

FEBRUARY 15, 1919

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

GOD DOES NOT FORGET

The World will strip your failings, And hide the good you do, And with its sharpest thorns And ways you best beware;

The hours of silent grieving, For some one loved and lost The hours of self-denial, 'Twas hard to count their cost;

His eye is ever seeking The we things done for Him; And that shall light the shadows Where death waits, stern and grim.

THE NARROW-MINDED MAN

A writer in the Catholic Herald thus muses on his subject:

This man is a wonder; but not in the sense that a lion is a wonder or a whale is a wonder, but in the sense of how he came into our family at all. As he is at present—we find him as sort of reclaimed wizard, but with his mind still under the wizard influence.

Now let us come to close quarters with this narrow man and try to analyze him. To define a narrow-minded man is as hard as to take the pledge for life. Let us trot him out and see what account he can give of himself. The first real characteristic of being narrow-minded is to be jealous of the success of your neighbor.

The narrow-minded man thinks that the world was specially created for him, to enable him to live, to show off, and to rule over all others. From this thinking to jealousy there is a logical sequence that is quite correct. If he is destined to have a monopoly, what right have any of us to try to climb to anything?

The petty of it is that he should be obliged to wait for a crisis to expand his soul to just and generous proportions after having plagued and tortured many a poor soul by trying to apply his own narrow principles to the solution of all the complex problems of life.

The next characteristic of the narrow-minded man is his vindictive spirit. It is remarkable how the little incidents that happened to bring Jones into handgrips with him, with as much tenacity of memory as an Armenian miser remembers the amount of interest he is to get from his debtors.

A narrow-minded man finds it very difficult to forgive his enemies, simply because he cannot look along any line but a straight one, and on the straight one right in front of him he sees his neighbor's faults like little black hills frowning on him; he is unable to look over these hills or under them or to any side, owing to his narrow outlook on life altogether, so he constantly looks at them and finds that they are inexorable manners of offence; how then can he forgive, he thinks.

Look through the hills, you old narrow site, and see your brother behind it, weeping bitterly because he offended you; and see the Almighty by his side asking you for His sake to forgive the brother that offended you. But how can I see through the

so called hill," he is sure to ask. Set it on fire with a little charity and you will find it nothing more substantial than tissue paper; what you imagine is a hill will become only a pinch of miserable ashes.

Oh, Narrowness! You are the bane of charity, the cause of much heart burning, the plague, the pest, the evil genius that haunts and tortures liberal-minded, good-hearted people into the very madness of desperation, if they—the narrow ones—are in a position of authority, and if not, they are before us in the same capacity as Mr. Ulrich Heep, Scrooge and Marley & Co. Away with you, O narrow-minded man, from the society of all honest, generous, good people, go hide yourself in the dark fissures of the ice-caves of Arctic climates, and live out your cold and narrow life amid the howling of the frosty winds that pile up the south sea symbols of their wrath.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

THE LAUGHTER OF A CHILD

I have heard the feathered songsters Sing their praise at break of day; I have heard the purring brooklet As it sang along its way;

I have heard a mighty chorus Fall a hundred voices strong; I have heard the prima donna Sing her sentimental song;

I have heard the hands of masters Weave rich tapestries of sound; I have heard the Great Musician Bring forth melodies profound;

There is something in its music That no earthly hand can play; There are harmonies celestial That draw all my thoughts away.

DO YOU KNOW THESE THINGS?

Make your mother your best friend, And treat her as politely as if she were a strange lady who did not spend her life in your service.

Put away your playthings when you are through with them. Do not leave them scattered about for others to pick up or stumble over.

Do not grumble or refuse to render a service when requested. Never tease. Express your gratitude on leaving the house where you have been entertained. Seek the hostess and thank her for her kindness.

What would the world do without the Roman calendar of saints—the members of it are so eminently a respectable body by which to name some fashionable avenue for a young people's frolic? They are never brought into requisition as emissaries whose stainless hands are worthy to present our petitions before the great White Throne, but to further levity by contrast with their gravity of saintlike demeanor is considered quite effective by the so-called smart world.

St. Valentine, Bishop and martyr, is made to serve as the patron of a custom as far removed from a respectable body by which to name some fashionable avenue for a young people's frolic? They are never brought into requisition as emissaries whose stainless hands are worthy to present our petitions before the great White Throne, but to further levity by contrast with their gravity of saintlike demeanor is considered quite effective by the so-called smart world.

