

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN.

Whatever You Do, Keep Sweet.

No matter how disagreeable your work, or how much trouble you may have this year, resolve that, whatever comes to you or does not come to you, you will keep sweet, that you will not allow your disposition to sour, that you will face the sunlight no matter how deep the shadows.

The determination to be cheerful will procure multitudes of little victories that would otherwise harass you.

If you can not get rid of a trouble, do as the oyster does with the grain of sand that gets into the shell and irritates it. Cover it with pearl. Do as you would with an ugly rock or stump on your grounds. Cover it with ivy or roses, or something else which will beautify it. Make the best of it.

You can make poetry out of the prosiest life, and bring sunshine into the darkest home; you can develop beauty and grace amid the ugliest surroundings. It is not circumstance, so much as attitude of mind, that gives happiness.

Nothing can disturb his good nature," said a man of one of his employees; "that is why I like him. It does not matter how much I scold him or find fault with him, he is always sunny. He never lays up anything against me, never resents anything."

That is recommendation enough for anybody. No wonder this man did not want to part with such an employee.

Who can estimate the value of a nature so sunny that it attracts everybody, repels nobody? Everybody wants to get near sunny people; everybody likes to know them. They open, without effort, doors which morose natures are obliged to pry open with great difficulty, or perhaps can not open at all.

I know an old man who has had a great deal of trouble and many losses and misfortunes; but he started out in life with a firm determination to extract just as much real enjoyment from it, as he went along, as possible—not in dissipation, but in wholesome recreation and fun. He has always tried to see the humorous side of things, the bright side, and the duty of happiness.

The result is, that, although this man has had more than his share of sorrow in his career, he has developed the inestimable faculty of making the best of every situation, and is always facing the sun and turning his back to the shadows. This life habit of cheerfulness and optimism has brought out a sweetness of character, and a peace and serenity of mind which are the envy of all who know him. Although he has lost his property and the most of his family and relatives, yet he radiates sunshine and helpfulness wherever he goes.

A man who can laugh outside when he is crying inside, who can smile when he feels badly, has a great accomplishment. We all love the one who believes the sun shines when he can not see it.

A potted rose in a window will turn its face away from the darkness toward the light. Turn it as often as you will it always turns away from the darkness and lifts its face upward toward the sun.

So we, instinctively, shrink from cold, melancholy, ink natures, and turn our face toward the bright, the cheerful and the sunny. There is more virtue in one sunbeam than in a whole atmosphere of cloud and gloom.

As the Gulf Stream leaves a warm, soft climate in its wake as it flows through the colder waters of the ocean on its way from the Gulf to the North Pole, so a happy, joyous, sunny nature leaves a warm trail of sunshine wherever it goes through the cold, practical, selfish world.

Lydia Maria Child used to say: "I think cheerfulness in every possible way. I read only chipper books, and hang prisms in my window to fill the room with rainbows." This is the right kind of philosophy—the philosophy of good cheer, the greatest medicine for the mind, the best tonic for the body, and the greatest health food known.

Your ability to carry your own sunshine with you, your own lubricant, your own light, so that, no matter how heavy the load or dark the way, you will be equal to the emergency, will measure your ability to continue and to achieve.—Success.

The Source of Happiness.

We each of us possess within ourselves the true source of happiness. Joyment is contained in our imagination, not in the books we read; in our appreciation of beauty, not in the picture; in our material culture, not in the instrument played.

Our enjoyment of nature does not depend on the charms of our surroundings, but upon ourselves. Some men will find more joy in a prairie than others in the Alps, some more joy in the desert than others in the flowers and forests of fertile lands. Is it the rich, the powerful, the popular, that obtain the greatest happiness? We look about us and we know that this is not true, though we act as if it were. Blessed are the poor in spirit; this we know is true, though we act as if it were not. No one is truly happy who has not happiness as a well of water springing up within himself into everlasting life.

The Path to Success.

"What leads to success?" asks many a young man. What will keep the wolf from the door and the man from the sorbonne? First of all he must have his employer's interest at heart. He must keep his eyes and ears open and his mouth shut. He must learn to overcome any obstacle that may arise in his work and to do so quickly. He must be able to satisfy an angry and irritated customer, so that the home may not lose patronage. Any chap who is able to do these things is bound to succeed, provided he has one trait—"stick-to-it-iveness." Then let him take advantage of any opening, no matter how small it may be, provided it will advance him on his road to success.

