

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

LOOK PLEASANT

We can not, of course, all be handsome, some, And it's hard for us all to be good; We are sure now and then to be lonely, And we don't always do what we should.

To be patient is not always easy, To be cheerful is much harder still; But at least we can always be pleasant, If we make up our minds that we will.

And it pays every time to be kindly, Although you feel worried and blue; If you smile at the world and look cheerful, The world will soon smile back at you.

So try to brace up and look pleasant, No matter how low you are down, Good humor is always contagious; But you banish your friends when you frown.

PERFECTION

Adversity blesses those who strive against it. Men ever sigh for health and ease, the foes of individuals and States. No one yearns for adversity though its stroke is beneficial. Few strong, true men are overcome by trials but rise above them purified and strengthened, but myriads of giant souls have succumbed to the Circean spell of prosperity and under it have forgotten manhood and honor.

No soft-handed people unaccustomed to braving the elements could have torn America from England's grasp and built up this Republic. The colonist in the Western wilderness prepared himself in adversity for the conflict that brought this nation into being. Nor could England herself have come to her present position or retained the colonies that are now hers had not her sons preserved a good modicum of that discipline and fortitude in hardship by which her empire has been built up and maintained.

Persecuted peoples are the hardest. They may lose their national identity but they will win in every clime. The Jews have ceaselessly borne for thousands of years every variety of misfortune, the Land of Promise has passed from them, they are exiles; yet in every civilized land they find a man of might and kindness, a man of eloquence and practicalness, a man who will ride into the jaws of death untrifled and sway thousands with the magic of his voice, you may be sure that he is at least in part an Irishman.

The men whose names are writ large across the pages of the Nineteenth Century are those who stand today the accredited leaders in every sphere of activity were not cradled in the lap of luxury, but imbibed the energy that made them what they are, from the hard breast of that severe nurse, Adversity.

Read their biographies and you will find that they were brought up in small houses, with scanty food, that they wrested education from life that they sought every step of their way up the heights; and if their faces are a bit grim and their hearts somewhat seared, we should not wonder for these scarred warriors have come through a hundred battles. Watch workmen flinging coal on rock against a screen. The larger lumps resist the impact and remain outside, the smaller ones pass through the screen, wires next against a screen of closer meshes and so on until the different sizes are distributed. So are men flung against the screen of life. Those of strong character and intelligence resist the impact and take the first places. Lesser men are sifted through the graduated series of meshes of the life-screen until they reach their allotted place and field of usefulness or uselessness. It is the shock, the impact, that proves their quality.

Perfection comes through pain or something analogous to pain. Marble is hewn into the statue by the blows of the chisel and the mallet, the diamond is cut and polished into glittering facets by keen instruments and the remorseless wheel, the dream of the architect comes into being only when stones torn from hillsides are cut into symmetry by ceaseless blows, when trees shorn of their dignity and foliage are sawed and planned into proper dimensions. The laughing child, the smooth-browed youth and maiden, have that beauty of Nature about them that we see in the blooming meadow and the quiet forest; but it is only when time, experience and adversity have written their record on the brow and the brain behind it that men and women reach their true maturity of character.

Uniformly through created things from the lowest to the highest works the inexorable law that the worth of man as the worth of things must be shown forth through bitterness and pain. Life does to the soul of man what civilization and its works does to inanimate Nature—tears, cuts and smooths-it to beauty and usefulness by hard blows.

Adversity alone strengthens. The goddess pagan saw that life was hard, steeled his soul and worked on. The modern pagan does the same. But man is more than a beast and there is not equity in this view of life.

