

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

CHEERFULNESS

A cheery word with a friendly smile,  
And a loving thought behind,  
Are the everlasting flowers of earth  
That angels love to find.  
And they wreath them into a floral cord  
That binds your soul to heaven,  
And ever a stronger knot is tied  
With each word of kindness given.

HABIT

If you want to abolish a habit, and its accumulated circumstances as well, you must grapple with the matter as earnestly as you would with a physical enemy. You must go into the encounter with all tenacity of determination, with all fierceness of resolve—yes, even with a passion for success that may be called vindictive.

No human ill can be as insidious, as persevering, as unrelenting as an unfavorable habit. It never sleeps, it needs no rest. It is like a parasite that grows with the growth of the supporting body. And like a parasite it can best be killed by violent separation and crushing.

SILENCE

They who can be silent when they are tempted to say something cutting or reproving possess a strong sword of defense against things to which others yield in the way that means their defeat. It is a great thing to have such perfect control of the tongue that one will not allow it to lead one into talking, when it should keep still. A very serene old man once told me that he thought he had kept a great deal of anger out of the world by simply not "answering back." He explained this by adding:

"You see if you never answer back an angry person, his wrath will die out lots quicker than if you answer back in your own kind. Keeping still yourself is one of the best ways in the world to keep mad folks from getting madder and madder."

Nothing is more useless than to try to argue with an angry person. Serene—silence on our part will surely lessen the angry words of others.

WORRY

Worry is a vicious imp that creeps stealthily into our lives and ever so gradually poisons and paralyzes healthily thought. Under the guise of zeal and enthusiasm for a grand cause or for our own welfare, the monster fastens its fangs upon the mind and drains from the human brain the vigorous energy placed there by the Creator for the noble purpose of divining His will and planning its proper execution.

Careful self-examination will teach us how much of our lives are worn away by needless worry and how prematurely our brains grow fagged from being abused by useless brooding.

How often do men sit by the hour reviewing over and over again a blunder past recall, allowing the mind to swim in the maze of ever-widening circles of hopeless regrets, until their souls are saddened and sickened and desperate; whereas they should have long since turned in humility of heart from the scene of their weakness to the bountiful and merciful heart of God, drawing therefrom the sweet consolation of forgiveness and the mature wisdom that would transform the fall into a future blessing.

Or, again: man allows his mind to mount to giddy heights there to whine to himself of the maze of impossible dreams of the future, perhaps as he lies on his pillow at night: his worried brain still keep working in order to run a race with his insatiable and childish ambition.

Another nurses an imaginary grievance and builds for himself a fortress of fancied defence, racking his nerves to think of some clever and stinging rebuke with which to discredit his enemy and all for no purpose, all because of an overweening vanity and conceit, which dry up the fountains of the love of God and neighbor and leave his soul empty and his body sickened and degenerate.

MARTYR CHERISHED LOVE FOR PRAYER

A beautiful page from the holy life of Father Isaac Jogues, the Apostle of the Hurons, recently beatified with his heroic companions, relates to his interior sufferings which added greatly to the pains of exile and the many interior hardships endured in the midst of savage Indian tribes.

In his many bodily and spiritual sufferings, we are told, Father Jogues' sole comfort was to retire to a little rustic oratory which he had constructed in the woods a short distance from the cabin. "Hither he repaired as soon as he had done his day's work as a slave, by laying in a stock of wood for the day, and here, without fire or any shelter but some fir branches to shield him against the wind, he spent whole hours kneeling in the snow to converse with his God, at the foot of a

large Cross which he had cut in the bark of a tree.  
"Here he meditated and prayed, read the Following of Christ, and roused himself to a holy fervor by thinking that he was almost alone in loving and honoring the true God in that vast country.

"He did even more. Like a good religious he endeavored to follow as well as he could all the pious exercises of community life, and as it was just the time when he usually made his annual spiritual retreat, he devoted a certain number of days to perform its holy exercises.  
"Meanwhile the Indians had noticed his long and frequent absence. Accustomed to misinterpret all he did, they watched and followed him to make sure that he was not performing some witchcraft to injure them. They did not disturb him when they saw that he was simply engaged in prayer, but the young men amused themselves by trying to distract or alarm him. They rushed on him, brandishing their tomahawks as if to strike him, or fired arrows which fell around him. Sometimes they raised a yell from behind, as if to warn him of some great danger. At other times they cut down trees nearby so as to graze him when they fell.

"But nothing could divert the servant of God from his close colloquies with Heaven. He renewed his courage and learned by experience that the Almighty seemed to choose that spot of predilection for bestowing favors upon him. We take from one of his Latin notes written by him on his captivity the account of some of these favors which proved an abundant source of consolation to him:

"While in the place," he says, "which I had chosen as my retreat, I seemed to be in the company of several of our Fathers whom I had known in life, and whose virtue and merit I esteemed highly. I preserve a distinct recollection only of Father James Bertrix, Father Stephen Binet and Father Coton vaguely. I besought them with all the ardor of my soul to commend me to the Cross, that it might receive me as the disciple of Him Whom it had borne, and that it would not refuse a Citizen of the Cross." Finally, good Father Jogues preserved and meditated upon the saying of St. Bernard, "Not unreasonably does He ask our life Who first gave us His Own."—The Pilot.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

OPPORTUNITY

A word unsung seems a little thing;  
But alas! I may never know  
If the coming days to a soul may bring  
The truth that I fail to show.