Persistence.

Want of constancy is the cause of many a failure, making the millionaire of to-day a beggar to-morrow. Show me a really great triumph that is not

the reward of persistence. One of the paintings which made Titian famous was on his easel eight years, another seven. How came popular writers famous? By writing for years without any pay at all; by writing hundreds of pages as mere practice work; by working like galley slaves at literature for half a life-time with no other compensation than—fame. "Never despair," says Burke; "but if you do, work on in despair." "He who has put forth his total strength in fit actions," says Emerson, "has the richest return of wisdom."

To Make a Man.

It is often the case that a father who has accumulated property after a hard struggle will want to save his boy from having the hard time in life that he himself had. He forgets that it is that very hard time which has made him the man he is. It is by made, not by having an easy time. Just as exercise develops muscle and makes the physical man. Instead of trying to save your boy from having a hard time you had better make him have as hard a time as you can by putting him to work in every way. You may save him from the deprivations and sacrifices you had. You may be able to give him better advantages than fell to your lot, but be sure you do not try to keep him from having a hard time. To rear him in luxurious ease is to take all the manhood out of him and to leave the muscles of his character flabby and soft.—Western Watchman.

Lacordaire on Humility.

The Christian must be humble; and humility does not consist in hiding our talents and virtues, but in the clear knowledge of all that is wanting in us, in not being elated by what we have, seeing that it is a free gift of God, and that even with all His gifts we are still infinitely little. It is a remarkable fact that great virtue necessarily begets humility, and if great talent has not always the same effect, still it softens down a great deal of the uncouthness which clings inseparably to the pride of mediocrity. Real excellence and humility are consequently not incompatible one with the other; on the contrary, they are twin sisters. God, who is excellence itself, is without pride. He sees Himself as He is, without however despising what is not Himself; He is Himself, naturally and simply, with an affection for all His creatures however humble. Kindness and humility are almost one and the same thing.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

Courtesy at Home.

Courtesy is the perfume of Christian grace. Its lustre should be an expression of the best emotions of the soul. The word is derived from the French, and is closely allied therefore, in origin, with "courtesy," which has an equivocal meaning. A courtesier is supposed to possess elegant manners, cultivated, however, and used mainly for selfish ends. Politeness, which is the synonym of courtesy, is of nobler birth. It comes from a Greek term, signifying citizenship. As the divine kingdom is distinct in its laws, spirit, and purpose, from the kingdoms of this earth, so too are its members held together by a supernatural life. They compose one body, ruled by one Supreme Head. Christian politeness is therefore the product of regeneration. Its roots are in the heart. They are watered from above. All, then, who are subjects of Divine grace, should be gracious, kind, considerate, courteous, and polite in their deportment, and show forth the savor of the precious anointing they have received.

How much a sincere and hearty politeness may do for others is readily tested and measured by all who have learned to appreciate it for themselves. While it is comparatively easy to be courteous toward strangers, or toward people of distinction, whom one meets in society or on public occasions, still it should be remembered that it is at home, in the family and among kindred, that an every day politeness of manners is really most to be prized. There it confers substantial benefits and brings the sweetest returns. The little attentions which members of the same household may show towards one another day by day belong, in fact, to what is styled "good breeding." There cannot be any ingrained gentility which does not exhibit itself first at home. There, of all places in the world, it will be able to demonstrate how much genuine politeness there is in the heart. A well ordered family cannot afford to dispense with the observance of the good rules of mutual intercourse which are enforced in good society. A cheerful, sour, morose deportment at home is simply cruel, for it cuts into the tenderest sensibilities and hurts love just where love is strongest and most loyal. Parents and children, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, never lose anything by mutual politeness; on the contrary, by maintaining not only its forms, but by the inward cultivation of its spirits, they become contributors to that domestic felicity which is, in itself, a foretaste of heaven.—Our Young People.

A Boy's Reading.

When the fact comes to the boy or girl that the reading they do before they are twenty-one years old, has more influence on their lives and character than all the reading they do afterward, it should be a matter of great importance to them what they are reading. If it is the trash of the day, to that level they are likely to come; no higher.

So we invoke their attention to this matter now, and impress upon their minds that unworthy books will spoil their whole lives. This caution is especially necessary now, when society is going daff on its reading and devoting itself to a literature that adds not a filament to the mental or moral fiber of a person.

Since parents are swamped in this literary morass, they are poor guides for their own children. They are in no condition to point out a path to safe ground.

