CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN.

YOUR OPPORTUNITY CONFRONTS YOU WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH IT.

A crucial period comes into every normal life, the psychological moment which, if grasped, brings success. It comes to the young surgeon when, perhaps, after long waiting and years of drudgery, studying and experimenting, he is suddenly confronted with his first critical operation. An accident has happened and the great surgeon is absent. Life and death hang in the balance. Will he be equal to the emergency? If his knife slips but the thickness of a sheet of paper, it may cost a precious life. Only a hair's breadth separates life and death in his patient. Are his training and learning sufficient to make him equal to the occasion? If so, his reputation may be made. But if he has dawdled when he should have been studying, if he has idled away his precious hours at college, the opportunity will offer only danger to the patient and ruin to his reputation. Everything depends upon the accuracy of his knowledge.

An opportunity confronts a young lawyer. In a critical case, a fortune or a life may hang upon his skill, upon the faithfulness which he has put into his preparation. Will he be equal to the occasion? Has he laid a solid foundation? Is he well read in similar cases? Does he know all the precedents? Can he convince the jury? Will he drag into his brief and plea the wasted hours which he has put into his preparation, the neglected opportunities in his law study; or will he bring to bear a sharp, keen insight born of earnestness, exactitude, thoroughness, conscientiousness? His opportunity confronts him. What will he do with it?

Sir Astley Cooper, when a lad in England, happened to be present when a helpless crowd was watching an accident to a boy who had been run over by a carriage. No one seemed to know what to do. But young Cooper had been compelled to handle tools at home, to make the things he could not buy, and he was equal to the occasion, for he had developed skill. He took his handkerchief and stopped the flow of blood by pressure above the boy's wound. This led to his becoming the royal surgeon, and was the beginning of his famous career.

Every now and then a critical opportunity confronts a clerk in a store. A member of the firm has died or retired, or the firm changes hands, and they are looking for a partner, manager, or superintendent. This test will bring out what is in the clerk. Has he been watching the clock—stealing the time of his employer—doing dishonest work—putting in short hours of service all these years? Has he been indifferent, impudent, gruff, or curt to his customers, or has he been polite and obliging, kind, deferential, and accommodating? The opportunity confronts him. What will he do with it?

It confronts a reporter on a newspaper. The writer of the leading editorials is sick. Who shall take his place? Will it be the reporter who never gets the thing he is sent for, but brings back only excuses that he could not get at the man, that he was not approachable, or that nobody would tell him anything; or the one who is always "carrying the message to Garcia"?

So, in every avenue of life, great opportunities are constantly confronting us. Who are ready for them? Who will fill the positions? It is the prepared men, those who are equal to the places, who generally get them.

Be sure that your great opportunity will confront you. Are you prepared for it? Will you be equal to it? Have you laid your foundation deep and wide and strong? What will you do with your great opportunity when it comes?

The world is always looking for men, for leaders, for organizers. You may be sure there is a vacancy nearer to you than you dream, if you are ready for it, if you are equal to it. An accident on a railroad, sickness, death—any of the unexpected events of life—may open the door for you. Something is constantly happening to make vacancies. Are you prepared to grasp your opportunity? If you are not prepared, someone else will be chosen. You may wonder why you are not selected for promotion; but if you analyze your life, you will probably find many a good reason. Somebody in every institution is ready for the opportunity when it comes. Somebody will be equal to the crisis, because he has been fitting himself for it all his life. In writing every letter, in doing every errand, in selling every yard of cloth, in teaching every pupil, in writing every brief, in making every speech, he has had the possible vacancy, the awaited opportunity, in constant view.

It is interesting to note the different attitudes of men when an opportunity confronts them. Some men, who have waited for years for a particular chance, seem to be paralyzed when it appears. They did not expect it to look just that way. They are not quite ready for it. They might be to morrow, or next week, but not to day. By that time the opportunity has gone by. It does not look quite as attractive when close to them as it did in the distance, and it will look more attractive to morrow, when it is beyond reach. Some characters are unnerved when they face their opportunity. Others are in doubt as to whether or not it is the opportunity they have been seeking; and while they are waiting, doubting, it has slipped away from them. Some men are nerved the moment their great opportunity confronts them. It is to them a tonic, a stimulant, which calls out power they did not dream they possessed before, and the greater the obstacles in their way the stronger they feel. The very sight of the chance which they have longed for seems to brace up all their faculties, buttress their ability, and call out all their reserve power, and they go into the battle like giants.

