

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN.

A BENEFACTRESS.

By Rhodes Campbell.

Young Patmore was sure that it was some other fellow who lay there on the couch that lovely June day. He could catch a glimpse of himself from where he lay, in the big chevron glass, and after one curious, amazed, disgusted survey, he turned his head. That white-faced, wan, thin creature the athlete of the graduating class of the year before!

And to waken to this—weeks of misery and helplessness! And to learn from his perhaps too outspoken doctor that he could never again be the strong, active agent that he had been. Those were the dreadful words which kept repeating themselves in his confused brain. Why, if he couldn't be that he didn't care to be anything. He'd always had his way; hadn't he heard over and over again that Dick Patmore had been born Fortune's favorite, a lucky fellow?

His mother was a wealthy widow, whose idol was this only son. After graduating there were six months abroad, and then Doctor Elston offered him a place as assistant after two years' additional study under him. It was a chance coveted by many, for Doctor Elston had a large city practice, and Patmore's future was assured.

But that was over. Not ore, but three fine physicians his distracted mother had consulted, declared there must be no thought of his profession. Patmore lay there watching the sun-beams on the floor with a sigh. Did any one ever have such a fate? It was too cruel to be borne, and still the world went on as gayly as ever. It must not be, his mother came in softly and put her hand on his handsome head, "Poor boy!" she said, "I'm sure you'll like it at Aunt Eleanor's. She writes that it's a lovely place."

Patmore frowned impatiently. "It will be gay, I've no doubt; a little better than imprisonment here. You people who can go anywhere and are strong enjoy anything; no wonder. I suppose I can read and think outdoors there; that's about all the difference."

"Here's the carriage, and Thomas to help you," said Mrs. Patmore at last. The tall colored man came in quietly and helped the young master out to the sports coach, and into the low, handsome carriage. His mother followed with pillows, suitcase, and bag, and they were whirled away to the station.

Patmore had been a week at his aunt's beautiful new country place. He was gaining every day his aunt said, but Patmore denied this. No one could be improving and still feel as bad as he did. A few days after his coming, his cousin Marta had a house party of girls for a week. She said it would be "jolly her cousin up," but Patmore saw but little of them. He had been the life of every party, but of course he couldn't meet these lively, heartless girls. He lay in a reclining chair trying to read a new story, determined to be indifferent to the laughter and gay chatter which came through the open window from the piazza. And then such a clear, distinct voice rang out: "Well, Marta, you all spoil him; yes, you do. Of course I'm sorry for him. I think it's a terrible blow. I don't wonder he felt almost crushed at first; but what I can't understand is, this brooding over it, and shunning everyone as if he were dead. Why, father says there are several openings for him if he can't study medicine. Think what that would mean to him, and how poor fellows. And if he can't be as he was, he won't be even a semi-invalid in time. Look at my Cousin Arthur. He's really fit half the time to be in bed, yet he works hard and supports Cousin Betina and himself. And he won't let you hint that it's hard. He has to go to bed early and deny himself so much to keep his strength for his work, and he's what I call hard. Mr. Patmore has everything compared with Arthur Steadman."

The voice paused, and another, a nervous, timid one said: "Are you sure, Marta, that your cousin isn't around?" "Oh, yes," said Marta decisively. "I saw him an hour ago going out with his book to his favorite place under the big trees. Poor fellow! I'm sure I feel sorry for him, if Katherine doesn't. I think he's like a hero in a book. It's all so sad and so interesting."

"Well, he'd be much more interesting to me," said the first voice, "if he'd get to work and make the best of the advantages he has left to him. I may be hard-hearted, but I feel more sorry for that poor mother of his than I do for him. Mamma says she's lost twenty pounds since the accident, and she hasn't a happy moment, and such a cross fellow to care for. I should have known if I had to wait on him all the time, and so far, nerves and I are unacquainted."

"Well, I agree with Marta," said Elsie Mayhew. "I think Mr. Patmore a real martyr; and his eyes are so mournful and he looks so sad."

"He'd better look up and not down, and self-pity is the most weakening thing. No strong soul wastes pity on itself. Think of the many who have overcome all kinds of obstacles and kept right on, and they might have lided about and dreamed only of sunless days. Oh, dear! I have no patience with Marta's posing, tragical cousin!"

"You shan't say another word," Marta said warmly. "Now, I mean it. Come, let us play golf."

