

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS. SAINT ANTHONY'S AID NEVER FAILS.

A SISTER OF ST. FRANCIS. "Ah, mother darling, but I'm going to make the lady of you in a bit. It's a silk dress I'll be gettin' you, and—"

"Now, Teddy darling, don't be talkin' in a silly, old body like me in a silk dress, indeed." "Why, mother, you're as fit for silks and satins as anyone I know, and if I get to be assistant bookkeeper—"

"Acusha! don't be moun'tin' too high; it's dangerous altogether." "But, mother, hasn't Mr. Crosby as good as promised me the job, and won't I be making the piles of money, and won't I spend it on you, mother dear, and won't I save the bite from your own mouth for me. And I'll have a servant-maid for you. You have slaved and toiled enough."

"God bless the dear, kind heart of the boy, but it'd be a sore day when his own mother would be after lettin' strangers do for him! Teddy, darling, leave everything in the hands of the Lord, and we'll be satisfied with whatever He does." "Mother, sure; but now I must be off. Take care of yourself and I'll be back this evening with the grand news." He kissed his mother affectionately—his little mother, wasn't she all— and started, whistling a lively tune, down the street to his place of business.

Mrs. Finnigan stood at the door of her neat but humble cottage and looked after her boy with an expression of fondest affection. Wasn't he the little, active figure, the very picture of his dear father, resting under the sod these twelve long years—so brave, so true and so handsome was her Dinnie, the finest gossam in all the country side. Yes, God in His wisdom, and goodness, too, surely, had taken away the husband she loved so devotedly, but He had left her the darling boy, the sunshine of her life, and for that she thanked Him daily. No race more thankful, more resigned, most trusting in the dispensation of Providence than the sons and daughters of Erin!

At last Teddy disappeared around the corner; she closed the door, with a fervent prayer for the boy. Teddy was, indeed, a good son, a bright, industrious lad, just the character to make his mark in our dear country, which recognizes no right to success but well directed and persevering effort. He had obtained, about a year ago, a position as clerk in a large mercantile concern. His cheerful and obliging disposition, his industry and tact for business had won him the confidence of his employers and the friendship of the numerous employees of the establishment.

"Young man, I am afraid you look like a traitor," said Mr. Wainwright, severely. "Why, Mr. Wainwright! you cannot mean that I—"

"I cannot afford to make suppositions. I must have certainty. The persons and belongings of each and every one of the employes must be searched before leaving the building," said Mr. Wainwright. Teddy brightened. Thanks be to God, they can't suspect me any longer. Several were searched, but nothing was found. Teddy's turn came; nothing was found on him; he was radiant, all would seem to be cleared up. There was a small box in the press, in which the boy kept odds and ends. Its contents were emptied on the counter, and with them a roll of bills. Teddy staggered, and would have fallen on the floor had the bookkeeper not supported him.

"O Teddy, how could you," he whispered reproachfully. "O, Mr. Crosby, I never did it; God knows I never did it." "Teddy, is this the way you reward the kindness of the firm?" asked Mr. Wainwright, sternly. "O, sir, God knows I never touched the money. O, believe me, sir, believe me, I would not touch a copper belonging to another."

"Tell me, boy, what has become of the notes—the gold," he demanded, curtly. "What notes! What gold! Oh, sir, I never saw notes nor gold. I never touched the safe." "Do you not see that you are concealing the money? Why will you obstinately deny your guilt and make pardon impossible?" "O, I am not, I am not a thief," cried Teddy.

"Indeed, Mr. Wainwright, I can't possibly see how the lad could have robbed the safe in so short a time. Was it open?" asked the bookkeeper. "Yes, sir, Mr. Maitland forgot to turn the key. Teddy must have observed it and improved the opportunity." "It looks bad," answered Mr. Crosby; "still I can't for the life of me see how he could be so quick about it." "Guess he has practiced the trade a bit," sneered Mr. Butler.

