

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

THE YOUNG MAN'S AMUSEMENT

We will now speak of the forbidden pleasures. What are the forbidden pleasures? They are dangerous amusements. Among the amusements that are accompanied with danger we may mention in the first place card-playing. If itself an innocent amusement, it quickly degenerates into gambling and sin. It is an amusement in which moderation is difficult. This is especially true of certain games. These games lead themselves easily to playing for money, interest increases and the small sums soon become large stakes. Usually the young man who began to play for recreation ends by playing above his means; the passion grows and he becomes a gambler. These games are too often prolonged into the late hours of the night or even the early hours of the morning; no recreation is obtained; but on the contrary, greater fatigue is the result. These games, too, keep young men from attending Mass on Sundays; they keep them from their duties. Listen to what St. Francis de Sales, the kindest of men, says about card-playing: "Games of this nature are called recreation, and they are invented to serve that purpose, yet they do not by any means serve the purpose for which they were invented, for as a matter of fact they are nothing but a severe mental strain. Look at the players which can be more sombre and gloomy than the attention they pay to the game? No one dares speak a word, or laugh while it is going on; nay, one can hardly cough for fear of causing vexation or giving offense. And after all, the whole pleasure consists in winning money. Is not that a reprehensible pleasure which consists in winning at the expense of one's companions? Truly one can not recommend so ignoble a gratification. The frequenting of taverns and saloons must also be mentioned with the forbidden pleasures. Is it wrong to take a drink when one is thirsty, especially after long working-hours? By no means; you are at perfect liberty to do this, but you must also remember that frequenting drinking-places, especially when doing so becomes habitual, is extremely dangerous. "Behold joy and gladness, eating flesh and drinking wine; let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die" (Is. xxii, 13). This is the maxim of the world; but the Wise Man says of wine that "it will bite like a snake, and will spread abroad poison like a basilisk" (Prov. xxiii, 32). But it is especially the company that you are thrown among in the saloon which is dangerous. There you hear unprincipled suggestions, evil conversations, and this corrupting influence sinks deep into your heart. Disputes arise, curses are heard, brawls ensue. A young man with a Catholic education ought to feel that this is not the company for him. To the evil effects of frequenting saloons experience testifies only too clearly.—Rev. Joseph Schuen in Sacred Heart Review.

one of the greatest lines of the West make this striking statement: "We have to move two and a half tons of freight a mile to pay for two cents' worth of waste."

Think of this a moment. Let us put it in another way. That man meant that when one of the employees of the road, through carelessness or by accident, caused the loss of property worth two cents, the company, to make up for that loss, must haul two and a half tons of stuff a mile. It seems a small matter to crumple up a few sheets of fine writing paper and toss it into the waste-paper basket, does it not? To leave the water running from some spigot all night does not appear to be a serious matter. An electric light needlessly burning through the hours of inactivity is a little thing for a large business house to consider.

And yet, for all those little points of leakage, the firm must do work which is really costly. Valuable machinery must run, men who receive high salaries must serve, every resource of the vast business concern must be taxed, to overcome the cost of the waste of the humblest errand boy.

He never wastes anything. He gathers up the very smoke from the forest fire and uses it somewhere else in His great universe. The mist rising from the sea, touched by His finger, takes shape and comes back in the form of rain to water the earth and make it smile. In all heaven, earth and sky not an atom is permitted to be lost. Everything is saved. Don't waste material entrusted to you. Save opportunity. Save strength of body. Save the credit of the firm by good habits on your part. Don't waste anything belonging to your employer as you would not steal it. Don't waste yourself, so as to unfit to render an honest day's services for the wages you receive.—Edgar L. Vincent in Catholic Columbian.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

THE OFFICER'S ROSARY

A young officer in the army, whose life was anything but an exemplary one, for he was careless in the practice of his duties to God, had, however one virtue; he had bound himself by a promise to say the rosary every day. This, as a man otherwise of honor, he faithfully kept for years. But for everyone who pledges himself to any rule, the occasion must come when the rule grows irksome, and so it was with the officer. One day during the war, he returned at nightfall to his tent, utterly worn out with fatigue, and he threw himself at once on his cot, and immediately fell into a deep sleep. Before midnight he awoke, or better said, his Angel Guardian woke him, and he remembered that he had not said his rosary. As may be imagined, he felt not a little disinclined to get up and recite it. For a while he lay still, debating what he should do. At last he said to himself: "I never broke my word to any man and I will not do so to our Blessed Lady." He sprang up, and as one after another he said his beads, feelings of contrition for his past sins began to enter into his heart. By the time the rosary was finished, he was conscious of an intense desire to go to confession. Kneeling down he made

WASTE

"Willful waste makes woeful want," is an old maxim. In thinking of it most people have in mind some notable waste. But it is also true of trifles—moments, cents, health, opportunities, etc., for many a mickle makes a muckle: At a meeting of railway employees held not long ago, the president of

a solemn promise to do so, saying aloud. "I will go to confession to-morrow morning."

