THE CATHOLIC RECORD

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS. THE LITTLE SACRISTAN.

"Remember, Phil, be home before dark. All right, mother ; I'll be back by

S o'clock at the latest. Then with a hasty farewell the youth sprang on his bicycle and rode youn spraug on his blockle and fold swiftly down the street under the shady maples, through whose leaves, already tinged with the beauties of approach-ing autumn, streamed down the brilliant midday sunlight.

Phil Seton was the only child of a widowed mother, and had spent all his fourteen summers in the pleasant little village of Exeter. A mighty bond of affection united mother and son. To her maternal care and solicitude he responded with a truly filial devotion. He was a sturdy, active lad, inclined to all manner of sport, and, indeed, his proficiency in this line was greater than in his studies, though Phil was nevertheless a diligent student. Being the son of a pious Catholic mother, he was intimately connected with all concerning the little parish Church. He had lately been appointed assistant sacristan, and he took much pride in the performance of his duties.

"Oh ! a goody goody sort of a boy, this!" some of my readers will perhaps be tempted to exclaim. But no, Phil had his little faults; who has not? This, however, is not the place for enumerating them. We have another tale to tell.

Phil wheeled out to " Elmgrove "-Harry White's home-and the two boys enjoyed, as only boys can, the delights of a day's tramp through the woods and fields. The day was draw-ing to a close as Pail remounted his wheel for the journey home, for, though earnestly pressed by his friends to remain and spend the evening with them, the memory of his promise would not allow nim to accept promise would not allow him to accept the kind invitation The las: rays of the setting sun were gleaning through the tree tops, barring the long white read with the shadows of the great elms that skirted its borders. He had scarcely proceeded a mile, when suddenly he felt the rear tire give way. What was his dismay to find that it was punctured,

"Whew! this is a pretty fix, and I haven't my repair kit with me. It's a 'ong walk back to Elmgrove-1 have it! I'll just step into Mr. Cherry's house, which cannot be more than a quarter of a mile from here, and leave my wheel there until I can come and fetch it home, while I myself-

Phil stopped. He was going to add that he could walk back to Exeter. But now it was dark and it would be a long, lonely tramp, while Mr. Cherry's hospitable family would be only too glad to retain him. Inclination pointed one way, filtal affection and obedience the other. The struggle was short, for the thought of nis mother's anxiety if he should not return effectually banished any lurking desire he may have had to evade the dreary walk home.

All this time Phil was proceeding towards the Cherry homestead, and by the time he had made up his mind to go home he was almost at Cherry's gate. Mr. Cherry, an old friend of Phil's father, welcomed him heartily and was loath to let him depart. But after Phil had gone he remarked emphatically to his wife : "Sarah, mark my words ! That

as when I was young.

nights were growing colder and a keen

breeze whistling through the tree tops

swept down on the lad as he began his long walk. But, summoning up all his

was a camp fire, around which three

Tramps ! ejaculated Phil. During the past summer Exeter had been tormented with the usual number of the tramping fraternity. The bold-ness and insolence of these Wandering

Willies had grown intolerable, and fin-

ally they were strictly forbidden the town

under pain of imprisonment. Recently burglaries had become numerous in

the village and surrounding country,

and it was thought that the perpetrat-

ors probably had a rendezvous in some

or four men were seated.

Tramps ! ejaculated Phil.

the swag." Phil's heart seemed to stand still as he heard those words. "What," thought he, "are these men going to break into the church

"The swag? What do they mean? Surely they do not intend to lay hands on the sacred vessels of the altar!

Yet that such was the awful deed may succee they contemplated he soon had ample proof. proof. With the most profane lan-guage they outlined their plan in all its terrible details.

was, Phil could not but believe the evidence of his ears. No time was to be lost. His duty lay plain before him : at all costs he must prevent this manual for the could be below the church breakers away. Thunderstruck and horrified as he had taken root in Phil's mind. He sacrilege. The only safe course lay in retracing his steps and going around by the road. He turned, but as he did had the key of the sacristy, for, as we have seen, he was assistant sacristan. by the road. He turned, but as he did so he stepped upon a dry twig, which broke with a loud snap. At once the men around the fire sprang to their feet. The leader's "Who's there?" was unanswered save by the sound of He now felt confident of frustrating the robbers' design. So proceeding cautiously to the rear of the church he opened the door and stole in. ing. His heart throbbed violently as he caught the faint rasping sounds at the main door. For an instant he halted to breathe an earnest ejaculatsome one running away. Phil was a swift runner, and with the start he had he thought he might be able to evade his pursuers in the darkness. Unfortunately he had gone but a short ory prayer at the foot of the altar. Then with a quick bound he stood at distance when he stumbled and fell. the front of the church with the bell-Before he could rise they were upon rope in his hands. More than the church breakers were

