

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

Father Helving's Swan.

The holidays were over, and the boys had come back to St. Oswald's to face with more or less cheerfulness the long and arduous part of the school year.

"Why, he's a perfect dumb skull," Dick Hobson was saying with inflating scorn. "When I asked him if he wanted to have a catch in the corridor, he said: 'Can't play ball, and says sir! What's the use of Father Helving telling us to be kind, and play with him if the fellow can't play?'"

"Well, I don't mind that," said Dick Hobson easily, "because he's got a good chance to be president when he stops nagging."

"Oh, bother politics!" broke in Dick. "Don't be so smart, fellows. What I say about it is that it is nobody's fault to be poor, and some of our fathers come over here poor enough, goodness knows. But this kid—Hans—he's so dumb and so slow, he's not worth his keep, and if Father Helving wants to take a boy for charity I wish he'd take one with something in him, who'd be a credit to St. Oswald's."

The news came while they were at rehearsal, during which no one noticed that Hans "the swan" was present, his cheeks flushed, and eye bright, his

whole face transfigured by the music to which he was listening.

When the messenger announcing Will's illness had delivered his tidings, Herr Baumeister struck a false chord with his left hand, and his right cleared his hair tragically.

"You can sing? Good! Begin," and he struck the opening chords of Will's first solo.

A little timidly, but gaining courage as he went on in the delight of the melody Hans began. Such a voice! High, and true and sweet, with a quality quite indescribable, but which made even the boys who were not musical wish they were where they could cry unison.

The song ended, a murmur of applause arose, and the boys remarked that Will had not in it with that ugly duckling of Father Helving's, who was not merely turning out a swan, but a nightingale.

As to Herr Baumeister, being a German, and not ashamed of emotion, and a musician who must necessarily feel it, the tears ran down into his big beard, and taking Hans in his arms he kissed him on both cheeks, breaking into enthusiastic praise in German.

And so Hans sang at the concert, and everyone found words inadequate for praise of his marvelous voice.

Stimulated by the admiration he received, Hans came out of his shell of shyness and proved he could do many other things besides sing, though he was above all things a musician.

People flocked on Sunday afternoons to St. Oswald's chapel at Vespers to hear the boy's soprano, and his mates became more proud of him than even of the pitcher of the nine, or their crack oarsman, although one could send in such curves, and the other could pull a stroke that could not be beaten.

And Father Helving was well pleased that his charity had been so well disposed, and smiled with satisfaction over Hans' appropriate nickname, "Father Helving's swan."

"Well, I don't mind that," said Dick Hobson easily, "because he's got a good chance to be president when he stops nagging."

"No, it doesn't; it takes a lot of dickering," said Ed. "You take my money, and I'll take your office, that's what the deal is, and beggars are not in it."

"Oh, bother politics!" broke in Dick. "Don't be so smart, fellows. What I say about it is that it is nobody's fault to be poor, and some of our fathers come over here poor enough, goodness knows. But this kid—Hans—he's so dumb and so slow, he's not worth his keep, and if Father Helving wants to take a boy for charity I wish he'd take one with something in him, who'd be a credit to St. Oswald's."

Fortune's trumpet blast which, passed unheeded, may never recur.

Strangely enough, despite this age of earnestness, despite the ever increasing difficulty of attaining to wealth and distinction, even as contrasted with only several years ago, there are still many fields of endeavor bristling with opportunity and fraught with rosy promise for the young.

The limited resources of our young country, this age of essential progress, in the potentials of electrical force, the new standards by which journalism and literature are being judged, the impetus given to ambitious for army and navy life by the surprising anteclimax of the century just closed—all these, and more, create new fields and reveal areas of untitled soil abounding in fertility and resources.

So that, although the professions are being rapidly overcrowded and more than pasted intelligence frequently rewarded, at least for a time, by scarce more than a pittance, it is not at all unlikely that more failures result from misdirected judgment or ill-selected vocation than from lack of opportunity.

And so for the young, they are doubly fortunate in this age of ours. The activity and energy of youth, the progressiveness of thought and teaching have done much to arm the young in dissipating the prejudices which, until recently had obtained against the headless doctor and the youthful advocate.

So that we find the sentiment of today to be that our lives, our reputations and our fortunes are as secure in the hands of the brainy youth as in those of his colleagues of much riper years.

Granted, my dear young men, that you have a chance against age, what are the elements of permanent and lasting success?

Of course, you must be educated, for "education is a man's best passport to success in life; you must possess an intellectual grasp and receptive ability; you must have heads to know and hearts to feel and mouths to speak."

