

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

The Biggest Day in the World's History

Some one says, "Upon the brink of mighty things we stand." Never before in the world's history have we stood upon the brink of such mighty things as we do to-day. All the past ages have been a snowball rolling up to this day. It is a summing up of all the centuries. It is a storehouse into which the ages have poured their treasures. Every inventor, every discoverer, every thinker, every workman who has ever lived has contributed the results of his efforts to this day.

To-day is the biggest day in the world's history, because it is made up of all the days that have gone before it, and in it are packed all the successes, all the achievements, all the progress of the past. What a starting-point for the youth compared with the corresponding date a century or even a half century ago!

How we have been emancipated from drudgery by steam, by electricity; by the discoveries in chemistry, in physics! What ignominy, what emancipation we have won from the discomforts and slavery of the past! The masses to-day have luxuries which the world's monarchs did not enjoy a century ago.

The Current that sets Toward the Dollar.

It is not a fact that, with a few grand exceptions outside of our business Napoleons, America with all its vast possibilities and resources, its wonderfully stimulating conditions, and all its brag and bluster, has produced very few master men?

There is no other country which gives such encouragement to young men, which gives such a powerful stimulus to ambition, to liberty of choice and such freedom of pursuit of the ideal, as America; and yet the great trend of American ambition sets toward money-making, and not man-making.

This current that sets toward the dollar with such terrific force, sweeps in the majority of our youth, and often silences the call of art, of music, of literature, of scholarship, the call of the pulpit, the call of useful service, the call of the school and the college.

In spite of teaching and preaching the contrary to our children, the whole atmosphere of their training is so strongly saturated with the dollar that it tends to cover up their aspirations for higher things.

Their pastor, their teacher, the books that are put into their hands, tell them of the beauties of man-making, woman-making, life-making, but the actual examples about them are nearly all set toward the dollar. In all sorts of ingenious ways they see men everywhere fighting like demons for the dollar. Everything seems to center in it. Everybody around them seems to be the possession of money is the possession of power; that money will buy about everything that is desirable.

Brought up in such an atmosphere, is it strange that the children should catch the contagion?

How few youths start out in life with the determination that they will first be real human beings, and second, business men! It is usually the reverse.

The youth finds everybody struggling and straining for the almighty dollar, and he can not be blamed for doing himself what he sees older examples all about him doing.

He may have an idea struggling within him that making a life instead of a living ought to be man's first great aim; but somehow, before he realizes it, he is putting the greater emphasis upon the dollar.

Changing life into dollars and pleasure seems to be the dominant note in the lives of a large percentage of Americans. Whatever else comes to them is merely incidental, and as a rule, was not deliberately planned.

With most people the struggle is not for character, is not for usefulness, not for the building up of a magnificent manhood, a well-rounded, symmetrical, complete character, but the making of a world a little better place to live in, but to get more money. This is the great life burden, and there is nothing too sacred to grind into dollars.

We coin our ability, our energies, our health, our friendships, our homes, our families—everything into the dollar. All the finest sentiments and graces are crushed out in the scramble.

The Man Who is always "Just Going to."

He was just going to pay a note when it went to protest.

He was just going to help a neighbor when he died.

He was just going to send some flowers to a sick friend when it proved too late.

He was just going to reduce his debt when his creditors "shut down" on him.

He was just going to stop drinking and dissipating, when his health became wrecked.

He was just going to provide proper protection for his wife and family when his fortune was swept away.

He was just going to introduce a better system into his business when it went to smash.

He was just going to call on a customer to close a deal when he found his competitor had preceded him and secured the order.

He was just going to quit work awhile and take a vacation when nervous prostration came.

He was just going to repair his sidewalk when a neighbor fell on it and broke a leg.

He was just going to provide his wife with more help when she took to her bed and required a nurse, a doctor, and a maid.

He meant to insure his house, but it burned before he got around to it—Success.

Rule For Young Men.

Spend a fair share of every day upon the serious occupations of your state, and look upon this work as one of your first duties and as your personal fulfillment of that sentence passed by God upon our first father: "In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat thy bread."

To the lawful pleasures of the mind, the heart or the senses, indulge

in them with gratitude and moderation, withdrawing from them sometimes in order to punish yourself, without waiting till you are forced to do so by necessity.

