

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

WHEN YOU ARE DOWNCAST

Everybody has days of depression, when his spirits are low and everything around him is dark and dismal. If he gives way to melancholy, he is miserable, and while he is in that state he is too discouraged to do anything brave or hopeful. If he resists the blues, and refuses to stay downcast, the sun will come up over his horizon and the darkness will disappear.

There is nothing that will take the grit out of a man, nothing that will limber his backbone quite so quickly as giving in to discouragement. Few people are sufficient masters of themselves to get down into the dumps, to spend nights worrying and day-dreaming evils ahead. Don't allow the traitor doubt, which has made such havoc in your past life, to push you deeper and deeper into the slough of despond. Positively refuse entrance or harbor in your mind to any of the enemies of your peace, your happiness, your efficiency or your success. Brace yourself up by a self-encouragement treatment.

This is the time when you need your mental friends, when you need to kill your mental enemies—doubts and fears, anxieties and terrors—with their antidotes. This is the time you need hope and courage and expectancy of good things to come to you. You don't want any more blue devils, any more enemies of your welfare in your mind; you want your friends; you want to neutralize all that is black, ugly, disheartening and discouraging in your mental kingdom and in your environment. This is the time to make connection with all that is strong and uplifting, to put up your trolley pole, which you have allowed to drop, and to tap the current which will carry you above and beyond doubt, fear and despondency.

The most effective way to do this, to overcome the temptation to play the coward because of discouragement, is to get to some place where you can be alone and have a good heart-to-heart talk with yourself. Say to yourself: "I am God's child, and my father never created me to be a miserable, down-hearted, discouraged creature. He made me to look up, to be courageous, cheerful, happy. I will trust Him. I will do His will. I will be patient for His sake. I will have courage. The sun is still shining somewhere and light, brightness and joy will come again to me."

Talk to yourself in the same dead-in-earnest way that you would to a child or to a dear friend who was deep in the mire of despondency, suffering tortures from melancholy. Drive out the black, hideous pictures which haunt your mind. Sweep away all depressing thoughts, suggestions, all the mistakes, all the disagreeable past; just rise up in arms against the enemies of your peace and happiness, summon all the force you can muster and drive them out. Negative, discordant thoughts cannot exist in the presence of their opposites. After even one good heart-to-heart talk with yourself you will be ashamed to be such a coward as to give way to the blues, to think of turning back from your resolution, or lying down and giving up hope, in obedience to a mood.

THE GREEN GRASS

Just over the fence is the better pasture. We all know that. "Where we are not there is luck." When we are in New York we could do better work if we were only west—Chicago, San Francisco—anywhere but where we are. Luck is always with the other man. Seldom does anyone see the steps up the steep path of success some other man trod, nor know of the bruised feet, nor the weariness of the back bent to the burden. It's been a long, rocky road usually but those of us who look with longing on the green grass which is at the summit of that long road and just over the fence from our own pasture, see nothing of all that. The successful man is so absorbed in his business and so bent on making other successes that he probably doesn't talk much about the stones in the path nor how dark the way. He just toiled on and arrived. He is enjoying green pastures now and we are envying him. We forget that it is he who cleared the pasture, who made it green—we just see results, we fail to look behind them. Therefore, we envy instead of emulating him. Also are we very sure we too could do good work over there where he is. But could we? Wouldn't we be likely, if we came nearer, to find spots in that pasture that were bare, and stones, and rough places, that we did not notice from our side of the fence?

Shall we ever learn to find contentment in our own corner—and plenty of work to do? Not the contentment that settles into a lack of ambition, but the contentment that is happy in its own lot and is not envious of the success of others.—Catholic Columbian.

