

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

TAKING ADVANTAGE

Don't be a "sponge." Don't accept favors regularly where you cannot reciprocate. Pay your way. Take your share. If you cannot afford to be generous, at least be just, and do not habitually take when you cannot also as freely give. Hold your head up and play your part in life like a gentleman.

The other day at a restaurant, I happened to be sitting near a table where a half-dozen young men were having an elaborate and very hilarious dinner. When they had finished their coffee and the waiter came with the bill, one of them said: "Now it seems to me we'd better let Harry pay."

Instantly there was a loud laugh, evidently at a great joke, joined in by all the men except one, whose face turned red and whose hand, with obvious reluctance, went to his back pocket.

"I'll pay if you want me to," he said, in a tone that showed he was by no means happy.

The others looked at him with their eyes shining and then they exchanged glances.

The meaning of the situation was plain enough. They were "getting even" with a "sucker" who had become known as a mean fellow, expert at taking advantage of his acquaintances by letting them pay his score for him.

We all have in our acquaintance at least one person who is known for being parsimonious and for taking advantage of his friends. We are fortunate if we don't know more than one. In some ways they are rather pitiful objects, these traders on social good-will, abusers of kindly feeling. And yet, at times, they can be very irritating. They do things that make those around him feel ashamed, and that, in some instances, must cause shame to themselves. I have actually seen some of them betray embarrassment and even become apologetic while they were in the very act of doing meanness. It was as if they were controlled by a force that represented only a part of them and that the rest of their being helplessly obeyed.

I used to know a man of some means who had a way of speaking quite frankly about this kind of weakness, which he recognized in himself. His inability to use money generously he attributed to the habit formed in his youth when he was so poor that he was constantly forced to make close calculations. Sometimes he would try hard to overcome the weakness. He would give expensive entertainments and he would make foolish presents, greatly to the bewilderment of some of his friends, who could not understand the contradiction in his nature. Meantime he would maintain those parsimonious ways that characterized his daily life.

There are many cases of this kind. When one meets them and sees what lies behind they appeal to sympathy and they grow easier to be patient about. I suspect that, like most human beings, the parsimonious long to cut a good figure in the world. They would enjoy being considered liberal. But they resemble people suffering from a disease. In the end, of course, they are the worst sufferers from their weakness. Their small economies are great extravagances. Where they save a few dollars they may lose good will that is worth far more in all kinds of advantages, including the practical.

The unfair people nearly always have excuses for themselves. Their exactions they decorate with flattering names or with exonerating phrases. They are obliged, perhaps, to behave in this way on account of some burden they are carrying. They forget that other people carry burdens, too, perhaps even greater, and that, by trying to make their own burden lighter, they impose further hardship on others. What is even worse, they often turn good-will into ill-will. For the instant one suspects that a friend is deliberately taking mean advantages, where once there was kindness bitterness is likely to take its place.

Occasionally, selfishness in petty ways is compensated for in a character by unselfishness in other ways, making a strange contradiction. It would seem as if the two kinds of quality could not go together; but they do just the same. Of all animals, the human animal is the least possible, because he combines qualities that are opposed to one another.

On the other hand there are those whose selfishness runs through the character with a powerful consistency. They are among the hardest people in the world to put up with. And yet they are often people of attractive social gifts that enable them to make and to keep friends in spite of their weakness.

The most surprising contradictions are to be found in the world of business where getting the advantage and keeping it and making the most of it is the main object. Men who develop a genius for this kind of enterprise are often fine, generous fellows outside of business. It is almost as if each were two persons.

This phenomenon, so common as hardly to be recognized as such, explains why there has grown up in the older civilization so deep-seated a prejudice against business, a feeling that the great service it renders in some way carries a stigma. The marvel is that, in spite of its encouragement of greed, it should not have corrupted mankind far worse. But

meanness is no more a legitimate part of business than of any other expression of life. Here generosity brings its reward, if not always in dollars then in the good will that is worth far more than its weight in gold. "The longer I work," says one of the most successful business men in this community, "the more firmly I am convinced that the dog-in-the-manger policy doesn't pay. The man who is small to the other fellow is the man who is small to himself, and makes himself smaller every day he lives."—John D. Barry.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

