

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

ROOFS

The road is wide and the stars are out and the breath of the night is sweet

And this is the time when Wanderlust should seize upon my feet

But I'm glad to turn from the open road and the starlight on my face

And leave the splendor of out-of-doors for a human dwelling place

I never have known a vagabond who really liked to roam

All up and down the streets of the world and never have a home

The tramp who slept in your barn last night and left at break of day

Will wander only until he finds another place to stay

If you call the gypsy a vagabond, I think you're wrong

For he never goes a-traveling, but he takes his home along

And the only reason a road is good, as every wanderer knows, is just because of the homes, the homes to which it goes!

They say life is a highway and its mile-stones are the years

And now and then there's a toll-gate where you pay your way with tears

It's a rough road and a steep road, and it stretches broad and far

But it leads at last to a golden town where golden houses are

GENTLENESS

You will catch more flies, St. Francis used to say, with a spoonful of honey than with a hundred barrels of vinegar

"Were there anything better or fairer on earth than gentleness, Jesus Christ would have taught it us; and yet He has given us only two lessons to learn of Him—meekness and humility of heart."

At times the exceeding gentleness with which he received heretics and sinners almost scandalized his friends, and one of them said to him, "Francis of Sales will go to Paradise, of course; but I am not so sure about the Bishop of Geneva; I am almost afraid his gentleness will play him a shrewd turn."

"Ah," said the saint, "I would rather account to God for too great gentleness than for too great severity. Is not God all love? God the Father is the Father of mercy; God the Son is a Lamb; God the Holy Ghost is a Dove, that is, gentleness itself. And are you wiser than God?"

KEEP STUDYING

People who keep thinking are usually happy. It is when a man becomes a drifter and a floater down the stream that he becomes dissatisfied and discouraged

Every human being should keep studying all the time

Not only should you study along some line in which you are interested, but you should take up some line or subject about which you know nothing. It is surprising how little any of us know

To keep studying your friends is to improve your friendships. To keep studying art is to increase your appreciation for all beautiful things

To keep studying books is to come closer to all mankind

One of the greatest secrets of success is to learn the fact that only as you do your work and fill your niche better than any one has ever done it before, do you really grow into a commanding place of power

It is that "Keep Studying" that smooths the way and lights up the path of progress

In this connection it is well to do something each day that you would rather not do at all. For to all of us there always comes times when we have too many things that we didn't expect but are compelled to do

Keep studying. It helps us to meet all the affairs of life gracefully.—Catholic Columbian

FAITH IN GOD

We often look upon the life of one who has accomplished great and good things. Conditions that seemed as inexorable as steel gradually gave way before this man or woman

Evil influences lost their sinister power, and a victory others had long prayed and striven for, was achieved

Where lay the source of that strength, that courage, that endurance, that almost superhuman patience and loyalty? where but in the belief that good would triumph in the conflict with evil

And the right will always prevail if you will stick to your post and maintain your fight for it. But do not look for angels to descend from Heaven to make that fight for you

Never doubt the angels are near, but they have no orders to do battle for you, so long as you are able to strike one blow for yourself

If the time comes when the conflict gets beyond you, never fear but they will rally to your side

But hardly ever does that happen. It has been said that there is an element of self-destruction in things evil; when to this element is joined the power working for good, we see why conditions that seem inexorable fall away; sometimes so unexpectedly, sometimes so hastily, we are forced to marvel at the changed situation

You will hear protesting voices against all this. You will hear it said that evil is too mighty, too strongly entrenched; why run up against it, since you only make life and work harder for your pains?

Never you harken to those voices! Though the speaker wore an angel's guise, the demon is their inspiration. For while God stays with His world—and remembering that it is His creation and the price He paid for its redemption, we may rest on the belief that this will be forever—good is more powerful than evil, and what is right shall prevail

And this is not alone in matters affecting the whole but in matters affecting the individual as well, for the universe and the atom are one in the sight of God.—The Pilot

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

ONLY TODAY

Only from day to day The life of a wise man runs; What matter if seasons far away Have glooms or have double suns?

Like a tide our work should be— Each later wave the best; Today is a king in disguise, Today is the special test.

