

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

RASHNESS AND TIMIDITY

Prudence and courage are a powerful combination. The first considers every opportunity, with its labors, its risks, its rewards, and its chances of success.

There are men who from impulse will risk the savings of a lifetime in some wild-cat scheme with less investigation than a fifteen-year-old boy would be expected to make, and they not only frequently do this against the earnest pleading about protests of the wise, but they will often make these investments, take chances with the capital which belongs just as much, and often very much more, to the wife, without even mentioning the matter to her.

I have known instances where men have mortgaged their homes to buy oil or mining stock, to invest in all sorts of foolish ventures, when their wives knew nothing whatever about the transaction until they were asked to sign the legal papers.

Rashness in going headlong into an enterprise, without using calm, sober judgment in the matter, is no oftener a cause of failure than its opposite—timidity, caution, so carried to excess that there is no daring, no courage left in a man.

This is a clog hindering tens of thousands from getting on in life—didn't dare to take a chance. There are young men in every section of this country to-day working for somebody else with ordinary pay, with ability and training which would enable them to do big things independent of others if they only had the courage to branch out, to take chances, if they only had a little more dare in their natures.

There is more or less gambling in every successful career, just as there is gambling in marriage. No two young people who talk to the altar are ever sure that they are going to have a harmonious and happy future. But they must take their chances.

There are occasions in life when we must take chances or lose everything. I know a young man of excellent character and good ability, but he is so afraid of losing the money he has saved by rigid economy that he never makes a venture. He has weighed and considered and balanced things so long in his mind that however promising the outlook he is afraid to take the least risk in anything.

His hump of precaution has become so abnormally large that no matter what enterprises you may suggest to him, he raises so many objections, sees so many chances for a loss or failure that he does not dare venture it. He simply grips his little savings tighter and tighter and grows narrower and narrower all the time. With the exception of a few thousand dollars in the bank, he is just where he was a dozen years ago.

Instead of managing a business of his own, which he is perfectly competent to do, this man works along on a small salary pinching on his clothing and food, and living in a poor room, in order to save a little money. He has been doing this so long that he has fallen into a rut out of which there is little hope now of his ever lifting himself.

The steadily successful man is neither rash nor timid. He is prudent and courageous. He will take a chance, where there is a reasonable prospect of success; but he will not rush into a venture blindly nor be so cautious as never to take any risk.

EVERY MAN IS LONESOME

A few years ago the writer read a story called "Everybody is Lonesome," in which the heroine discovers that the secret of awakening the interest of people, and particularly of strangers, lies in a recognition of the fact that everybody is lonesome. This statement that everybody is lonesome would appear to be a broad one, yet to be apparent.

Every man, regardless of the station in life which he occupies, hides behind the mask of that reserve which is habitual to us all, a feeling of loneliness which possibly he would be reluctant to admit under that term, but in a broad application there is no other word which so aptly defines the emotion. He may be a man whose friends are legion, whose home life leaves nothing to be desired and whose wealth is beyond measure, and yet in his mental life he is lonesome; there are rooms in the house of thought in which he lives to which he alone has the keys and they are never opened even to his wife or to his dearest friend, because of the feeling that the very intimacy of such relations would serve to prejudice against a sympathetic understanding of the unrealized ideals and unfulfilled ambitions which occupy those chambers in the mansion of the soul.

And if a man enjoying all the material possessions which are supposed to add to the happiness and

pleasure of life is lonesome, then in what greater degree of lonesomeness may the average man be found? The heart of man was made to possess the infinite, and nothing on earth will give it perfect peace.—Catholic Columbian.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

THE CHILDHOOD OF OUR LADY

By Florence Gilmore in The Rosary Magazine

This is, indeed, the age of the children. Never before was their importance so universally recognized—their importance both for good and for evil. Overworked and underpaid by the covetous, paginated by the arms of Christ the generations that are to come, pampered by a world which idolizes them, they are yet the darlings of God's Church. At the cost of enormous sacrifices she educates them in the way they should go; she calls them to her Holy Table in their tender years, and urges them to come, day after day, ever most welcome guests—surely this is the age of the child!

How the heart of that great priest of God rejoiced to offer to Him a lily so spotless, a rose so sweet! He led her to the altar, and cutting off some of her curls burned them in a brazier. Other priests placed a brown veil over the little Virgin's head. With tears she took leave of her father, white-faced and sad, and of her weeping mother, and they led her away to join the other "almas" or virgins, who lived within the Temple and were loved to welcome Mary among them.

Her preparation for what was to come had begun in earnest. No longer was she treated as a mere child. She was given a tiny room, not unlike a nun's cell of today—she who was so small that a stool to stand upon had to be placed before the copy of the Scriptures destined for her use. Otherwise she could not have reached it. Every morning she rose at daybreak, and with her companions repaired to the gallery reserved for the "almas" there to be present at the morning sacrifice and to pray that soon—soon—the Messiah might be sent. Mary added a petition of her own, not that she might be His mother, as did many Jewish maidens, but that she might be the handmaid of His mother. Such was the honor which her soul craved.

