

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

THE BETTER THING

It is better to lose with a conscience clean

Than win by a trick unfair; It is better to fall and to know you've been

Whatever the prize was, square, Than to claim the joy of a far-off goal

And the cheers of the standers-by, And to know down deep in your inmost soul

A cheat you must live and die.

Who wins by trick may take the prize,

And at first he may think it sweet, But many a day in the future life

When he'll wish he had met defeat; For the man who lost shall be glad at heart

And walk with his head up high, While his conqueror knows he must play the part

Of a cheat and a living lie.

The prize seems fair when the fight is on,

But save it is truly won You will hate the thing when the crowds are gone,

For it stands for a false deed done, And it's better you never should reach your goal

Than ever success to buy At the price of knowing down in your soul

That your glory is all a lie.

THRIFT

It is not what we make, but what we save, what we spend wisely, what we invest to advantage, that is a profit.

When we see in this land of infinite resources a vast number of industrious people earning enough to make them comfortable, yet so poor that they cannot afford many of the bare necessities of proper, healthful living, not to speak of the little luxuries or pleasures of life, we get some idea of the criminal lack of thrift training in our national life.

This lack of thrift, which is one of the main causes of poverty, is responsible for more unhappy homes than almost anything else.

It is astonishing how few people have learned to spend their money to the best advantage. The ease with which small change slips through the fingers of American youth, and older people, too, is appalling.

Only recently a young man working for \$30 a month told me that he had just invited two friends to dine with him, and their dinner bill amounted to \$4.50. Think of a young man spending almost a seventh part of his month's wages for a single dinner!

"What did you buy with it?" "Matches," he said simply. "I. C. in Public Opinion."

young blades of the Nickum's circle chess at the money. Still it takes a little boy a long time to collect a shilling, even if the Saturday penny is augmented by a stray ha'penny occasionally.

THE NICKUM'S HERO

"Uncle Jim is the Nickum's hero; ever since he came limping back from Mons, to limp through all the rest of his years. The child worships his soldier uncle and hung about his chair waiting to get in his ear in the talk. Somehow we talked about knives. I had to go out of the room a minute and when I came back I heard Jim say rather cryptically, 'Let not your right hand know what your left hand doeth.'

"Jim was on his way to give some wounded soldiers an outing, and he proposed that the Nickum should accompany him.

"The little chap doesn't take up much room," he said, "and he'll be a great help to the soldiers."

"The amount of room he takes up," I said severely, "is in inverse ratio to his size; however

THE NICKUM RETURNS

"It was late in the evening when the Nickum returned—very hungry but very happy, and full of stories which the soldiers had been telling him. He referred with modest pride to the assistance he had rendered the wounded, and grew offended because I looked sceptical.

"I helped them to climb in and to come out, and I held one soldier's crutch, and I said, 'Lean on my shoulder. I'm terribly strong.' An' there was one man there, an' he had been in the trenches at Wipers an' a German sniper snipe him right here in the arm, an' it's his right arm I said to him, 'I'll light your pipe for you, cos I can quite easy—'often do it for daddy—' an' he said, 'Never mind.

"He stopped in sudden confusion, 'I think I'll go to bed now,' he announced in a flat little voice. It was the very first time in his life Nickum had proposed such a thing.

"Aren't you well?" I asked in alarm.

"He swallowed a large mouthful of bread and butter and replied in an invalidish voice, 'Not very.'

"Well, how did you get on with lighting the pipes?" I asked.

"There wasn't no pipes," he said, with firmness but no grammar.

"I thought—"

"Uncle Jim said, 'Let not your right hand know—'

"But you don't call your mother your 'right hand,' do you?" "Tell me son."

"Well, then, I told you about the snippers man? And none of the soldiers were smoking, and so I said to Uncle Jim, 'Let me down at Hunter's please, an' he said 'Smith's you mean. It's tobacco they sell at Hunter's isn't it?' But I said 'Hunter's please,' an' so he 'blowed me, an' I buyed—cigarettes!

"What—'with all your money'?" "He 'nodded. 'All 'cept the ha'penny."

"What did you buy with it?" "Matches," he said simply. "I. C. in Public Opinion."

ON CROSSING BRIDGES IN LIFE'S JOURNEY

By William H. Sloan, M. A.

The disciples were in great perplexity at one time because they saw a hungry multitude, and did not know how they were to satisfy their hunger.

"Jesus going out saw a great multitude; and He had compassion on them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd, and He began to teach them many things" (Mark vi. 34).

Our Lord found a way, not thought of by His followers, of satisfying the needs of the famishing people around Him, and He exercised His Divine power without pomp or ostentation.

The anxiety of the disciples concerning the superfluous multitude might be quite accurately and picturesquely described in the terms of our modern life. "Do not cross the bridge before you come to it."

In conversation with an aged Catholic priest who had spent many years in pioneer work in the great West, he told us that in his early ministry he weighed and burdened himself needlessly with anxiety.

He was a young man, and his first missionary work was in the State of Indiana. It fell to his duty to make many horseback journeys, chiefly in the springtime, when rains fell in abundance.