Bear constantly in mind that we have two great vices to beat down and destroy—pride and sensuality; and two great virtues to acquire—penance and humility.

Lift your heart to God from time to time, and think upon the sorrowful passion of our Lord, in order to neutralize by the contemplation of His mangled and bleeding body the involuntary impression made upon you by objects you are condemned to see.

Choose some poor person, and relieve him regularly according to your means, and look upon him as Jesus Christ Himself; visit him, talk to him, and if you have the courage, kiss his clothes or his feet sometimes.

Fasten yourself in spirit to His cross, and hand yourself over to His executioner. To dwell upon the thought of chastisement and to undergo it mentally is a suffering in itself. The martyrs had offered themselves as victims a hundred times in their hearts before they were sacrificed in actual deed.

Think, too, how many of the down-trodden and of the poor scarcely get anything to eat save a little bad bread moistened with their tears and even with their blood.

Try to be good, amiable and simple in your bearing towards every one, and do not think that Christian life is crossed-grained or melancholy. St. Paul continually tells the faithful to rejoice. The true Christian is full of inward joy even in the midst of sufferings; he bears his cross good-humoredly; ill-treatment and disgrace do not affect his spirits; he offers up his body to whatever kicks and cuffs Providence may see fit to send him without losing his peace of mind: imprisonment, hunger, thirst, rags, fire, the scourge, the sword, death—in all these he finds matter for rejoicing. He loves and is loved—what more does he need?—Lacordaire.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

BOYS WHO ARE MEN.

"Boys are good for nothing."

Just a moment, my dear young friends. Have these words caught your eye? Then come here for a moment and I will tell you something. That is what I wished them to do—that only. Do you not see the quotation marks? That first line is not mine at all, but if it has won your attention I am well pleased, for I want to have a little chat with you. You may get a pencil and cross out the first line if you like.

I have known hundreds of boys and would be glad to know every one who will read these lines. I am only writing them because to talk with boys has ever been a real pleasure to me. This time you will have to pardon me, if I would rather talk to you than with you, for, from force of circumstances, I shall have to do most of the talking. But, if any boy wants to ask any questions, or has difficulties, he may write me a letter, which I shall be glad to get and answer. He will find my address below.

Before going any farther, however, let me put a little question. Are you, my beloved young reader, in earnest? Do you want to make something of yourself—to be somebody? If you are in earnest, and care about these things, there is my hand on it—we shall get on together. But for the other kind of boy—nobody has any time to waste with him.

Do you know what I once heard a man say? "That boys may be good enough as very little fellows, but that after twelve years of age they are a useless lot! I did not agree with him at all, for a very good reason: I was then myself a boy just beyond twelve. And most certainly, in all the dealings I have had with boys, I have not come to agree with that man since. I would as soon as put my name to the untruth we crossed out in the beginning of these lines.

So far, indeed, am I from chiming in with these unkind and pessimistic views of boyhood, in general, that I will say, without fear of causing pride to any boy in particular, that a good, earnest, manly Catholic boy seems to me the noblest object in God's visible creation! This sounds startling, but it means that if the majority of the boys, who will read these lines, are but true to their everyday opportunities, nothing, that any of us have ever known in this world, could be more worthy of enthusiastic admiration than they. Try to understand my reason for this; read it twice; such boys combine the exercise of the noble virtue of Fortitude which belongs to admirable manhood, with that freshness, beauty, and innocence of soul which the older men generally no longer possess.

Here, some one of my young friends stops me.

"What is fortitude?"

Surely you remember from your catechism. Fortitude means being strong, and is a gift of the Holy Ghost by means of which our souls are made strong—"strengthened" in the way of God. It is a gift, but we must do our part, and exercise this virtue; otherwise it lies useless in us, like a muscle never used. It is of use there, but one would never be able to judge so. You know—

"Oh—this is a sermon."

Is it? I knew that it would be, that some boys would begin to yawn and refuse to talk with me longer. But I know the earnest ones will go on. They are the only ones I want to go on. This is not a sermon, boys, but an un-planned—I fear, disorderly—talk. Read on to the end and you will see. I am anxious to make it a heart to heart talk with all boys who feel a longing to be with you are not my kind, and we'll say good-bye, right here.