The sacrifice offered, the "almas" returned to the apartments set apart for them, and their day was passed in prayer, in the study of the Scriptures, so dear to every child of Israel, in simple, wholesome recreation, and in domestic work, such as has been done by the women of every age, from the highest to the lowliest. Mary was taught to embroider, to work in wool, in linen and in byssus, a cloth of beautifully fine texture. She soon excelled in each kind of sewing. It was in remembrance of her skill that wives, among the early Christians, used to dedicate distaffs to her, and for this reason that, in the Middle Ages, guilds of weavers and manufacturers chose her to be their patroness and bore her image on their banners.

In the quiet and seclusion of the Temple Mary led for years the common life of the "almas," there to be present only for her greater simplicity and humility, and her greater tenderness towards her friends, towards the poor and towards the wayward; for she was from the beginning, in however childish a way, the health of the sick, the refuge of sinners, the comfort of the afflicted.

As the years passed Joachim grew feeble and was no longer able to cultivate with his own hands the land which he had inherited from his fathers, so he and Anne, ever yearning for their child, decided to go to Jerusalem and live not far from the Temple, that they might be near to Mary and sometimes see her. They had been there but a short time when the venerable old man became ill unto death. His friends and relatives gathered about his bed, and Mary was taken home to receive his last blessing. Many pious writers have thought that at the moment when he raised his head and trembling hands over her head in blessing a revelation permitted him to see what was her glorious destiny; that a look of unspeakable joy shone in his eyes before he dropped his arms, bowed his head and died.

Deeply did Mary grieve for her kind father. She who was destined to become the Mother of Sorrows, was already the Child of Sorrows. And more was to come. Anne, the mother whom she so tenderly loved, soon sickened and died, and at the age of twelve Mary was left an orphan, with no protector except Zachary, the high priest. Every earthly tie had been broken that she might be the more closely bound by heavenly ones. It was probably at this time that she made her vow of perpetual virginity. Henceforth she belonged to God and to Him alone.

The slow years passed until the hour came when the Angel Gabriel trembled in awe before her, and God

the treasure lent to her and to Joachim for three short years.

But though Anne grieved, she did not delay. She was brave; one of the valiant women of old. The family set forth for Jerusalem; Joachim, growing old but vigorous still, carrying what clothing, food and money they needed for their journey, Anne, no longer young, but tall and straight, bearing Mary in her arms and almost jealous when, from time to time, Joachim relieved her of her burden; and Mary, little Mary, wondrously happy in the sacrifice she was to make for the God whom she loved with all her child heart; yet, baby-like, often wearily by the ninety-mile journey and often asleep in the arms that held her so close. And all the way angels hovered, awe-struck, about the three, so humble in appearance; and the Lord God kept guard over them.

Reaching Jerusalem, they lodged in a small house, in the eastern part of the city, whose site tradition has marked out for us. After a purification of seven days, required by law of those who came to sacrifice in the Temple, Joachim, in white garments, offered a lamb to God. Anne and Mary then passed through the court to the foot of the marble staircase leading up to the Golden Gate where Zachary, the High Priest, awaited them. Anne had thought to take her little maiden to Zachary, but Mary quietly withdrew her hand from her mother's, and alone and unafraid, mounted the steps and knelt humbly at Zachary's feet—a tiny child, clad in blue and white, with golden hair and a face of angelic sweetness and beauty.

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Himself waited on her word. Angels were watching and guarding her, longing—longing for the day that was to come; and round about her the world was waiting and knew it not; was needing her and knew it not, even as it needs her today and forgets her—for what?

Painters, medieval and modern, have loved to picture Our Lady as a little one; poets, weary of a sin-begrimed world, have dreamed of her immaculate childhood days, and in low, reverent voices have sung their praise. It was Rossetti, in whose Italian blood love of her was a heritage, who wrote these lovely lines:

This is that Blessed Mary, pre-lect God's Virgin. Gone is a great while, and she Dwell young in Nazareth of Galilee. Unto God's will she brought devout respect, Profound simplicity of intellect, And supreme patience. From her mother's knee Faithful and hopeful; wise in charity; Strong in grave peace; in pity circumspexit. So held she through her girlhood; as it were An angel-watered lily, that near God Grows and is quiet.

THE SACRED HEART

The Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus has in a special manner hallowed this month of June, but the devotion to the Sacred Heart has laid claim upon every month of the year by its pre-emption of every First Friday. The grip which this devotion has taken upon the imagination of modern men is one of the most promising signs of the times. In spite of the materialistic tendencies of the epoch through which we have been passing, love for Jesus the Friend of Humanity has grown into a spiritual intimacy with the Saviour that will reveal its full significance only in the wonderful epoch that will dawn upon the world when this dark night of war is over. All things will then be made new, but the new will find its elements in the old, and one of its most precious elements will be the love with which the Sacred Heart of Jesus has inspired the souls of men.

