

lashed as a real boy; but he told Father Medhurst that he liked, the girls better than the boys.

"You see," he explained gravely, "you can be friends with girls without beating them; just put your hands in your pockets, look straight ahead and start to walk away, and you've just got 'em."

"So you've seized up the feminine part of creation already," the priest exclaimed.

"Yes, Father, Joe answered with a little smile. "Of course there are different kinds of girls—more kinds than there are of boys—but when they see that you're not going to take their nonsense, all of them give into you."

"Well, Joe," Father Medhurst said thoughtfully, "you have been inquisitive for your years; but don't trust to it over-much. I've had some experience myself, and I think the best friends for a boy are boys."

"Joe," said the priest, and he stood meditatively into the open before he answered. "Well," he said, "your different. Now I like girls and they like me. And I mean to have all kinds of friends; but I'll know a whole lot about life."

"Bless the boy!" exclaimed Father Medhurst, and silence fell between them for a time.

"Well," said the priest at last, "have you ever thought what you would like to be when you are grown up?"

"No," a little wonderingly.

"Well, think about it now for a few minutes. Of course your choice will probably change as the years go on, but would like to know what your inclinations are now."

Again there was a silence, until with bright eyes and eager tone Joe announced, "I'd like to be a steamboat captain."

"That's a fine calling, Joe," said the priest gravely, "now get to your studies, while I go on a call."

As he went on his way his thoughts were busy with the future of the child, but they did not picture him as a steamboat captain.

Past flew the years to the priest, whose early life had been spent in hardships and toil, and whose most precious of the present day. It had been a usual thing for him to say Mass in the town where he lived, and then ride miles on horseback to another small congregation, hear confessions, say Mass again, baptize, visit the sick and do the many duties of the priest who is with his people only once a week. On days like this it was often the case that he got his breakfast so late that he had small appetite for it. If he had not brought to the work a splendid constitution, youth and zeal, he could never have outlived the stress of those first years. Now in the fullness of his powers, he had comparative comfort—the congregation, a pretty church and rectory, time for the reading he loved, time for the cultivation of the roses. In the midst of this had come the wonderful human tie of his friendship for the boy. Peace for himself, and peace for Joe, gave to his present life a most harmonious tone. The hardships of his youth, however, had left their marks. The natural gentleness of his character had hidden itself under barriers his sensitiveness had found necessary to erect. Friendships and interests he had in plenty, and the Master's work among his people was a service of love as well as duty. But these were collected rather than individual interests. He had no relatives to keep alive the affections of his youth, and while memories of his own family were dear to him, the years of his priesthood, with their constantly recurring exactions and self-effacements, had obscured those memories. With the coming of Joe all this had changed. As the boy grew, his companionship cleared away the dust of the years from the priest's heart, and the joy of loving and being loved filled his days with gladness.

Slowly dragged the years to the eager boy, who gave no thought to the little meaning of his passing.

When Joe was sixteen there was a serious talk in the little study, and the boy and the priest came forth with a happy light in their eyes, which wrought a sort of likeness between them. Joe had decided to study for the priesthood, and Father Medhurst's hopes had leaped beyond the years, and he felt as if his boy was already assured of the holy state. Joe himself felt much the same, but the thought had not been in his mind as long as it had been in the mind of the priest. Exaltation and perfect sympathy filled them with a serious happiness. A little of the man's mood fell upon the boy, while the elderly priest seemed back in those far gone years of his own early experiences. It was a memorable time for both of them.

Joe went off to the seminary, and his absence would have taken the light from the days of his guardians, if the great hope was not always present. Then came the vacation—happiness for the two—a three, indeed, for Mrs. Brent was a devoted friend also.

It was during this first vacation that Father Medhurst, coming in after a long session in the confessional, began telling Joe some of the difficulties of this part of priestly work.

"I have almost come to the conclusion," he said, leaning back wearily in his big chair, "that people are changing in the mental and spiritual make-up."