There is nothing better to display the truth in an excellent light, than a clear and simple statement of facts.—St. Benedict.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

"THE LITTLE INDIAN" OF ST. SULPICE

Uncle Jack in the Sacred Heart Review had a letter from a disappointed boy, a boy who wants to do wonderful things "but never can, because I haven't the right start." He says: "We are too poor, and miles away from high schools." This boy needs to read the life of a great man, who died the other day, after long years of the most wonderful work. He was born in a tiny house in a French village called St. Sulpice, in Canada. His father and mother had little book learning, but they were wise and loving and reared their children carefully. A pretty story is told of the custom on New Year's morning for the children to kneel before their father to receive his blessing. Albert, the eldest of seven children made a little speech that his mother had taught him, and at the end he asked his father's blessing. Then even the baby put its little hands on the father's knees and was blessed by him. The mother looked on smiling and happy, but quick tears came, when Albert broke through all ceremony by crying out: "And, maman, you know how we love you."

Every spring Albert went with his father into the maple woods to make sugar and syrup from the sap, to supply the family for the year. When he was not in school he was kept busy picking stones, feeding pigs, driving the plough. And all the time a great longing possessed him to go away from the farm "to be a great man, a priest maybe like Monsieur de Viau," or a daring voyager like his granduncle. "My little Indian," the old priest called Albert, who had dark skin and flashing black eyes.

One Sunday afternoon when the family were sitting at the door of their home, the priest drove up in an old carriage drawn by a fat old horse. He sat down on the step and talked about the crops and the work. Then turning suddenly to Albert he asked: "My little Indian, what are you going to do?"

The boy's heart throbbed furiously. How could he tell the priest his great wish? His father spoke for him. "Albert would go to the big college, my father," he said. "But I have to means to send him. And besides I need him here to help me." "My boy, do you wish very much to go?" Albert couldn't speak; he caught the priest's hand, and tears sprang to his eyes. The priest turned to Albert's father. "It is well," he said. "You will send him to the college, and I will pay his way. Who knows? . . . Some day our little Indian may be a priest and work for the Indians."

The little Indian worked hard, played hard, and prayed hard. He stood high in his classes, and the day came when M. Viat's desire was realized—Albert was a priest. And a noble, holy, active priest he was. For sixty years he fought for God and the Church. His great work was among the Indians; he was their priest, their champion and friend. He died December 12, 1916, at the age of ninety. The story of his life is one of thrilling adventures and heroic labors. The disappointed boy and all other boys could ask no finer tale of heroism than is told in the life of Father Albert Lacombe, O.M.I., "the little Indian" of St. Sulpice.

HOW THIS PRIEST IS CONVERTING NON-CATHOLICS

(By Vice-President St. Mary's Converts' League, Pittsburg, Kans.)

The large class of converts confirmed October 21, at St. Mary's church, Pittsburg, Kansas, by Rt. Rev. J. J. Hennessy, D. D., Bishop of Wichita, represents the result of the working of our Inquiry Classes since April 12, 1915.

Our city of Pittsburg, Kansas, is a town of about 20,000 inhabitants. All the Protestant sects usually found in our western cities are represented here. The Catholic congregation was composed almost altogether of the laboring class. Two of the most nefarious, widely circulated anti-Catholic papers are published in neighboring towns. Besides, Pittsburg is noted all over the United States as a Socialist stronghold. A desperate warfare has been waged against the Church and more especially against our pastor, Father Pompeney, for the last four years. Circumstances seemed to make Pittsburg a hopeless locality in which to start a campaign for converts.

Four years ago two of the most virulent of the anti-Catholic papers trained their big guns on Rev. Father Pompeney. The most infamous attack was made on the head of our Church in Pittsburg. The big Socialists of the nation took a hand in the conflict. A spirited debate was carried in the Pittsburg Daily Herald for several weeks, from which the Socialist national birds of prey retired minus their tail feathers. During the night the big edition of the Appeal to Reason was printed, charging Father Pompeney with conspiracy to destroy the Appeal to Reason, the editor of the Appeal committed suicide. Several of the Socialist leaders were well on their way to the Federal prison when the change in government at Washington liberated the fine coterie of saviors of the country from the grip of the Federal laws.

The Socialist war against the Church did not work out according to the well-planned program of the "material conceptionists." On the contrary, it gave Father Pompeney

the opportunity to reveal to the public the ugly face of the demon of atheism, lurking behind the mask of Socialism. The tide turned. The religiously inclined people, irrespective of church affiliation, turned away with disgust from the ugly spectre of Socialistic philosophy, and defeated at the polls in the next election the party of Marx, which had throttled both the city and the county in its atheistic and revolutionary grip.

