

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN.

Set yourself earnestly to see what you were made to do, and then set yourself earnestly to do it; and the loftier your purpose is, the more sure you will be to make the world richer with every enrichment of yourself. — Phillips Brooks.

Lost Opportunities. "Don't be a founder," says the Catholic Citizen. "Don't be a sport. Don't be perennially festive. Don't go in for 'a good time' as your main object. The wages of sin is death. The wages of these things is lost opportunities, bad habits, impaired health and vulgar tastes."

Life can be made a success. It is not a question of climbing above poverty; it is a question of understanding life. So many of us have been lured away and fascinated by what turn out to be phantoms and false gods! We have had to fight back and begin over again and yet with all that life can be made a success—for success consists in doing right, in doing the best you can with what you have, of years of experience, of sorrows, of chances, of joys and of hope. Fight until the end.

The High and Beautiful. Nothing is more conducive to progress, and more helpful in keeping one up to high standards, than taking one's bearings now and then, and making, as it were, a fresh start. Whatever a man's occupation or profession may be, his chances of attaining marked success in it are ten to one if he makes up his mind at the outset that, at least once a year, he will make a thorough study of himself and his methods from the standpoint of an outsider.

It is easy to promise ourselves, when starting out in life, that we will never lower our ideals, that we will always go onward and upward, and that we will ever be found abreast of our times, in sympathy and co-operation with the leaders of progressive thought. We do not dream of the constant vigilance that must be exercised in order to keep our ideals in sight; we do not count on all the influences from without and within against which we must struggle if we would remain true to the high and beautiful aspiration of youth.—Success.

The Power of Initiative. There are a few qualities which are rarely, if ever, absent in the man who accomplishes things. One of these is the power of initiative, the will and energy to initiate, to transmit, to act. If James Watt had been content to talk about the "green idea" suggested to him by the sight of steam pouring out of the spout of a teakettle, our modern steam engine would not owe its existence to him. If Fulton had satisfied himself by yawning about his plans to build and launch a steamboat, the "Clement" never would have steamed its successful way up the Hudson. Had Franklin merely talked about his theory of electricity, he never would have succeeded in chaining lightning. Nor would any of the other great achievements in art, science or mechanics have been realized, if the first crude idea that pre-vented itself to the mind of the originator, had not been seized and acted upon.

Silence is Massive. Keep still. When trouble is brewing keep still. When Slander is getting on his legs, keep still. When your feelings are hurt, keep still till you recover from your excitement at any rate. Things look differently through an unquiet eye. In a commotion once I wrote a letter and sent it, and wished I had not. In later years I had another commotion, and wrote a long letter; but life had rubbed a little sense into me, and I kept that letter in my pocket against the day when I could look it over without agitation and without tears. I was glad I did. Less and less it seemed necessary to send it. I was not sure it would do any hurt, but in my doubtfulness I learned to reticence, and eventually it was destroyed. Time works wonders. Wait till you can speak calmly, and then you will not need to speak, maybe. Silence is the most massive thing conceivable, sometimes. It is strength in your grandeur.

The Stamp of Superiority. When a man feels throbbing within him the power to do what he undertakes as well as it can possibly be done, and all of his faculties say "Am men" to what he is doing, and give their unqualified approval to his efforts—this is happiness, this is success. This buoyant sense of power spins the faculties to their fullest development. It unfolds the mental, the moral, and the physical forces, and this very growth, the consciousness of an expanding mentality, and of a broadening horizon, give over added satisfaction beyond that power of nobility, the divinity of the mind. The writer has a friend who has been of inestimable assistance to him in his work, who has from boyhood made it a rule of his life never to let anything pass out of his hands until it is done to a finish, and has received the last touch of his best effort. It doesn't matter to him that people are in a hurry, or that others about him are fretting and fuming—he can not be induced to slight his work. There must be the stamp of completeness and superiority upon it before he lets it go. During many years of extensive correspondence with him, the writer has not received from him a hurried or slipshod letter or note, or one which was not well balanced and accurately punctuated. People envy this man his superior power to do things, but this is the result of always doing his level best in everything he has touched. He will not guess at a thing, and he insists upon absolute accuracy, and in doing everything to a complete finish. The effect of this habit upon this man has been most remarkable; his character is solid and substantial; there is not a false note in his make-up; everything rings true. He is honest, transparent to the very core, and I attribute a large part of this symmetry of character to this life-habit of putting the

stamp of superiority upon everything he touches.—Success.

A Few Brief Thoughts for Busy Men. Good manners are worth a great deal to a young man who wishes to succeed in life. For many of our most successful business men they have been more capital than the money they started with.