"Different environment, and the ensuing different circumstances would account for that, don't you think?" returned Joe.

"That's well put, Joe," answered Father Medhurst, pleased, but still following a thought of his own. "It doesn't account for everything, though. Not so long ago life was more simple, to be sure; and there seemed to be a clearer knowledge of right and wrong. Nowadays there is a soul-sickness that may have something contagious in it—so general has it become. I mean that spirit of questioning authority. Every one wants to know what he is doing for himself, and there is a tendency to question the wisdom of certain laws of the Church. The less capable an individual is to judge for himself, the more impossible it seems to convince him that the laws of the church are wiser than the highest merely human intelligence could have devised. Obedience to disciplinary law is held in small esteem."

"But," Joe began, isn't that just what the confessor says for—isn't it the priest's part to apply the law—"

"Yes," interrupted Father Medhurst, "to apply it, but it must be known and acknowledged by the penitent before coming into the tribunal of penance to receive judgment. There must be no sophistry, no quibbling in this court—no dodging the issues, where one is soft on account of his dark disposition is to set one's own will and desire above everything else, and still receive the sacraments, it is very difficult, in the limited time of a confession, to convince such a one of his lack of sincerity and humility. So many, nowadays, have the slogan; 'I must use my own intellect, I must reason for myself.' These same people will not hesitate to seek legal and medical advice and almost blindly trust to such direction. While in the affairs of the soul, the eternal verities, they wish to be the arbiters of their own destinies."

Joe's shoulders went back and his head went up, a trick he had when faced with a difficulty; his fighting attitude, Father Medhurst called it.

"Why not preach these things—wake the people up to a realization of the greatness, the completeness and the power of the sacrament of penance?"

"They acknowledge the greatness and power of the sacrament in coming to confession," answered the priest, "but they wish to make terms with their own conscience and God's law. They get their rights in the use of their intellect, but they do not use it, or they would realize the wisdom of the laws of obedience, precept and discipline."

"Instruction is the thing," said Joe in a convinced way, and his eyes widened with the look of one who gazes into the future, and sees a great work.

The weariness left the priest's face as he watched his boy; the rugged lines softened around his dark eyes, as they looked into the blue eyes, filled with the dream of the future.

"All I could not do," he thought, "he will do. A line read years before flashed into his mind: 'On the earth the broken ark; in heaven the perfect rown.'"

Unconsciously he spoke the remembered words aloud. Joe looked at him, puzzled, unable to connect the thought with what they had been speaking of.

"I thought I was thinking," explained Father Medhurst, laughing. "It means that I am hoping with a great hope for your future and for mine, Joe. When my hands and voice can do no more in the service of the Master it is a deep comfort to feel that you will take my place, profit by my experiences, fill the gaps left in my work."

In that moment Joe saw the great strength of Father Medhurst's ambition for him. Strangely enough it sent a wave of fear through the boy. It was long before he slept that night. Over and over he said to himself: "If I failed, if at the last I found it could not be, it would break his heart."

In the terror inspired by this thought came the first doubts of his vocation.

June again, and roses in profusion gladdened the heart of Father Medhurst. He was out in the fresh morning air, bestowing the gentle care of his favorite bush that made his flowers so beautiful as he heard over his back the ringing of the chant he loved, and his thoughts were busy with the dreams of the future. There was only a short time now for his boy to wait before receiving minor orders, then a short interval, and he would be home, after his great act, a priest, to say his first Mass. There must be many roses for that happy day. So busy was he that he did not hear the gate open, nor the lagging steps of the boy. So Joe stood watching nearly an entire minute, before speaking. The boy now looked at the priest through eyes sharpened by love and apprehension. He noted every dawning sign of age in the dear face of the priest, and all went to his young heart with a force that made it ache. When at last he spoke, his voice was husky and weak, almost like that of the fainting man who had brought him here, fifteen years before.