Like a sawyer's work is life; The present makes the flaw, And the only field for strife Is the inch before the saw.

—JOHN BOYLE O'REILLY

THE MERCIFUL KNIGHT

It was in one of the noblest of the great families of Florence that the two little brothers, Giovanni and Hugo Gualberto, were brought up

They were taught all that noble children were expected in those days, especially how to be skilful and quick in the use of arms, so that they might afterwards become brave knights and courageous soldiers

Besides this they were taught the lessons of their creed; for it was the duty of a Christian knight to hold in reverence all holy things. Together the two little brothers would kneel in the great church at Christmastide, when the story of Bethlehem was pictured once more

Then when Holy Week came round, and all the city bells had ceased to ring because it was Good Friday, they would kneel again beneath the crucifix, from which the Saviour of the world taught the forgiveness of injuries

So the boys grew up, learning their lessons together, and loving each other with a deep and special love. They were the only children in the old grey palace and shared every joy and sorrow of their lives

Then when all was sunshine and joy, when life was spreading out all its pleasures at the feet of the two young knights, suddenly the blow fell which seemed to blot forever the light from Giovanni's life

His brother Hugo, setting out one morning full of life and gaiety, was brought back at nightfall pierced through the heart by an enemy's dagger. There had been, perhaps, some hot quarrel; but the boy had been cruelly done to death by treachery, and no more than that was known

It seemed impossible to believe, but it was only too true. Hugo was dead, and a deep veil of grief went up to Heaven and a wild cry for vengeance upon the murderer. Giovanni's heart burned within him like a red-hot coal in his wrath

With his strong right hand he grasped his sword, and vowed that he would not rest until he had killed the murderer of his brother. He would hunt him down, no matter where he was hid. Nothing should save him from the vengeance which was his due. Revenge took possession of the young knight's heart

So Giovanni set out on his search, and it seemed as if in a few hours the lighthouse boy was changed into a stern-faced man. It was Springtime; the sky was blue and the earth was bursting into flowers, but it might have been mid-winter for all he knew. Day by day and hour by hour he searched, but no sign of his enemy could he find; and at last he turned wearily away from the city, and set out for the country-house, outside Florence, where his grief-stricken father and mother anxiously awaited him

It was the evening of Good Friday, and a solemn stillness seemed to brood over the land. Giovanni never noticed that the bells were silent. Slowly he began to mount the steep hill which began from the city gates to the church

of San Miniato, which he must needs pass on his way home

Halfway up the hill, a little road turns off sharply to the right; and there at the corner Giovanna suddenly came face to face with the man he was seeking—the enemy who had so cruelly killed his brother. Quick as lightning Giovanni drew his sword, and a wild rush of joy filled his heart

Here was his enemy, given into his hand, as it were. Vengeance had triumphed

The wretched man saw, too, that all chance of escape was hopeless. Neither could he defend himself, for he had no weapon. He was indeed given into the hand of the avenger. There was but one thing he could do. Throwing himself upon his knees, he pleaded for mercy

"For the love of Christ," he cried, "I beseech you to spare my life! He who on this day hung upon the Cross to save mankind, would He not have us show mercy to one another? For the love of Him our Blessed Saviour, have mercy upon me!"

And as he spoke he spread out his arms in the form of a cross, and looked beseechingly into the eyes of the angry young knight

There was a moment's pause. The uplifted sword was stayed. A terrible struggle was going on in Giovanni's heart. Could he forego the revenge for which he had thirsted so long? The man was a murderer and deserved punishment. But had not our Blessed Saviour upon the Cross prayed for forgiveness for His murderers?

The struggle was fierce, but a prayer rose from his heart for help to overcome, and slowly he lowered his sword. Then, as he gazed at the trembling wretch at his feet, a great pity moved him; and he bent down and raised the man from his knees, and embraced him in token of forgiveness

There they parted; and Giovanni, still trembling after the fierce struggle that had gone on in his heart, went slowly on his way up the steep hill, until he came to the church door. Turning aside, he went in, and found his way to the high altar, where a great crucifix hung. There he knelt and hid his face in his hands, and the hot tears forced their way through his fingers and dropped on the marble floor

He saw now how often he had offended and grieved that gentle Master who had hung so uncomplainingly upon the cross to save his soul. And the prayer rose to his lips: "O Blessed Lord, who has taught us to be merciful to our enemies, have mercy upon me as I have shown mercy to mine!"

