoulders.

A true friend is one who unobtrusively
advises, gently assists readily,
adventures boldly, takes all patiently,
defends courageously and remains a
friend, unchangeably. What a great
blessing is a friend in whom we may
safely confide all secrets, who can
relieve our cares by his conversation,
our doubts by his counsel, our sadness
by his good humor, and whose
very looks give comfort to us.

Comment me to that generous
heart,
Which like the fire on high
Uplifts the same unvarying bow
To every change of sky,
Whose friendship does not fade away
When wintry tempests blow,
But like the winter's icy crown
Looks greener through the snow.

He is the true friend then who is
with us in sunshine and storm and
that unchanging fidelity is really
what is meant by friendship. If it
were expediency that cemented
friendships, expediency when changed
would dissolve them, but because
one's nature can never change, there-
fore true friendships are enduring.

Much, certainly, of the happiness
and purity of our lives depends on
our making a wise choice of our
companions and friends, for our
friends are badly chosen, they will
inevitably drag us down; if chosen
well, they cannot fail to have an
ennobling, elevating influence on us
and consequently on our lives. And
yet the strange thing about it is how
few people exercise even a little
judgment or take a little trouble in
the choice of their friends, and how
many seem to trust blindly to chance
to make the selection for them.

Why, they exercise much greater
care in the choice of a citizen boy
than in selecting friends by whom
their whole life will be more or less
influenced for good or evil. In the
case of friends it is always well
to remember that "one should never
judge a book by its cover," and

choose our friends for what they
are and not for what they look
or have. It is a sign of gentleness
to treat everyone without distinc-
tion, with courtesy and considera-
tion, but to treat them as friends
betrays a foolish mind.—The Echo.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

**THE LITTLE TOWN OF
LAUGHTER**

The little town of Laughter
Lies under yonder hill,
With sunlight in the meadows
And music in the rill,
All day by in dreams of youth,
And from the tall church steeple
The bells are ringing truth.

The little town of Laughter
Is happy all the while,
With all the flowers in blossom,
And all the lips a smile,
It never knows a headache,
It never has a care,
And all the day it's singing
When not engaged in prayer.

The sweetest little faces
Are those you see go by,
And there's a merry twinkle
In every sparkling eye,
There is no anger nor strife
No hate nor greed nor strife
To mar the golden beauty
Of each day's happy life.

The little town of Laughter
Is only known to those
Who go with hearts of kindness
To pluck its fragrant rose,
And in the street the children
Look up to you and say
If you have learned to love them
Then you have found the way.

THE SKATING RACE

The wind moaned through the trees.
The night was intensely cold and the
moon, just rising, seemed first to
light up the tall gym cedars and
then throw its bright beams on a
clear sheet of ice.—The Castor River.
This was the great night for which
we had all waited, counting the days
and the very hours to the date of the
Skating Competition.

The crowd of young faces were
turned in anxious interest towards
two young boys each representing a
Country School, who stood in the
centre of the group, and notwith-
standing the rivalry between them
were chatting intimately.

Both schools prided themselves in
skating, but tonight they were not
thinking of the joy and freedom of
skating—that was forgotten—for the
hearts of all were set on one thing—
they would win that race.

The teacher of the rival school
stood in the centre of the ice and
said: "Jack Moore, come take your
place" but the rest was drowned
with cheers from us as Jack, our
representative, the hero of our
school, stepped forward; and then, as
the noise subsided the teacher went
on: "Everyone knows that tonight
we skate for a prize—not a prize
—rather for the honour of our
schools; but also it is to determine
which school shall hold the Woods
Cup for the present year." Oh! how
we cheered, both schools this time
voicing their hopes in that Hip Hip
Hurrah!

"Now, Bill Smith, take your place,
and as both boys shook hands we
stood breathless—waiting—
"ONE—TWO—THREE—GO!"
Who was ahead? Our question
was soon answered for our rivals
were cheering, cheering—On Bill, oh
Bill—boy—boy, skate, faster, faster
—that's it, you're ahead!

Our school was silent, was Jack,
our Jack losing, oh, it couldn't be.
Then we broke into a yell—our
school yell—for Jack was creeping
up. It's a tie, on Jack, on Bill.
They're down, tripped, Coward—
Coward—we yelled. Then the bell
rang and we became silent even
before the echoes had died away.