"Father!"

Father Medhurst straightened, turned instantly, and then stared, incredulous.

"Why, boy," he began, then anxiety flashed through him. "Oh, Joe are you here?"

"Yes, and no, Father," said Joe. "I'll be all right when we've had a little talk."

Hand in hand, silently, they went into the house.

This thing that Joe was doing now had been haunting terror for weeks, yes, even for months, and so painful had it seemed to him, that he had brought every force in his mind to avert it. The struggle had worn him out, body and soul; but the teaching of the dear old man, and the boy's own clear honest spirit had triumphed. He knew that God did not call him to the altar, and he felt that he had loved himself into that holy state without the divine call the penalties would dwarf the gifts that were truly his, and which he could use nobly, if he lived true to the light within him.

The words were spoken. Joe looked up and drew a deep breath. It had not been so dreadful after all. He felt for the instant strangely light and buoyant. Father Medhurst had asked a question here and there in the pauses of Joe's telling; but in fact, made it easy for the boy to open his mind fully. He had not even seemed surprised, after the first words beside the rose-bush.

What a boggy the terrible lead had proved to be! The dear friend was really one with him—had understood! Such a warmth of grateful love irradiated the boy that he rose hastily, and, going over to Father Medhurst's chair, knelt beside him, setting his hands in a strong grip. So they remained for a reading each other's soul in a deep silence. Then the priest drew his hands from the boy's, and placing them on his shoulders, said in a pleading way:

"You want to know what I think of this, let this terrible disappointment fall on me, Joe—not without a perfect conviction that in entering the priesthood you would be going against the Divine will. Dear boy, there have been too few priests who have had this temptation—to doubt their own vocation. It is a temptation, he insisted, as Joe looked up with a white face, all his misery back on him. "It is a temptation! Drop all thought of a temptation! Drop all thought of a temptation!" he went on, as Joe rose to his feet and stood with downcast eyes;

"let yourself rest in just the present. I will arrange to make a retreat at Manresa. These leisurely visits will set you on your feet. They'll show you!"

He was all feverish eagerness, and began pacing around the room, lifting his feet on the marble, turning them over and in a procession way replacing them. For the first time in their intercourse with each other there was no direct meeting of the eyes; the golden glow of perfect sympathy between them lay on the floor.

"I will do anything you say, Father," said Joe at last. "But I wish you would see that the light has been fought. There can be no other decision for me, except by closing my eyes to all the laws of my own soul, well as the laws of the divine call. You have taught me too well in this matter for me to be deceived now."

"The last law is the submission of your own will to the priest's. Then suddenly vehement, he broke out: "Every law of your life and training, your talents and all you possess point to this choice for you!" Then striding over to the door he bent and struck, stood still by the empty chair—"Are you turning aside from the perfect life for some senseless girl?" He questioned fiercely, and in a gust of fury at that thought, he grasped the boy by the arm and shook him.

The surprise of the onslaught no less than the charge made Joe speechless for the moment. Then, as the storm of rage died down as quickly as it had risen, Father Medhurst put his arms about the boy.

"Forgive me," he said in a low voice, "but it is a terrible thing to me to think of you being anything but a priest. Yet, God knows, I want you to be according to His will."

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"I'll write," said Father Medhurst, striving to put his voice as usual— "I'll write—now—to Manresa, and arrange for a retreat." Then, with some hesitation—"Go, rest a while, Joe. We'll have a quiet evening together, any way."

When the door closed, he sat staring at the pen in his hand, unnerved, shaken, filled with a disquiet he had never known before. About a half hour later he stole into the church, only to come away more cautiously than he had entered, for Joe knelt at the altar steps, his head bowed, his whole figure motionless.

"Poor boy," said the priest to himself, "I must not disturb him."

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"What he exclaimed, startled. But she threw up her hands in a disparaging way and walked off, muttering to herself: "It's all sheer nonsense."