him. Our hero was led back to the light of the campfire. Here he was interrogated by the leader of the gang surprised as the clanging of the old bell disturbed the stillness of the night, as to his eavesdropping, but he refused but certainly none more so than they. From the dark old tower above them to give any information. Thereupon the worthies held a consultation with the sound came becoming forth with regard to what they should do with startling suddenness. Thunder-struck

him. Finally they decided to bind him hand and foot and keep him there until they returned from their intendthe would . be sanctuary . despoilers dropped their tools and ran. "The hand of God," gasped the renegade Italian-and all were more or less ed robbery. In the meantime Phil's mind was tortured with terrible anxistricken with like feeling of fear. As ety. What would his mother think of to the parish priest, at first he thought the sounds were but noises of dreamhis failing to arrive at the usual hour And, oh, what if these villains should land. Next they seemed to him to pro-ceed but from the trickster, Imagina succeed in executing their awful pur-pose? What would he not give to be able to frustrate it?

he become fully alive to the reality of . It was now about 9 o'clock. They intended to leave for the village about the clangor of the bell and rushed forth mid-night. Surely he could do some- to inquire the cause of this mysterious to inquire the cause of this mysterious occurrence. The other citizens of Exeter naturally thought a fire was in progress and each hurried from his thing in three hours. If he could only free himself he might be able to reach the village before them. How to do this was the question, and Phil vainly tortured his mind for an answer.

The group around the fire passed the time in gambling and smoking, while occasionally a bottle was handed rout d. This latter naturally had its customary effect, and suddenly one of the men, an Italian, took offense at some saying of one of his companions. Angry words followed, and finally the Italian pulled out a long, dangerouslooking knife and threatened the others after having accomplished his work. Tenderly they carried him into the presbytery, while in the meantime the with it. Instantly all were on their feet. With a savage oath the leader sprang between the two men and knocked the knife from the Italian's ing his chance, rolled over upon it to hide it from view. In the excitement of the moment his action passed un-several weeks he lay at death's door. hand. It fell upon Phil, who, watchnoticed.

erly and lovingly cared for by his anxious mother, whose grief, however, "Fools ! What do you mean ? Do you want to spoil our plans by your was submerged in feelings of maternal fighting? No more quarreling or pride in her little hero, her little somebody will suffer Knight of the Blessed Sacrament. Mrs.

The leader's words had some effect on Seton also succeeded in nursing her the gang, for they immediately became quiet again. The Italian, however, scowled darkly at his enemy, and luck ily for Phil, his mind was so full of thoughts of revenge that he forgot about his knife. Our hero now cast off his despondency, buoying himself tan .- Ottawa University Review. up with the hope that by this new-found means he might yet be able to thwart the burglars. His bonds caused thwart the burglars. boy's got the makings of a good man in him. It's not often nowadays you see boys so obedient to their parents. Seems to me children ar'n't as dootiful

the rest enter the church and collar down the village street. He must Among such wealth and fame are agencies for good or for evil. There give the alarm at the priest's house. But just as he reached the presbytery is no reason why they should not be sought after and possessed by those who understand their potency for good door he saw four dark forms skulking and are of the disposition to wield them

through the churchyard. "Mother of God, am I too late? What can I do? It will take too long to rouse the house, and then—I must do something. 'Yes, I will try it. It may succeed." for wise and salutary purposes. Why should not Catholics as well as their fellow citizens of other denominations acquire their share of the world's goods and the world's fame. Acquir-ing these by honest and upright A sudden thought had struck our hero. He could not give the alarm by any ordinary means, so he must use means they can employ them better extraordinary measures. If he could but get at the alarm bell in the church and to greater advantage for the good of the Church and religion.-Inod, in Catholic Mirror.

The Folly of Despondency.