Devotion to the Sacred Heart has naturally and inevitably linked itself with devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. Frequent Communion has been the logical manifestation of that love which yearns for union with its Beloved. The craving for peace of soul has been accentuated by the sad experiences of thousands who have been lured into the bargain of modern worldliness only to be driven back to their Divine Friend by the emptiness and loneliness of their foolish pilgrimage. Thousands that must needs be "in the world" have begun to know that they cannot stately be "of the world." Under what must be regarded as unpromising circumstances, thousands have been sustained and brought thus far with safety through their devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

In these solemn days of war, devotion to the Sacred Heart ought to take yet firmer grip upon men's souls. The soldier is lonely in the midst of a legion when he faces eternity. He thinks, then, the thoughts that are unto salvation. When he is struck down by a mortal wound he yearns for a mother's tenderness, but he must die in tragic loneliness and often in unavoidable neglect. It will be fortunate for him if he has merited by his devotion to the Sacred Heart, comfort from the Friend of Friends. In such a moment none but his Divine Friend can come to him and, through a spiritual communion, can communicate something of that joy which He brought to him every First Friday through the Sacrament of His love. In the darkness of the night, amid the loneliness of an abandoned trench, the faithful champion of the Sacred Heart will find Him whom his soul loveth.

Not only will those who face danger, but all of us who will follow them with anxious sympathy, will seek courage and comfort in the Sacred Heart. Love alone can make the tragedies of life tolerable. And a love that is stronger than death can alone lead us with confidence "down through the valley of the shadow of death," whither we all must go, and through which thousands have been tramping for the past thirty odd months, and into which many of our own may be marching in the near future. We always need our Divine Friend, but in these days we shall be increasingly sensible of our need of Him. In accordance with the wish of our Sovereign Pontiff we shall especially pray that the Sacred Heart of Jesus will suffuse with something of its tenderness the hard hearts of nations

that are mad with the lust of conquest and will not listen to the cry of peace.—The Missionary.

THE POPE IN THE WAR

While the fortunes of war change as the picture of a kaleidoscope from Flanders to Galicia, from the Carpathians to the Caucasus, from the Congo to the Balkans, subconsciously the whole world looks to one figure, rising above the warring nations, leaning neither to one nor the other, but appealing in the name of the Prince of Peace, to the princes and rulers of the world. "That moved by the sight of so many tears, so much blood shed, they delay not to bring back to their peoples the life-giving blessings of peace. Let them not suffer our voice of father and friend to pass unheeded." So did he call to them in his first Encyclical, when he took up the theme from his martyr-predecessor and in the same vein he has exhorted his children ever since, "clama, non cessa," "cry incessantly for peace." And as the weary months go by, ever and ever more does the world look to him for the initiative.

In Pope Benedict's first Encyclical letter, written in the early days of the War, he laid his finger on the causes of the War. He did not point to the Kaiser, nor to the Czar, and say, "Thou art the man!" But he said that this murderous conflict arose because "from the lack of mutual love among men; disregard for authority; unjust quarrels between the various classes; material prosperity became the absorbing object of human trust in God though there were nothing higher or better to be gained." And who will gainsay him?

His first call to the world was for a solemn function of atonement and prayer, which was held in Europe in February, 1915, and throughout the other continents on March 21. Then was recited from myriads of altars, in every language under the sun, that never-to-be-forgotten prayer, composed by himself, in which he revealed the bitterness of his sorrow and his sublime trust in God's power and mercy and love. But the devastation continued, and in May he ordered the three days' fast. In July he addressed a powerful and pathetic appeal to the heads of the warring nations for peace "in the Holy Name of God, in the name of Our Heavenly Father and Master, by the Sacred Blood of Christ, the price of human redemption." But they were in no mood to listen. Again and again has he appealed to the faithful to pray incessantly, and finally through him the beautiful thought that the Holy Communion of millions of innocent children offered up for one intention cannot fail to move an offended God.

But Pope Benedict has done much more than pray for peace. He has done practical work in alleviating the horrors of war. Since March, 1915, numberless trains have passed through Holland and Switzerland, bearing thousands of wounded soldiers and exchanged civilians back to their homes. Few newspapers have failed to note even in an obscure corner that these trains moved at the initiative of the Holy Father. Then in regard to prisoners not permanently disabled: At his suggestion equal numbers of French, Belgian, English and German prisoners are taken to Swiss hospitals, where they are interned and nursed. As many as 15,000 French soldiers have been in these hospitals at one time, and the others in proportion. This treatment has been extremely beneficial in cases of tuberculosis. And again the problem was set of discovering the thousands of soldiers of all armies who were posted as "missing." The Pope set up four great bureaus at Rome, Vienna, Fribourg and Paderborn, and through this means more than 100,000 applications have been dealt with, and a large proportion of missing men put in touch with their relatives. Still on the subject of prisoners it was found that at one time the French were concentrating German prisoners in the unhealthy tracts of Dahomey, and the Germans retaliated by sending the French to the eastern marshes. The Pope intervened, and both regulations were withdrawn.

For these humane deeds the Pope was officially thanked by King George on behalf of the British Government. And the German Chancellor conveyed also the thanks of his country. For this work the English socialist journal, the Labor Leader, wrote editorially: "When all the terrible carnage is over there are few men who will have less reason to be ashamed of the part they have played than the Pope. . . . In face of all other countries, or countries which call themselves mothers, the Pope has shown himself today the Father of men. . . . Holy Father, you

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