

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

A NEW LEAF FOR THE NEW YEAR

I have turned a leaf, which is plain to view, And I've writ, on a vacant page. The things that I mean to say and do— The things may be old but the will is new, Ann my word is good as a gage.

I mean to curb this tongue of mine, And to conquer it more and more; I hope to restore that name of thine, Of which I robbed thee, my friend benign, And I wounded thee to the core.

I resolve to check my pungent wit, Which often cut to the quick; A witty word may make a hit, But then, alas! the result of it Is to make the victim sick.

I purpose to mend my churlish ways, And be kind in thought and deed; To cleave to my friends of the olden days, And say not a word if I cannot praise, And become a friend in need.

After the war and strife and hate We hanker for peace and rest; But our sighs and tears will not abate Unless we act instead of prate, And follow Christ's best.

For He forgave His bitterest foes, And He died that they might live; He remembered not His wrongs and woes, He forgot the insults, kicks and blows, To teach us how to forgive.

I have writ these things on a virgin leaf, And I hope to keep them well, I do avow my strong belief That the man who hates shall come to grief, And carry within a hell.

WORTH REMEMBERING No good work was ever begun by excessive anxiety as to how the end was to be accomplished. If you wish to do all at once, you will do nothing. And he has done half the work who has made a good beginning.

You have troubles of your own. So have others. Nobody is free from them, and perhaps it is as well that none should be. They give sinew and tone to life, fortitude and courage to those who learn to bear them manfully.

Happiness resides in a contented mind and a good conscience. The hectic chase after amusement and distractions cannot satisfy the soul, which was made for better things. Truly "the Kingdom of God is within you," in your own heart.

If you have a sense of humor, you have one of the greatest weapons against failure or morbidity that is possible to be given to you. What is a sense of humor? It's this—seeing the funny side to a thing when there is no funny side. The ordinary human being would grow irritated under such a situation. But the man with a sense of humor—never.—Catholic Columbian.

NUN TAUGHT HIM HOW TO ACT As part of the history of Charles E. Gilpin, the Negro actor who made a remarkable success of the title role of "Emperor Jones," the Colored Harvest reprints the following from the Kansas City Star:

To the interpretation of this role Gilpin brought a naturalness in the higher scenes and a peculiar somber intensity of emotional expression in its tragic phases that fascinated his audience and stamped him as a real student of his art, skilled in the technique and entirely alive to its psychological demands.

New York's curiosity in this regard was keenly intrigued and to the persistent "How come?" of the press, Gilpin finally told.

"How did I come to know how to interpret that part? Well, in a good many ways. I have been a Pullman car porter myself and I think I know how a Pullman car porter would act if he came to be an emperor. Then that fellow Jones lost his nerve out there in the woods because he was hungry. And I know what that's like, too. I have had lots of ups and downs in life and they've all taught me something. But how to act. Well, I guess the credit for the start of that belongs to a good Sister away back there in Richmond, Va., where I was raised. That was Sister Jerome, a nun, who taught in the St. Francis school there. She started me off. This Sister Jerome got hold of me when I was just a kid—I don't know where she got it from and I don't know why she thought I could do anything—but she taught me the rudiments of the business. She taught me how to breathe—and that's a big thing in this game. She taught me gesture, tone, the placing of my voice and she gave me good books to read on plays. I used to recite poetry to her. She started me out all right. I wonder what she'd say if she knew what I'm doing now?"

THE MAN WHO LIES There are many forms of human depravity, various manifestations of the weakness that still inheres in the soul of man. The original propensity to evil crops out in a vast variety of ill-smelling weeds, all devastating and destructive of the

beauty that God intends to dwell in the human spirit. One of the most despicable—because easily preventable—maladies of Man's weakness is that which leads him to the basest form of cowardice; the tendency to prevaricate. Cowardice in any form is hateful; when displayed in thoughts transmuted into words it reaches the depth of iniquity. For Man possesses reason and intellect in order to see and judge aright. True, at times the clearness of vision is dimmed and he falls into error; to lie is deliberately and with wide-open eyes to run into the pit. Such a course indicates a fear of one's fellows without any relation to God. It is Adam all over again hiding behind the fault of Eve. It is the weakling crying out in impotence after his fall; it is the mongrel snapping at the heels of the passerby, the hyena slinking after its prey, a rational being transforming himself with intent into the likeness of the serpent.

Some persons there are who scruple not to lie on every possible occasion. Religion seems to enter into their calculations. If the object which they desire appeals with sufficient force, such miscreants hesitate not to shatter every sign of truth, justice and elementary fairness. Business, social or personal aggrandizement suffices to lead these moral cowards into the by-paths of deception; they are plain, unvarnished liars for the sake of a little profit, a small recognition, a slight gain in prestige or advancement.

Lying often tends towards murder; in fact, it is a kind of murder, for it aims at the destruction of the truth, and many are the victims who fall under the blows of these mental cowards who use the lash of the tongue to wreak their vengeance or to advance themselves or their interests.