The retreat ended, as Joe prepared to try and be worthy of both by striving to make His passion and death fruitful to his souls. To do this we must do now what we would feign have done there were we with Him in His agony, namely His words: "Whoever gives Him His sympathies for all that He underwent for us weep for our offenses against Him, and assure Him with all our heart that we will be true to Him and His heavenly Father because of the love of the Holy Spirit which they will send to us."

But listen to the appealing words of Our Divine Lord, as He ascends the hill of Calvary: "O all ye who pass this way look and see if there be sorrow shown on My sorrow. On His suffering shoulders He was bearing the heavy cross up the steep ascent and three times He fell beneath its weight. His Blessed Mother's gaze met His for a moment, and she murmured to that was hurrying on; but that moment of comfort was all He had to sustain Him, save the tears of a few weeping women standing on the way."

It is for us now to show our sympathy. See that the indignities that are heaped upon Our Lord—the gibes, the insults—and His body bleeding at every pore. He is dragged by His murderers to the place of crucifixion. Let us listen to His words: "Whoever gives Him His sympathies for all that He underwent for us weep for our offenses against Him, and assure Him with all our heart that we will be true to Him and His heavenly Father because of the love of the Holy Spirit which they will send to us."

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"No Religious Training"

Commenting on the calculation made by a Protestant Sunday-school official, that there are eight million young people in this country, between the ages of five and eighteen years, who do not attend Sunday-school, the Catholic Columbian says: "These millions of boys and girls are growing up without religious instruction. They do not get it at home. They do not get it in school. They do not get it on Sunday, for they stay away from church and avoid Sabbath-school classes. What is to be the fate of those millions in this life and in the world to come?"

CATHOLICS AND DANCING

Reprinting in full the article "The Dance Problem" which appeared in the Review of Feb. 4, and which it recommends to the careful perusal of all readers young and old, the Southern Messenger of San Antonio, Tex., says: "This is one of those subjects on which it is difficult to lay down hard and fast rules, applicable at all classes and conditions. In the writings of some of the Fathers and of many ascetical writers dancing is condemned. But the condemnation was founded rather on the character of the dances in their days, except by closing my eyes to all the laws of my own soul, well as the laws of the divine call. You have taught me too well in this matter for me to be deceived now."

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PASSIONATE

As the Lenten season advances, the spirit of piety among the Catholics increases, for all realize that with Passion Sunday the sympathy of men for their suffering and crucified Saviour, takes on a deeper feeling and they are filled with the recollection of His passion and death.

The Christian often reverts to those days and he is filled with heroic courage born of his faith, which inspires a readiness to do more what his Lord would have asked him to do, were he present at that saddest period of His life, namely, give Him his thoughts and give Him his sympathies; give Him his gratitude and give Him his assurances that His blood will not be shed for him in vain. See Him in His agony in the garden of Gethsemane, bowed to the ground, undergoing a sweat of blood at the thought of the sufferings awaiting Him, and poor nature weakening, saying to His Father: "Why have you forsaken me? Why have you forsaken me? Why have you forsaken me?"

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THE CARDINAL AND THE WIZARD

In his usual gentle and kindly way, but with the steady and persistent fearlessness with which a great surgeon would plunge his lancet into the roots of a morbid growth in some illustrious patient, His Eminence of Baltimore disposed of the difficulties which the recent utterances of Mr. Edison have given rise to in a certain number of timid minds.

In the first place, he resents the rudeness of some of the critics, who describe the wizard of electricity as a mere mechanic. The Cardinal, on the contrary, regards him not only as a genius, but as a great benefactor of humanity—a sentiment with which most men will agree. So much indeed does he admire Mr. Edison that he is quite willing to admit that he ever made the assertions attributed to him or that he made them in the sense in which they are taken.