A song unsung seems a little thing;  
But the heart that I left today  
May pine for the songs that I did  
Not sing.

As it goes on its cheerless way,  
A deed undone seems a little thing;  
But the burden I might have shared  
Has left a heart with a bitter sting  
Of the thought that "nobody cared."

So the little things we leave undone  
Are the things that men hold dear;  
Life's battles are reckoned lost or won  
By a smile, or a falling tear.

'Tis the little things that the burdened heart  
In the time of trial heeds;  
Then let us lighten life's ache and smart  
With the sunshine of little deeds.

SLANDER

"Slander," how ominous the word sounds—how it makes one shudder. Yet it is one of the commonest forms of pastime in our very modern world. Two or three persons can scarcely ever meet and not the conversation goes on, innocent people's characters are torn to pieces, merely to pass away the time.

Those thoughtless people who indulge in that sort of thing have no scruple whatever in putting into words the foulest calumny, prefacing it with: "Have you heard?" and ending with: "Could you believe it?"

Persons who talk thus are base and selfish; there is a blasphemous spirit which rejoices in blighting and crushing the sunshine out of other's lives, "because to hear cruel calumny about ourselves, or perhaps someone we know and respect has a very crushing effect upon the spirit."

We should try by showing our displeasure to put down this evil habit, and when we can, avoid those who indulge in it, for truly the slanderer is a vile beast of prey who does not wait for the death of the creature it devours.—The Transcript.

THE DUTY OF GRATITUDE

St. Bernard, speaking of ingratitude in one of his sermons, says that it is above all things displeasing to God, especially in those who have been particularly favored; it closes up the fountain of divine favors and prevents our further reception of the gifts of piety or the outpourings of mercy and grace.

On the other hand gratitude toward God and to Our Blessed Lady for favors obtained is one of the easiest and surest means of drawing down future graces and blessings; as gratitude is ever pleasing and welcome among men so it is one of the virtues most dear to God.

"No one," said Don Bosco, "should dispense himself from the obligation of gratitude after having obtained some favor through the intercession of Mary help of Christians. This duty can be fulfilled in two ways; by making known the grace that has been granted, or by promoting in some other way devotion to Our Lady." But all are seriously recommended not to let their promised good work slip by; let the prayers, the mortifications, the confessions or Communions or good works be faithfully accomplished, for God is displeased with a faithless and foolish promise.

"It sometimes happens," he continues "that want of fidelity to the promise made prevents the obtaining of the whole of one's petition, or even sometimes brings about the recall of favors already granted. Two good families had besought God to give them a child to be their joy, and inherit their name and property. Almighty God heard their prayers; but in the fulness of their joy they forgot the promised religious exercises and work of charity. It was fearfully brought home to them that God is displeased with a foolish promise. Both children died before they were twelve months old, leaving the parents in consternation. The same misfortunes and even worse have overtaken others; the cause being inquired into, it was found that obligations had remained unfulfilled.

It would also be well to remember that God grants our requests in varying degrees. Sometimes our prayers have to be long continued and very persevering. At one time He grants a favor in its entirety, another only in part. Sometimes He gives us resignation to the Divine Will, or, changes a temporal into a spiritual favor, which may be for our greater good.

In all these cases, our petitions, carried before the throne of God by His Blessed Mother, have not remained unheard, and we are not at liberty to dispense with the promised good works simply because our arrangements did not fall out exactly as we had thought; the promise in the Gospel, "Ask and you shall receive," has been fulfilled; our prayers are never without effect.

In the second place the making known of the favor as a pledge of gratitude, is at the same time an act of religion, pleasing to God and His Blessed Mother; as well as an encouragement and an example to others. The more widely her powerful advocacy is made known, the more do confidence and piety increase.—The Pilot.

JUGOSLAVIA UNJUST TO CATHOLICS

SPECIAL SURVEY MADE BY N. C. W. C. NEWS SERVICE CORRESPONDENT

By Dr. Frederick Funder (Vienna Correspondent, N. C. W. C.)

Vienna, May 18.—I have just returned from a somewhat extensive trip through Yugoslavia, made for the purpose of ascertaining the exact situation there following the recent elections, as it affects the Catholic population of that country. I found some things to encourage one in the outlook, but many things which must be sources of anxiety. In those regions where the Catholic population is living in close contact with the Orthodox Serbs, the Church and all the Church organizations are suffering from great poverty, but at the same time the Catholics in such communities are anything but downcast and are determined with quiet persistence to assert their rights.