Here is a boy or girl, reading one of the glittering pieces of fiction, about domestic infelicity, lapse of virtue or

suicide in high life, and getting his mind saturated with thoughts and imaginations evoked by such stuff—they are there to stay. He will never get rid of the scratches they make on the soul. And in the future, they will conflict with principle, duty and moral discrimination.

It is enough to spoil an age, this tampering with the clean souls of youth. This is what frivolous and shady reading does. It is a youth to be particular; to see that a time spends part of his time, at least, in something that is wholesome, pure, inspiring, useful; something that will make him think of the real things of life, of which he is after a while to be a part, and to inspire him with a purpose to do his part well.

The true secret of reform in the world lies in the heart of the boy or girl. There is the future enclosed just as truly as a forest is wrapped in an acorn cup. How that heart is cared for and treated will determine whether the world grows better or worse. It is not cared for if it runs to shabby, frivolous, fashionably, filthy literature. The Lamp.

How an Unattractive Girl Became Popular.

I know a girl who had become so morbid and dependent through constantly dwelling on her plain features and unattractive manner that she was on the verge of insanity. She was extremely sensitive, very proud, and would brood for days over the fancied slight when she was not invited to a party or other entertainment with her more attractive acquaintances.

Finally a real friend came to her assistance and told her that it was possible for her to cultivate qualities which would be far more attractive and would make her much more popular than the mere physical beauty and grace whose absence she so deplored.

With this kind friend's assistance she completely reversed her estimate of herself; she turned about face, and, instead of over-emphasizing mere physical grace and beauty, instead of thinking of herself as ugly and repulsive, she constantly held the thought that she was the expression of God's idea, that there was something divine in her, and she resolved to bring it out.

She denied every suggestion that she could possibly be unpopular, or that she could really be ugly, and held persistently in mind the image of her popularity and attractiveness, and the thought that she could make herself interesting and even fascinating.

She would not allow herself to harbor the suggestion that she could be anything but attractive.

She began to improve herself intellectually in every possible way. Hitherto she had been careless of dress and manners because of the conviction that it did not matter how she dressed or what she did, she would still be unpopular. She began to dress as becomingly as possible and in better taste.

She read the best authors; she took up different courses of study; and determined that at every opportunity she would make herself just as interesting as possible.

The result was, that instead of being a wallflower, as formerly, she began to attract little groups about her wherever she went. She became a fascinating talker, and made herself so interesting in every way that she was invited out just often as the more attractive friends whom she used to envy. In a short time she had not only overcome her handicap, but had also become the most interesting girl in the community.

Her task had not been an easy one, but she had worked with superb resolution and grit to overcome the things which had held her down; and, in her determined effort to overcome what she regarded as a fatal handicap, as a result she was enabled to develop qualities which more than compensated for the personal beauty that was denied her.

It is wonderful what a transformation we can bring about by holding persistently in the mind the image of the thing we would become and struggling hard to attain it. It has a marvellous power to attract what we desire, to make real the picture that we see.—Success.

TALKS ON RELIGION.

THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION.

The dogma of the Immaculate Conception, like many other dogmas of our faith, is not understood by the great majority of non-Catholics; nor is it fully comprehended by some Catholics. It is not "the Virgin birth," about which we read and hear so much these days. The Virgin birth has reference to the mystery of the Incarnation of our Saviour, Who was conceived and born of the Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Ghost. "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God." Such were the words of the Angel Gabriel, announcing to Mary the astounding mystery which was to be wrought in her by the Almighty. This is of the Incarnation, not of the Immaculate Conception.

Further, this dogma has no reference whatever to Mary's parents, but only to herself. There was nothing miraculous in Mary's generation. She was begotten like other children; had her parents blessed Joachim and Ann. She was the daughter of a fallen race and as such, were it not for the interposition of God, would have incurred the "debt," or liability to contract original sin. Again, this dogma has reference not to the body, as such, but to the soul. For the body while still inanimate could not be sanctified or preserved from original sin, for it is the soul, not the body, which is capable of receiving either the gift of grace or the stain of sin. And hence when her time, on earth, had come and her work was done, she died—for such was the will of her Creator.

