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CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN.

Catholic Column.

The worth of a man depends on his stamina. He may have sound principles, but, if he has a weak will, his principles will be thrown down by temptation. He will have little self-control, yet appear to be good, because circumstances shield him from trial; but let this outside protection fail him in any great crisis, and he will fall into evil. But if he knows what is right and has the "grit" to stick to it, against his own inclination, against incitement from others, against suggestions from the devil, he is truly noble.

This stamina, when it is supernaturalized, is one of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost. It is then called fortitude.

This moral courage can be cultivated. By exercising the will in the practice of self-denial, in the subjugation of the flesh, in acts of charity to the neighbor that require some sacrifice, a habit of mastery of the soul over the lower nature can be formed. Every act of virtue of this sort makes easier the next one and strengthens the power of the will to dominate one's life.

The Church, knowing how necessary "grit" is in a Christian's character, requires its members to practice self-mastery—they must abstain from meat every Friday, they must hear Mass on Sunday in fair weather or foul, they must fast in Lent, etc.

Catholics defend the purpose of the Church when they are cowardly, weak, self-indulgent, afraid of pain, and refuse to practice the penance it commands. Lent is an excellent discipline. It is a training in stamina. The fast is not difficult, yet it is a bugaboo for the soft, for the people who shrink from suffering, who are afraid to subdue their carnal inclinations. A snack, a good dinner, and a light supper are sufficient for most persons. Indeed, the majority of those who keep the fast never feel so well as during Lent. Their health is better than when they eat three heavy meals a day.

But besides the fast, there are opportunities to practice other mortifications—to abstain from sugar and candy, to refrain from the use of beer and whiskey, to give up amusements, to perform spiritual and corporal works of mercy, etc. These all help in forming the habit of virtue.

A good man died recently who had lived more than three score years. His beautiful face was a sermon in favor of self-control. The clear eyes, the thin cheeks, the firm mouth, the high poise of the head, all spoke of dauntless courage and persistent abstinence. An acquaintance, who is given over to self-indulgence, said: "I hate to look at him—he makes me ashamed of myself, without saying a word of reproach or even knowing my thoughts."

Don't be a weakling. Don't yield to the flesh. Practice self-denial. Have plenty of stamina.

Self-Exiled.

One who had traveled long and far in foreign lands tells of a class whose representatives he met in many strange and distant places—fellow-countrymen, self-exiled, Americans who cannot come back. In Arab cities, in the African deserts, in crowded towns of China and Japan, in remote islands of the sea, he came upon them as solitary individuals wearing foreign dress, but whose tongue, claiming to belong to the country in which they live, but homesick at heart.

Their paths across the earth are many and diverse, but the story is always one beginning—some hour of fierce temptation before which the hope of down-money taken with the hope of replacing it, a name forged with the intention of righting the wrong before it could be known, some mad deed of desperation or passion, and then discovery and flight. At first the fear of being overtaken dominates all other thought in the fugitive's mind, his one desire is to escape; but at last that desire is accomplished, and a land of safety reached, and then punishment begins. If any court had pronounced a sentence of banishment for life it would have seemed a fearful penalty, but this exile is self-imposed. He is free; he can wander to the edge of the world, but to the country to which he belongs by birth and education, which holds all that he prizes most, he can never more return.

Genius and Physique.

Discussing the severe physical examination that cadets at West Point and Annapolis must undergo, a writer cites the case of Lord Nelson, who was not trained at Osborne and could not have entered that academy for physical disability. Yet he entered the British navy and lives in history as "the greatest sailor who ever trod a plank."

Francis Drake, too, was another man of mean person, but he gave the "invincible armada" its most cruel stab.

Napoleon Bonaparte was not of physical proportions that would admit him to West Point under the present regulations, and it is doubtful if the great Conde had inches enough to pass the examination. When Joe Wheeler got in, the physical standard was lower than now. One of his stature would be rejected at a glance in 1900. The Marshall Luxembourg would be excluded with a gesture and without a word. Alexander Farnese could not pass, either, for physical frailty. Nathan B. Forrest would be rejected for educational deficiency, though our country has not produced a man of superior military genius.

No school ever created a genius. West Point and Annapolis do develop military and naval talent. The training is admirable; but the ideal seems to be that every student should have the ideal physical proportions and graceful

carriage of Marlborough or Robert E. Lee. Would it not be well enough to establish a preparatory institution to search out the talent of the cadet, and if he develop it in extraordinary degree pass him, even if he be not physically perfect?