This "being strong" then, this strength of spirit which I mentioned, will show itself mainly in a certain manly independence, in doing our duty. If we know we are in the right, and ought to do a thing, we will go on and do it, even if the whole world is opposed or is laughing at us.

Dear boys! Let us learn once for all that this, and this only is to be a man.

Learn to say no. A good-hearted young fellow is invited by his friends to have a drink at the bar. He has resolved, for his mother's sake (he loves his mother) and for his own soul's sake, never to touch a drop of spirituous liquor; and when he made that resolution, in the sight of God and his angel, as a man meant it. So now he says, "No, thanks, I don't care to drink."

"Come on," they laugh.

"I didn't think you were a milkop," sneers one.

"He isn't big enough, yet, boys; he has to grow up," remarks another.

He is urged further; but hear his answer: "Fellows, I have said no; and when I say no I mean no, and it will never mean anything else from me."

There is a little pardonable heat in his answer; he goes his way then, with a heart clear before God, and seeks friends more worthy of a "child of the light."

Boys, I'd like to know that chap. Wouldn't it do one good to meet him just once? Of course, for the example I have chosen can be substituted many by another action, that we may be tempted to, by others against our principles.

Very few boys would like their chums to say of them (when these "friends" think they are not near) "That fellow? Why he's a contemptible coward! I know he's afraid of me. I held up my finger at him and he'll do anything I say. He has no spirit of independence, no more backbone than a clam. I'll bet you I can get him to do just what I please."

We are all disgusted with such a character, and rightly so. He has no real friends. His apparent ones would walk on him the moment they could gain advantage by it. Yet how many young fellows are of just this stamp—though I trust that none of my readers are. Boys of that class are entirely wanting in the strong, manly independence and fearlessness, on which an American is supposed to pride himself.

They are slaves of what is called "Human Respect," a base weakness, which robs them of that nobility, that Christian manhood, which it should be their aim never to abdicate or to dishonor.

Yes—of course. Every boy wants to be known as manly; yet there is not one in ten, who thinks himself manly that is so. To put on "mannish" airs in smoking, swagger, and unguarded talk, is so far from being manly, that it is even beneath contempt. Tell me which you think the real man; the boy who faithfully fulfils his duty of studying, for example, or the one who idles his time away, and, in a superior manner, calls the studious one "a little fool?"

Which is the braver—which performs the harder action?

I know, and you know too.

It is, without doubt, a sad sight to see so many boys, even those with good homes and kind parents, boys, who might be brave, generous fellows, true as tested gold, deceiving themselves, and making of themselves, in this way, mere snobs to the disgust of all who see them—to the deep sorrow of those who love them.

Let a boy stand still for just one second by the clock, and ask himself, "Am I going to make of myself a mere excuse for a human being?" Many boys are doing so to-day, ruining their lives.

"I will be somebody!"

"I have but one life. I am going to live it aright. I am going to make a beautiful thing of it."

Beloved Catholic boys! Does each of you want a test, a living test, as to whether you are a man in the real sense of the word, worth something in this world—worth the care of parents or guardians—worth the regard of friends? Here is the test; listen: Do other boys, when they notice you coming, immediately leave off low or unbecoming talk?

A hard test isn't it. But if that is the case, then you are a man, and as a Catholic I am proud of you; and know, that above all, your Savior is proud of you, and counts you on the staff He has chosen for His bravest.

Do not try to squirm away from this conclusion. Any other view of real manliness is a fraud and a counterfeit, and in your heart of hearts you know that this is true. Always—let me pray you as your friend—act according to that "heart of hearts," which is nothing other than the faithful conscience God has given you.

Be honest with yourself. Strive to be always "at your best," and let your "best" be something strongly noble.

Think of these things, boys. It is now time for us to leave off for a season. I have other things to say to you next month; but now you are tired, so farewell until then. In the meantime may God bless your earnest efforts to be men, true and noble and strong.—Manomnin in the Christian Family.