"Do you persist in saying that Butler sent you into the office," again demanded Mr. Wainwright. "Yes, sir, he really did. I didn't much like to go, but—"

"If you hadn't seen the safe open," said Butler, maliciously. "Mr. Butler, this is no time for jesting; this is a very serious case—a very painful occurrence. Tell me, boy, what has become of the notes and rolls of bills, and perhaps we can compromise matters; but the notes I must absolutely have." "If I had them, Mr. Wainwright, how gladly would I restore them, but I never, never saw them." Mr. Wainwright looked distressed. If the boy would only acknowledge his guilt!

per, and spending an hour or two with him. She experienced a strange, uneasy feeling, for which she could not account, and a dread of coming evil which drove sleep from her pillow. The next day, and the next, brought no extenuating circumstances to light. The lad adhered stoutly to his first statement, despite Mr. Wainwright's promise that the matter would be passed over in silence if he confessed fully and freely.

He was not a thief; he had not touched the safe, was his indignant declaration. The partners generally sided the lad, and could not explain how the act could have been so deftly and swiftly accomplished; still circumstances were against him. He was finally sent to jail to await his trial. Alas! was this to be the end of his beautiful daydream, all bright with the rosy tints of filial love and gratitude? Poor Mrs. Finnigan, her idolized boy branded a thief and confined to the common jail! It was more than she could bear. A severe illness prostrated the hapless mother.

In the meantime Teddy wept and prayed. When did ever good St. Anthony get back on a fellow that trusted him, as he did! Surely he never could! And wasn't it on him that the dear saint was to go back the first time for ages? The detective with all his cunning could detect nothing. The affair was shrouded in gloom and mystery, but still Teddy hoped and prayed with the fervor and constancy of his race. For when does a son of Erin sink into despair while God's blue heavens and bright sun, the harbinger of the Creator's love, smile above; it has never yet, through centuries of woe, learned to distrust the love of the gracious Father above. Nine days had passed, during which Teddy had made a fervent novena to his patron, St. Anthony. Were they only days? They seemed to be years to the mother, racked with pain. They were, indeed, long, long days to Teddy, but not all dark; sweet home brightened them. Mr. Crosby called every day on his young favorite, and could not suspect guilt in one so frank and open as Teddy had always shown himself.

"Now, Teddy," he asked, at the close of the ninth day. "Can't you remember seeing any one on the street as Butler passed out of the store, a fact which he denies so obstinately?" "No," answered Teddy, with a puzzled expression. "I can't." Suddenly a bright flash mantled his pale cheek. "Mr. Crosby, Mr. Crosby, I have it! Jim Blake, who comes to the store sometimes to see Mr. Butler, passed in a hurry, and Butler seemed to hand him something. How strange! Never came into my mind until this moment. My! but my head has been in a muddle. Everything was so awfully sudden."

"If I had them, Mr. Wainwright, how gladly would I restore them, but I never, never saw them." Mr. Wainwright looked distressed. If the boy would only acknowledge his guilt! "Upon my conscience, I don't believe he is the thief. A deeper knave has accomplished this villainy," said Crosby. "Well, I think your remarks are insulting to us all, Mr. Crosby. The shortest way to arrive at the truth, in my opinion, would be to call in the police."

"I am averse to disgracing the boy, if it can possibly be avoided. Teddy, make a clean breast of it; give back the notes and deeds, and we'll compromise," said Mr. Wainwright, persuasively. "I can't, I can't," sobbed Teddy. "Why can't you; you didn't destroy them, I hope," said Mr. Wainwright, much agitated. "O, sir, I never saw them, I never touched them," said Teddy, raising his frank blue eyes filled with tears to the stern face of his employer.

"Think of your poor mother, Teddy," remarked Mr. Wainwright, impressively. "O, mother, mother," sobbed the boy in an agony of grief. "O, Mother of God, O, good St. Anthony, help me, or it will be the breaking of my poor mother's heart." The lad's grief was evidently so sincere that the men all felt the deepest pity for him. Butler, excepted, who growled under his breath. "Young idolater, calling on his saints. Much good they'll do him." "We must make an end of this," said Mr. Wainwright, moodily. "I should say so," suggested Butler. "I am anxious to get home, and as I pass the station on my way, I could send up the chief of police."

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN.

There is no road to success but through a clear strong purpose. A purpose underlies character, culture, position, attainment of whatever sort. Don't Harbor Them. Some one has said in reference to temptations: "You cannot prevent birds from flying over your head, but you can from their building nests in your hair." The "upsetting" power of the devil only resides in the "consenting" power of the sinner.

