

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

BE CAREFUL

Be careful of the little things you do, For oftentimes they echo back to you

Across the years; The tiny note you sent one sorry day, The coin that helped the beggar on his way,

Ah, always take the time to stop and say

The word that cheers! Perhaps some little deed may bring you fame, Perhaps the world will learn to love your name

Because of tears You dried for others. And when this life is through,

Perhaps the little deeds you, thoughtless, do,

Will be a glowing monument to you For countless years!

THOUGHTLESSNESS

The type of man who is always complaining of his lack of opportunities is a familiar character to all of us. But as we consider the line of complaint peculiar to him, a certain point of view is thrust upon us. And it is this: the man who is about our opportunities is that we usually recognize their coat-tails as they vanish round corners. Opportunity is like time: it waits for no man. Opportunity is like a thief in the night: if we would apprehend him, we must anticipate his approach; we must gauge his probable course, and lie in wait for him. Otherwise the only glimpse vouchsafed is of the aforesaid coat-tails.

The universal truth of this in the material sphere will be readily admitted. It applies equally well to the realm of the soul. Daily and hourly there is presented to us a host of opportunities, of which we could make abundant use if only we were not endowed with that wonderful faculty of recognizing them just as they vanish from our grasp for ever; if only we were endowed with that still more wonderful faculty of anticipating and grasping them.

An ordinary explanation of this extraordinary phenomenon is to be found in a small, but vital, defect of character, which is rendered all the more baneful by the fact that it is so widespread.

That small defect is thoughtlessness, and thoughtlessness is, after all, only a habit, yet it robs us, and those with whom we are associated, of much that is brightest and best both in Time and in Eternity. For thoughtlessness is the door by which so many ghosts enter. It is, in the last resort, a form of ignorance. Someone has well said: "Few disclose the source of errors, so frequently committed to the hurt of society; nor seem to know that they arise from ignorance. People are hurried by shoals into vice, merely through ignorance; and it is impossible for them to act right, till they are taught what is right and wrong in particulars. From ignorance it is that men make false judgments one of another. Thus one man shall be praised for his patience because he is not by nature prone to anger; and another be condemned for his warmth because he happens to have too much bile in his constitution."

A by far larger percentage of harm arises from thoughtlessness than from any other cause that can be enumerated, and it is a thousand pities that this should be so. It becomes tragic to contemplate, when we realize that the majority of misunderstandings between man and man rise from a negative cause such as this. The casual word is a deadly thing. The thrust and parry of "smart" conversation, where the only goal aimed at is the verbal victory (usually designed for the benefit of the bystanders,) may leave a hidden, but festering, sore in the heart of our adversary. And what is it all for? Could man conceive of anything more paltry and futile, anything more alien to reason and common-sense, than this business of parry and thrust in conversation, where no real issue is at stake except self-aggrandizement? "Truth," aid you say? My dear sir, the element of truth is as absent from arguments of this type, as soap is from the washbub of a Hottentot. In point of fact such discussions vie with the Hottentot in dirtiness, and in their underhand and mean seeking for advantage. We refer not to those which are carried on with manifest ill-will. Their character is plain for all the world to see. But to the more subtle branch of this plain-down breed, where the argument goes with a laugh or jest and a friendly smile—with one of those sleek, greasy, forced-for-the-occasion smiles; where the nod and the wink are potent weapons for the undoing of the other man, and where the vanquished one retires with the best of good humors covering a sorely wounded pride. This sort of thing is the very acme of thoughtlessness, for nothing but ill-will remains.

It is indeed sad to contemplate the infinite harm occasioned by this particular form of thoughtlessness. Sufficient has been said to indicate the general line taken by thoughtlessness. Volumes might be written upon the subject, for thoughtlessness springs from such a diversity of sources, and such a multiplicity of causes.

Through thoughtlessness, we are led to fritter away our lives in little nothings. Through thoughtlessness we live as if our lives were of no more account than a little moth's. Through thoughtlessness we are led to forget the good we might do, until we see the opportunity flitting away round the corner.

Now the thoughtful man works on a harmonious plan, and this plan of his, by its very nature, thrusts out of his life the opposite defect which we have under consideration. The thoughtful man—the man who has a guard over the tongue—has few, if any, of those sins of the tongue to this discredit. He seldom, if ever, gives offence, when offence is far from his intention, for it is characteristic of the thoughtful one, that he offends without the intention.

In short, thoughtlessness gives us a false view of most things, for not only does the thoughtless person too frequently speak ill, but he also thinks ill of those who are so unfortunate as to meet with his disapproval. The confirmed habits of a thoughtless life become as hard to change as the confirmed habits of an indolent life. Youth has been frittered thoughtlessly away, and old age must be labored through, like a maze of error, which it is too late to change.—Stella Maris.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

"GOD SAVE ALL HERE"

There is a prayer that's breathed alone, In dear Erin's land; 'Tis uttered on the threshold-stone,

With smiles and clasping hand; And oft perchance, 'tis murmured low,

With sigh and falling tear, The grandest greeting man may know,

The prayer—"God save all here."