They all ran down the steps and off to their game, little dreaming of the storm they left behind them. Dick Patmore lay there speechless with wrath. He had met the girl a few times at Doctor Elston's, for she was his daughter just home from college. He had admired the self-reliant yet modest Katherine Elston; he liked her bright, independent way of delivering her

mind; that is, he had liked it, but now he felt that a good shaking was far too mild a punishment for such heartless, cruel words as hers.

Yet why did he care for such a girl? What did she know of such an affliction as his? And then he remembered what she said of self-pity, and he flushed more angrily as he remembered Elsie Mayhew's picture of him.

"I must be interesting rolling up my eyes like a fourth-rate actor in a sixth-rate play," he thought angrily.

He lay there growling and fuming, story forgotten and unheeded. He'd show that dreadful girl that he could amount to something. He supposed there were others who were talking; it was gossip, unfeeling wags, anyhow. He would go to work, and if the results were fatal he couldn't help it.

The next day Patmore started his mother by asking for paper, pen, etc., and hurrying—actually hurrying—over to the desk and writing letters for the early mail. At the end of the week he announced at the breakfast table—he had come down to eat with the family—that he had made arrangements to go to work Monday, adding that his mother could stay if she wished.

Then there was an outcry. His mother declared he was insane; his aunt said it was suicide. Marta remarked that he looked like working with his white face! His uncle waited till the hubbub had subsided, and then in his calm, matter-of-fact voice said: "It may be hard at first, but it's a very sensible decision, Dick. It'll give you something to think about."

Patmore acquiesced outwardly, but he reflected that Uncle Matt was like a horse, so strong and never ill that he didn't know what he was talking about, and had as much feeling as a mud fence.

Monday proved a hard day. Mr. Elgin had, through his uncle, offered him a vacancy in the large department store, with promise of promotion, and if he proved satisfactory an interest in the business and junior partnership.

But there was much to learn first. Patmore had desk work until he was stronger. He set his teeth and worked as he never had before. The first day he kept up till he reached his front door, and then fainted. The next few days he went to bed and to sleep at 7, thinking grimly of the model Arthur, not of the Round Table. Then he began to feel better, oh, much better. He lifted his eyes away from himself, and was a little dazzled at first by some things he saw.

Through the glass doors of his office in an adjoining one was a young fellow with one leg, and such a bright, wide-awake face that Patmore looked again. A fellow with but one leg! Limping through life with smiles and energy. He asked some one about it. "Yes, Crofter was all right till he hurt himself at football three years ago; had to lose his leg. Nice fellow; took it hard, but his disposition's all right. Said his mother took it so much harder that he had to brace up."

The boy had a fascination for Patmore. Once he would have dismissed him after a "What a shame!" but now found himself looking at him, thinking of him. He was an object lesson for a class in life's school he had not entered, and object lessons are more telling than abstract learning.

So the time went on and Patmore began to take a deep interest in business. He left much better; yes, there was no denying that fact. He fairly shivered as he remembered the days of languid indifference and depression which might have lasted yet if it hadn't been for Katherine Elston. For the first time he thought of her without the unreasonable anger always associated with her name. She was away for a last year, and did not come home for the holidays, but she was to come back Easter and not return—so Marta said. Patmore wondered if she had heard of him, and then caught himself up with: Why should she care if he had? She probably despised him. A girl like that was too good for him to waste thought on mere men, and especially a man whom she thought lazy and conceited and selfish. He shivered a little as he recalled her scathing words; it had never in all his life heard such unpalatable truths. And he had been such a careless brute to his gentle, sad little mother; she was quite right there. Men were a sort of savages, they needed to be brought up standing. His mother had indulged him all his life, and he had let her do so even after he was grown. But he was a little better now; even Miss Elston would say that. It made him write with shame to remember his mother's grateful look and happy eyes over his novel attentions. "She missed his father's care so much," she said one day. And he had never seen further than his own nose.

It was at a little party given at his uncle's city house that Patmore next saw Katherine Elston. He felt her eyes upon him in a sort of wonder at first, and enjoyed it. Then with a sudden impulse he went over to her and talked of indifferent subject first. Then he asked her to see some fine new prints his uncle had hung in the library. As they looked at them Patmore said earnestly and frankly: "Miss Elston, I owe you a great deal. Indeed, I consider you my benefactress."

Katherine turned and looked at him in honest amazement. "What do you mean? I've never posed as a benefactress before, and after reading Elizabeth's 'Benefactress' I don't believe I want to," she said smiling.