Secret of Keeping Young. One of the secrets of keeping young, vigorous and supple-jointed, is to continue to practice the activities of youth, and to refuse to allow the mind to stiffen the muscles by its suggestions of age limitations. If men like Peter Cooper and William E. Gladstone, who kept up the vitalizing exercises of robust manhood when far into the eighties, had succumbed at forty to the thought of the valuable life-work which would have remained undone!—Success.

What Makes Young Men Old. Perhaps our young men will receive the following remarks of Mr. Robert Fitzsimmons with more respect than if they were made by a professor or a confessor or some other less distinguished personage: "Drink, late hours, cigarettes in youth, and the idea some men have that the way to have fun is to ruin your health—these things make young men old. "I live quietly, sleep regularly, drink moderately, a little ale or beer, never croquet, I would as soon learn to croquet as to smoke a cigarette. In fact, I'd rather croquet. If a man criticised me for doing that, I could give him some kind of an answer, or at least give him a punch for criticising. But if he caught me smoking a cigarette, I'd have to confess that I had gone wrong."—Antigonish Casket.

Abundance Takes the Iron from the Blood. It is a curious fact, in the history of nations, that only those which have had to struggle the hardest for an existence have been highly successful. As a rule, the same thing is true of men. One would think that it would be a great relief to have the bread-and-butter problem solved by one's ancestors so that he might devote all his energies and time to the development of the mental and spiritual faculties. But this is contrary to the verdict of history and the daily experience of the world. The strugglers, those born to a heritage of poverty and toil, and not those reared in the lap of fortune, have, with a few exceptions, been the leaders of civilization, the giants of the race.—Success.

To Young Men in Politics. Here are words of wisdom, from the Catholic Mirror, of special import to young men who feel a stirring of political impulse: "The desire for feeding at the public crib is awakened in those seeking politicians, who, by appealing to self-interest, gather to their support the very desirable cohorts of young men, always an important factor in the carrying of elections. Promises are given, which, like pie-crust, are made to be broken. But the evil is done. The greed for spoils stifles all higher and nobler ambitions, and the office-seeker is enticed by the attraction of a higher salary than his own ability, but which would immediately net him. The future is left out of the calculation, or the lifetime of ups-and-downs, of reverses and disappointments, which becomes the lot of the small-fry politician, is glossed over."

The Problem of Prosperity. Books have been written to tell young men how to get on in life, but the sum and substance of the volumes can be condensed into the three rules: Be faithful in the practice of religion, be industrious, be thrifty. This is the simplest of simple problems for the true Christian to solve. Perhaps its very simplicity prevents many from grasping the ideas involved in its solution, because so many seem determined to make much of everything they are pleased to undertake, and inclined to raise difficulties, with no apparent object other than to weigh in their minds, in thinking over them, the various excuses therein for their fretful and marvelous tempers. Those who really understood how to work out this easy problem are generally called "plodders" and this word is often pronounced in a way to indicate that the plodder lacks mentality and is far beneath the speaker's intelligence. The truth is, however, that the contrary is frequently the truth; for many of the greatest men of our industry in one, to look the situation calmly in the face and do the best he can under the circumstances; and this is the so-called plodder does.—Church Progress.

Many young men start out with the idea that they can learn to do everything by intuition and that they will simply carry every thing with a high hand and head everybody else's will to theirs. In fact, turn every one they meet to associate with, either socially or in business circles, around their fingers. My! how such dispositions are "worked," consciously or unconsciously, by almost every one—friend and foe, alike. The sensible man decides at once, on coming into manhood, on some occupation. He at once settles about learning all about it. He may have the laudable ambition to eventually setting up for himself; but he is clear-sighted enough to see that he needs two things for that—experience and cash, without which he would only make a failure of it. If he has the cash, and not the experience, he knows that he must first learn as an employee all the ins and outs of the selected business, before he can safely invest his cash in it. If he has experience, and not the cash, he knows that he must continue as an employee until his prudent savings have made it possible for him to become an employer. Slowly, but surely, he makes his moves on the checker-board of life; but he is sure to win at last. Long before middle age, however, he enjoys comforts which his self-important companion at the start is then still as far away

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