Here is another young man who says he is discouraged and does not find life worth living. I am surprised that any young fellow with the health and strength that this one apparently pos-sesses should allow himself to sink into a state of chronic depression. In the first place, he does not appear to realise that human existence was not in-Now he was out in the main build-We tended to be a series of successes. are all on trial here in order to see whether we are worthy to enjoy a state of enduring blise, and if he thinks he can in any way escape the ordinary trials of humanity he will be just as much disappointed as was the man who failed to find the foot of the rain-

bow and the pot of gold which was said to be beneath it. Of course he will get thrown down occasionally. And this will do him no harm. It may, on the contrary, do him a great deal of good if there is any manliness in his composition. If he is a poor puny fellow, who stands dangling his bonnet and plume, like the bridegroom in "Young Lochinvar," he will of course lose heart, and everything else in fact, for victory comes to the brave and fearless, not to the fel-lows who skulk behind trees while their companions are fighting. No one likes a coward, because fear can be overcome by resolute endeavor. If you approach a man in an undaunted, straightforward manner you are better able to secure his attention than if you addressed him in a listless, hangdog fashion

Everybody likes enthusiasm. gives a glow and attraction to exist-ence that no other quality can bestow. home. But there was no sign of fire anywhere, and so those nearest the church hastened thither. If you go about with a down-in the mouth expression, relating your woes The old sexton was the first on the as if you were the only one who was ever afflicted, you will be shunned. Keep your head up, man! Cock up your boanet, as the Scotch say, and scene, closely followed by the pastor. Opening the main door they entered. The bell had ceased ringing, but the rope yet swung gently to and fro, and you will make friends wherever you go. There is nothing like good nature underneath lay a limp, bleeding form. What was the astonishment of all prego. There is nothing itse good and cheerfulness to prevent the fricand cheerfulness to prevent the fricand cheerfulness of every day sent to find that the mysterious bell-ringer was Phil Seton, who had fainted tion in the machinery of every day pursuits.

But to be discouraged is to say that you have lost your confidence in God. He has placed you here, and He will see that you are taken care of if you exert the powers that He has given you to get an honest living. And if a man is mentally or physically deficient he will be provided for by the various or ganizations of charity. I take it, how-ever, judging by your letter, that you are a young man of average intelligence who can succeed in any one of a variety of employments if you only make up your mind to put your shoulder to the wheel and push on. You son back to health and strength, to the can accomplish nothing by brooding. joy of the whole village, for Phil was You tell me that you can not get any. the lion and idol of all Exeter, whose thing to do, and are now living on a little money that was left you, but which will be soon exhausted. Have good citizens still love to discourse on the heroism of the brave little sacrisyou tried very hard to get a situation ? I venture to say that you are one of those fellows who sit down and smoke CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN. cigarettes if you do not do something infinitely worse, and expect work to walk in to you. It will not do that, Through your whole life everything that you do according to the will of walk in to you. It will not do that, God, being in a state of grace, has in and even if it did I doubt if you would

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you a bill of goods. You are just as much obliged in conscience to supply the labor as you would be to furnish the goods. And when you shirk you are cheating yourself as surely as you are defrauding your master, for you get into a lazy, shiftless habit that makes you a no-account man. You cannot remain long discouraged if you keep your mind and your hands busy. The man withou' an object in life is a miserable piece of driftwood tossed hither and thither by the waves of fate, only to be burned in the end, for the aimless man is bound to hell. This is

strong language, but it is true. Discouraged ! Why should you be discouraged ? You are in the morning of life, and have the making or the maring of your own fortune. It rests with you whether you will be a success or a failure. You can not be the former if you sit down and moan, and compare what you consider your sad fate with what you look upon as the more fortunate one of your neigh-bor. What do you know about the obstacles he has had to overcome? They may be and probably are greater than any you have ever encountered. His very triumphs may be the result of his keeping a stiff upper lip and resisting all devilish temptations to de spondency. And now I come to one intimation in your letter that strikes me with horror. You hint obscurely at suicide. What kind of a Catholic are you? None at all, I shelld say at present. Go to your duty, where you have apparently not been for years, and you will not make this cowardly instnuation again, for the man who in his right seuses takes his life is the meanest kind of a coward, Bob Iggersoll to the contrary notwithstanding. He lets the world and the devil get the better of him. - Benedict Bell in Sacred Heart Review.

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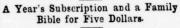
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In which opinion, minus the characteristic grumble that accompanied it, lege. Mrs. Cherry heartily concurred.

