

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN.

Steady and Inward Growth.

Manliness is not made by miracle; it is a result of a process. Character growth is just as natural, just as amenable to laws as material growth.

Some people think they are pious because they never change their opinions while others think they are exceedingly spiritual minded because they pick up new fancies every hour.

The progress of the world depends not on the increasing speed of its trains nor the accumulation of its bonds and securities; it depends on the development of its people.

Greater than the changes that have taken place in our physical form are those taking place in our inner lives. Religion is the name we give to that mighty power that works out the higher type of personal character.

Do not let conversation drift into the subject. Begin the attack with something definite, and force your partner to show his powers.

Let no man hope to leap in an instant into the fullness of character. The best things are likely to grow slowly.

More Important Than Intellect is Character.

While you lay the full stress you ought to lay upon learning, upon the training of the intellect, yet you appreciate that even more important than intellect is character.

How to Achieve Permanent Success.

Bear this in mind that you will not make true progress or achieve permanent success in other words, according to our text, you will not be content in your calling, unless you bring to your work honesty, fidelity, perseverance, and courage.

First of all you must be honest with yourself—the very air we breathe is tainted with dishonesty to day.

Do to day's work faithfully. Draw not the fatal line on just so many hours a day or a week, but continue your labor, even to the burning of the midnight oil when necessary to finish the work in hand.

And, my young friends, persevere. Honesty of purpose is necessary, fidelity to your calling is necessary, but be of stout heart—persevere.

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Be a Help, and Not a Burden.

"Of course the first duty of each of you is to earn his own livelihood. You will not find it so easy either. Your first business is to be a help and not a burden upon those who have helped you through.

"First be able to hold your own in the world. Treat this merely as laying the foundation of your life; and upon that foundation of self-help, of self-service raise the lofty structure of service for

your fellows, of service to the State, of service to the community as a whole.

"Remember, each of you young men here, that the chance for heroic endeavor of a rather spectacular kind does not often count; that the man who really counts in this life is not the man who thinks how well he could do some bit of heroism if the chance arose, but the man who actually does the humdrum, workaday, every day duties as those duties arise.

Hints on Conversation.

Never let your eye wander over the room while your friend is talking to you. Study the person with whom you are conversing, and lead up to the subjects with which he is familiar.

Do not talk about the weather, or your illness, or the maladies of your friends; society is a place for the interchange of only bright and pleasant thoughts—leave the "grinds" at home.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

THE LITTLE ACOLYTE.

Fred was in a quandary. He had found it pleasant enough during the last months to get up at 6 o'clock and hurry off to the convent to serve the community Mass.

And now at 9 p. m. Fred was thinking—thinking seriously over the problem. He had finished learning his last lesson and kissed his mother good-night; and now in his little, cold room he was preparing to say his night prayers.

When the carriage reached the hotel a life bond had been formed between Fred and Mrs. Aiken. A little more than an hour had elapsed, when Fred, warmly and richly clad, even to the fine boots which pinched just enough to give him a good chance for an act of mortification,

"My dear child, you comfort me. I had forgotten all about Mary, our dear mother; and she was the Mother of Sorrows, too," and she leaned back in the carriage, lost in a reverie. His words had somehow thrown a light on a vow she had made that morning in the chapel.

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"I have never seen anything more touching in my life," said Sister Anne. "Mrs. Aiken, broken-hearted as she is, had time and thought for others; and while the body of her dear child is just to be borne to the station, she gives him happiness even in heaven by making him the benefactor of your dear Fred. And her left hand never knows what her right hand does. I have seen that ever since she was our pupil in the convent."

"But she is a stranger to me and I have no claim on her," argued Mrs. Walters, though weakly.

"The words of God are never strangers to each other," but Sister Anne's decided generalization was brought to a full stop by the roll of a carriage to the door.

Bearing in his hand a beautiful basket of fruit, Fred jumped lightly out and assisted Mrs. Aiken to the curb with the grace of a little prince. Sister Anne's eyes glistened, and Mrs. Walters' voice was husky as she murmured, "My God, what a change!"

They ascended the steps, followed by the driver, who deposited a heavy trunk in the hall.

With a heart overflowing with gratitude and sympathy Mrs. Walters greeted Mrs. Aiken; but her tears told more than the broken words which she tried to frame into an expression of thanks.

"Now sit down and get a good warming," said Sister Anne, "and wait for me till I bring you a cup of hot coffee and some fresh rolls," and she left him, wondering at the happy smile that played about his lips.

He was slipping the fresh, fragrant coffee when the beautiful lady was

ushered into the sacristy by Sister Anne.

"Yes, it is a heavy blow," the lady was saying; "so well and bright only a week ago, when we arrived; full of life—our only comfort—and now we go home desolate Mr. Aiken and I. But I have said, 'They will be done!' and I shall not repine, for God knows best even when He shadows our lives."

Fred looked up; he had laid down his roll and the tears were standing in his eyes. As the lady glanced toward him she caught the sympathetic look, and her eyes turned questioning toward the good Sister.

"He is our little acolyte, Fred Walters," she said, in her cheery, musical voice; "comes every morning so promptly, in spite of the cold, to serve Mass."

"He is just about the age and size of my Charlie," the lady remarked, in lowered tones, as she walked to the long, old-fashioned sofa. "He does not seem warmly clad," and her glance wandered from his worn coat to his shoes, much the worse for the wear.