Then Patmore told her of the conversation he had overheard. "I was furious, I confess," he concluded, "but you can't think how it stirred me to action, and waked me up and gave me a stimulus the doctors couldn't supply."

The color came into the girl's face. "It must have sounded so rude; but you know I never dreamed you were in the house. My father tells me I'm too impatient and judge too harshly. Oh, I'm afraid I do, and that is so horrid over and over. But don't—oh, surely, you know that I couldn't be such a priggish, narrow specimen as that."

She looked at him with an anxious, troubled look. He hastened to say:

"No, indeed I don't. You don't understand. I am most sincere in thanking you. I shall always be under obligation to your opinion of me." He laughed.

Katherine flushed. "Your cousin has written me of your application, and Mr. Elgin told my father that you knew more of the business now than any one he'd had in his employ."

Patmore's expressive face showed his pleasure. "Did he? How good of you to tell me. Elgin never says a word, and I fancied he thought me very ordinary. Never mind, Miss Elston, you may yet be proud of being a benefactress—at least your protegee is grateful, and that is something."—Our Young People.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

STORIES ON THE ROSARY.

By LOUISA EMILY DOBRIE.

The Descent of the Holy Ghost. MAGDALEN'S CELL.

The convent near Ashton had been in a state of mild bustle and excitement all day, for from the morning onwards leaving for the holidays, cabs and carriages were coming and going, excited meetings taking place between parents and relatives come to fetch their respective children; there were sad farewells from girls who were not to return, and a general feeling of depression among those who had to spend their holidays away from home, either at the convent or some sea-side place in the vicinity.

However, the bustle was over at last; the convent fell into its normal quiet state, and in the warm summer evening Mother Mary Joseph and a girl who was in her eighteenth year sat under a large copper holly on the lawn of the children's garden. Mother Mary Joseph had a pale face, which betokened delicacy, and the extreme sweetness of her smile could not altogether hide the suffering that had drawn lines on her lovely countenance and had added depth to its expression.

Magdalen Waring, who sat beside her, was tall, slight, with a face which was taking rather than pretty. She had brown eyes, a high colour, and thick dark hair brushed away from an open forehead. High spirits and brightness were writ large on her face, and she spoke with much animation. She was a sweet, fresh, pure-minded girl, long and amusing, and what she called having "a good time."

An only child, she had been brought up at the convent, going home only for the holidays when possible. Sometimes she stayed at Ashton or went to the sea with the others who were unable to be at home during that time. Her mother had died seven years ago, and Magdalen had really seen very little of her, as the former had been a great invalid during the last years of her life and had been obliged to attend certain "cures," which belied their name, just at the times when Magdalen was free to leave the convent.

"I am glad to have this little time more, Mother," said Magdalen, looking lovingly at the old house, half hidden by trees, where so much of her life had been spent, "but all the same I cannot think why dad has not written or wired or come for me to-day."

"It is very strange," admitted Mother Mary Joseph. "Such a thing never happened before. He's always been so punctilious. I hope there is a bad correspondent," said Magdalen. "He wrote from Murren and said he should be in town in July, and come or send for me, and that we were to go straight home. I wrote quite lately to tell him the day we broke up, and he had no answer. I hope there is nothing wrong, but dad is very casual, you know. Oh, Mother, dear I am very sorry to be leaving this dear place, but I am looking forward to being at home and keeping house for dad. I have all kinds of plans and projects, and I do hope I shall be able to carry them out. It will be so good to be so far from a church. I really think that is the only crumpled piece left."

"I am very sorry for that, Magdalen. Will daily Mass be impossible, or if not daily, a few times in the week?"

"Not from the distance, Mother, because the church is really only a temporary thing, and I shall have to go up to a kind of ladder to get to it, and there is only Mass—our two Masses rather on Sundays and days of obligation. All through the week it is shut up. It really was only begun four years ago, because two Catholic families came to Farnon and they had a good deal to do with starting the mission. One of the families is that of a rich butcher who owns a great deal of land, and the other is that of a poultry farmer."

"That will indeed be a loss to you, Magdalen. I am very sorry."