Silent, but only for an instant.
Then clearly, above the yells the
teacher's voice rang out—
"If you don't stop that yelling—I'll
call the race—
"Call the race for the Woods Cup—
Never."
They're up, they're off again,
Jack's lame, call the race, call it!
"Losing! We were losing, for
yonder Jack was being left behind,
yard by yard, then with a spurt he
quickness and with only a hundred
yards from the goal they were again
a TIE!

How they were skating, they
seemed rather to be flying, the yards
between them and the goal grew
fewer and fewer—who would win
his fate to be determined—and then
with a rush—a cheer—we sprang
forward—
The race was over! and with one
breath we broke into

VICTORY

The Cup is ours, Well, I guess,
Castor High School, YES, YES, YES.
Our School Yell.

ENVIRONMENT

Environment is so active and
energizing in its influence upon
character that there is a school of
thought which said that man's des-
tiny was determined by environment.
But is man of such little breed that
his fate is to be determined by cir-
cumstances? No, rather must he be
the architect of the circumstances,
building up life's trials and troubles
into a staircase sloping to the throne
of God, where he must find his right
place for all the days of eternity.—
Rev. Bernard Vaughan, S. J.

**SIGNIFICANCE OF
LABOR UNIONS**

Joseph Hussein, S. J., in America

In previous articles we established
the natural right of labor unions and
their necessity in the present social
system. It is not impossible that the
free exercise of this right may be
interdicted in the future, under a
Socialist no less than a capitalist
regime. The complete suppression
of labor unions in modern times
took place as a consequence of the
French Revolution. Here, for in-
stance, the two first articles of the
Loi Chapelier, passed June 14,
1791:

"Article I. Since the destruction
of every kind of association of per-
sons of the same estate or profession
is one of the foundations of the Con-
stitution, the reestablishment of
them under any form whatsoever is
forbidden."
"Article II. Citizens of the same
estate and the same profession,
workers and journeymen in what-
ever trade, may not, when they are
gathered together, elect any presi-
dent, secretary, or syndic; keep
minutes, take resolutions or draw up
rules regarding their pretended
common interests."

The loss of faith, together with
this total suppression of labor unions,
gradually enacted into law over the
entire civilized world, was necessarily
followed by the economic evils of the
modern industrialism. History has
convincingly proved the falsehood of
the doctrine that economic forces,
left to themselves, without inter-
ference of law or association, will
work out surely to the continuous
betterment of the laborer's condition.
The fact is rather that under a
system of unrestrained individual
bargaining, with legal regulation and
labor unions suppressed, the "iron
law" of wages would inevitably come
again into effect. According to this
the average wage of the laborer will
always be reduced to what is just
barely necessary to support his own
life and rear a family through which
the labor market can be continuously
supplied. The actual wage might
slightly rise above this mark or sink
a degree below it, but must always
gravitate to it again. The worker,
reduced by individual bargaining to
this helpless, un-Christian and in-
human condition, is then correctly
styled a proletarian. A body of
workers, thus afflicted and enslaved
is known as the proletariat.

To remedy this situation, which
followed upon the Reformation and
was completed by the French Revolu-
tion the abomination of the Mal-
thusian principle of birth-control was
invoked by godless economists and
labor leaders, as it still ceaselessly
promoted today by rationalists and
Socialists in every land.

Labor unions meet these dim-
culties by the constantly applied
force of collective bargaining, which
results in shortening hours, raising
wages, and securing better working
conditions in general. The moral
limit to this process must be the
point where such demands would
imply an injustice or a violation of
charity towards either the employer
or the consumer. But real as is the
danger that labor may exceed the
rightful use of its organized power,
the absence of this power, as we
have shown, would be far more fatal,
not merely for the laborer, but for
the entire civil society, since it would
establish an autocracy of capital
that could be combated in no other
way than by a bloody social revolu-
tion. And even this, in turn, could
be of no avail without establishing
the acknowledged right of labor
organizations, under one form or
another.