"I would like to give him Charlie's clothes; I had just bought a new winter suit for him, poor darling!" and her tears broke forth afresh. "He only wore it once. Would there be any impropriety in my offering it to this little boy?"

"None in the world," answered Sister Anne, with a pleased smile. "It would be a beautiful act of charity."

Just then the Sister portress entered. "The carriage is at the door, Mrs. Aiken," she said, as the lady walked by her side to the vestibule. Sister Anne her left, explained in a low voice: "His mother has a hard struggle to support a sick aunt who has been in the hospital for some years; and she is trying to educate Fred, who shows remarkable talent."

Call the little boy, then, and he can drive to the hotel with me." Fred blushed to his temples with pleasure when he found he was to take a ride with the beautiful, sad lady. His heart had warmed toward her, and as she threw a heavy shawl about his shoulders and tucked the carriage blanket around him in such a motherly way had lost these loving attentions, and said in a tremulous and embarrassed tone, "I am so sorry that your little boy died."

"Yes, dear, I know it; I loved you for your sympathy this morning; we take our child home with us to lay him in his little grave," and the falling tears only made her face more beautiful.

"But you know his soul is living with God in heaven, he said softly, while his hand slid into hers with childlike confidence. And Mary, Sister Anne, let me place in your hand these two checks, providing for the endowment of two beds in St. Vincent's Hospital; as you will see, one is secured to Mrs. Walters' aunt while she lives."

Mrs. Walters was sobbing aloud by this time, and poor Fred walked over to the window to conceal his emotion; while Sister Anne folded Mrs. Aiken to her heart, exclaiming, "Oh, Margaret, I thought I knew you all these years; a great, magnanimous heart you have!"

"Now, don't speak of it, dear Sister," she protested, with a sweet humility that glorified her face. "God has shown me in the very act of making my vow how acceptable it is to Him, and be sure it is I who have received the greatest favor. I shall go home this afternoon inexpressibly consoled in the midst of my great sorrow. And dear Fred—shall he not go to St. Charles' College next week?" and with a winning smile she slipped a sealed envelope into Mrs. Walters' hand.

"Your bounty makes it possible, dear madam, and there shall be no delay in fulfilling your wishes. My comfort is that you are lavishing your kindness on one who has never given his mother a moment of pain—whose respectful obedience and patience under the privations we have suffered since his father died, five years ago, have been—by a mother's lips may not say all," and her eyes sought the floor.

"But I believe all and more than you can say," was Mrs. Aiken's quick rejoinder. "The dear child began his missionary work of love and comfort in my soul this morning. And he has promised to write to me once a month and tell me of his progress."

Mrs. Walters seemed spellbound as she accompanied Mrs. Aiken to the door. Sister Anne put her arms around her. "I don't wonder you are so overcome," she asserted. "It is my firm conviction that it will take you three days at least to realize what has happened, as it surely will be."

"If I could only speak and tell you all I feel," she murmured, helplessly, as Mrs. Aiken took her hand at parting.

"I know it better by your tears," said that lady.

"But there are thoughts that lie too deep for tears, you know," rejoined Mrs. Walters.

"Those deep, deep thoughts are for God, my dear friend, for He alone can read and understand them; they are offerings of our best worship of Him."

convent this morning God's designs over my whole life would have been frustrated. And you and Aunt Alice would have suffered, too. Isn't it all wonderful, mother?"

"Yes, truly, God hath blessed us," she answered. "Father Carey's words have begun already to prove a prophecy for my dear Fred."

"Mother, I made a solemn promise to God at Mass this morning to obey them all my life, and 'correspond with God's grace' at all times and to the utmost of my power."—M. S. Pine in the Sentinel of the Blessed Sacrament.

"HOW TO MAKE A HOODLUM."

This is the rather startling title of a short article in one of our contemporaries. Who, under the sun, may be asked, would want advice as to how to make a hoodlum? Well, nobody seeks directions on the subject, but the fact is that a great many fathers, mothers, uncles and aunts (to say nothing of grandmothers), are through ignorance or carelessness, turning sundry little boys into hoodlums every day of their lives.

"This is all so wonderful I can hardly credit my senses," she said at last. "But, Mrs. Walters, you will be very lonely," and her tone was brimming with compassion.

"Dear Sister Anne, you never forget anything," Mrs. Aiken gently interposed. "Mrs. Walters must have terped." "Mrs. Walters, where he can a home near her son, where he can I shall furnish her with light clerical work which will insure her a lucrative and permanent income. And, dear Sister Anne, let me place in your hand these two checks, providing for the endowment of two beds in St. Vincent's Hospital; as you will see, one is secured to Mrs. Walters' aunt while she lives."

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"Those deep, deep thoughts are for God, my dear friend, for He alone can read and understand them; they are offerings of our best worship of Him."

"May He guide and bless and bring to a great end all that you may have begun, my dear Margaret," said Sister Anne, fervently.

"Amen," was the equally fervent response from three hearts.

The good byes were said, but Mrs. Aiken turned back and, drawing Fred to her, kissed him tenderly. A hot tear fell upon his forehead which seemed to him a consecration of sorrow and of love.

As the carriage rolled away Fred closed the door, and conducting his mother back to their little room, placed her in a chair. Her shop work lay neglected on the floor; Fred picked it up and, with a feeling of relief and happiness, threw it on the table. Then he knelt by her side, while she wept unrestrainedly. He waited till the storm of mingled joy and sorrow had subsided; then while she listened in wonder he told her the whole story of his temptation.

"And think, dearest mother," he concluded, "if I had not gone to the

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