Christ has blessed adversity, glorified it with a halo that is His own. He first went up that awful road that leads to the Cross and proved to man that that path of adversity is the way to Heaven; that it is only through pain, sorrow and death that we come to the only victory and only peace that is worth striving for by the sons of men.—A Looker-On in Boston Pilot.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

SHORT SKETCH OF LIVES OF SAINTS OF THE WEEK

MARCH 19.—ST. JOSEPH, SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN AND PATRON OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH

St. Joseph was by birth of the royal family of David, but was living in humble obscurity as a carpenter when God raised him to the highest sanctity, and fitted him to be the spouse of His Virgin Mother, and foster father and guardian of the Incarnate Word. Joseph, says the Holy Scripture, was a just man; he was innocent and pure, as became the husband of Mary; he was gentle and tender, as one worthy to be named the father of Jesus; he was prudent and a lover of silence, as became the master of the holy house; above all he was faithful and obedient to divine calls. His conversation was with angels rather than with men. When he learned that Mary bore within her womb the Lord of heaven, he feared to take her as his wife; but an angel bade him fear not, and all doubts vanished. When Herod sought the life of the divine Infant, an angel told Joseph in a dream to fly with the Child and His mother into Egypt. Joseph at once arose and obeyed. This sudden and unexpected flight must have exposed Joseph to many inconveniences and sufferings in so long a journey with a little babe and a tender virgin, the greater part of the way being through deserts and among strangers; yet he alleges no excuses, nor inquires at what time they were to return. St. Chrysostom observes that God treats thus all His servants, sending them frequent trials to clear their hearts from the rust of self-love, but intermixing seasons of consolation. "Joseph," says he, "is anxious on seeing the Virgin with child; an angel removes that fear. He rejoices at the Child's birth, but a great fear succeeds; the furious king seeks to destroy the Child, and the whole city is in an uproar to take away His life. This is followed by another joy, the adoration of the Magi; a new sorrow then arises; he is ordered to fly into a foreign unknown country, without help or acquaintance." It is the opinion of the Fathers that upon their entering Egypt, at the presence of the Child Jesus, all the oracles of that superstitious country were struck dumb, and the statues of their gods trembled and in many places fell to the ground. The Fathers also attribute to this holy visit the spiritual benediction poured on that country, which made it for many ages most fruitful in saints. After the death of King Herod, of which St. Joseph was informed in another vision, God ordered him to return with the Child and His mother into the land of Israel, which our saint readily obeyed. But when he arrived at Nazareth, hearing that Archelaus had succeeded Herod in that part of the country, and apprehensive that he might be infected with his father's vices, he feared on that account to settle there, as he would otherwise probably have done for the education of the Child; and therefore, being directed by God in another vision, he retired into the dominions of Herod Antipas, in Galilee, to his former habitation in Nazareth. St. Joseph, being a strict observer of the Mosaic law, in conformity to its direction annually repaired to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. Our Saviour, now in the twelfth year of His age, accompanied His parents thither. Having performed the usual ceremonies of the feast, they were returning with many of their neighbors and acquaintance towards Galilee; and never doubting but that Jesus was with some of the company, they travelled on for a whole day's journey before they discovered that He was not with them. But when night came on and they could hear no tidings of Him among their kindred and acquaintance, they, in the deepest affliction, returned with the utmost speed to Jerusalem. After an anxious search of three days they found Him in the Temple, discoursing with the learned doctors of the law, and asking them such questions as raised the admiration of all that heard Him, and made them astonished at the ripeness of His understanding; nor were His parents less surprised on this occasion. When His Mother told Him with what grief and earnestness they had sought Him, and asked, "Son, why hast Thou thus dealt with us? behold Thy father and I have sought Thee in great affliction of mind," she

received for answer, "How is it that you sought Me? did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" But though thus staying in the Temple unknown to His parents, in all other things He was obedient to them. As no further mention is made of St. Joseph, he must have died before the marriage of Cana and the beginning of our Saviour's ministry. We cannot doubt that he had the happiness of Jesus and Mary attending at his death, praying for him, assisting and comforting him in his last moments; whence he is particularly invoked for the great grace of a happy death and the spiritual presence of Jesus in that hour.