In other lands they know not well How priceless is the lore That hedges with a sacred spell Old Ireland's cabin door; To those it is no empty sound Who think with many a tear Of long-lived memories wreathing round,

The prayer—"God save all here."

Live on, O prayer, in Ireland still, Live on for ever more, The echoes of our home to fill When uttered at the door;

And, growing by Thy Holy spell, The soul and conscience clear, Be graven on each heart as well The loved prayer—"God save all here."

THE BEAUTIFUL TRAIT

We have all heard of the type of woman of whom it is said that she "makes friends everywhere she goes." When one hears of a person of this kind one may be sure of several things. One is that she has a great deal of kindness of heart.

It is utterly impossible to make friends without this most gracious attribute. Kindly human feeling towards everyone will be sure to win friends for its possessor, particularly when it is allied with kind deeds and friendly ways. This is an attribute that blinds one to many of the things that the over-critical and fault-finding are so apt to discover without at the same time discovering all that is fine and admirable in others.

The woman who makes friends will have the beautiful trait of genuine human sympathy that will create in her a desire to be helpful and considerate. It will be a sympathy that will extend to all her children. It is doubtful if one can find a woman invariably kind to children who is unpoplar with other women and with people in general. Such kindness as this is the sure proof of a good heart, something always necessary in the making of friends.

The woman who makes friends will be considerate of old people. This wins for her not only the respect and gratitude of the old but of others as well. Forgetting self in one's eagerness to be kind and helpful to others is always an attribute of her who makes friends. It is proof of unselfishness. The woman who makes friends everywhere she goes is one with a great capacity for not only being happy herself, but an equal capacity for making others happy.

A STORY WITH A MORAL

The little nun stood at the window of her classroom. She was tired and discouraged. As she looked out over the sandy wastes of the desert to the barren mountains that lay south of the Rio Grande, her thoughts instinctively turned back to the green fields of Kentucky. Was her work a success for God. Was it possible to teach the truths of Faith to the poorly clad, restless urchins that formed her class?

As she looked from the little window to the narrow street below, she saw a hearse drive to the church door, but before she could look further, there was a restless moan and a voice from the class: "Sister, I must go to the funeral; it is my friend."

The little nun turned wearily and motioned to an active boy of ten to be quiet. There was a knock at the door and the gentle pastor stood smiling and beckoned to the nervous excited youngster who again was trying to attract the attention of his tired teacher.

"Sister, a man was dying yesterday, here in the quarters of the

poor, and this child was playing near the house. When he discovered that someone was dying unattended by a priest, he came to me and brought me to the dying one. Sister, this child has saved a soul. When I asked him how he knew what to do, he told me that you had taught them in class always to call a priest in the time of sickness. See, Sister, your teaching has not been in vain."

When the door had closed, the little Sister's eyes were still looking out over the barren desert and the sandy wastes dotted here and there by cactus-plants. Her thoughts are not back upon the green fields of the East for there is a joy in her heart. She knows that she is leading souls to God; that she is teaching the little ones to love their Faith.—The Echo.

A GRACE OF THE HOLY ROSARY

The following little story, besides being very interesting, has the additional merit of being true. The writer has it from the Reverend Father himself, who received the happy favorite of the "Queen of the Most Holy Rosary" into the Holy Church. This good gentleman had Catholic servant girls. One of them lost her beads, and the gentleman happened to pick them up. Without accounting for it, he felt glad at having them, but hearing in the girls' mention that they had lost a pair of beads, he then showed them, and gave them back. He felt so badly at parting with the beads, that soon after he inquired of the servants where they got those things. At once he got a pair, and felt it was good to have them.

After some time, it occurred to him that it looked rather foolish to attach so much importance to a thing that he knew nothing about. So he ventured to ask the girls what they were doing with the beads. One of them answered him that he would find it better explained in any Catholic prayer book than she could do it herself. The gentleman asked her to let him take her prayer book. The poor man searched from the beginning of the book to the end, and found nothing about the beads. Sadly disappointed, he returned the prayer book to its owner.

He did not like to confess his disappointment to the girls, but went to a Catholic bookseller, and asked for a prayer book where he might find some explanation about the beads. He was disappointed again, for he could find nothing about the beads in the book. Thinking that it was a mistake of the bookseller, he requested him to give him another where he should find something about the beads. The bookseller took the book and showed him a chapter about the Rosary. When he understood that the Rosary and beads were the same thing, he took his book back home, and began to examine the explanations about the Rosary. At once he was amazed. That connection of the Mysteries with the decades seemed to him marvelous. "Why, those Catholics who say their beads go over the whole Gospel—the whole life of our Blessed Lord!" He was lost in admiration. He began constantly to do himself what he admired so much. And he was not long begging the heavenly Mother, in the name of the Joys, Sorrows and Glories of her Divine Son, to pray for him, and he was soon blessed by her motherly intercession. No wonder that he became a fervent Catholic, every one will who practically appreciates the Rosary.—St. Anthony's Messenger.