"First impressions are lasting" is an old proverb. A gruff, uncouth manner has often ruined an otherwise gifted young man. Kind, gentle manners—manners that come from the heart and not merely the head—will win their way to any heart.

Good manners refine the character, and make it more harmonious, more in tune with the manner that God wishes to exist in all things.

He is a successful man who radiates the sunshine of cheerfulness and helpful encouragement among his fellow-men, in whose presence men feel better and are lifted nearer to the most perfect of Men. Christ is the model of a true gentleman.

Are You Capable? The world asks two questions of those who knock for admittance at the door of success: "Are you capable?" "Are you genuine?" Most of us already have our places in life; we are working away in such lines as we happen to secure. We may lose our positions by incompetence, or we may hold them by doing good work, or we may secure promotion by developing capabilities which fit us to grasp the opportunities that come to us.

It is not luck, it is not favoritism which push forward those who advance. There are exceptional cases, but the overwhelming majority advance by doing good work and by developing, through experience in their work, capabilities for better things.

Some of us feel that we know all we need to know in the positions we hold; but there are things outside of the duties of our position that are worth knowing; for instance, there are accomplishments to be acquired. Aside from that matter, what is well done may be still better done. The teacher who holds an appointment and who does a teacher's work passably well, can by some effort obtain a reputation for excellence and progressiveness. What a contrast there is between the carpenter who does his work like an expert cabinet-maker and the ordinary slovenly carpenter; between the printer whose deftness and celerity put him ahead of his fellows and the ordinary slouchy typesetter of uncertain habits and agitating propensities.

The instances might be multiplied touching every line of work and every avocation of life. To the good workman, to the capable teacher, to the well-versed lawyer there comes—besides the rewards which better work obtains—the respect of the world, both on the business and the social side. The rewards of good work are good wages, certainty of employment, independence of character and respect among men. Certainly these are objects well worth taking greater pains to acquire.

We will estimate that it requires 75 per cent. of energy to become an ordinary carpenter, an ordinary teacher, an ordinary lawyer; and that an exertion of 25 per cent. additional energy will make one an excellent carpenter, an expert stenographer, a strong lawyer, an expert stenographer, an able lawyer. Is not the teacher, an able lawyer? Is not the character which comes largely from the habit of doing slovenly work, not having a place in the world for which one is fit, or despising one's work and environment. To make pretensions to a character or position which is not indicated failure in self-respect. We do not respect a character different from the character that really is ours. If we fail to respect ourselves we are not in a position to be respected by others.—Catholic Citizen.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

STORIES ON THE ROSARY BY LOUISA EMILY DOBRIER.

The Ascension of Our Lord Into Heaven. THE POWER OF HOPE.

"I wish I were rich," said Agnese Vari one January evening as she sat with her grandmother in the little room which served as kitchen by day and Antonio's bedroom by night.

"When I was your age I often wished it, too," said Teresa, Agnese's grandmother.

"Oh, dear me, how discontented I used to be!" continued Teresa, laying down the spoon on the table, for she had been stirring the polenta for their evening meal, which, now it was quite cooked and steaming hot, looked very tempting indeed both to her and to Agnese. There was a great brown loaf of casalinga (homemade) bread on the table, and a little wicker-covered flask of thin red wine called acquarolo.

wanted the little heat to be had from it.

"You came back late to-night," said Teresa as Agnese helped her to clear away the dishes and prepared to wash them up. They had all been so hungry that they had eaten their meal in silence. "You, Tonio, I mean," she added.

"Yes, I had to work on. The padrone said I must," answered Antonio. "Ah, it's bitter to be poor and have to work as hard as I do just for the little I get.—What is it?" and the boy frowned as he pushed back his chair from the table. "Nothing!"

"Don't be ungrateful, Tonio; there are many far worse off, who have no work and who have not enough to eat and drink as we have. Let us be thankful for what we have."

"I am not," said Antonio. "I should like to be richer and not to have to work, and if that can't be to have different work to mine."

"That's just what I say," remarked Agnese, "and Teresa calls it discontent—pleasure it would be to be able to lie late in bed in the morning, and not to have to go to work all day, running errands for the padrone, mending things and doing all kinds of odds and ends, and with what hope? Well, later on to be a work girl, and sit stewing in the heat or shivering in the cold."

"I don't think that at all," said Antonio. "I think it matters very much indeed. There's the young Englishman on the third floor opposite—see what a life he has! and he is just my age—what a difference to my lot! All the work he does is to paint a little in the galleries to amuse himself, ride on his bicycle all over the country, and have servants to wait on him. They are very rich, so Giuseppe tells me, and besides this beautiful flat here, they have a great estate in England and no end of money."