Labor cannot, like capital, sell its
product in any market. It has but
its skill and strength to give, which
are inseparable from the person of
the laborer himself. It cannot store
up its wares, waiting for a better
opportunity of bargaining, for it has
nothing but its labor power to dis-
pose of, and starvation follows if the
worker is unemployed. Left without
the aid of organization the laborer
is normally in the position of a mer-
chant who must sell his goods at
once and at any price or else run
into bankruptcy. The physical
strength of the wage-earner is then
placed upon the labor market at
whatever employers may decide to
offer to it. Thus the application of
the iron law of wages would, under
individual bargaining, continually
keep the laborer in the pitiful con-
dition of a mere proletarian, as we
find him under paganism and as
again we behold him after the sup-
pression of labor unions in
modern times. He thus becomes at
once the scoundrel and the menace
of such a civilization, which Chris-
tianity could never tolerate.

Organization, even though but
very partial, elevates the entire pos-
sibility of the wage-earning class.
Directly, by the force of its collective
bargaining power, or indirectly,
through the respect or fear it in-
spires, organized labor soon reduces
hours to a reasonable limit, raises
wages above the proletarian limit,
and secures for the worker a share
in the comforts, the rightful enjoy-
ments and the culture consequent
with the present stage of material
and intellectual civilization.

So necessary in fact is labor organi-
zation that the celebrated Jesuit
moralist, Father Cathrein, advan-
ces in common with many other
leading Catholic authorities, the
compulsory organization of labor,
even in our own time, provided that
a majority of the workers them-
selves should demand this. Such
after all, was the practical result of
the action taken in the Middle Ages,
and such is the object of the closed

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shop today. The latter would force
the unorganized workers, not by
physical violence, nor by legal enact-
ment, but by exclusion from their
trade, to gather into the existing
labor unions, as was done in the
days of the Catholic gilde.

Here, as elsewhere, the only diffi-
culty in our day arises from the
absence of religion as a guiding
principle of unionism to assure
justice and charity for all men. In
Catholic countries this condition is
readily remedied by the establish-
ment of Catholic labor unions. In
other countries the circumstances of
time and place must help to decide
how far the ideal blending of reli-
gion and unionism will be possible to
approximate as closely as may be to
the Catholic form of unionism we
have described before, where econ-
omics are the body, and religion is
the soul of the labor movement.

Without this conception of unionism
there can never be a true revival of
the medieval guild ideal, when it was
indeed for the highest good of all
the people that every tradesman
should be forced to join his own
trade union, or else be excluded
from mastership in his craft. The
conditions for the practical applica-
tion of the closed shop principle are
described by the present writer in
"The World Problem" (pp. 172, 173).
It is necessary that admission to
their respective unions must be
rendered easy to all qualified work-
ers, and the inconvenience to non-
unionists must not be out of propor-
tion with the good accomplished.
The union itself, moreover, must be
such in its nature that workers will
not be withheld by their Christian
principles from joining it.

The growth of labor unionism in
modern times has been viewed with
most divided sentiments. To some
it was a sign no less ominous than
the swarming locust-clouds were to
the eyes of the Roman peasant as he
saw them slowly darkening the sun
and threatening to settle on his fields
and vineyards. Nothing would be
left, he knew, of all the beauty of
that rich Italian landscape but black
destruction. But to others who
struggled with equal attention the
development of the same labor move-
ment it seemed to rise like a fruitful
cloud laden with every benediction,
and bringing plenty and golden
harvests to the land. Which of
these two classes of observers saw
with the eyes of prophecy?

The fact is that it depends entirely
upon the nature of the particular
labor organization whether it shall
be a blessing or a curse. Like the
girls of the Middle Ages at their
perfection, it may come, with the
promise of peace and happiness, or
like the Bolshevik menace it may
rise up dark with class hatred and be
scourged along in its destructive
course by the storm-winds of irrelig-
ion, leaving wreck and ruin in its
pass.

Modern labor unions have of
necessity begun as fighting organiza-
tions. It was only by hard and bitter
struggle that they secured reasonable
hours, better wages and human con-
ditions of labor. There had been an
incentive for the master to provide
for the slave or the serf, but human
labor was cheap in the days of indus-
trialism, when men had separated
from labor's greatest friend, the
Church, and the unions had been
beginning under the hoofs of the new
god Pan, half human, half brute, who
played on this road of gold. Under
such conditions, which no one ever
pictured more realistically than the
great Pope Leo XIII. himself, the
modern labor union arose, fighting
without success, struggling through
victory and through defeat, until it
should attain its end. There was
naturally a danger to be dreaded
when that end should be attained.
The great powers it fought in the
beginning had little regard for jus-
tice or for charity. Their principles,
in general, were the longest hours for
the shortest pay and the least
expense in providing the worker with
human conditions of labor. Their
supreme end was the amassing of the
greatest gain by any legal means.
Labor unionism must beware lest
it copy these methods and follow
these principles with its own growth
in power. That there is danger of
this the intelligent laborer well
knows.