MARCH 21.—ST. BENEDICT, ABBOT

St. Benedict, blessed by grace and in name, was born of a noble Italian family about 480. When a boy he was sent to Rome, and there placed in the public schools. Scared by the licentiousness of the Roman youth, he fled to the desert mountains of Subiaco, and was directed by the Holy Spirit into a cave, deep, craggy, and almost inaccessible. He lived there for three years, unknown to any one save the holy monk Romanus, who clothed him with the monastic habit and brought him food. But the fame of his sanctity soon gathered disciples round him. The rigor of his rule, however, drew on him the hatred of some of the monks, and one of them mixed poison with the abbot's drink; but when the saint made the sign of the cross on the poisoned bowl, it broke and fell to pieces to the ground. After he had built twelve monasteries at Subiaco, he removed to Monte Casino, where he founded an abbey in which he wrote his rule and lived until death. By prayer he did all things; wrought miracles, saw visions, and prophesied. A peasant, whose boy had just died, ran in anguish to St. Benedict, crying out, "Give me back my son!" The monks joined the poor man in his entreaties; but the saint replied, "Such miracles are not for us to work, but for the blessed angels. Why will you lay upon me a burden which my weakness cannot bear?" Moved at length by compassion he knelt down and, prostrating himself upon the body of the child, prayed earnestly. Then rising, he cried out, "Behold now, O Lord, my sins, but the faith of this man, who doeth the life of his son, and restore to the body that soul which Thou hast taken away." Hardly had he spoken when the child's body began to tremble, and taking it by the hand he restored it alive to his father. Six days before his death he ordered his grave to be opened, and fell ill of a fever. On the sixth day he requested to be brought to the chapel, and, having received the body and blood of Christ, with hands uplifted, and leaning on one of his disciples, he calmly expired in prayer on the 21st of March, 543.

MARCH 23.—ST. VICTORIAN

Runicic, the Arian king of the Vandals in Africa, succeeded his father Genseric in 477. He behaved himself at first with moderation towards the Catholics, but in 480 he began a grievous persecution of the clergy and holy virgins, which in 484 became general, and vast numbers of Catholics were put to death. Victorian, one of the principal lords of the kingdom, had been made governor of Carthage, with the Roman title of Proconsul. He was the wealthiest subject of the king, who placed great confidence in him, and he had ever behaved with an inviolable fidelity. The king, after he had published his cruel edicts, sent a message to the proconsul, promising, if he would conform to his religion, to bestow on him the greatest wealth and the highest honors which it was in the power of a prince to bestow. The proconsul, who amidst the glittering pomp of the world perfectly understood its emptiness, made this generous answer: "Tell the king that I trust in Christ. His Majesty may condemn me to any tortures, but I shall never consent to renounce the Catholic Church, in which I have been baptized. Even if there were no life after this, I would never be ungrateful and perfidious to God, Who has granted me the happiness of knowing Him, and bestowed on me His most precious graces." The tyrant became furious at this answer, nor can the tortures be imagined which he caused the Saint to endure. Victorian suffered them with joy, and amidst them finished his glorious martyrdom.

MARCH 24.—ST. SIMON, INFANT MARTYR

"Hail flowers of the martyrs!" the Church sings in her Office of the Holy Innocents, who were the first to die for Christ; and in every age mere children and infants have gloriously confessed His name. In 1473 the Jews in the city of Trent determined to vent their hate against the Crucified by slaying a Christian child at the coming Passover; and Tobias, one of their number, was deputed to entrap a victim. He found a bright, smiling boy named Simon playing outside his home, with no one guarding him. Tobias patked the little fellow's cheek, and coaxed him to take his hand. The boy, who was not two years old, did so; but he began to call and cry for his mother when he found himself being led from home. Then Tobias gave him a bright coin to look at, and with many kind caresses silenced his grief, and conducted him securely to his home. At midnight on Holy Thursday the work of butchery began. Having gagged his mouth, they held his arms in the form of a cross, while they pierced his tender body with awls and bodkins in blasphemous mockery of the sufferings of Jesus Christ.