"How could it be possible," he asks, "that the act of our boy had any intelligence and that their aggregate is the human intellect?" Almost facetiously but very felicitously he answers: "That would be determining a man's mind by his girls, and conveying the most comfortable information that he would decrease in intelligence as he declined in bulk. How," he continues in the same strain, "does Mr. Edison imagine that an idea enters into a man's mind? Do all the little brain cells begin to debate it? Are some of the little brain cells audacious insurgents and others immovable stand-patters? Has each intelligent little cell an opinion of its own? And how is it that at this intellectual activity goes on absolutely unknown to us? Finally, if it is unknown, how can any one declare it to be a fact? Surely, Mr. Edison would be the very last to do so, for it is his constant boast that his activity goes on absolutely upon known and indisputable facts."

We merely cite this as an example of the method which should reign in controversy of all sorts. A great saint has said that we should always read the most benign meaning into all written or spoken utterances, especially on religious questions, considering that the author himself, or is imperfectly informed, or is misinterpreted. In our case the Cardinal is advised, if possible, and not only when the error is patent and persisted in should a direct attack be begun if the circumstances or importance of the matter warrant it. In our case the Cardinal is advised, if possible, and not only when the error is patent and persisted in should a direct attack be begun if the circumstances or importance of the matter warrant it. In our case the Cardinal is advised, if possible, and not only when the error is patent and persisted in should a direct attack be begun if the circumstances or importance of the matter warrant it.

RECOVERIES AFTER EXTREME UNCTION

There is a valuable lesson in the following passages from "Extracts from the Diary of a Workhouse Chaplain," published originally in the Ave Maria: "A Protestant doctor, during my time on the mission, impressed me very much with his anxiety to have his patients go to confession. 'Until their mind is at peace,' he would say, 'there is little hope of any ameliorating medicine.' He looked at the matter of confession from a professional point of view; the recovery of his patients and his own reputation; and even so it is not without its usefulness. But it has a higher and a nobler end: the recovery of a soul from a state of disease—sometimes bordering on death itself—to a state life and blessedness. Moreover, with regard to Extreme Unction, it is laid down by the Church that the recovery of a soul from the sacrament is to restore health to the sick, and that not by way of miracle, but by the efficacy attached to it by our Blessed Lord when instituting it.

There is scarcely a priest on the mission but could give numerous instances of recoveries that could be attributed to nothing else than the efficacy of Extreme Unction. The latest case in my own recollection was a little boy who was suffering from a gastric attack. The doctors had pronounced his case hopeless. He was writing with pain; beads of perspiration stood on his face from weakness and agony. He had yet made his First Communion and had never been to confession, for he was only about seven years old. He was an only child. The parents were not rich, but the poor love their children as tenderly and devotedly as do the wealthy. He was a good looking boy; his complexion was fair and delicate, and the sickness gave a tinge as of rose to the cheek and a brightness to the eye. He was a mild, uncomplaining little fellow, contrary to what one would expect from the petting usually bestowed on an only child. "O ma O ma" was all he would say, as he looked up to his mother with eyes and face expressive of intense suffering.

As I entered the bedroom the mother knelt at the door, and, with her hands flung out, cried: "The doctors have given over my poor child, but my trust is in God. God will save him. I found the boy well instructed; and when about to anoint him, I told the mother

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not be compared as of the nervous in his mind gives must suffer alone understand or sympathize tell you to cheer agitation.

off this depression are restored to treatment as Dr. Your digestive apply proper nourishment and are certain patience and persistence is no way certainly restore the use of Dr.

store the nervous such a critical Such symptoms as weakness, loss of memory and power stability and dis-a failure of the warn you of the Food 50 cents a 0; all dealers, or Toronto.

the roof that lasts long and leaks not

the cheapest good roof is one that

is so thoroughly locked together, unit by unit, that the hardest windstorm cannot budge; the heaviest rainstorm cannot penetrate; the severest lightning cannot harm. And that means Preston Shingles.

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