

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

GOLDEN WORDS FOR THE TREASURY OF YOUTH

The following golden words might profitably be treasured up by our Catholic young men. They were spoken by Father Heculan, at a mission given in St. Mary's church, Marion, Ohio, and were especially directed to the young men of the congregation:

"Youth is the time to lay the foundation for life. Lay a good foundation in youth and you will have blessings in this life and in the next. No matter what are our inclinations and ideals we all have the desire to be happy. No matter what we do, we do it that we may become happy. This is a natural instinct instilled in us by the Creator.

"There is only one thing in life that can make man really unhappy. This is not poverty. We know people who are extremely poor and yet their hearts are filled with happiness. Happiness is not a thing to be desired, yet we know many who are happy in spite of long continued illness. No, it is not poverty, nor hard work, nor sickness that makes man unhappy. It is sin.

"There is one sin in particular that so frequently causes the unhappiness and ruin of youth and leads to this I want to call your special attention. It is that one sin gets hold of a young man he becomes its slave. That is the sin of impurity which holds its head like a poisonous serpent above all other transgressions of the law of God. That one sin is so hated by God that it seems He cannot wait to punish it in the next life. He always begins its punishment in this world.

"And sins of impurity are mortal sins. It is a mortal sin to wilfully entertain impure imaginations. The minds of some men are saturated with a sponge with these thoughts. In order to avoid temptations of this kind you must not let the devil find you idle. While you are busy these thoughts do not come. It is only when you are sitting around dreaming or holding up some building on the street corner down town that you are tempted by bad thoughts. Keep busy, whether at work or some innocent amusement.

"The sixth commandment forbids looking at any object with impure lust, whether that object be person or thing. It is a mortal sin to do this. Frequently you sin by attending theaters. When is a play or show sinful? You may judge for yourselves. When you go for the sake of seeing something smutty or satisfying your animal passions, you are committing sin.

"It is sinful to read impure publications of whatever character. It is wrong to read anything that brings to the mind impure thoughts. These set the spark to the soul and often you will not only think these things but go and do them. One of the great evils of the day is impure talk and one of the grandest institutions of this Church is the Holy Name Society, which is pledged to observe purity of language. But sad to say, some Catholic young men cannot open their mouths without displaying the impurity of their hearts. Whenever you tell a dirty story, another sin by listening to you and thus you have a double gift on your soul. So make it a rule of your life to never let an impure remark pass your lips.

"Impure actions, of course, are mortal sins.

"Dancing is a dangerous thing. Is it wrong? That depends on the circumstances. Dances that are improper are positively sinful. If dancing is an occasion of sin for you, you must give it up.

"There are but two vocations in life, the married and the religious state. Most of you are called to the married state of life. Man who does not follow either of these without sufficient cause passes through life without a vocation.

"The preparation for marriage is keeping company. You should not begin to keep company until you are old enough to get married and have the intention to do so. This modern idea of keeping company at fourteen and getting married at forty is a great cause of impurity. Some men are too wise at fourteen and not wise enough at forty. A young man of twenty-one is old enough to get married. Get married young. The happiest couples are those who do so.

"How long should you keep company? A year is plenty of time. If you have been keeping company for over a year it is time you were getting married. The next question is, how keep company? Young men, never dare attempt to do anything which your conscience tells you is wrong. You sometimes find couples that are disgusted with each other six months after they are married. What is the cause of this? It is God's curse for what they did before they were married. Remember that these sins are paid for in this life. Enter the married state a pure man.

"The next question is, with whom keep company? The Catholic Church forbids the marriage of a Catholic with a non-Catholic because she wishes the happiness of both parties which is impossible without the common bond of religion. If you are a non-Catholic and feel that you are right and wish to remain a non-Catholic, do not marry a Catholic. You will never be happy and your children will never be happy.

"Young men, if you wish to lay the foundation for a happy manhood, avoid intemperance; do not gamble, say your prayers every day. Look

back in your past life and you will find that when you are sinning it was because you had neglected your prayers. Go to the Sacraments every month. This is not too much for any man and it will be the greatest consolation in your dying hour."

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

HONOR THE HOLY NAME

A newsboy when passing the parish church took off his cap. "A good little Catholic," thought a passer-by, who noticed the act. But, alas! another boy running head-first in the opposite direction collided with the newsboy and both went down, and both spoke the Holy Name in anger, not once only, but often, in the argument that would have ended in a fight, if the officer on the beat had not come around the corner at that moment. "I wish that I didn't know that that boy is a Catholic," thought the passer-by. "He is certainly no credit to his teachers or his Church." Which is quite true, young folks. It is a very easy matter for a boy, when feeling all right, to salute as he passes the church, but the real test of his respect for his God is the way he acts when his temper flares up. Just imagine any boy who calls himself a Catholic indulging in profanity because another boy ran into him! He has no respect for the Holy Name. How pleased the devil must be when he hears a boy swear! The devil hates God and he delights in hearing the Holy Name used in disrespect. You may be sure he was hovering near those two boys, gloating over the words that fell from their lips, and saying to himself: "These are not God's children—if they were they would not use their Father's Name in vain; they would not speak it in anger and contempt."