There were many rivers in the country, and often the floods overflowed the banks of the streams; in that new country the bridges were none of the strongest.

For many days before undertaking his journey, and after he had entered upon it, he was almost sick with a kind of nervous dread, lest when he struck one of those bridges it should not bear the weight of himself and beast; or it might be gone entirely.

And so the journey, hard enough anyway in the rain and mud, and sometimes in the sleet and snow, was rendered doubly difficult by such foreboding anxiety. But the bridges, he said always held and the streams were always crossed in safety. And so the pile of possible evil that he had strapped upon his back was a

quite useless and altogether needlessly added weight upon him. And he learned at last not to bother about the bridges, at least, until he came to them.

It is not that the way some of the readers of The Missionary concerning many things are steadily doing? Crossing bridges in anxious foreboding long before we come to them, weighting and hindering ourselves with valueless and needless worry, forgetting the injunction of our Blessed Lord and Master. "Be not therefore" solicitous for to-morrow; for the morrow will be solicitous for itself.

Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof (Matt. vi. 34). We frequently we cross these bridges before we come to them concerning the results of the possible mistakes we think we have made. The state of the most practical Catholics is often very unsatisfactory. The affections that, true as the needle to the pole, should point steadily to heaven, go wheeling about like a weather vane that shifts with shifting winds. Sinful thoughts and conspicuous desires spring up—thick as weeds in showery weather—faster than we can cut them down; and every attempt to keep the heart pure ends in miserable failure—extorting the question "Who is sufficient for these things?" (2 Cor. 11, 16).

We go often to the confessional, partake often of the Holy Eucharist, and then fail to keep our hearts holy and sweet. It is disheartening. We think we have made mistakes that will tear away all bridges in our future pathway. We go into our gardens and see the flowers growing into beauty by sunny day and silent night; week by week of autumn the fields around us assume a more golden tint, ripening for the harvest; and year by year childhood in our homes rises into youth, and youth into bearded manhood—but our souls seem standing still.

We imagine in our foreboding anxiety that there is no appreciable progress; and we begin to ask is there any way by which we may grow fit for heaven? Is our hope of it but a pious dream, a beautiful delusion? Can we never reach the heights where the martyrs and confessors of old caught a vision of the heavenly world? Daily called to contend with temptations, the battle often goes against us; in these passions and temptations old habits, the sons of Saurin "are too hard for us."

Not that we do not fight. That startling cry, "The Philistines are on thee, Samson!" rouses us; we make some little fight; but, too often relying only to be conquered, we are ready to give up the struggle, saying: "It is useless; and like Saul in Gilboa's battle, throw away sword and shield. So we would; but that cheered by a voice from on high as we knelt before the priest or at the altar, and sustained by hope in God's grace and mercy, we turn to our souls and say, 'Why art thou sad, O my soul? why dost thou trouble me? Hope in God, for I will still give praise to Him; the salvation of my countenance and God' (Psalm xiv, 6). Rise; press onward; the bridges are not gone; the streams shall not prevail against thee.

Here we stand, where it is the doom of life we must so often stand, where two ways meet. We are sincerely desirous to choose the way that is at once the right and the best. In the time given us for decision we make use of all the aids given us by means of which we may reach the right and best decision. We pray; we frequent the sacraments; we take counsel of our Father confessor; we take account of the teachings of Holy Scripture in the Missal that the Church places in our hands; we get all the light that an intelligent survey of the situation can afford us; we take reckoning of our capacity, our aptitude in this direction or in that, we gather what light we may from the advice of judicious friends. Then at last it comes as it must come always, that we ourselves must make decision. And so we start along our chosen way. Then unlooked-for difficulties appear in this way in which we have chosen to get on our feet. Then we say we have made a mistake. It does not follow that we really have, but we think we have.

But we must go on—that is the necessity laid upon our life, that we must go on. We are nervous and hesitant about going on. We are regretful and brooding about an impossible getting back into a past that is already fixed and finished. We imagine ourselves plunged into the whelming flood of some disaster. We come up to one of those bridges built of the results of our choosing. We go on it, for we must. It bears. But there is another bridge ahead, and then another, and another, and all the time we are filled with foreboding fears. And so we weight ourselves down with misgivings, tie our hands and hamper our movements, and forget our Lord's injunction, "sufficient for the day is the evil thereof" (Matt. vi, 34).

Then how often we cross the bridge before we come to it. We remember a story in one of our old school readers. It was about a discontented pendulum that hung in the old clock in the hallway. Gloomy day; pendulum out of heart; led into a mathematical mood; began to calculate how many times it would have to swing back and forth in an hour, a day, a week, a month, a year, in ten years. The pendulum, utterly appalled, stopped swinging. Nor could it be persuaded to start again until it began to see that it must swing only in the moment next to it, and that simply doing that would in time put the whole ten years' work behind it. A bridge of duty that cannot be made to bear the weight of

a ten years' service heaped at once upon it will easily bear that whole weight when it is distributed upon it as the recurring moments and days may demand. Sidney Smith's prescription of "short views" is a good one for anxious people. Such crossing of the bridge before we come to it prevents clear vision and the right estimate of things; it turns and twists the events of life to sombre caricature; you see things always with threatening aspect. You see them thus, though they do not really wear such aspect. You are scared needlessly.