I always feel anxious for a young man when I see him facing the great crisis of his life, a powerful emergency which will make or break him; and I ask myself the questions: what will he do with it—what will he make of it? Will it bring out the man in him? Will it call out his latent forces, backed up by all the energies he can muster? Will he conquer it, or will it conquer him? If it conquers him, if he has not the courage, grit, and persistence to cut his way through it, he will lose something of power, of energy, of ambition; he will never be quite so strong again for another emergency. He will be like an eagle with his wings clipped, conscious of power which he is unable to use. He will have the sense of humiliation at being conquered, and of fearing that it will happen again.

During the month of June, thousands of young men graduates full of ambition and hope, full of expectancy, will go out from the schools, the colleges, and the universities, with their diplomas, to face for the first time the practical world.

On every side it will be dinned into your ears that the great trusts are swallowing up all the good opportunities; that the chances in business for those without capital have gone by. But you must not heed this parrot cry. There never was a time in all history when the call for the man who is prepared was so loud as now. But the call is for a larger, completer man—a man who can do things, a man with a finer training, a man who has not skimped or tried to economize on his foundation.

It does not matter how many great combinations of capital there are; the opportunity is greater than ever before, but the opportunity is for the skilled man, the trained man, the specialist, the man who is king in his line, the man whose mind is so trained and disciplined that he can bring the whole of himself with power and vigor to his life work.

The world is all gates, all opportunities to him who can make use of them; and power and fortune are all about us, awaiting the eye that can see, the ear that can hear, the hand that can achieve.

Your future, fortunate graduates, like a great block of pure white marble, stands untouched before you.

You hold the chisel and mallet—your ability, your education—in your hands. There is something in the block for you, and it lives in your ideal. Shall it be angel or devil? What are your ideals, as you stand tip-toe on the threshold of active life? Will you smite the block and shatter it into an unshapely or hideous piece; or will you call out a statue of usefulness, of grace and beauty, a statue which will tell the unborn generations the story of a noble life?—O. S. M. in Success.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

THE BOY IN THE WINDOW.

Freddie made a point of getting the boys to play in front of the window just as much as possible.

He liked to look up and nod at the boy, and receive his sad little smile and a wave of the hand in reply.

"He likes to see us, if he can't do it himself," he explained, when Jerry Simpson, his chum, tried to get the marble ring moved to the next street.

"Guess if any of us fellows had to sit in that old chair all day, and wear as much iron on 'em as he does, we'd be glad to have somebody to look at."

And so the marble ring remained, and was well patronized after school hours. They played all sorts of games; hop skotch ball, pitching quoits, jumping and wrestling. When the weather grew warm enough, the window was thrown open, then the boys gathered around and talked to him while they played. Sometimes they took him into their games by making him judge or umpire.

It was when the season for soldiering commenced that the idea came into Freddie's mind. He was always tender-hearted, and would not harm the smallest insect; as for animals, he brought home every homeless or crippled dog or cat in the neighborhood. Freddie was a leader among his fellows; he could run faster, jump farther and swim better than any one of them, that is why he used to look at that boy in the window and wonder what he himself would do if he could not climb a tree or jump from a second floor of a carriage house to the ground without getting hurt, or walk on the top of a high board fence which surrounded the school yard; and that is the reason he always tried to bring a little brightness into the boys's life.

The Spanish-American War, at the time of our story had just begun, and all of the little boys of the land were wild to become brave sons of Mars. Horns, drums and wooden swords were in demand; shevrons and shoulder straps were artistically drawn with chalk: and now and then an indulgent mother sewed red or yellow stripes on the little trousers, but the uniforms were as non-de script as Coxey's army; then too, there was no race line drawn. Dinah's little black boy marched beside the son of the banker who lived in the big house on the corner. And little Jakey Goldstine blew thrilling calls upon his toy bugle. Freddie was made captain by unanimous consent and under his discipline the company soon showed good results. They marched and counter-marched, formed by twos, by fours, eight abreast and practised wheeling.

His order "Forward march" moved the column of little men at a right military pace down the street.

The drum's rub-dub dub and the notes of the bugle brought more than one to watch them. It was on one of these parades that Freddie noticed the face of the boy in the window. His heart gave a thump of sympathy, for he realized suddenly that since their drilling had commenced he must have had many lonely hours.

Of course he could see them passing, but Freddie could feel in his own heart how that boy longed to be with them, to march as they did, to beat of drum and toot of horn. He felt a lump come into his throat and he had to wink hard to keep the tears back.