During the fall of 1914 and the following winter Father Pompeney began his famous course of Religion. The discourses were advertised in the public prints on Sundays, and the sermons were given Sunday nights at the church. Personal invitations by letter were also addressed to business and professional men of the city. At first the addresses were not well attended. Gradually, however, the attendance improved until the church was filled. During the whole course at the church the non-Catholics constituted from 25% to 50% of the audience. With the approach of summer, the instructions held in the open on the parish laws, and Simultaneously with the lecture course there was inaugurated a class of "inquirers" taken from a group of men who were especially interested in the discussion of the fundamentals of religion. The first meeting of the inquiry group was held at the home of Mr. E. M. Conrad, time-keeper for the Kansas City Southern Railroad, April 12, 1915. The class consisted of eight charter members, all men, to whom were soon added ten new members.

On Saturday night, July 3, 1915, after the course of twenty-five lectures had been completed, nine men were baptized, and made their first Holy Communion on Sunday morning, July 4. The members of the first class were all men of families.

In the meantime a class had been organized for women, which was being taught simultaneously, though on different nights. By August 26, 1915 nine members of the class had been baptized.

On August 11 of the same year, one month after the reception of the first men's class, Father Pompeney organized a third class. This class began with fifteen members, of whom six were ex-members of the first men's class. These six men had not heard the full course given to the first class, and supplemented in class three. The new members numbered nine. Eleven members of this class were received into the Church October 24, 1915. One member wrote Father Pompeney from Chicago that he had been received into the Church in that city shortly after his departure from Pittsburg.

The reader will readily perceive from this report that most of the membership of class number one came into the Church. Immediately after the reception into the Church of class number three, lectures were resumed in the church and delivered during the winter of 1915 and the spring of 1916. With the approach of summer the addresses were delivered in the open. Inquiry classes were organized during the summer months with a membership of twenty-five. Of these twenty-five members, nineteen were received into the Church Saturday, August 5, 1916, of whom sixteen were men and three were women. Of the six original members who did not enter with their companions, four came in during the month of October.

Sunday, October 22, 1916, Right Rev. J. J. Hennessy, D. D., Bishop of Wichita, Kansas, made a special trip to Pittsburg to put his stamp of approval on the work of evangelization at St. Mary's church and confirm the largest class of adults in his whole career as a bishop. It was a beautiful sight to witness a hundred men and women receive the sacrament of confirmation. There were sixty men and forty women in the class. Of the men forty-nine were converts, and there were twenty-seven converts among the women, making in all seventy-six converts out of the whole class.

The Right Rev. Bishop was greatly moved by this scene, which he said reminded him of the first days of Christianity. The day's glorious festivities stirred the people's hearts, and nearly the whole congregation went during the confirmation service. Three hundred families were made happy on that day, and a hundred vows were made by the candidates who were confirmed, to labor and pray for the success of our future Inquiry Classes.

Inquiry Class number five is already forming with a prospective membership of more than twenty.—The Queen's Work.

CRITICISM

Whenever you hear yourself criticized, justly or unjustly, maybe often or the latter, on account of the general want of thought, knowledge, or virtue, console yourself with the belief that you are doing something and your critic nothing. Work always weighs more than words. To escape criticism, you must do nothing, but crawl through the mud of meanness, and then, instead of comment, you will get pity. Which would you have? Criticism of course, every time.

It is a principle in literature that the best critics are the worst writers, and the same is true in every department of life, so do your work and let the other fellow prate. Men know very little of their fellows and that very little is trailed all over with ignorance, misconception or mistake. Men who are real scholars, after mature study, know little of themselves,

and walk through life puzzles to themselves and mysteries to others. The sum and substance of all human knowledge in the highest domain of thought makes a poor showing, when we consider the length of the generations and the multitudes of men that peopled them, so don't be annoyed with the wretched prattle of poor, thoughtless babblers that are oftentimes a subject for sympathy and prayer. Don't lose your time heeding them or being distracted by them from your own labors, and then their own folly, will be left them as their sole and undisturbed consideration to disgust them if they have any high sensibilities.—Catholic Columbian.