After an hour's torture the little martyr lifted his eyes to heaven and gave up his innocent soul. The Jews cast his body into the river; but their crime was discovered and punished, while the holy relics were enshrined in St. Peter's Church at Trent, where they have worked many miracles.

William of Norwich is another of these children martyrs. His parents were simple country folk, but his mother was taught by a vision to expect a Saint in her son. As a boy he fasted three a week and prayed constantly, and he was only an apprentice twelve years of age, at a tanner's in Norwich when he won his crown. A little before Easter, A. D. 1137, he was enticed into a Jew's house, and was there gagged, bound, and crucified in hatred of Christ. Five years passed before the body was found, when it was buried as a saintly relic in the cathedral churchyard. A rose-tree planted hard by flourished miraculously in mid winter, all manner of sick persons were healed of their diseases at St. William's shrine.

THE IRISH ABBEY OF HOLY CROSS

No country is more fertile in ruins than Ireland. Among these ruins there are some that appeal more strongly to the beholder, for there still breathes a fragrance of piety from their ivy-clad walls and broken cloisters. Such a ruin is the once famous Cistercian Abbey of Holy Cross.

Situated on the right bank of the Suir, and about eight miles from the no less famous Rock of Cashel in the County of Tipperary, the abbey was chosen with the usual taste of the monks of old, for a more peaceful and retired spot could not have been found. On all sides the country is one vast plain, well-wooded and fertile, and secluded from all the noise of a busy world. The river Suir as it goes "a-crouching to the sea" almost washes the walls of the old abbey, and no doubt its babbling waters often lured the monks to sleep, weary of the labor of the day. Holy Cross owes its name to the possession of a relic of the true Cross which was given to the Abbot by Eleanor, wife of Henry II., of England, as a reward for services rendered by the monks to her son who, the Four Masters say, died in the neighborhood about the year 1228.

The abbey was founded in 1159 for the newly-founded city of Thobes, which until 1182, when they were replaced by the reformed monks of the Order of Cîteaux. It flourished for several centuries and was visited by all classes of society who came to see and reverence the sacred relic which was exposed for public veneration. But in 1553 it was suppressed.

SANCTIFYING GRACE

Rev. Albert Mutsch in Our Sunday Visitor

We are easily beguiled by things that flatter the senses or that appeal to our notion of "the practical." We are so slow to recognize those things that are of value to the interior life, to the soul. In education this estimate upon immediate results shows itself in the emphasis that is now almost universally placed upon studies that do not make for real solid training, but for immediate, material results.

Now, however, the Catholic may be at a loss to estimate properly the things of this world, he has an infallible test as regards "spiritual values." There is only one thing worth striving for as far as his immortal soul and its destiny are concerned. This is sanctifying grace or habitual grace, a supernatural gift, dwelling in the soul, making it holy, and pleasing to God. It remains in the soul as a habit, so long as sin does not make it disappear and hence it is called habitual grace. It is called sanctifying, because it renders the soul pure and holy in the sight of God.

It gives supernatural life to the soul, it makes us children of God, it forms supernatural gifts within us, it enables us to perform works meritorious for Heaven, and it is a sure guarantee of eternal life.

Now this priceless boon, rendering the soul beautiful in the sight of God, is lost by mortal sin. The supernatural life given by grace is at once destroyed. Charity, or the love of God, instantly disappears from the soul. The latter is reduced to the state of a useless drudge. It can no longer avail for heaven. A person dying in that terrible condition, that is in the state of grievous sin, would be lost forever. From this sentence there is no appeal. Encouraging, however, beyond all words is the happy fact that the state of grace or justification, lost by mortal sin, may be recovered. It is regained by returning to God with a contrite heart, and by doing penance. It can no longer be regained by a person dying in that terrible condition, that is in the state of grievous sin, would be lost forever.