St. Valentine's date of martyrdom is February 15, in the year 270. He was so much revered that a gate in Rome, now called the Porta Popola, was named after him, Porta Valentiniana. As late as two hundred years afterwards the Roman youths and maidens still persisted in following the ancient pagan custom of celebrating the festival of Pan and Juno by dropping into an urn the names of the young men and women friends, and then drawing by lot. In consequence orgies followed which were opposed to Christian modesty and sobriety.

To guide a popular custom into a right channel the Bishop of Rome transferred the feast of St. Valentine to February 14, and instead of allowing the young people to drop into the urn the names of very

venal men and women, as in former times, they were obliged to substitute the names of saints. And the saint whose name was drawn became the recipient of "dear St. Valentine," whose life he or she should imitate throughout the year.

In the sixteenth century the young people of France began to relapse into the custom practiced before the Christian ethics gave a turn to it through the hands of the Bishop of Rome. To offset this St. Francis de Sales revived the drawing of saints' names, and the courtly saint did much to discourage the debasing of human affections by copying indelicate heathenish practices.

All these precautions have tended towards the development of a healthy wholesome St. Valentine's Day, when even our little folks exchange loving greetings with their parents. In England long ago there was a merry practice of rising before dawn, that one's valentine might not be sun burnt, and greeting every one with the words: "Good morning 'tis St. Valentine's Day." The first accented was obliged to pay a forfeit.

An old custom in the writing of sonnets on St. Valentine's Day, a way back in 1140 Lydgate, the Monk of Bury, wrote one in honor of Henry of England and his consort, Queen Catharine of Arragon. No doubt it was the last the bluebeard sovereign ever received.

Popularity has been the saving grace of our present Valentine custom. The exchange of greetings on this day is now conducted on such a wholesale scale that there is safety in numbers, while the making of the dainty trifles has provided work for thousands of skillful hands, and the writing of appropriate verse has given many a silent poet an outlet. —Catholic Union and Times.

COURTESY TO THEIR HOST

The Western Catholic reads a lesson to a class of Catholics always to be found in every parish when it says: Timeliness may well dispute with cleanliness its proximity to godliness. The one who comes late to a social function is ready with an excuse or an apology. He knows that it is expected as a matter of ordinary courtesy to his host.

There is one class who have not the slightest regard for their fellow guests nor do they recognize the courtesy due their Host. We speak of those who habitually and without just cause are late for Sunday Mass. They are waiting in the common courtesies when dealing with Almighty God.

On Sunday morning the Lord is their Host. He is entertaining them at a great Banquet of His Body and Blood. They are the honored guests yet their sense of the tremendous honor that their Host is paying them is so blunted that they will not show Him the courtesy they show their fellow men in society.

They do not seem to care that it is disrespectful to God, a distraction to the priest at the altar and a scandal to the rest of the congregation. They saunter into church with an indifferent air. One would imagine that they were doing a favor to Almighty God by coming at all.

PRESIDENT WILSON VIEWS RUINS

ESCORTED THROUGH RHEIMS CATHEDRAL BY CARDINAL LUCON

A light blanket of snow covered the ground and the President drove up to the Cathedral and Rheims, ravished and naked in all its misery and desolation, looked like a graveyard in the moonlight. There were more crows in the air, circling over the ruined town, than there were human beings in the littered streets. Cardinal Lucon, Archbishop of Rheims, who stood steadfastly by his charge for four years, during which time scarcely a day passed without a German shell hurling death into the city, met the President. The Cardinal conducted Mr. Wilson to the nave of the Cathedral, where in 1914 the Germans, during their short occupation of it, then placed their wounded, and then, bathed with by incendiary shells that fired the roof, but did not damage the vault.

All over the flagging, worn smooth through the years by millions of feet bringing Frenchmen to an hour's devotion, were piled heaps of rubrics, remnants of stonework and fresco, and fragments of columns and coles, which were accounted the most perfect art. As the President and the Cardinal stood together looking upward while the priest briefly recounted the story of four years of constant destruction, they looked straight through to the clouded sky.

The chalky stone of Champagne, of which the Cathedral was built, is scaling off, the falling snowflakes were mixed with an almost constant dropping of fragments. Pausing a moment before the scene of the crucifix above the north door and before the painting of the coronation of the Virgin over the central door, Mr. Wilson silently viewed the destruction wrought upon these masterpieces by the bombing of the scaffolding when the Germans set fire to the roof of the edifice. Ruins of statues lie about the side door and the great rose window, said to be the most beautiful in the world, where Field Marshal von Moltke in

1870 sat and watched the sunset, is shattered by shell fire until it looks like camouflage set up by the roadside. Mr. Wilson followed the Cardinal to the ruins of the chapel, where old-time kings watched through the night at the time of their anointing, and to the ruins of the museum, where priceless Flemish tapestries were ruined.