The best way of defeating this so common tendency of foreboding trouble, of crossing the bridge before you come to it, is the sedulous cultivation of the practical Christian life. A special intimacy with Jesus Christ is advised. Frequent visits to the House of God and quiet devotions before the altar; a constant fellowship with practical Catholics, who live clean, sober, and stimulating lives; a faithful compliance with the precepts of the Church and an avoidance of all the occasions of sin. Our Blessed Lord solicits special intimacy with every one of us. And the practical Catholic life is that Jesus Christ and he stand together in the relation of a personal friendship, as well as in that of saving grace. He discloses Himself to the Christian in every sacrament and service of the Church, and in every page of the prayer-book in his hands. He puts Himself close to him by the ministry of the Holy Ghost. He breathes a holy blessing upon him through the sweet ministry of His Immaculate Mother. He dwells in him, clarifying his vision, girding his purpose, lifting his ideals. In the Holy Communion the Lord Jesus comes nearer to him than breathing, "closer than hands and feet." And as we open ourselves for the inflowing of His friendship, we learn to love, and the child of love is trust. And so it is possible for us to go with a sweet, deep, unforgetting rest, for life, for death, for future destiny, held in the clasping arms of an increasing trust, for He will make the bridges bear; and after a while we shall find and purged of all sin, we shall sit at His feet and go away no more forever.—The Missionary.

A CATHOLIC BOY TO A FREE THINKER

Not long ago a Catholic boy was travelling in a train between Brussels and Namur. In the same train was an infidel school inspector. On passing before a Catholic Church the boy uncovered his head in honor of the Blessed Sacrament, which he knew was kept in the church.

The inspector, who up to this time had been reading a newspaper, on seeing the reverence paid by the boy to the house of God, began to laugh, and the following dialogue ensued: "To be sure, my little friend, you must be an altar-boy?"

"Yes, sir," replied the boy, "and I am just preparing for my First Communion."

"And would you please tell me what the curate teaches you?"

"Well, he is just instructing me in the mysteries of religion."

"And, please, what are those mysteries? I have forgotten all about those mysterious things long time ago, and in a couple of years it will be the same with you."

"No, sir; I will never forget the mysteries of the Holy Trinity, of the Incarnation, and of the Redemption."

"What do you mean by the Holy Trinity?"

"One God in the Persons."

"Do you understand that now, my little friend?"

"Where there is a question of mystery three things are to be distinguished; to know, to believe, to understand. I know and I believe, but I do not understand. We will understand only in heaven."

"These are idle stories; I believe only what I understand."

"Well, sir, if you believe only what you understand, will you tell me this: How is it that you can move your finger at will?"

"My finger is moved because my will impresses a motion to the muscles of my fingers."

"But do you understand how this is?"

"Oh, yes; I understand it. If you understand it, then tell me why your will can move your finger and not, as in the case of a donkey, your ear?"

"That was too much for the learned school-inspector. He made a sorry face, coughed, and muttered between his teeth: 'Let me alone, little fellow; you are far too young to teach me a lesson.' He resumed reading his newspaper, and never took his eyes from it until his unpleasant little travelling companion had stepped off at the next station and disappeared from sight.—Our Sunday Visitor.

A LUTHERAN'S TRIBUTE

"The pyramid of crutches in (St. Anne de Beupre) the church's entrance is really an object of wonderment. The heart fills with awe and the eye with tears as one stands and looks upon them and reads their silent story. I wonder not that persons are sceptical when they hear only the story of these pyramids, but one's scepticism is soon dispelled as he examines crutch after crutch and sees the marks of pain and sorrow they bear."—Rev. John H. Heindel (Lutheran) Jersey City, N. Y., Jan. 8, 1909.

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First Announcement

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which will be ready for the market about October 1st, 1916. The work is written by the Rt. Rev. Mons. P. E. O'Hare, LL.D., who is well known as a writer and lecturer on Lutheranism. The object of the volume is to present the life of Luther in its different phases as outlined in the contents.

THE forthcoming celebration to commemorate the 4th centenary of Luther's "revolt" which occurs October, 1917, tend to invest the volume with a special timeliness. But, apart from this consideration, the need has long been felt for a reliable work in English on Luther based on the best authorities and written more particularly with a view to the "man on the street".

The book will have approximately 300 pages and will sell at 25c. per copy. To the clergy and religious a generous discount will be allowed, provided the order is placed before Oct. 1st, 1916.

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OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

THE NICKUM'S RIGHT HAND

Here is a charmingly told tale of a little hero—whose home is a Scottish manse. We quote it from the Glasgow Herald:

"The young man who answers with equal readiness to the name of 'Nickum' or 'Annoyance' declared the other day that life was insupportable for a person of his years—the is seven) unless he owned a knife—not a silly one with two blades, but a Boy Scout one with 'things in it,' including a corkscrew, and chained to the outside of his person.

"A desperate weapon! It costs a shilling, and is considered by the