GOOD AND BAD OF HANOI

TOURING MISSIONARY TELLS OF THE GREAT WORK OF HUMBLE NUNS

By Rev. Michael Mathis, C. S. C.

Hanoi, Tonkin.—Foremost among the things of Catholic interest in Hanoi are the places hallowed by the martyrdom of Theophane Venard. The martyrdom itself took place on the river bank facing the city gate. The exact spot has been obliterated by the shifting bed of the river. But the ancient gate under which the martyr passed to his doom still stands, and the road to the prison is practically the same as when Theophane was carried along it to his execution. Even the old prison where he was caged for months is partially preserved. A visit to several Christian homes will always be treasured, for in all of them—the homes of poor and the homes of rich—there was an oratory, often beautifully decorated in rich wood-carvings for which the Annamites are famous, and around which the household gathers mornings and evenings for family prayers.

VISITING BLESSED SACRAMENT

"My house is a house of prayer." In every large city of our country there are numerous Catholic churches. Scarcely anyone whose occupation is in the city can go to his work without passing a church. How many visit it when they pass it? How many start from home a few minutes earlier than usual in order to visit our Lord? "My house is a house of prayer. If when you are passing by you will step in I will speak with you; I will look with pleasure upon your visit. The business and the cares of the day will find a safe resting place in Me, so that you will leave My presence strengthened and refreshed." These are the words one might imagine our Lord addressing to us.

THE END OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

The end of all scientific research is Truth. A few months ago our Holy Father Pope Pius XI. at the meeting of a great international scientific congress in Rome portrayed the ideal of the scientist in these beautiful words, that may not be inappropriate at this time, when science and scientists are occupying so much space in the public prints. "You, who by your science are raised above the fleeting things of earth," said the Holy Father, "ought to understand better than anyone the need of the peace which is our ideal for all men. Would that your astronomical Congress, like the star of Bethlehem, would be the sign of universal peace. We feel certain that you find in the profound questions which are the objects of your labors, a manifestation of the will of God. Our admiration for the universe, for that marvellous divine construction of which you understand the laws, its grandeur and its harmony, induces us to venerate the Creator of this wonderful edifice, and you yourselves ought to feel nearer to Him than those who are strangers to your observations and researches."—The Pilot.

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FRENCH GOVERNMENT AND CATHOLIC MISSIONS

Before describing our visit to the leper-asylum at Hanoi, it may be well to state the strange attitude of the French Government towards Catholic missionaries in some of its own colonies. It has often been said that anti-clericalism is not an article for exportation. This we found to be true almost everywhere in the Orient. We saw it in Japan and China where to a certain degree the French Government actually supports missionaries. Wherever the French language is taught in the Orient, with the exception of the French colonies, subsidies are sent to the school. Government recognition is also granted under the form of decoration and money prizes. In France itself novitiates of communities that have missions are allowed to reopen.

In this policy France is wise, for her own point of view, for the missionaries alone would suffice to give Orientals a good idea of France. This patronage of missionaries in China and Japan is, however, withheld in lands where France feels at home. This is in her colonies. True, religions are allowed to teach; the Christian Brothers and the Sisters of St. Paul of Chartres have many schools in Indo-China. But religious schools find it hard to compete with the vast sums of money spent by the Government on its own schools. Yet, in spite of it, many people, other than functionaries, send their children to religious institutions for the moral training there provided. The principle of French action in her colonies is the same as in France, namely: "Laicization." Functionaries who desire to keep their jobs must enforce the principle unless public opinion is against them.

A DISGRACE TO FRANCE

Where the principle of laicization works to the everlasting disgrace of the French Government appears in the leper asylum at Hanoi. Formerly this institution was cared for by the missionaries. It has since been laicized. A lay superintendent is now in charge. He resides in a snug little home outside of the boundaries of the asylum. He hardly ever goes in and has nothing to do directly with the lepers. The chaplain, a valiant young priest, of the Paris Foreign Missionary society is merely tolerated. He is not permitted to reside within the limits of the asylum, and accordingly twice a day he must plod through muddy roads or under a scorching sun to attend to his lepers. He is the only one who really takes an interest in the lepers themselves. This the lepers see and though they all come to the asylum pagan, all die Christians.

RADIO INDICATOR

The only habitable building in the leper colony is the little chapel which is now being built with the pennies of the lepers. The sheds in which the lepers are forced to reside are simply frightful, and, in spite of the fact that lepers are keenly sensitive to cold, the Government refuses to construct walls that will protect the inmates from the winter wind. In contrast to the smiles and laughter of lepers in the Catholic institutions we visited in Japan and China, our memory of the Hanoi asylum will be hard and sullen faces, murmuring and pitiful cries—all due to laicization as it is practised by anti-clericals in French colonies.

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