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THE MYSTERIES OF FAITH ARE NEVER OPPOSED TO REASON

The Catholic Church is most frequently accused of exacting a blind faith from her followers, and yet her philosophers and theologians insist that faith means much more than blind trust and confidence. Faith signifies "the substance of things to be hoped for, the argument of things not seen." The intellectual conviction of the reasonableness of everything revealed to man on the subject of his origin, purpose and destiny.

Catholic teachers do not profess to explain mysteries. They accept these mysteries as true because of the Authority that revealed them, but they contend and demonstrate that these mysteries are never opposed to reason, but merely above and beyond reason. Faith is more than sentiment. Sentiment may be regarded as an outward fortification on the borderland of reason. When its guns are directed by reason, man is free, and all is well; when its guns are directed against reason man becomes enslaved by it. Especially in religion must reason and experience rule. It is a fatal error to regard religion as a mere emotion or sentiment. Religion must be based on the intellectual conviction of man's relation to the eternal Cause and Energy behind the universe—God.

After reason is convinced, noble sentiment may follow. Scores of newspaper scientists and of college instructors who love the notoriety that comes from odd and sensational views and theories often assert the superiority of Science over Faith. In reality Science is but the well-ordered summary of knowledge and of the research for the causes of the things carried on within the limitations of human reason. Science can not be greater than the human mind, because it exists nowhere except within the finite human mind. All the limited glories of Science are due to research and classification directed and sifted by reason. Before a Scientist can enunciate theories and

conclusions of Science, he must first make an act of faith in the first principles of correct thinking. Thus all Science begins with faith in reason. Thus all human knowledge rests upon faith in reason.—Rev. H. C. Mangell.

THE DRAGON'S TEETH

By Rev. Joseph Huelstein, in Our Sunday Visitor

Among the familiar stories of the ancient Greek mythology is one that will always remain popular, the story of the Dragon's Teeth.

Cadmus, so the legend runs, slew a dragon who had destroyed several of his companions as they approached a spring to draw water for a sacrifice. By the instruction of the goddess Athena he sowed the monster's teeth in the furrows of the earth, and lo! a race of warriors sprang up from them, fully armed. At the bidding of the goddess he then cast a stone among them, and at once they furiously fell upon each other and fought until only five remained. These were to help him in erecting the citadel of the newly founded city of Thebes.

Curiously enough Athena is the goddess of learning and the Greek Cadmus is often confounded with the Phœnician immigrant of the same name who first introduced the alphabet. Perhaps the application of the myth is already dawdling upon the reader. The modern dragon's teeth, from which constantly spring, full-armed, new legions of champions for the ruin of every cause, whether good or evil, are the books and magazines and papers scattered broadcast through out the land.

From the literature of atheism spring the men determined to destroy religion from the face of the earth. From the literature of the A. P. A. and the Guardians of Liberty come the bigot's resolve, by fair means or by foul, to bring about the ruin of the Church. From the literature of anarchism and Socialism arise the armies that advance for their work of destruction under the banners of revolution in place of fighting with us for a true, just and Christian reconstruction of society. From the literature of rationalism, finally, are bred the ignoble generations of apostates and the dupes who can see in man, with his splendid gift of reason and his spiritual soul, nothing more than a descendant of the hairy gorilla or an evolution from a primary cell of matter, reducing to a mere clod of earth the human mind itself, with its heaven-searching thoughts.

While the armies of untruth, like the warriors sprung from the dragon's teeth, are perpetually combating each other, there is no peace and unity within the Church alone.

There is one cause for which all her children are willing to do battle unto death, that is the cause of Christ, the cause of truth, which must ever be one as the Church is one.

Are we helping to disseminate that Catholic literature from which are to spring new armies for Christ?

Who can ever explain the love which the Heart of Jesus bears to each one of us? This love surpasses that of a child for its mother, and that of mother for her child.—St. Lawrence Justinian.

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