BY THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

There are no better Catholics in the wide world than the Highlanders of Bonny Scotland; and their descendants in America, we are glad to know, are worthy of them. The Rev. Father Campbell, S. J., who during the autumn of 1907 conducted a series of missions to the Gaelic inhabitants, was enthusiastic in his praise of their lively faith and fervent piety. The pilgrim of Our Lady of Martyrs relates an interesting story which he heard from some of the pioneers among these Scotch Canadians:

"A company of a dozen men took a boat from the Pictou and crossed the Gulf of Antigonish into Cape Breton. They were busy at work clearing the ground to make a home for themselves and their wives and children, left behind at Pictou, when all of a sudden they noticed a flotilla of Indian boats making straight for them. The Indians landed and came up to the Highlanders with menacing looks, while their chief demanded, in broken English, by whose authority they were cutting down those trees. The reply was that they were doing so on the authority of the King. The chief replied that he was the only King in those parts, and as they had not sought his leave they should all suffer death for this offense. He then gave orders that his men, who were over a hundred strong, should approach and

carry out his sentence. The Highlanders were meanwhile making acts of contrition in preparation for death. One of their number openly began his act of contrition with a big Sign of the Cross, when all of a sudden the tomahawk fell from the grasp of the chief, who exclaimed to his men: "Stop, we brothers, we children of the Great Father!" He took each of the Highlanders by the hand and gave them the necessary permission. Then his followers drew near, and the Highlanders had to shake hands with each of them.

The Indians themselves (Miamees), several reservations of whom exist in Nova Scotia and around Cape Breton, are likewise faithful Catholics. All attempts to proselytize them have been without avail.—Ave Maria.

STAGE IMMORALITY.

London and New York, to say nothing of a number of less important cities, and to pass over Paris altogether, have latterly been seriously confronted with the problem of stage immorality. A certain level dance which certainly would not have been tolerated ten years ago in England was this year witnessed publicly by tens of thousands as a matter of course; as late as a year ago it was forbidden on the stage of New York, but this year it has not only been allowed to return there, but it has given rise to a host of still lower imitations in the minor music-halls which continue day after day with hardly a word of protest from any section of the public. But things have turned out very differently in Buenos Ayres and Montevideo. In both of these cities the impresarios of the two principal theatres recently announced that among the repertory of the present season would figure the opera containing the dance which has been permitted in London and New York. The ladies of both towns first protested in the newspapers, and then held meetings at which they decided to boycott the theatres in question, unless the impresarios withdrew the objectionable performance—and to such purpose that their efforts have been entirely successful. Here is surely a field where the example of the Catholic ladies of South America might be followed with profit in Europe and North America.—Rome.

Nourishment

not food merely. Ordinary food sooner or later throws the system of the brain worker out of gear, but he must have nutriment to make good the energy expended in his work. BOVRIL is rich in the phosphates contained in beef and it will quickly repair the waste occasioned by hard mental work. Take a cup of BOVRIL at eleven o'clock and occasionally replace an ordinary meal by a cup of "Bovril sandwiches."



Our American Nuns.

There 121 different Catholic sisterhoods in the United States and 21 independent convents. The various Franciscan orders, 24 in all, count 6,600 sisters; four Notre Dame orders count 5,700 sisters, and six Sisters of Charity orders count 5,000 sisters. Thus these 34 orders alone, with 17,300 members, outnumber all the secular and regular clergy. Accurate statistics of all the American sisterhoods are not available, but counting novices and postulants, 45,000 would seem to be a reasonably correct estimate. Education and charity form the life work of most of this great and noble army of women. If we allow one teacher to every fifty pupils in our parochial schools, it will require 24,000 teachers to take care of the 1,200,000 parish school pupils. Fully 20,000 of these teachers are sisters.

French Pilgrims Greet Pope.

The Pope on Monday received eight hundred French pilgrims, who presented greetings on the jubilee. His Holiness made a long speech, dealing with the present situation of the Church in France, saying in part: "I hope the day will never come for France in which, her churches being destroyed,

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the faithful shall be obliged to take refuge in other countries. In these days, while the holy sacrament is exalted in Protestant England, and while the holy wafer is honored throughout the streets of London, in France is trampled on by brutal force, serving those who declared war on God to the detriment of France." The Pope ended by recommending union to the French Catholics and clergy.—Catholic Union and Times.

Striking tributes to Cardinal Newman are always welcome. Lord Coleridge, the Protestant Lord Chief Justice of England, utters these remarkable words: "Raffaello is said to have thanked God that he had lived in the days of Michael Angelo. There are scores of men, I know, there are hundreds and thousands, I believe, who thank God that they have lived in the days of John Henry Newman."

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