Beside, the labor union is
primarily at present a bargaining
organization. For this very purpose
it was needed and for this mainly it
came into existence. When a rea-
sonable bargain has been concluded,
the danger is that unreasonable con-
ditions may next be exacted, in place
of constructive work that should
benefit all alike, of increasing pro-
duction and lessening prices.

The relation between capital and
labor must not be permitted to
degenerate into a selfish struggle for
the spoils of war and a ruthless class
supremacy. The idea of public ser-
vice, rendered in the spirit of Christ,
must be brought back again to cur-

commercial and industrial life.
Some ray of hope we behold in the
shop organizations springing up
within certain plants, and built at
times on the idea of a true coopera-
tion between capital and labor. This
new "industrial democracy" should
not be brought in conflict with the
national labor union system. Labor
unionism will still be needed within
these plants to safeguard labor's po-
sition, while the shop committees can
cooperate with capital in perfecting
industrial relations and labor pro-
cesses. Labor will thus arrive at a
new stage of that constant self devel-
opment which trade unionism was to
take possible again among the
masses. Participation in industrial
management will thus be no idle
dream and a further step will have
been taken in the great process of
the gradual democratization of our
industries.

In one thing we are still sadly
wanting. It is a profound and prac-
tical realization of that greatest of
all Christian social principles which
demands of us that at all times we
consider, first and foremost, as of
supreme importance, whether in the
deliberations of employers' associa-
tions or the councils of labor unions,
the common good of all the people.
Until the truth is again firmly
grasped that this consideration must
take precedence over all merely
private or group interest; until the
mad race for profits on the one hand,
and for unreasonably shortened
hours or heightened wages on the
other is set the strictest limits, we
are far indeed from the ideal that is
to bring peace, contentment and
happiness to all. A single laborer
may accomplish little in guiding the
action of his union, a single stock-
holder may fall helplessly to direct
the policy of his giant corporation,
but the consistent and combined
action of all Christian men and
women must be a mighty power
everywhere for truth and for good.
Democracy and Christianity will thus
go hand in hand to bring in the new
day of true cooperation between man
and man, between class and class.

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and the Empire.

PARENT AND SCHOOL

About the only time that father or
mother ever goes near the school is
when Johnny or Mary gets into
trouble. Then one or other comes
in a mood for fight; because, of
course, John and Mary are always
right. The worst tact is demanded
from the teacher, not to remedy
what has gone wrong, but to assuage
the anger of the irate parent. It
should be added, that the circum-
stances that brought father or mother
to school are a very serious character.
Nothing short of catastrophe could
have induced them to come. They
see the school under the worst pos-
sible disadvantage, namely through
the eyes of some slight brought upon
them through their offspring. And
the visit as a consequence, results in
little good. The normal Catholic
parent is really interested in his
children. No one is so anxious for
their success and no one so ready
to make sacrifices for their success
as they are. But the wish
usually stops short at the mere fact
of interesting the child to his
studies or to the necessary
priests or to the school. The burden is
to be entirely upon their shoulders.
This, of course, is absurdly wrong.
Here and there endeavors have been
made to link the school with the
home. From the teacher's point of
view it is almost indispensable, and
from the parent's point of view
it should hardly be less so. It is
not the mere fact of preparing the
lessons at home and this is impor-
tant enough, but it is the necessary
knowledge that the teacher should
have of the home surroundings of
the child and the natural co-
operation that the parent should give
to the teacher. This assures good
work without which no school can
be thoroughly successful. So that
association of parents which takes
interest in their children, in their
teachers, and in the school itself is
the best assurance that satisfactory
results will be achieved by everyone.
Parent-teacher associations are no
mere fad.—New World.

If every year we would root out
one fault we should be perfect men.
—Thomas a Kempfe.

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