"Company halt!" His voice had a ring of sudden determination that brought all his little followers up short. "Say, boys," he began impulsively, "did you see Alec as we passed? Well I did, and he looked as though he wanted to cry; guess he's been lonesome since we commenced to drill, though he hasn't said anything about it; it's mean for us to leave him alone. Can't we take him in some way?"

"Why, he can't be a soldier," spoke up Jerry Simpson, "he can't walk."

"All—soldiers—don't walk," stammered Tommy Ruggles, the first lieutenant.

"Well, they ride horses, if they don't," responded Jerry.

"He'd make a good soldier anyway," said Freddie, regretfully.

"Last winter I went in to play with him one day and he had all sorts of wooden soldiers. We set them up on the table, in squares like a checker board, then we fought battles, and Alec beat me every time. He said his father showed him how. You know he was a real soldier, and a general. Say boys, I have it." Freddie's face flushed red with pleasure. "We'll make Alec our general. Generals never do anything, anyway, but sit in their tents and plan battles and review troops. We can march in front of his window, and he can review us; then he can give us all our orders and watch us as we obey them."

The idea was received with the wildest enthusiasm. "Let's go tell him now," said Jerry.

"All right fall in. With rub dub dub and toot of horn, the Hanover Street Rifles marched up in front of Alec's window and halted, while every man came to "Attention."

Alec leaned forward expectantly; it was an unusual honor they were paying him and he could not understand it's meaning.

Freddie marched to the window and saluted with his sword. Mr. Alexander Gordon, he began, "I have the honor to inform you that the Hanover Street Rifles have appointed you their general-in-chief and that hereafter, they will report here daily after school hours to be reviewed by you; also that my adjutant will wait on you each morning for orders."

"Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!

"You are very good to think of me. I shall be proud to be your general."

"Hurrah for the General."

"Hurrah for the Hanover Street Rifles."

The neighbors hearing such a din, rushed to see what caused the excitement. They saw an open window, framing a delicate-faced, crippled boy, who was leaning forward trying to talk to the crowd of eager boys below. Suddenly he buried his face in his hands and those outside could see the boyish form was shaking with sobs.

The little company stood in embarassed silence, which was broken by Freddie's trembling voice.

"Don't Alec, please don't," he pleaded, "we want you for our general, you know generals always stays in their tents and plan battles. You know how; don't you remembor how you used to beat me last winter? You can ask your father about it."

The little cloud of sorrow was lifting and in a brief space the boy raised his head. The tears were still shining in his eyes, but his face was bright with smiles and his voice joyous and faltering.

"You are very good to think of me, fellows," he said. "I shall be proud to be your general. I shall almost forget that I can't march with you.

"Company, attention!" commanded Freddie.

"Now, we'll review them." He passed up and down the line reporting to the general, and after a few revolutions they disappeared down the street.

Alec was a great success as a general. He drew plans of battles to be fought on the lawn or in the alley ways or on the vacant lot, where the excavators had left a high embankment, which made an ideal San Juan.

The daily reviews were made with so much dignity and fine military display that they usually had quite an audience.

It was along toward the end of the summer that General Gordon ordered Captain Grant, with his command, to report at headquarters Saturday afternoon at 2 o'clock. Something unusual was about to happen, what, they could not guess; but everyone felt the mystery that was in the air.

They marched around the side of the house to the lawn. Here they found their general, comfortably seated in a rolling chair, under the shade of trees. There was quite a party of ladies and gentlemen with him and they all looked eager and expectant.

Freddie brought his company into position in front of the reviewing party with so much skill that they were greeted with a burst of applause, and Gen. Gordon, senior, stepped forward. The small soldiers looked as though they almost needed a word of command from their captain to keep them steady as the grey-haired, soldierly man addressed them.

"Captain Grant and members of the Hanover St. Rifles: I want to thank you for the honor you bestowed upon my son Alexander in choosing him for your commander-in-chief. His mother and I appreciate the kindly thought which prompted you to bring so much pleasure into his life. He is about to go away across the sea, to an eminent physician, whom we have reason to hope will be able to make him strong and well. Before going, he wished to present to you this flag, which you are to carry in remembrance of him. God bless you all, boys."

Freddie was equal to the occasion, and his command had reason to be proud of their captain when he stepped forward and took the flag from General Gordon's hand.

"I thank you, Gen. Gordon, in the name of the Hanover Street Rifles. We will try to be a credit to this flag, and when Alec comes back we'll meet him at the train, and he shall march home ahead of us."