And surely the prayer was heard; for as the words fell upon the stillness, lo! the figure of Christ lowered itself, and kissed the bowed head of the merciful knight

This story is a true one. The merciful knight was St. John Gualberto, whose feast is kept on the 12th of July, the day on which he died, in the year 1073. After his conversion he had given himself up to a life of prayer and penance, and founded the Order of Valombrosa, so called from the beautiful valley near Florence where his first monastery was established. It flourishes to this day, and the miraculous crucifix is still preserved and venerated.—Vincent Barrett in The Ave Maria

VIENNA CATHOLICS TO DEFEND FAITH

By Dr. Frederic Funder (Vienna Correspondent, N. C. W. C.)

An elaborate celebration here to commemorate the third anniversary of the coronation of Pope Pius XI. was made the occasion of a statement of Catholic determination to resist all efforts to interfere with religious liberty, particularly in the education of children and in relation to marriage

The Catholics of Vienna and Austria will stand on the defensive. We shall work and fight to our last breath and to the last bit of strength in our bodies for the liberty of the Church and religion and for the unrestricted political rights of the Catholic people in matters of religious activity

We shall not suffer ourselves to be driven back into the catacombs; we remain in our churches and we keep our place in public life. Socialism is mistaken if it interprets the signs of the times as being favorable to it and thinks it recognizes in them an indication of the decline and fall of all that has been and of victory for Socialism in the near future

It is true mankind has become tired of its own successes. In the age of technical arts and of unheard-of scientific achievements, uneasy feelings of loneliness, isolation and helplessness are taking possession of the human soul

Everywhere the seekers of God can be seen at work; many are seeking in India and China for a religious sensation that will fertilize the barrenness and sterility of the modern soul. Consciously or unconsciously, pantheistic tendencies are making their appearance along with such experiments

The beginning of a new era is indicated; it will bring us a new synthesis, for the second time a work will be produced comparable to that of St. Thomas Aquinas. At present the great task is to free the spiritual evolution of the last few centuries from the destructive poison of negation—heriloom of rationalistic origins—and to lead back to Christ and His Church the really great men of our times

Socialism is not the thing of the future, it is only the last, though, perhaps, the most frightful, stage

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trate more and more the relations between peoples

"This is a wish which I formulate the more easily before you, Mr. President, as when it is a question of France, it does not appear to hide a lesson, but on the contrary it finds, in the very example of your generous nation, a defense against those who might judge it to be chimerical

"May God, therefore, grant our wishes! I know that they will find an echo in your heart and that you will be good enough to accept them, together with those which we very respectfully formulate for yourself"

In thanking Mgr. Cerretti, the President of the Republic said: "Mr. Nuncio, the wishes which Your Excellency has expressed in the name of the diplomatic corps respond to those of all Frenchmen. They are, I may affirm, the wishes of France herself"

"To consolidate peace through international agreements, to bring to fruit the fruitful idea of arbitration so that the inevitable differences between peoples may not degenerate into sanguinary conflicts, to give to all nations the security indispensable to their development, to assure the respect of the treaties which are the political charters of the world, such is the ideal of France, the ideal whose realization she will resolutely pursue"

of a great long continued struggle. Its existence may in itself be regarded as a sign of an impending change if it is true, as Frederic Corneilius asserts, that communistic movements are the symptoms of the beginning of each new era

For the Catholic Church, this struggle is only one of the long series she withstood in former times and will withstand in future. She outlived the Roman Empire, the Wandering of the Nations, the onrush of Islam, and the Reformation. Our fathers many years ago, were told that the end of the Church was near, and now, behold, she is still alive and the spirit hostile to her is on the wane

For the Papacy and the Church represent the proof of the past, the strength of the present and the hope of the future

If only the "fine pointe de la volonte" be kept firm to God, "My God, I want to do your Will"—there may be bitterness upon bitterness in the soul, it matters little

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