A BISHOP'S ADVICE TO GRADUATES

The good Bishop of South Africa who took the trouble to write a circular letter to all his boys and girls about their duties at home and at school, gives also some splendid advice to the graduates. They have entered on a very important period of their lives, and are now doing their share in helping father and mother—or they should be doing it. Here is what Bishop Cox says to these young people. Every word should be born in mind:

Don't then forget the useful lessons you have learned. Take care to keep up your good practices. As you get older you should become even better. Don't be like those who think, because they are no longer at school, that they may omit their prayers, and do what careless people in the world do. The way to heaven is like a steep hill which you have to go up in order to reach the top. Don't go down the hill when you leave school. Don't throw away the blessings which God has given you. As you wish to be saved, you must ever be on the right path, and you must not neglect the means of salvation. Be very careful not to take up with bad companions, and don't neglect the holy Sacraments, and the practice of your religion.

"Let me give a last word of general advice. Remember always what you owe to your parents, and don't be ungrateful to them, think kindly of your teachers and of all who have been kind to you. Try to make others love you. Respect yourselves and others, and others will respect you. Be tidy in your dress. Try to do credit to your parents.

Finally, be devout to the Sacred Heart of your loving Saviour, and to Mary your heavenly Queen. Also place yourselves under the patronage and protection of St. Joseph and of St. Aloysius."—Catholic News.

WHAT "TINKERING" DID
"Clear up that rubbish, Fred. You're always tinkering at something."

Alice Graham was called a "lovely" girl by her friends, and she was a helpful girl in her home, but her brother called her a "nagger," and not without reason.

Just now she was sweeping his scraps of iron and twine and wire from the kitchen table, and there was every prospect of a war of words.

"What's up?" asked Mr. Graham, who had come back for a tool.

"What's Fred doing now?"

"The same old thing—just tinkering," said Alice, scornfully. "Please, papa, make him take this rubbish down to the barn."

"I can't heat my wire down there, papa. I'll be through soon."

Mr. Graham looked at the flushed, cross faces.

"Just tinkering. That reminds me of something I read the other day about another boy who was always tinkering. He was better off than Fred, for he had an old junk shop on the farm where he gathered everything from nails to wagon tires and harrow-teeth. He started to make a small steam engine, and he made a marvel with a whistle that could be heard for miles. Climbing aboard, he tried it out in the meadow dashing about so that the cows ran mad to get out of his way."

"Next, Henry bought a watch for \$3—he was now earning \$5 a week in the dry dock works—he took it apart and decided it was worth about a dollar. If he had a factory! A great, big factory, what wouldn't he do!"

"One day he came out of a store with his arms full of bundles. Everybody on the streets had lined up to see a steam-engine that actually ran along without a special road-bed and rails. Henry watched, too. The huge boiler caught his attention; he began a figuring on the weight of water it carried. It bothered me for weeks," he said. That set him wandering if gasoline wouldn't be better. To try out the idea he made another engine. By this time Henry had a wife, and while he worked she sat on a box watching him.

"At last he was ready for the trial trip. After all the making ready was done and the machinery set in motion he found it would run but the steering gear must be adjusted. At midnight he was still at work; at 2 o'clock he started the engine and it missed fire. The spark was at fault. At 3 o'clock he nailed two boards together for a seat, opened the shed doors, and steered into the yard. Instead of cows that ran away from him he had to contend with clothes-lines and posts that tried to entangle him, but he reached the street finally, and the little machine rattling and coughing jerked and jumped along through the slush on the road, while drizzling rain fell. Henry wondered how he could turn the machine to get home, and at the end of the third block he jumped out, lifted his machine around and headed it for home. The engine was acting badly, but the

machine pushed and jerked until it jerked itself into the shed.

"By this time Henry was hungry. The kitchen was fireless, so he got out his machine for another run—this time to see Coffee Jim, who kept an all-night lunch cart. Wasn't he surprised when Henry bumped up in the queer machine. As he cut sand-

wiches for him, Coffee Jim talked about the car, and after lunch Henry took him for a ride. After that he often called on Coffee Jim, and it was this friend who put up the money to enable Henry to build a car that came in a half a mile ahead of all the other cars entered in an automobile race. News of the feat went round the world, and everybody was talking about Henry Ford, whose first car had frightened the cows.