So much for what the Immaculate Conception is not; and now, what is it? What does it mean? What does the Church teach concerning this

dogma? Here, permit us to remark, lest our instructed Catholic readers may lose patience with us for repeating what they already know, that the Universe has very many non-Catholic readers and perhaps some ill-instructed Catholic ones. We cannot better tell of this dogma than by quoting the very words of the dogmatic decree, contained in the Bull "Ineffabilis," issued by the saintly Pope Pius IX., December 8, 1854. "It is the dogma of faith that the most Blessed Virgin Mary, in the first instant of her conception, by a singular privilege and grace of God, in virtue of the foreseen merits of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the human race, was preserved exempt from all stain of original sin." This solemn definition was received not only with submission of mind, heart and soul, but with sincere joy and rejoicings, throughout the universal Church. Not a murmur, not an objection. Not a word or line in protest, but with joyous, beating hearts did the Church's faithful children crown their dear Mother's brow with this glorious, immortal crown of absolute, immaculate virginity. And the blessed angels of God, in heaven, sang the canticle as they bowed, from their golden thrones, to the new born majesty of heaven's bright Queen. The three Persons of the Holy Trinity crowned with this spotless diadem the Elect among the daughters of men. Such were heaven and earth, such were Church militant and Church triumphant, on that ever memorable 8th of December, 1854.

Flourish contention, strife, protests, arguments pro and con, and a new definition of former dogmatic decrees. The Church had to fight, and strike out telling blows, in defense of the truth, as witness the councils of Nicea, Constantinople, Ephesus and others, even up to and including the Vatican council. This total lack of strife and opposition, this unanimity and complete consensus go, powerfully, to show the universality of this doctrine and the wonderful pertinacity its hold had on the hearts of the faithful. It proves that its root and fibers, trunk and branches, sprang out of the ever rich and fruitful soil of Holy Scripture and Sacred Tradition. "I will place enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed; she shall crush thy head." Such were the words of divine prophecy spoken by Almighty God to the serpent demon at the cradle, as it were, of humanity. Four thousand years afterwards the arch-angel Gabriel thus addressed "the second Eve"—Mary: "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee." And so, in God's time, He fulfilled the old prophecy, and Mary crushed the serpent's head, through her Son, and that Son's most beautiful gift to her. And, in the exuberance of her grateful soul, with eye and heart lifted to heaven, does that fair young, immaculate Virgin sing forth her hymn of praise—the sweetest, most precious song that ever ascended to the song-book throne of the Eternal Father: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour; because He that is mighty hath done great things to me, and holy is His Name."

From the earliest times the whole mind of the Oriental Church was found to have been imbued with this doctrine. Thus speaks St. Ephraim, A. D. 379, "Truly it is Thou and Thy Mother only, who are fair altogether. For in Thee there is no stain in Thy Mother no spot." And when in the Western Church the great controversy with the Pelagians led to a thorough sifting of the subject of original sin it drew from St. Augustine—the great doctor of grace, those remarkable declarations which exempt the Blessed Virgin from all sin. "Except," he says, "the holy virgin Mary of whom for the honor of the Lord, I will have no question whatever where sin is concerned. For whence can we know the measure of grace conferred on her to vanish sin on every side, on her who deserved to conceive and bring forth Him, Who, it is evident, had no sin." St. Proclus in the great council of Ephesus, A. D. 431, says, "As He formed her without any stain of her own, so He proceeded from her contracting no stain." To quote more were unnecessary and space would be wanting.

Some, not of the faith, may object that, granting the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception Mary would not have needed redemption through the merits of Christ. But Mary was redeemed through the "merits foreseen" of Christ, by anticipation. So far from derogating from, the Catholic doctrine exalts, the merits of Christ. He Who redeemed us, redeemed her. He Who sanctifies us in baptism sanctified her in conception; that she might be "full of grace," prepared, as far as a creature could be prepared, to receive Him into her bosom. St. John the Baptist was sanctified by the spirit

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Makes Child's Play of Wash Day. SURPRISE SOAP. A PURE HARD SOAP.

before his birth; shall Mary be equal to him? asks Cardinal Newman: "is it not fitting," continues the Cardinal, "that her privileges should surpass his? Is it wonderful, if grace, which anticipated his birth by three months, should in her case run up to the very first moment of her being, outstrip the imputation of sin, and be beforehand with the usurpation of Satan?" Such is the Immaculate Conception; such is the glory of "our tainted nature's solitary boast." Such is the magnificent gift of God, to Whom be honor and glory and praise forever.—Cleveland University.

Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord: he shall delight exceedingly in His commandments.—(Ps. exi-1.)

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