Respect the Holy Name, love and honor it, and lead others to do the same.—Sacred Heart Review.

A VALENTINE FOR SAINT VALENTINE

"O mama, please, I want 10 cents to buy a valentine; all the boys and girls are going to send valentines tomorrow," and Harry was breathless in his hurry to purchase the coveted valentine.

It was a sad, sweet face that looked lovingly into the merry blue eyes of the boy. The young mother was a widow and earned her own living and that of her child by decorating china for the few wealthy friends who remembered her now in adversity.

The mother was a convent girl, and the beautiful stories connected with her faith were treasured memories of her convent life; she felt that she was living life over again as she taxed her memory when Harry begged a story at bedtime; and it was the same old story that pleased her when she was a child that she told now to her own child.

Harry returned jubilant. He had purchased a very pretty valentine, which he showed with delight. In the evening, when he begged for the customary story, his mother took the valentine from the envelope and said: "Would you like to know the story of this dainty bit of paper?"

"A story about that valentine? Oh, yes, mama. Why do we have valentines, mama?"

"Long, long ago, in the days when the Christians were few, the pagan people of Rome thought they were doing a great favor to their false gods by killing the Christians. The people who knew of Jesus and loved Him were often put in prison, whipped, and punished in various cruel ways, and then put to death.

"About three hundred years after Christ there lived a good and holy priest named Valentine. When he heard of any of his brethren who were sick, or in prison, or suffering, he always went to see them and brought messages of love and peace and good cheer, until Valentine and a loving message came to mean one and the same thing.

"At last Valentine was seized and put into prison, and was finally put to death because he would not deny his Divine Master.

"People have ever remembered about his loving messages, and Valentine has become known as the 'Loving Messenger.'

"In the days when Saint Valentine lived, and after, the Roman youths had a custom that was peculiar to their own country. On a certain day they drew from a box on the altar of a heathen goddess the names of Roman ladies, and at some feast afterwards each young man showed the name which he had drawn.

"Years passed; Roman boys became Christians; pagan altars gave place to the altars of the Living God, and practices of Christian piety succeeded pagan rites.

"The old custom of drawing the name of a fair protector remained, but on the slips of paper were now written the names of saints. People remembered the loving messages of the martyr, Saint Valentine, and the day of his death, the fourteenth of February, was observed by sending loving messages to friends and by drawing the name of the patron saint.

"Now as you look at your beautiful souvenir, you can read a new story. The white lace bordered with flowers means a pure life with charitable deeds; the red roses tell of blood which flowed for you and me; the heart under the roses means the Sacred Heart of love; the golden stars tell of heaven above, and as you seal and send it, remember it is Saint Valentine's messages of the love of God for man.—E. M. Baird in Sunday Companion.

NOTED CONVERTS AT HOME AND ABROAD

In a review of the conversions that have occurred during the last three months, says the December number of the Catholic Convert, a prominent place should be given to that of Judge S. B. Spalding, of Hannibal, Mo. Acknowledging no definite religion before, he received instruction and was baptized quite recently at a hospital in St. Louis, by the Rev. F. J. O'Connor, pastor of the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes.

The wedding of Miss Margaret Preston Draper and Prince Andrea Boncompagni occupied a conspicuous place in the secular press last October. Miss Draper is the daughter of the late Gen. William F. Draper, former United States Ambassador to Rome. Her long stay in the Eternal City had brought her under Catholic influences and to this was added her years of study at the Sacred Heart Convent, Manhattanville, New York. She became a convert to the Church shortly before her marriage, which was one of the most brilliant of the Washington season. The Right Rev. Monsignor Russell administered the sacrament of baptism with the Chief Justice of the United States and Mrs. White representing the sponsors. Cardinal Gibbons presided at the wedding ceremony which, through the special privilege accorded to the Boncompagni family, was celebrated in a private chapel erected in the Draper ballroom. Miss Draper's mother is still an Episcopalian, but several of her family are converts to the Catholic Church.