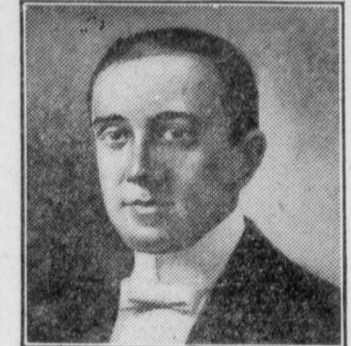
He got his factory all right. I guess I wouldn't be too hard on Fred, little woman, just for tinkering."

"You can stay there, Fred," agreed Alice. "Perhaps there is something in a boy when he's always working with all kinds of old junk. But I wish you had a shed of your own."

—Catholic News.

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—Catholic News.

INCOMPLETENESS

Nothing resting in its own completeness

Can have worth or beauty: but alone

Because it leads and tends to further sweetness.

Fuller, higher, deeper than its own.

Spring's real glory dwells not in the meaning,

Gracious though it be, of her blue hours;

But is hidden in her tender leaning To the Summer's richer wealth of flowers.

Dawn is fair, because the mists fade slowly

Into day, which floods the world with light;

Twilight's mystery is so sweet and holy

Just because it ends in starry Night.

Childhood's smiles unconscious

From strife, that in a far-off future lies;

And angel glances (veiled now by Life's sorrow)

Draw our hearts to some beloved eyes.

Life is only bright when it proceed-

eth

Towards a truer, deeper Life above;

Human Love is sweetest when it leadeth

To a more divine and perfect Love.

Learn the mystery of Progression duly:

Do not call each glorious change, Decay;

But know we only hold our treasures truly,

When it seems as if they passed away.

Nor dare to blame God's gifts for incompleteness;

In that want their beauty lies: they roll

Towards some infinite depth of love and sweetness,

Bearing onward man's reluctant soul.

—ADELAIDE A. PROCTER

AFFECTING LETTER FROM ALFONSO

KING OF SPAIN INTERESTED IN APPEAL OF CHILD

Her name is Genevieve Crinon; she is nine years old, and she lives at 126 Rue Ferdinand, Paris. Her hair is as black as a raven's wing, and her eyes the color of a gazelle's.

Genevieve had very often heard during the last two years as of the suffering of her uncle, who was a prisoner of war in Germany. She remembered him very well, for she had loved him very much. Her mother and her aunt often sorrowed at belating tidings, or sorrowed more at none at all. They had no word from him for three months, and the last letter was very short, as the regulations specify, telling only of life and love for those in France and also of sickness.

While one evening about the fire, and her mother and her aunt were crying, she asked where the German prison camp was. Her mother told her it was Camp Festerdorf, in Westphalia, and that's all she knew. An hour later, while Genevieve was looking at the evening paper, she suddenly said aloud, "Gracious!" The next afternoon while her mother and her aunt were out, she stealthily opened her little savings bank and took from it 40 centimes, went herself and bought a sheet of paper and envelope and a 25 centimes stamp, came home and wrote this letter: wrote it in her childish way, oblivious of error, un mindful of a big blot that leaked from her mother's pen and she signed her name.

Monsieur, Your Majesty the King of Spain: "You will please see about my uncle Gabriel Crinon, who is a prisoner in Camp Festerdorf in Westphalia, he is sick, and I read in the paper sick French soldiers can be sent to Switzerland to be made well again. I read in the same paper you had a friend who said you were good. I am a little friend who asks you for myself and for my mamma and my aunt. It would make us happy to know my uncle was in Switzerland, and away from the hooche that hurt him with a big gun. He would never have made my uncle prisoner if he had not hurt him first. I will kiss you if you will send him to Switzerland. He is a sergeant, and I love him. He is a sergeant of the line, my aunt says. I don't know what the line is, but he wears a grey uniform and has a moustache. I am only nine years old, and if you will send him to Switzerland I will come to your castle when the nasty war is over and see you my own self."

Then Genevieve wrote upon the envelope: "The King of Spain, Madrid," and put the letter in the post box at the corner as she went to school the next morning. And every day she went to school again and she played and helped her mamma and her aunt and lived her little life of childish innocence.

One evening, long after, so long Genevieve had forgotten, thinking only now and then that some day she would have to tell her mamma about the 40 missing centimes from her bank, the postman came to the door. Her mother greeted him eagerly, for no news had come from the prisoner in Westphalia for four months. And she cried out:

"Genevieve! Genevieve! It's a letter for you. And it comes from Spain. What can it be?"