Then there were cheers, lots of them, for Alec, their general, for his father, and his flag, and in the midst of it great dishes of ice cream and cake and lemonade were passed around; while the boy of the window was happy with happiest.—Our Young People.

BISHOP SPALDING'S ADVICE

Day by day parents and children are confronted with the great problem of life. "What shall I do with my boys or my girls?" is asked by the parents. "What shall I do?" says a boy or a girl. Bishop Spalding begins his lecture on opportunity thus:

"How shall I live? How shall I make the most of my life? How shall I become a man and do a man's work? This and not politics or trade or war or pleasure is the question. The primary consideration is not how one shall get a living, but how he shall live, for if he live rightly, whatever is needful he shall easily find. Life is opportunity, and therefore its whole circumstance may be made to serve the purpose of those who are bent on self-improvement, on making themselves capable of doing thorough work."

And work it is that wins. Any other way of winning is unworthy of consideration. A true man would not want to win in any other way. Life is full of opportunities to labor, and the willing worker is sure of success. Such a worker has never failed, never will fail.

By all this neither the Bishop nor anyone means to counsel a cloddish indifference to progress and material prosperity. On the contrary, he would counsel aspirations high as hsaven. It is a law student who listens? Put your ideals high as were those of Cicero, Sir Thomas More, John Marshall. Is it a doctor to whom we speak? Aspire to surpass the highest in human history, always moved by the purpose of being a benefactor. Is the boy a blacksmith who reads these lines? Be the best blacksmith. But if God has so endowed you, read, write, think and study till the work of an Elihu Buritt with his wonderful knowledge of languages is inferior to yours. Are you a carpenter or craftsman of any kind? Make the most of every moment. All that the world has done is within reach of you. Bee like, go to the gardens of the gods, filled by the full fair flowerings of genius and pluck, get seed, sew it then in your own soul. But look to it well that thou goest to the best.

By consulting carefully lists left to us by the best men you cannot go astray. In it all should be the aspiration to be a good man, a good woman. Not all the gold on earth can give one happiness. Happiness is not in gold, it is in a well developed mind. A poet singing to the South has said:

"Let them give you gold and treasures,
Wealth in mountains or in streams,
Let the Southland keep the measures
That I've marked here in my dreams,
For the Dixie, dear old Dixie
That our fathers knew of old
Was better far than fifty Dixies
Measured by a man of gold."

No, boys and girls, young men and young women, it isn't gold that gains the day, it is the doing of one's duty, daily, hourly in all the golden, glorious moments of time.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

MARVELLOUS PROGRESS IN TWENTY FIVE YEARS.

Turkey now has but 25,000,000 inhabitants to its 40,000,000 in 1800. From Afghanistan to China, liberty has made it possible for Catholic missionaries to spread the Faith among 300,000,000, the Catholic natives now numbering 2,250,000, as against 500,000 in 1800. In Indo-China alone the indigenous Catholic population has risen from 300,000 to nearly 1,000,000. Australia and New Zealand, which were without priests in 1800, are now the home of 1,000,000 Catholics, and the islands of Oceania can boast 100,000 members of the Faith in their population of 5,000,000. Japan, since 1879, has added 50,000 to her original number of 4,000 Catholics, and China proper boasts nearly 2,000,000 members of the Catholic Church. Africa, which was almost entirely Moslem in 1800, has now a following of the Church numbering 2,000,000, with six Vicars Apostolic and a splendid Hierarchy.

IN THE AMERICAN CONTINENT.

Marvellous are the progressive results in both Americas. The Catholic churches of South America, with their 40,000,000 members, have awakened from their torpor and give promise of a splendid increase. The Catholics in the United States numbered in 1800, 1 Bishop, 40 priests, 40,000 Catholics. To-day there are 94 Bishops, 11,817 priests, and some 14,000,000 confessed members of the Catholic Church. Finally, in Europe there is Germany, with its 20,000,000 of Catholics strongly organized; Belgium, almost Catholic to an individual; Holland, which banished priests and persecuted Catholics in 1800, with 1,500,000, Catholics entirely free; and a rapidly growing increase of Catholicity in Scandinavia and Switzerland. Even in the Balkan States in the last century, the Church gained many new adherents; in Roumania, nearly 50,000; Bosnia and Herzegovina, over 275,000; Bulgaria, 26,000; Greece, some 15,000. The above figures, which are taken from a monumental work by Father Forbes, a Scotch Jesuit, should inspire Catholics with hope and confidence.

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