Further than this: You must be plucky, persevering and patient. The emphasis of all things from politics to pastimes, is never so striking as when we fail in them.

Magnumity to a vanquished foe is a most commendable trait of character and can always be relied upon as a most valuable aid to success. There are enough inevitable turns of fortune which force us to believe that our gain is another's loss; that is one of the ugly aspects of life. Finally, you must possess physical fitness and vital force. This last might well be considered the most important of all.

A healthy, vigorous system is a prerequisite to sustained intellectual effort. It is a most significant fact that the successes in life have been most frequently registered by the boys of courage, of determination, of eagerness for sport and outdoor exercise, of a reckless disregard for a black eye or worse, so long as they were not compelled to "back water," and their honor remained unsullied, rather than by those goody goody, pseudo saintly fellows who let a guilty blush for being forced to smile and forgot even the selfish thought of their own mean selves in their incessant worrying into black care.

Once become a prey to that fashionable American disease, "nervous prostration," and you will find its effects incalculable: You will find it compromises achievement and stifles energy and ambition even in the very zenith of their hopes.

The discontinuance of the observance of it was not spiritually impressive. In former times in New England fasting was a practiced custom among all devoted Christians. There may be more of it now throughout the region named than any one can know, but it is my strong impression that, save as it is observed by Catholics and extreme ritualists, the custom of fasting as a religious duty has gone out.

The Christian world will celebrate this month the centenary of the birth of the great Cardinal Newman. His claims on the affectionate remembrance of all Catholics can not be overestimated. He was a great ecclesiastical leader, foremost in the pulpit and the press. He was the leader of that great movement which has left its mark upon many departments of thought and of life. He was a great writer, whose historical works made a profound impression, and whose eloquence kept the English language in a state of purity, of grace, and of softness.

If it were only for the singular literary charm of his writings, Cardinal Newman ought to be dearer to the literary world than any other writer in the English language.

Veres on Various Occasions, which are but too few, and his memorabilia of us will recall on our own deathbeds, will always be among their most cherished memories, and that not chiefly for the singularity of their language or their style.

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in its disciples. To the poor peasant who knows no other dignity it must be a proud thing to feel himself a member of a vast community that spreads from the Andes to the Indus; that has bid defiance to the vicissitudes of fifteen centuries and adorned itself with the genius and virtues of them all; that beheld the transition from ancient to modern civilization, and itself forms the connecting link between the old world in Europe and the new, the missionary of the mission, the associate of history, the patron of art, the vanquisher of the sword.

THE WHITE PLAGUE.

One-Sixth of all Deaths Due to Consumption.

ITS RAVAGES SPARE NO CLASS—RICH AND POOR ALIKE FALL ITS VICTIMS—HOW THIS DREAD TROUBLE MAY BE PREVENTED.

Consumption has been well named the great white plague. One-sixth of all the deaths occurring in Canada annually are due to the ravages of this terrible disease.

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CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN.

The world needs true men, it needs Christian men, it needs the manhood which religion alone can develop.

Liquor is a Curse. The Hon. John Sherman, in a letter to a discouraged and unfortunate young man, the son of a schoolmate of the eminent statesman, said, among other good things: "Abandon liquor as you would abandon a pestilence, for liquor is the curse which wrecks more lives than all the horrors of the world."

Of Interest to Our Boys. A neat attire is not always an index to good character and ability, but the fact remains that of two applicants the business man will always employ the well dressed, attractive looking boy rather than the one who is careless in his appearance.

Opportunities of the Young. What is opportunity? What opportunities has a young man? Considering these questions, Dr. John H. Barry, of Long Island City, made these impressive remarks in an address to the students of a college:

There comes a supreme moment in life when character has to stand the test, when "bluff" bluster and counterfeit are exposed, when the counter-fores of innocence and expertise are reached, when the exigencies of the times signal genius to declare itself, when ordinary minds seemingly receive an inspiration, when truth, honor, integrity, capacity become the inexorable standards by which our fitness is to be measured.

Fastings Obsolete in Protestant Churches. From the Church Economist. Hesperian to be in Hartford, the capital of Connecticut, recently, the editor of the Church Economist sought to ascertain if fasting was actually practiced by any communions of Christians or by any individuals in the S. State.

Protestant Divine's Tribute to the Catholic Church. Dr. James Marineau, a voluminous author and by universal consent one of the profoundest thinkers and metaphysicians of his time, who died recently in London, wrote of the Catholic Church:

Long and far was this Church the seat of the Christian faith, that bore it on over the storm of ages, and sheltered it amid the clash of nations. It evangelized the philosophy of the East and gave some sobriety to its wild and voluptuous dreams.

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