When our hero turned his back on the burglars' departure arrived. As the burglars departure arrived. As soon as they were out of sight our hero prepared to free himself from his bonds. He had previously decided that the best way to use the knife would be to grasp it in his fingers and then try to say through the fostering the Cherry homestead the journey seemed far drearier than before. The long road stretching out before him into the increasing darkness, formed a most dismal contrast to the bright and cheerful fireside he had just left. The

then try to saw through the fastenings on his wrists. It was a difficult task, bound as he was, but after ten minutes' painful labor he succeeded in long walk. But, summoning up all his natural coursge and buoyancy of spirits Phil resolutely faced towards cut the thongs that bound his feet. bome. By way of short cut the boy turned down an old disused road leading to the left. He had gone scarcely two hundred yards when a surprising sight met his view as he descended a small hill. Behind a clump of cedar bushes was a camp fire, around which three

ea ily get there in three-quarters of an So that if Phil wished to arrive hour. before them he must cover the distance in less than thirty minutes. The rail-road track crossed the road at the end of the lane, so most probably the burglars would take to this, as it was slight-

ly shorter and less public. The task our hero had set himself was enough to daunt an older and abler person, but despite his sore and cramped limbs he resolved to do it if it could be done. "I would gladly die," he murmured, "to prevent this

"Well, what matter even if they are tramps. They won't hurt a fellow and they would hardly hold me up. They would not get much for their trouble. I'm not going to go back for fear of them. I'll inst would

tion. But finally, thoroughly aroused,

village doctor was summoned. The mental and physical strain Phil

Daring this trying time he was tend-

age of opportunity has passed. Whenever any one who has achieved notable distinction or wealth speaks of the same advantages which he enjoyed being still open to all, there are many to differ from him, not seeing or recognizing any opportunities for themselves The cry is, "there are fewer openings now and more people to step in." There are probably more young men in our cities now than formerly, but at the same time there are more places open to young men and calling for them. There is a feeling that a young

man without wealth and position can not complete with thos; who are pos-sessed of these. This is far from true. Not only can they complete, but they can win. Rich men's sons often lack self - reliance and grit and per-severance and economy. One severance and economy. One trouble in this age of the multi millionaire, is that young men have heard of fabulous fortunes acquired at a single turn of the wheel and they in consequence expect to get along too rapidly and to get rich too soon. If a man would make money lawfully, he must give a fair return for it. Patience and perseverance must be used. Those who expect to rise must work their way inch by inch, and work long and hard. As to whether ever, had been in vain. "Well, what matter even if they are they would hardly hold me up. They would not get much for their trouble. The not going to go back for fear of them. I'll just walk right past them, and as likely as not they won't say a few yards from the fire one of the few yards from the fire one of the the uttered a little cry of joy as he at few yards from the fire one of the the uttered a little cry of joy as he at few yards from the fire one of the the uttered a little cry of joy as he at few yards from the fire one of the the uttered a little cry of joy as he at they the lock and stand guard, while the lock and stand guard, while

worry, and it does no good. If a man is honest and industrious time usually works wonders for him and rights all things. Do not get into a nervous state, for that will unfit you for business, and will make you irritable and querulous, and no person wants an mployee who is disposed to grumble. When you get a situation act as if you really wished to keep it, and be ready to do anything honorable that is asked of you during the time you sell to your employer. I say sell, because that is really what you do when you under-

take work at a fixed salary, quite as much as if you sold the man who hires



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Through your while life everything into his tender flash. But he bore it without murmur. From his boyish heart he poured forth many a fervent prayer that he might be per-mitted to prevent this terrible sacri-lege. At length the time settled upon for the burglars' departure arrived. Aj soon as they were out of sight our hero prepared to free himself from his bonds. He had previously decided as the of a saying that the bords. He had previously decided as a for an entry has prepared to free himself from his bonds. He had previously decided as the of a saying that the bords. He had previously decided as the of a saying that the bords. He had previously decided to free himself from his bonds. He had previously decided to free himself from his bonds. He had previously decided to free himself from his bonds. He had previously decided to free himself from his bonds. He had previously decided to free himself from his bonds. He had previously decided to free himself from his bonds. He had previously decided to free himself from his bonds. He had previously decided to free himself from his bonds. He had previously decided to free himself from his bonds. He had previously decided to free himself from his bonds. He had previously decided to free himself from his bonds. He had previously decided to free himself from his bonds. He had previously decided to free himself from his bonds to free himself from himself from himself to free himself from himself from himse free himself



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