Much had been expected from the offer made to the government by the Croat Peasant Party, led by Stephen Radic, who is now under arrest, but the outcome was distinctly disappointing. It had been expected that the strong Croatian party would be given an understanding under which it would be able to enter the government and displace some of the elements which exhibit extraordinary hatred for Catholics. So far this expectation has not been realized in any of the negotiations carried on alternately at Zagreb and at Belgrade.

CROATIAN DEPUTIES RELEASED

One result of these negotiations, however, has been that a number of electoral seats won by the Croats in which the validity of the election was challenged by the government have now been conceded and a number of Croatian deputies who had been arrested have been released. The great stumbling block to further advances in the paths of peace is the continued presence in the government of Svetozar Pribicevic, the member of the Democratic Party who has always been foremost in all persecutions of the Catholic Church and who is known among educated Catholics as "the evil spirit of Yugoslavia."

The Catholics complain bitterly of the confiscation of ecclesiastical buildings and school houses in Dalmatia, the Backa and the Banat, and of the difficulties those not actually confiscated have to struggle against because of the attachment of the lands from which they receive much of the money for their maintenance.

The recent elections made it clear to many Catholic priests that to exercise their rights as citizens meant and still means persecution and possible imprisonment. During

the elections dozens of priests were arrested and thrown into prison on unsupported denunciation of them as citizens not favorably disposed to the government who intended to vote for the candidates of the opposition. In every case the priest arrested was later set at liberty for lack of corroboration of the charges brought against him.

TERRORIZING TACTICS FAIL

If it was intended to terrorize the Catholic population by this treatment of the clergy, the move failed altogether in its object. A certain amount of bitterness was engendered, but wherever these methods were used, new determination seemed to be born in the hearts of Catholic laymen.

At the conference of the executive committee of the Catholic Episcopate, held at Zagreb in the middle of April, particular complaint was made of the fact that all the cultural institutions, such as those employed in nursing the sick and giving instruction to children, have been placed under government inspectors and robbed of their independence to such an extent that they can no longer be regarded as being still in the possession of the Catholics. Among the members of the Episcopate the respective decrees of the government are regarded as open infringements of the constitution which indicates that a persecution of the Catholics is intended. Decisive contests are expected when the bill on the organization of instruction in primary schools will be presented. On the part of the Catholic Episcopate four fundamental demands are advanced:

1. A legal guarantee that religious instruction in every primary school will be declared obligatory.
2. The object of education must be defined so clearly that the religious and moral foundations of life find expression in this definition.
3. The Church must be allowed to influence to a certain degree the direction and the spirit of religious instruction.
4. Guarantees must be given that the Catholics will be at liberty to found their own Catholic schools out of funds at their disposal.

OMINOUS BILL PREPARED

At the moment of writing it is announced in the Belgrade Parliament that a bill will be brought in by which it is intended to subject all ecclesiastical matters to the authority of the State. The principle has been laid down that all measures taken by church authorities which touch upon matters of general interest, and for which the previous consent of the State has not been obtained, shall be invalid. For over a decade negotiations with the Vatican have been carried on by the various Serbian governments for the conclusion of a concordat, but the introduction of this bill seems to show that any intention of bringing about an amicable understanding with the Holy See is to be definitely abandoned.

HIS SIXTY-SEVENTH WALK IN ANNUAL PROCESSION

London, June 13.—For the sixty-seventh consecutive year, John Corbishley walked this week in the Guild procession which is a feature of Catholic life in Preston. The Bishop of Lancaster, in a coach with postillions and outriders, headed the pageant in which 10,000 people participated, bringing the traffic of the city to a stand-still. When John Corbishley walked in his first procession, at the age of nine, the Preston pageant was not what it is now. "It was a bit of an adventure then," he recalls, "for sometimes we used to encounter gatherings, organized by other churches—and then anything might happen."

But now the annual procession is a feature of the life of the city, and the non-Catholics take as much interest in it as the Catholics, who number one in three. John Corbishley nearly missed the procession three years ago, when he dashed back from Rome and arrived in Preston only a few hours before the event began.

BIGOTRY OF RACE REBUKED

Boston, June 19.—"True Americanism is of the spirit, not of any race or strain," Charles Evans Hughes, former Secretary of State, declared in an address in historic Faneuil Hall here Wednesday, in which he vigorously rebuked bigotry of race. The bigoted citizen, however boastful of long American descent, who would deny political privilege to his fellow citizen because of race or creed is exhibiting not his Americanism, but his lack of it," Mr. Hughes declared.

The address was delivered at the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Bunker Hill, and the speaker, after reviewing the great strides of the nation since that historic struggle, warned of dangers now facing America. These perils, he said, are the decline of patriotism, radicalism, racial and religious bigotry, over-confidence rising from wealth and strength, and a "passion for uniformity" which threatens local self-government.

America must guard against destructive forces all over the world which "invoke the name of liberty" but actually are seeking to establish a dictatorship of class, he said.



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