William Fink, of Chicago, who had been studying for the Episcopal ministry, was announced as a convert to Catholicism two months ago. He is now a student with the Victorians and will enter the priesthood. Miss Alice Payne, Episcopal choir singer of Waukegan, Ill., came in at about the same time. Then there was Mrs. Dorothy Ritter Flagg, of New York; Spencer N. Johnson, of Astoria, Oreg., received shortly before his death; the Misses Ruth and Muriel Carroll, of Denver, Col., and Dr. William Henry Johnson, of Albany, N. Y., one of the most prominent colored men in the country, friend of Abraham Lincoln and a noted orator.

On Sept. 19, Frater Hugo, convert to the Catholic faith, made his profession as a member of the Franciscan order of Minor Conventuals at Syracuse, N. Y. He comes from a distinguished family, the third son of H. R. C. Tromp and the late Countess De Leloux. His paternal ancestors were the famous Dutch Admirals, Marten and Cornelius Tromp—the former renowned in history as the sea captain who swept the English Channel with a broom at his masthead.

The Rev. Dr. Kemper, of Texas, editor of the Antidote, keeps up his reputation as a convert-maker. One of his latest converts is Mrs. E. Nye, of Kerrville, Texas, whose husband is the secretary of the Public School Board and assistant cashier of the Kerrville Bank. She had been a Baptist and a member of the Eastern Star Masonic Auxiliary. Another is Delmore C. Reeves, of Camp Verde, Texas, formerly a Campbellite who used to travel 28 miles to receive his Catholic instruction.

During the three months under review two more former Protestant clergymen have turned to the Catholic Church. On Oct. 12, at Newman School, Hackensack, N. J., Arthur Clement Chapman was received and conditionally baptized by the rector of the school, the Rev. Signourney W. Fay. Mr. Chapman had been a minister of the Protestant Episcopal Church. So had Mr. Henry B. Sanderson who stood as his godfather, so had Dr. Fay, and so had Dr. Jesse Albert Locke, who was head master of the Newman School before Dr. Fay. Mr. Chapman made the fourth Episcopalian minister received a Catholic in the Newman School Chapel.

The other minister-convert was the Rev. Albert L. Ott, of the Protestant Episcopal diocese of Milwaukee, a graduate of Nashotah Seminary and afterwards connected with the Episcopal Cathedral of Sts. Peter and Paul, Chicago. Mr. Ott will study for the priesthood.

On Sunday, Oct. 22, the Right Rev. Bishop Hennessy confirmed a class of 100 adults at Pittsburg, Kas. Of these, 40 men and 27 women were converts, products of the last year of the famous inquiry class conducted by the Rev. Father Pompey of St. Mary's Church, Pittsburg. Some of the candidates came from a distance to be present at the celebration.

Colonel Phelps, Missouri State Senator, was received at Carthage, Mo., shortly before his death. He was a well-known leader of the Democratic party in the State. Miss Gertrude Glenn Barrette, of San Marcos, Texas Normal School, is another recent convert, and so is Miss Inez L. Dunlap, of St. Louis. Prof. Eno D. Harding and his wife, formerly Miss Velva Hales, of Memphis, Tenn., and Ralph G. Criswell, of Redondo Beach, Cal., son of a former socialist candidate for Mayor of Los Angeles, are among the additions to the list. Of special interest in the group of converts from Pittsburg, Kansas, is Dr. Thomas Morton Wright, whose grandfather on his father's side was a Methodist minister and whose maternal grandfather occupied a pulpit in the Baptist church.

From the Lutheran church comes Dr. Charles L. Mattfeldt, of Catonsville, Md., former president of the Board of Commissioners of Baltimore County. Miss Mary Byrne, portrait painter, has renounced her allegi-

ance to Anglicanism, after ten years' residence in Rome. The names are also reported of John H. Jeffries, of Memphis, Tenn., of the late Mrs. Charles Watts, of Indianapolis, and of John F. Stanton, deceased, formerly State architect of Kansas.

In the last review which was for the quarter ending Aug. 31, the names of three former Anglican ministers were recorded as having become Catholics during that period. In the quarter ending November, there are again three converts of the same type, two who were ministers and one who was a lay-reader. One of the ministers was the Rev. S. A. Cuthbert who as an Anglican had been curate of All Saints' Church, Wellington, and later rector of the church at Moleworth. He was received by the Oratorians at Brompton. The other minister was the Rev. W. B. Black, pastor of St. Columba's Anglican Church, Granton-on-Spey, Scotland. His lay-reader, H. B. Easter, came into him. They are both engaged in Red Cross work at the front and it is said that they were influenced to no little extent by the example of the Catholic soldiers with whom they were closely associated.