ANGLICANS AND THE AFTER LIFE

A witty member of the Irish (Anglican) Church, when a heated discussion was in progress as to the desirability of framing a special prayer with reference to the deliberations of the Synod, then in session, suggested that the case might be met by employing the usual prayer for those at sea. It looks as if this petition might suitably form a permanent part of the supplications of our Anglican friends, for they appear to be in something like a chronic condition of not knowing exactly where they are. In England, at present, the debated question is whether women are to be allowed to preach in the Anglican churches in connection with the forthcoming "National Mission;" in New Zealand, the point of uncertainty and dubiety is what Anglicans are to believe concerning prayers for the dead and the after life. About a year ago Bishop Julius dealt with the matter, and impressed upon his people that "the Church of Christ had never failed in prayer for those who had passed away." The statement, so far as the Anglican Church is concerned, is grotesquely at variance with historical fact, but it may be allowed to pass as representing a present Anglican point of view. About the same time, the Rev. A. H. Colville, M. A., Anglican minister at New Plymouth, also discussed the question, in a sermon published in the Taranaki press, and the reverend gentleman, again endeavoring to elucidate the Anglican attitude, threw the gravest doubt on the existence of hell, at least as a place or state of everlasting punishment.

And now comes the Anglican Bishop of Auckland, Dr. Averill, who, in a sermon preached at the Auckland Anglican Cathedral, the other day, calmly abolishes hell altogether, and assigns all and sundry, without exception, to participation in what corresponds tolerably closely to the Catholic definition of purgatory. We welcome the conversion to purgatory—formerly regarded by Anglicans as a "Popish superstition"—but it is a matter for grave concern to see the Bishop of a Christian Church playing fast and loose with the plain words of Holy Scripture on the subject of hell. And still the inquiring lay member of the Anglican Church is left guessing as to what his church really teaches, for the present burial service of his church—where, if anywhere, the mind of the church might be presumed to find expression—declares that "the souls of the faithful, after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh, are in joy and felicity."

The implication being that they are no longer in need of the prayers of their friends and can be in no way assisted by their petitions. What is the unhappy layman to believe? Apparently—such is the "glorious comprehensiveness" of the Church of England—he is at liberty to believe anything or nothing on the subject, just as he pleases, and still be accounted a faithful Christian and loyal member of the Church. Assuredly, both for the clergy and laity of "the Church of England, as by law established," the prayer "for those at sea" is the perennially fitting petition.—New Zealand Tablet.

LOOSE DIVORCE LAWS

The Right Rev. Bishop Lillis, of Kansas City, recently made a strong protest against divorce legislation. "No species of legislation has done as much harm as the divorce laws, and the end is not yet," he said. "We spend millions of money and spare no expense in guarding against disease and epidemics. Research institutions are numerous, and the scientists are engaged to inquire into the cause of disease in the hope that a remedy may be found against deadly germs. At present the whole country is waiting most anxiously a remedy against infantile paralysis, or crippling hundreds of children and making our homes desolate, but the one disease farthest reaching in its deadly work is put in the hands of unskilful and oftentimes unscrupulous agents, and they in our State legislatures are passing laws that varied as the minds composing those assemblies. What a travesty on morals and sacred Scripture are the disorders brought into society by our divorce legislation and our divorce courts! Special judges must now be called in to assist our regular bench in this blighting industry. Judges realize the havoc to family life caused by the disease, and most of them are disgusted with the situation created by state legislatures. They are powerless to manage the condition, but they do not hesitate to manifest their disgust with the work they have to perform. The

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press frequently sounds an indignant protest against this evil, but, it, too, can do nothing. Denominational churches in their assemblies and congresses deplore the alarming statistics and reprobate the evil, but all to no purpose. The awful thing is spreading and its progress is marked by human misery and decadent family life.—Sacred Heart Review.

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His Wife Was Like an Icicle
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