"Yes, Mother, so am I. And I shall feel it so much, not having you to turn to about things, or Father Ruthven to help me. Only he says I can write to him if I really want advice about anything special, and I shall write volumes to you, Mother," added Magdalen, with a look manifesting great affection. She did not catch a half sigh that escaped the lips of the Mother, and she continued: "It will be so different, so help me! from convent life. I shall like part of it, I know, the going about and going out, for father knows all the people within driving or bicycling distance, he tells me, and there will be plenty of Society. He says Lady Graham, who is only five miles off, will chaperone me about. It seems she was a great friend of mother's, and I shall never meet her when I was at Homeleigh, and it will be nice for me having her. She is a Catholic, but, beyond her, dad says he does not know of anyone else who is one. My idea is to try and improve the mission by getting people interested in it, and perhaps getting up a bazaars—Professants, too, will offer help, and it would be great fun—and then by-and-by we could get a church built. Oh, I see it all before me so clearly!" and Magdalen smiled.

"You will have a good deal of money at your own disposal, will you not?"

asked the Mother, looking at the bright vivacious face of the speaker.

"Oh, dad is very rich! Homeleigh is a lovely place, there are plenty of horses and all that, and a large estate. He always gave me a liberal allowance of pocket money, as you know."

"And you made good use of it," said Mother Mary Joseph. "You must use your money as well in the future."

"I promise you I will," said Magdalen gravely. "I want to make the best of my life, Mother, you know that, and spending one's money is a responsibility, I know. Dad said when I came out I should have a very large allowance, about £200 a year or more. Dear dad is so generous! Of course I must dress well, must I not? Then there's my money of my mother's to come to me on my eighteenth birthday in December."

"Yes, dear," answered the Mother decidedly, "always dress in accordance with your position in the world, but you need not make dressing yourself one of your objects in life, and give too much thought to it—need you?"

"I am not likely to do that, Mother," said Magdalen. "I have so many other things I want to do, and dad, I am sure, will do lots for the church, if I wake him up to realizing its needs. You see, besides my allowance, I know this money which I am to come into is rather a lot, and with it I can do a great deal for the poor and the church."

"Money is a great thing, certainly, and needed to help on good works," said the Mother slowly, "but it is not the chief thing."

"One cannot do much without it," said Magdalen. Mother Mary Joseph shook her head. "More than you think, Magdalen; it is the life more than the gifts we offer that Our Lord regards, and if we have the spirit of charity always animating our actions they become priceless in value."

"I don't see how they could build a church or clothe the poor, Mother, though I know what you mean about charity, for I remember so well all Father Ruthven said about it the Wednesday of my First Communion and I have never forgotten it," said Magdalen, referring to a sermon which had made a great impression on her. Father Ruthven had quoted the words of St. Thomas Aquinas where he says: "Without charity the highest and most estimable goods are without union or cohesion; charity unites them. Without charity all good things are fragile; charity gives them stability. Without charity goods of an inferior order tend to separation from the supreme good; charity elevates them, transforms them, and makes all goods one only good."

"No, not the spirit of charity itself," said Mother Mary Joseph, answering Magdalen's remark, "but it is the great gift which descended on the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, and comes to each individual in so many ways—in Baptism and Confirmation in particular. And in the exercise of self-sacrifice, which unites them, and strengthens the spiritual powers within us."

"So that it is better to be good and loving and charitable in one's life than to be rich and do a great deal with one's money for God," said Magdalen.

"Do you mean that?"

"St. Paul did," said Mother Mary Joseph smiling, "did he not, when he said: 'And now there remain, faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greater of these is charity.'"

Magdalen was silent for a minute. "And you see that this really builds up the spiritual fabric of the Church, and does wonderful, though unseen work for God."

"But one can have the two, can one not?" asked Magdalen, with a little frown on her brow. "It is not necessary to be poor to have charity."

"By no means," said Mother Mary Joseph. "If it is God's Will to give you riches you will have duties to respond with them, and in the spirit of charity, you can, for the love of our Lord, so discipline your own character that, if they are taken away from you, you may bow to His Will. As St. Jerome said: 'The fire of charity will burn and enlighten,' and when you say the third Glorious Mystery of the Rosary, you might ask that the fire of charity should do so, burn all that is bad, and enlighten you as to God's Will for you, in every detail of your life, in joy as well as sorrow, and the use of riches, as well as the bearing of poverty, should you ever be called upon to bear it."

"I understand you, dear Mother. I shall think of all you say when I haven't you there to help me. You know I do wish to be a good Catholic and live my life for God, but I like pretty clothes and nice things, I must admit, and all that money can do for one."

TO BE CONTINUED.

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