WHERE THOUSANDS OF SHELLS FELL

He was shown where thousands of shells thrown from German batteries on two sides burst among the buttresses which support the main structure, and where forests of sculpture which ornament the structure have been scarred, nicked and torn by fragments from the big shells, but very few of which ever reached the vault.

Part of the vault, however, lies a heap of twisted and crumpled wreckage on the main altar, where it was thrown by an explosion which wrecked most of the stained glass windows. Cardinal Lucon took Mr. Wilson outside and they picked their way through rubbish heaps to a point from which they could view the shell-riddled painting of the "Last Judgment," above its south door; the symbols from Noah's ark about the great rose window, the statue of St. Anne and dozens of other works of art of which virtually none escaped. —Catholic Columbian.

PRAYER ILLUMINED SOUL OF GEN. FOCH

The following appreciation of Marshal Foch is from the pen of a non-Catholic contributor to the Evening Bulletin of Philadelphia: "Where are the hidings of his power? A slender man, delicately organized, sixty three years of age, most modest and simple, full of fire and energy, unmoved either by victory or disaster, Foch is also a deeply religious man being a devout Catholic. His brother is a Jesuit priest. Newspaper correspondents speak of seeing him going alone often to the deserted church to meditate on his task and find help in his hour of need. More light is found in one of his letters: 'Not only our France, but all humanity is at stake. Liberty must triumph first. Afterward we may weep in our silent homes, over which float the standards of victory. I approach the twilight of my life with the consciousness of a good servant, and faith in a merciful God who has sustained me in my hardest hours; prayer has illumined my soul.'

"Supported by this faith, fighting in the spirit of hope, Foch won his victory for France and England and Belgium and the world. Memorable his achievements and his name and fame are immortal."

TRIBUTE

By Cecile Joyce Keenan in the Canadian Magazine Upon your lowest step I'll rest—I'll kneel upon the floor— To steep my spirit in the glory shining from your door. 'Twill ease the bond of human tears, (He died that I might live.) Then let me share your sorrow, I who have no son to give.

Life's harp against the lintel hangs, 'tis turned to music; His fearless hands struck from the strings a chord that swept the shies. The wind of fame caught up the strain upon its pinions strong, That all the list'ning years might wake to sing the deathless song.

Then let me kneel beside your door, and share your splendid woe: "To Arms! To Arms!" our country called—I had no son to go, But you who bore, and you who gave, and you who suffer now, Take off the garments of distress, the myrtle from your brow!

Pat on a robe of purple silk, put on the golden crown, Upon the throne of Motherhood in majesty sit down, And let me kneel before you, then in lowly tribute, I Who, when the ravaged world cried out, could send no son to die!

PRIESTS' "HUMAN SIDE"

In her recent volume of reminiscences, "The Middle Years," Katharine Tynan writes thus of her clerical friends: "There is no such exalting word as 'the priest' for other men. He has the 'loneliness' as the old Saints used to put it—very often a heart-breaking malady. On the other hand, he keeps the heart of a boy. There is no such place for jests and laughter as the community rooms of the Order, their students return from which to time like happy school-boys. They are always laughing at each other, playing pranks on each other, telling silly stories of each other. If you are lucky enough to be in their confidence you enjoy a golden humor, a humor without malice."

One of my happiest memories of my English life is of the priests and our friendships with them. In England, from being placed on a pedestal, where he is most uncomfortable, He is always 'the Father' and treated as though he were the Grand Llama. Those good people never understand the human side of the priest. I think no greater kindness can be

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done than to receive a lonely priest into the family life in which he can be perfectly at his ease. A priest's friendship is a deeply touching thing. Where his best wish is to give of necessity—he, the man of no ties—more than those with many ties can return him. He that will not be ruled by the rudder must be ruled by the rock.

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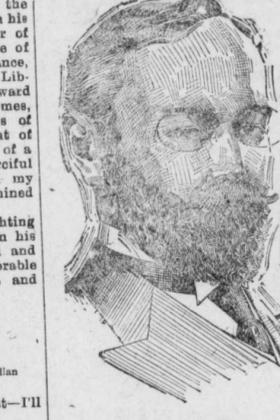
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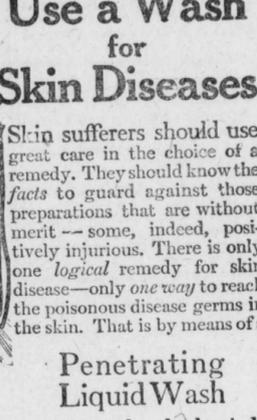
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