The man who lies—even once—has, to that extent, forfeited his claim to respect. He has proven himself a dastard, a coward, a miserable image of moral turpitude. When his lie involves the welfare of another, he is guilty of grave sin before God and of serious injustice before Man. Of course, such creatures usually have little faith in God, since their mental attitude proclaims them as enemies of God who is Truth. Many a person will at the last day deplore, when too late, the terrible ruin he has caused by his sins of the tongue, sins that perhaps have sent others down to destruction, and that will inevitably recoil upon the head of their author, the liar.—Catholic Bulletin.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS VALENTINE TO A LITTLE GIRL Little maiden, dost thou pine For a faithful valentine? Art thou scanning timidly Every face that meets thine eye? Art thou fancying there may be Fairer face than thou dost see? Little maiden, scholar mine, Wouldst thou have a valentine? Go and ask, my little child, Ask the Mother Undefined, Ask, for she will draw thee near And will whisper in thy ear—"Valentine" the name is good; For it comes of lineage high, And a famous family: And it tells of gentle blood, Noble blood, and nobler still, For its owner freely poured Every drop there was to spill In the quarrel of his Lord. "Valentine" I know the name, Many martyrs bear the same; And they stand in glittering ring Round their warrior God and King Who before and for them bled, With their robes of ruby red, And their swords of cherub flame.

Yes, there is a plenty there, Knights without reproach or fear, Such St. Denys, such St. George, Martin, Maurice, Theodore, And a hundred thousand more, Guerdon gain'd and warfare o'er, By that sea without a surge, And beneath the eternal sky, And the beatific sun, An Jerusalem above, Valentine is every one; Choose from out that company Whom to serve, and whom to love.

ST. VALENTINE WAS A VENERABLE BISHOP OF ROME February 14 was St. Valentine's day, and therefore the following from the Child Apostle may prove interesting to young and old: "Who was good St. Valentine and how did his feast day become a day set apart for the sending of love messages?" is a question that bobs up yearly about February 14. And yearly, despite the fact that the day is so rich in fancy and legend, the same unsatisfactory answer is made; for no one has ever been able to explain just how the little blind god Cupid came to be mixed up with the celebration of the feast day of a martyr saint.

St. Valentine was a sure enough saint, who wrote no poems nor love songs and, so far as prying eyes and ears have been able to find out, never was a victim of the little fellow's darts.

He was in fact a venerable Bishop of Rome, who weathered the fierce persecution of the monster Emperor Claudius and won for himself the crown of martyrdom in the year 270 A. D.

Immured, because of his defence of his faith, in a dark and loathsome dungeon, one person only in all the world appears to have pitied

his misery and made an effort to comfort his solitude. This was the gentle blind daughter of his jailer, who practised the faith in secret.

She it was, tradition tells us, who stole daily to the bars of the prisoners' dungeon cell, to sing the sweet songs of faith and hope that strengthened his weary heart.

Her self sacrifice and sweet sympathy did not go unrewarded, for in thanksgiving the gentle Bishop healed her eyes, and the maid, who had been blind from her birth, saw as others see.

Such a miracle should have moved the stony-hearted judges of the good saint, but it seems to have had the opposite effect upon them, for a short time afterward he was haled from his dungeon, clubbed through the streets of Rome and afterward beheaded.

So far back in the world's history goes the celebration of a feast day of love that even the dusty old porers over the mud tablets of ancient Babylon have not been able to get at the root of the matter. An old belief revealed at one time that the birds chose their mates on St. Valentine's day; but whether there is or is not a grain of truth in the matter, it is quite certain that human sweethearts formerly used this day to signify their devotion to each other.

The custom of composing verses appropriate to this day dates far back indeed, and we learn that a certain tome of 1440, the work of a monk of Bury, contained a reference to St. Valentine's day. There is a saying that one cannot love without giving. Perhaps this is the reason why the giving of gifts has always been part of good St. Valentine's Day. Before the time of manufactured valentines the love-love swain or maid was compelled to make as best he or she could a valentine for the dear one. Some of these are of the quaintest and crudest designs imaginable.

The heathens had a love feast of their own, which was celebrated on February 15, in honor of the goddess Juno. When the world began to become Christianized the survival of the practices that had prevailed in heathen times distressed the good fathers of the church. On the festival of Juno for instance it was the custom for the girls of pagan Rome to write their names on slips of paper, which were thrown into a large urn in the market place, later to be drawn by the youths of the city. Each boy looked upon the maid whose name he drew as his sweetheart for the time.

Innocent as this custom seems, the fact that it was of pagan origin was enough to decide the early fathers of the church to decide it must go. One of the most inventive of the holy men finally hit upon the expedient of substituting for the name of the maids the names of martyrs and saints and by this means put an end to the objectionable custom at once.

This is all that we really know concerning the origin of the day to which the youths and maids of hundreds of years ago looked forward as eagerly as we have every reason to believe the youths and maidens of hundreds of years to come will look.

THE BEST GIFT OF ALL Bring Him on this Gift-giving Day, not merely the gold of your love, the frankincense of your prayer, and the myrrh of your sacrifice, but through the hands of His Ever-Blessed Mother, give Him also yourself, just as you are, with your faults huddled on your back, with all your shortcomings and failings—in fact, just as you are. Do not wait until you are less unworthy; do not pause to gather fresh-cut flowers of piety; do not await the Angelus bell, but come now, today, at once, and say, with all your love in it: Dearest Jesus, on this Gift-giving Day I offer myself with all that I am and have in life and death to be entirely Thine—I give Thee my work—sorrows—do Thou give me comfort; I give Thee my sufferings—do Thou give me support; I give Thee my trials—do Thou give me triumph; I give Thee my time—do Thou give me eternity. But above all things, what I want is Thy promise that I shall hear from Thy sacred lips, when I am called from exile to Home, from earth to Heaven, the only word that can satisfy me: I am Thy reward exceeding great. For, what have I in Heaven but Thee, and besides Thee what do I desire on earth? My life and my portion forever!—The Sentinel of The Blessed Sacrament.

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