"The English are rich, yes, I know," said Teresa, "and it is a good thing for us that they come here to spend some of their money, for we should fare badly here in Florence without them, and also the Americans, who have often still more. I welcome the foreigners with all my heart."

"You always look at things in a different way, Teresa," said Antonio in an irritated voice. "I don't care who comes here or who does not. I have to grind on at my work for pay, and that is all. The signorino is rich and must be very happy; I am poor and very miserable."

"Che—che," said Teresa. "Don't talk nonsense like that. I think there's many a boy who hasn't half as nice work as you have among the beautiful flowers all day—"

"Giving them water and tying them up and carrying them here and there—fine work, certainly!" said Antonio. "I would like something better."

"That's just and reasonable enough," said Teresa, nodding her head. "And I am not at all against such things as those. It is well to keep eyes and ears open, and if there was a chance for you, say, at some office or shop, there is always the possibility of a place if you apply early enough. A fine, tall boy like you will get on, no doubt—have patience."

"Patience! I have a great deal," said Antonio, "but if only I knew English I could do ever so much better, and—"

"Knew English!" exclaimed Teresa, laying a dish down on the table as she was in the midst of wiping it. "What will you say next, I wonder! Who has put these foolish ideas into your head?"

they kept a carriage with very sleek horses, and a coachman who did all kinds of odd jobs in turn with driving his employers about in the carefully kept carriage. Teresa earned well in those days, for the Antibaldi were generous and staid themselves so as to give their servants good wages and keep the dear old carriage in which they took a daily trotta. That, at least, was a consolation to them, quite making up, in their estimation, for slender meals, watery soup, and the twisting and turning of the Marchesa's wardrobe. The latter was effected by a small dress maker who came by the day, ate little, and took rather a pride in transforming all the well-worn odds and ends into wearable articles of attire for her handsome employer, whose stately head was crowned with snow-white hair. Teresa was always advised by her master to put by something for a rainy day, and she usually promised never to leave for long, for if the money was ever put by in the savings bank it was soon withdrawn. She had a whole host of impetuous nephews and nieces who, many of them, took advantage of their aunt's generous nature and susceptible heart to get all that they could out of her, while with others there was genuine want, which her little money was the means of very greatly relieving. And so it went on year after year, Teresa working harder and harder so as to have more money with which to help her people. She begged the Marchesa not to get another kitchen maid when Vittoria went away to be married, but to let her do all the work and have the extra wages, and as they agreed, her work was increased.

Then one day she received the news that her eldest son at Prato was ill of typhoid fever, and scarcely had she reached the house before she heard also that he was dead, his wife being also down with it. A few days after, the white-robed mortuary had carried away Leo's coffin in the dimness of an autumn evening. That of the wife soon followed. The two children, Antonio and Agnese, were then totally unprotected for, and so it was left to Teresa to see what she could do, for all the other members of the family were too poor, or pretended to be so, to move a finger to help them.

Meanwhile the old Marchesa Antibaldi died, and his wife, with her sister, left Florence to go and live in Sicily, where all their relations were, and so it came to pass that Teresa could hardly have left at a more convenient time. The Marchesa gave her a little sum of money in reward for her long and faithful service, and she established herself, with Antonio and Agnese, in the two little rooms in which she first found them. Though some years past seventy she worked on, going out by the day to cook or clean, and not refusing any work, however menial, which brought in a little money with which to make a home for her grandchildren. They were an anxiety to her and she watched them with great concern, making them the subject of numberless prayers and Communion, of mortifications, and visits to shrines and holy places, for Teresa, though not particularly well instructed in her religion, held firmly to the Church, which she knew could do so much for her and hers.

Teresa could not read or write, for she belonged to a past generation which had not the education which is scattered far and wide in these days, but she was not stupid, and as for a bargain in the market, why, as the fruit and vegetable vendors said among themselves in admiration, there was not her equal to be found easily in Florence.

TO BE CONTINUED.

IMITATION OF CHRIST.

AGAINST VAIN AND WORLDLY LEARNING.

Be not moved, my son, with the false and quaint sayings of men; for the kingdom of God is not in speech, but in power." (1. Cor. 13. 20)

Attend to my words, which inflame the heart and enlighten the mind; which excite to compunction and afford manifold consolations. Never read anything that thou mayest appear more learned or more wise. Study rather to mortify thy vices; for this will avail thee more than the being able to answer many hard questions. When thou hast read and shalt know many things, thou must always return to one beginning.

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