Napoleon the Great was as wonderful physically as he was mentally. No man in the army could undergo half the physical fatigue he endured with little discomfort. He made the swiftest horseback journey, its length considered, in history. It was from Spain to Paris, and immediately he set out for the battle of Aspern. He could make out with less food and less sleep than any man in Europe, and he was the greatest soldier since Caesar.

And yet Napoleon Bonaparte would be denied a commission in the American army of 1900 if he was the Bonaparte of Toulon, the beginning of his meteoric career.

To Hold Success.

Thirty years ago, in a poor school-house in a back district, a boy at the head of the class unexpectedly spelled a word that had passed down the entire class.

"Go up ahead," said the master, "and see that you stay there. You can if you work hard."

The boy hung his head. But the next day he did not miss a word in spelling. The brighter scholars knew every word in the lesson, hoping there might be a chance to get ahead. But there was not a single one. Dave stayed at the head. He had been an indifferent speller before, but now he knew every word.

"Dave, how do you get your lesson so well now?" said the master.

"I learn every word in the lessons, and get my mother to hear me at night; then I go over them in the morning before I come to school. And I go over them at my desk before the class is called up."

"Good boy, Dave!" said the master. "That's the way to have success: always work that way and you'll do."

Dave is to-day the manager of a big lumber company, and he attributes his start to the words:

"Go up ahead, and see that you stay there. You can if you work hard."

How Ballinger Studied Latin.

Hon. Richard A. Ballinger is Secretary of the Interior in President Taft's Cabinet.

"When I was fifteen years old—in 1873," he says, "my father removed from Virden, Ill., to Larned, Kan., and as that was in the center of the cattle country I soon was a cowboy."

"While I was on the range I rode seven miles every Sunday to recite Latin to the steward at Fort Larned, where several companies of soldiers were stationed. I was grateful for this assistance and also for the interest taken in me by a minister who lived three miles or more from our ranch and who was willing to impart to me his smattering of Greek. My ambition was to go to college as soon as I could, and I spent three years at the University of Kansas and Washburn College."

While at Washburn Ballinger met Senator John J. Ingalls, who advised him to take a course at Williams College. He followed this advice and was graduated with the class of 1884, of which James R. Garfield also was a member.

Playing With Fire.

Every now and then the newspapers tell the story of how some little child has been burned to death in playing with fire. The flame looks so dancing and inviting to ignorant childish eyes—how can they guess what agony lies behind? We are wiser, of course—but do we ever play with temptation?

Do we never touch fire, insisting that it will not burn? Alas, many a soul goes to eternal death by that inviting road!

Not a Good Friend.

A disputation person does not make a good friend. He cares more for argument than for harmony, and is more concerned about proving his own wisdom than making his brother comfortable. Whoever would be a true friend must be content to love over and around many things that do not exactly accord with his own views.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

The Rude Boy and Ill-Mannered Girl.

What's the matter with our boys and girls?

We are boasting a great deal about our schools and schooling, as though getting knowledge from books were the whole of education. Indeed, many of our people are laboring under this false notion, and as a result, we are getting a lot of ill-mannered boys and girls, which means that we are developing a lot of uncultured men and women.

Know this, that moral and social culture are the most essential features of education.

It is a fact, and a most serious one, that boys and girls of to-day are not being so trained that they will readily fit into desirable places in the social and economic structures that are building.

The school craze that has been sweeping over the country during the past generation seems to have eliminated the element of social culture, and bent all energy to the branches taught instead of efficiency in the things that count most for success in practical life.

It seems that a great many have forgotten, or never knew, the value of good manners and culture. Without these the best scholars are greatly handicapped, and many will meet with failure

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who might succeed were they more gentle and refined in manner. It is not only what one knows, but what can be well used that counts for success. Much knowledge and little wisdom, which is the sense to use knowledge, seems to be the fault of our system of education.

The well-mannered boy always has the call over the highly-schooled, but uncultured, boy. Ask any business man who is on the lookout for boys to take the places of those who are being advanced, and he will tell you that manners are first taken into account.

A gentleman who has given places to a great many of the boys who have made good says that he is largely governed in his choice by his first impressions. If the boy is gentle, well-mannered, and shows signs of having been well disciplined, it doesn't matter much what his schooling has been. But if he is loud and aggressive, unfriendly, and lacking in gentleness, he is allowed to go, no matter how highly he is recommended by his teachers for proficiency in his books.

What the world stands most in need of now and ever will, is cultured, refined men and women.—Sacred Heart Review.

Gave up All.

Sentiment and business are not such strangers as one might at first think. The following tale, taken from a man of World's Work, was told by a man of affairs, who handles millions of dollars every year. The lesson of the story had a lasting influence in this business man's life. The two boys concerned in the narrative were his college classmates.