And the little Genevieve remembered. Her little face grew red and then it grew pale, and then she burst into tears, sobbingly telling what she had done weeks before.

Her mother looked at her mother, and both looked at her aunt, and her aunt looked at Genevieve, while they both reached to take her in their arms at the same time. And while they all three sat down together Genevieve opened her first letter all her own self. It was written upon beautiful paper, and had a coronet and a crown at its top, while at its bottom was the signature, Alfonso. She passed it to her mother, who read it aloud. And here is what she read:

Mademoiselle—When one is but nine one cannot, of course, know that even kings cannot always do that which they wish to do. If this one could, your uncle would be home with you now.

But learn, mademoiselle, that I myself have written to Germany, not through a secretary, but in my own hand, as I would for a dear personal friend. I have done this because your letter moved and charmed me. And I hope that which I have written will bring your uncle to you. I would not be surprised if it did.

I thank you for your confidence in me mademoiselle. Every one has not confidence, even in a king and I shall hold to your promise to come and see me at Madrid when the wicked war is over, or if not then at least a little later, when you can bring your uncle and your aunt and your mamma.

Permit, mademoiselle, that the King of Spain express his gratitude to you for having written him, and that he place two big papa kisses upon the cheeks of a little French girl whose heart is in what she has written, so that it is here in Spain with him.

That letter was received by Genevieve some weeks ago. She is waiting for her uncle—waiting in the surety of childish confidence.—Providence Visitor.

Follow pleasure and then will pleasure flee.

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DISCOURAGE THE TALE-BEARER

Such is the advice of the Homiletic Monthly which we quote: "Never allow your children to carry gossip about children or about teachers. This should be discouraged before your children gain any headway in this direction. If your children complain to you about what the Sisters said or did to them, find out the truth from those who are in a position to tell you. You may be sure that no school Sister will ever punish a child without good and just reason. Even

if, after a thorough investigation, you have reasons for thinking the Sister acted hastily, never side with the child in this matter. Your child would abuse this support, and you would suffer the consequences by forfeiting your own authority. The child would next question your authority, and that would mean an end of your good influence with the child."

Nothing is quite so good as it seems beforehand.—George Eliot.

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Water, sterilized by boiling (carbonated); sugar, granulated, first quality; fruit flavoring extracts with caramel; acid flavorings, citric (lemon) and phosphoric; essence of tea—the refreshing principle.

The following analysis, by the late Dr. John W. Mallet, Fellow of the Royal Society and for nearly forty years Professor of Chemistry in the University of Virginia, shows the comparative stimulating or refreshing strength of tea and Coca-Cola, measured in terms of the refreshing principle:

Black tea—1 cupful (hot) (8 fl. oz.) 1.54
Green tea—1 glassful (cold) (8 fl. oz., exclusive of ice) 2.02
Coca-Cola—1 drink, 8 fl. oz. (prepared with 1 fl. oz. Syrup) 1.21
Coca-Cola—1 drink, 8 fl. oz. (bottled) (prepared with 1 fl. oz. Syrup) 1.12

From the above recipe and analysis, which are confirmed by all chemists who have analyzed these beverages, it is apparent that Coca-Cola is a carbonated, fruit-flavored modification of tea of a little more than one-half its stimulating strength.

A copy of the booklet referred to above will be mailed free on request, and The Coca-Cola Company especially invites inquiry from those who are interested in pure food and public health propaganda. Address

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Alchemist's Secret, The, by Isabel Cecilia Williams. This collection of short stories is not of the sort to meet and satisfy the reader's desire for simple direct teaching, and they lead us to think of and to pity sorrow and trials of others rather than our own.

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Four Great Evils of the Day, by Cardinal Manning. Happo-Go-Lucky, by Mary C. Crowley. A collection of tales of New York life, including "A Little Heroine," "Ned's Baseball Club," "Terry and His Friends," "The Boys at Balton," and "A Christmas Stocking."

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Heires of Kilgour, by Mrs. J. Sadlier. History and fiction combined; very interesting.

In The Crucible, by Isabel Cecilia Williams. These stories of hard endeavor, of the patient bearing of pain, the sacrifice of self for others' good, are keyed on the divine true story of Him Who gave us all for us and died on Calvary's Cross (Sacred Heart Review).

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