Until the close of the war, nothing even approaching a record of conversions in the battle area will be possible. Many who have become Catholics as they died will never be known about in this world. All accounts agree that the number of English soldiers, without any particular religion before, who are now joining the Church is very considerable. The story has gone the rounds of the Catholic press of Sergeant William Crofts of Bermondsey, England, who made a vow to become a Catholic if God would bring him safe through what he knew was to be a particularly serious engagement. His prayer was answered; he came out of the struggle unscathed and was awarded the Distinguished Conduct medal for conspicuous gallantry. On his return to Bermondsey he was received into the Catholic Church by the Rev. E. F. Murnane of that town. Sergeant C. W. Tanner of the 19th Battalion of the British Army, was another recipient of high military honors. He was given the Distinguished Service Medal for saving lives in a mine explosion; and Sergeant Tanner too has become a Catholic.

Another recent military convert is Captain James W. Wearing of the King's Own Lancaster Regiment. These are a few out of many. From Ireland comes the news of the recent conversion of Mrs. Studd, St. Cleran's, Loughrea, wife of Brig. Gen. Studd.

It has been reported during the last quarter that Anatole France, famous French litterateur, has been received into the Church. This story may be put in the category of "important if true" for Anatole France was one of the most prominent writers of the French atheistical school.—Catholic News.

THE PUNISHMENT OF UNBELIEF

Though Sir Oliver Lodge's son Raymond was killed at Ypres in the fall of 1915, his father believes that he has communicated since then with the young man's spirit. The "proofs" of this uncanny correspondence are set forth by Sir Oliver in a recent book called "Raymond, or Life and Death," and now the readers of Sunday supplements are seriously discussing the "phenomena." After experiencing considerable difficulty in "getting" the proofs "across" from the "other side," a medium at last succeeded in bringing to the bereaved parents such soothing intelligence from Raymond as this:

"My body's very similar to the one I had before. I pinch myself sometimes to see if it's real, and it is, but it doesn't seem to hurt as much as when I pinched the flesh body. The internal organs don't seem constituted on the same lines as before. They can't be quite the same. But to all appearances, and outwardly, they are the same as before. I can move somewhat more freely."

"(Though the assurance that the internal organs of the disembodied Raymond, at least to all appearances, are "constituted on the same lines as before" was no doubt a source of lasting comfort to his parents, it must have been a deeper consolation still for them to learn (of course through the medium) that their son in spirit had not only his "ears and eyes" but even "eyelashes and eyebrows," and incredible as it may seem, "he has got a new tooth in place of one he had—one that wasn't quite right." In subsequent communications Raymond told Sir Oliver and Lady Lodge that the denizens of the other side dwell in brick houses and have a highly economical way of manufacturing from the essence of the air whistles and cigars for the entertainment of late arrivals who are a little homesick.

That such absurdities as the foregoing should be seriously accepted by a modern Englishman of prominence indicates to what a pitiful state of credulity and superstition the cult of Spiritism leads its devotees. Those who reject the infallible teaching of Christ seem to be punished by becoming the dupes of vulgar charlatans. The War, moreover, is reported to have given Spiritism a renewed vogue, for bereaved relatives who have practically discarded Christianity become the medium's easiest prey. When all is said, Catholicism will be found the only effective safeguard against

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the frauds and superstitions of Spiritism. For, as Father Keating well observes in the January Month: "No Church except the Catholic has any definite or consistent doctrine on the subject of dealing with the dead. She condemns the attempt as an unlawful endeavor to escape from the conditions of our probation, and as, at any rate, risking intercourse with evil spirits, God's enemies. She maintains that the old prohibition in Deuteronomy (xviii: 10, 11): 'Neither let there be found among you anyone . . . that consulted soothsayers, or observeth dreams and omens: neither let there be any wizard, nor charmer, nor anyone that consulteth pythonic spirits, or fortune tellers, or that seeketh the truth from the dead' (R. V., 'or a necromancer') is still in full force, for these practices are sins against the First Commandment. She unhesitatingly proclaims that spiritistic phenomena properly so-called (not i. e., thought-reading or hypnotic displays) are due either to fraud or to the action of evil spirits, whether devils or lost souls."

It is clear, therefore, that no Catholic may dabble in Spiritism.—America.

REASONED HIMSELF INTO THE CHURCH

The recent conversion of an English gentleman who forfeits great worldly prospects by becoming a Catholic has some features out of the common, extraordinary as are numerous conversions to the Faith. He has never been inside a Catholic church, or spoken to a priest until he was introduced to the one to whom he made his submission. "He worked it all out himself," writes one of his friends. To quote his own words: "If there is a Revelation, it must be clear and definite. In all non-Catholic churches there are vagueness and contradiction. The Catholics have clear, definite teaching. God's Revelation must be true; therefore I must be a Catholic." He had no difficulties; it was always: "Just tell me what the Church teaches and what I must do."—Ave Maria

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