One of them was a farmhand, a big, brawny, slow chap who had made up his mind years before to get out of the day-laborer class. He had saved for a long time, and the local minister had helped him along with his lessons and coached him for college.

Finally, with a few hundred hard-earned dollars, he had taken the entrance examination and been admitted. I never saw a man with a more stubborn resolve to lift himself a peg or two. He knew his limitations, and he didn't aim too high, but he was determined to get along, to be, say, a lawyer in a country town, and the path seemed open before him, although his mental slowness and lack of early advantages meant that it would take him twice as long as it would a clever youngster.

His room-mate was the son of a country doctor, his story, quick, clever and quick, easily the head of his class, who had been brought up in substantial comfort, with no thought on the boy's part where the money came from.

The two became fast friends. The doctor's son used to help the other with his studies, and the farmhand looked up to his superior quickness with a sort of awe and admiration which was pathetic to see.

One day, about the end of the first year, the doctor's son received a letter from home. His father had died suddenly, and his mother had succumbed to the shock a few hours later. It presented a picture of a good income from practice; so the boy was left high and dry.

He had long talks with his chum about the matter and told him that it was evidently all up, so far as his career was concerned; he had not the stamina which would enable him to earn his own living while going through college, and he accepted the event as meaning that he would be sick-tracked for the rest of his life. Shortly he had to return home to settle up some family affairs.

At last the long-looked-for day came. The class was arranged in the large assembly hall awaiting the arrival of Father Dunning. It was not long before he was welcomed into the hall by a clamor of merry voices. The contest began at once. At first it was very easy, but as it continued the questions became harder and harder. Nellie began to despair of winning the prize. At last an example was given that startled the class—no one could reason it out—even Nellie gave it up. But one student remained—it was Bessie. Our Lady of Sorrows had come to her aid. Her answer was clear and correct and the medal was hers.

You cannot imagine how happy Bessie felt when Father Dunning placed the medal about her neck.

But Bessie did not forget to show thanks to our Blessed Lady. Now, when Bessie finds trouble in anything, she asks our Blessed Mother's aid and never fails to obtain it.—True Voice.

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A few days later he received a letter from his roommate, which ran something as follows:

"Dear Jack—I've been thinking things over. There's no possible question that you'll get more out of a college course than I could. You'll surely make a mark in the world. I can never be more than a fourth-rate lawyer. Economically considered, therefore, to educate me and leave you out is reckless extravagance."

"I enclose a check for the amount I've saved, which was to give me my course. This will see you through, with strict economy."

"Of course, I know you won't want to do this; but I've thought it all out, and it's the plain common sense of the situation. Moreover, I shall disappear by the time you receive this, and nobody will know where I am. So you couldn't return the check, anyhow."

"Good-bye and good luck."

The doctor's son took his college course, and is doing very well to-day; and he has never seen his friend since. It is possible that he got more out of a college course than his friend might have got. Whether he will get more out of life is another question.

How Bessie Won the Medal.

It was Bessie Sterling's first year at St. Mary's Academy. She was a bright, active child. But her path was beset with one thorn, which was a sword piercing her tender heart—this was a great difficulty in mathematics. All her spare time was directed to this study and still she seemed unable to conquer it.

Often at the close of school when the other pupils departed to perform some duty or to enjoy an hour's recreation, Bessie would be seen kneeling at the foot of Our Lady of Good Counsel deeply absorbed in prayer, after which she would retire to her room and devote her time to study.

Nellie Davis, who was one of Bessie's classmates, attained the honor of being the most accurate child in the class. She excelled the others especially in mathematics and distinguished herself among the others in these contests which so often took place in the class room.

It was the beginning of the term and the class was honored by a visit from their reverend pastor, who had just returned from a long voyage. He told them he would award a gold medal to the one who would win the contest given in mental arithmetic. The contest was to take place the following Tuesday.

Nellie Davis was delighted with this proposition and felt sure she would be the lucky recipient. At the close of school many of the girls gathered to discuss the coming event, all thinking they stood but a poor chance. But they parted with the determination to at least try. Bessie's prayers were doubled with her study. Nellie, thinking herself almost perfect, spent much of her time in talking of the eventful day.

At last the long-looked-for day came. The class was arranged in the large assembly hall awaiting the arrival of Father Dunning. It was not long before he was welcomed into the hall by a clamor of merry voices. The contest began at once. At first it was very easy, but as it continued the questions became harder and harder. Nellie began to despair of winning the prize. At last an example was given that startled the class—no one could reason it out—even Nellie gave it up. But one student remained—it was Bessie. Our Lady of Sorrows had come to her aid. Her answer was clear and correct and the medal was hers.

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tion of the Catholic faith from this book.

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