"And why not now?" asked a familiar voice out of the darkness. It was that of the army chaplain, Father Damas, who, through the providence of God, happened to be passing at that moment and heard the officer's words.

Impressed by this coincidence he readily consented and made his confession.

When the day dawned he assisted at the chaplain's Mass and received Holy Communion.

A few hours later the troops were called out to attack, and almost the first shot fired by the enemy struck the young officer and killed him on the spot. The rosary had once more saved a soul.—Selected.

THE REWARD OF FIDELITY

Julien was a poor little orphan boy. A rich man took pity on him and adopted him as his own son. He sent the boy to school in his early years and as he grew older he had him taught a trade.

His apprenticeship over, Julien started out on a tour of France. He travelled as a journeyman for five years, then returned to his former home. He had worked hard and faithfully, but had not earned very much money.

Upon reaching his native town he found that his benefactor had died. His heirs were in the house; and so angry were they at not receiving the sum expected, they were selling off the furniture and belongings, even down to a portrait of the dead relative. Julien was greatly shocked at this heartlessness, and he gave all the money he had for the picture. He reverently carried it to his own poor little chamber and hung it up by a cord. The cord broke, as the picture was heavy, and it fell with a crash to the floor. Upon examination Julien found that the frame was broken. He was considering how he could mend it, when he noticed something inside of it. The objects proved to be diamonds. With them was a piece of paper on which the following words were written: "I am sure that my natural heirs are heartless. I am sure, too, that they will sell my portrait. This will doubtless be bought by some one to whom I have done a kindness. These diamonds are the property of that person. I bequeath them to him."

The document was properly signed so that no one could dispute the boy's right to keep the jewels. He was now very rich; and, out of gratitude, he remembered the poor orphans of the city. He built a large, comfortable home for them, and often told the story of the portrait and the strange will.—Sacred Heart Review.

SLOVENLY WORK

Give me a boy noted for being industrious and who takes so much honest and manly pride in his work that nothing but perfection will suit him, and I shall feel that I am safe in prophesying a successful future for that boy. There is something fine and manly in the boy who takes pride in his work, who feels that it is a reflection on his character to be lazy, and who likes to put an "A" mark on all that he does.

I remember that I once happened to be near two boys of whom each had been given a certain task to do. I do not know how long they had been working on it, but presently I heard one of them say to the other: "There, Joe, that will do. It looks good enough."

"No, it doesn't," the boy called Joe replied. "I'm not going to leave mine until it looks a good deal better than this looks now."

Good for Joe! That boy who sets out in life determined that he will not do careless work is on the right track. Slovenly work will not pass muster in these days. If you have such tendencies, boys, you'd better get rid of them just as soon as possible. Let a man acquire the reputation of being slovenly and he is a sure failure. No man wants him around, and no man with a particle of honest, manly pride will be a person of that description. Pride in one's work, no matter what the work may be, is a tremendous help to success.—Catholic Union and Times.

ELIOT'S NEW RELIGION

Not at all surprising, yet indeed amusing, would a Christian consider the so-called "discovery" of the twentieth century Christianity" by so distinguished a gentleman as President Emeritus Charles W. Eliot of Harvard, says Vincent P. A. Clohisey, B. A., of the law department, Georgetown university, in an article in the New World.

In describing the Creator for modern man as a sleepless, active, energy and will, we hope he will also concede that Creator infinite intelligence and omnipotence; for the order of the universe implies an Intelligent Maker; and infinity of God essentially includes omnipotence. The first cause of all things cannot be "ens ab alio," i. e., a being dependent upon another being for its existence, or made by another being. We name the First Cause, "God." Hence, God is an "ens a se," i. e., existing by His own power, a being absolutely independent and self-sufficient. The Creator, then—"ens a se," the Supreme Being—is infinite, is omnipotent, and, therefore, able to perform miracles, in spite of fin-

ite Dr. Elliot's statement that "men of science have no faith in magic or miracles." We must exclude the word "magic" from the argument; for magic and miracles, in their sources, are as different as heaven and hell.

Thus, even reason alone tells us that miracles are possible, for naught can baffle the power of "Our Father," whom Dr. Elliot himself terms "Almighty." If "Our Father" is "Almighty" in Dr. Elliot's opinion, why not remain consistent in holding that "opinion," and admit that the Almighty really is almighty, and can do all things, including miracles, which—merely consist in suspending the operation of the physical law for special reasons; or better, since God's concursus make possible the operation of the physical law, certainly God may withhold that concursus in special cases wherein His Infinite Intelligence sees fit?

The Bible is a history; the "History of the United States" is a history. Why can we not believe a history which is as well the compilation of inspired writings, as readily as we believe the history of our nation, or of other nations? Therefore, why should we deny the "thrilling experience" of Jonah in the whale, with no further argument than that based upon the impossibility of the Almighty to perform miracles? The Garden of Eden was a place in history, and we should no more deny the events which occurred there than we would dare to doubt in modern history the actual fighting of the Battle of Gettysburg.

If God were able to create a world, certainly there is no incongruity in his giving into the hands of Moses the list of what material is to be covered. The expression that "the sun stood still" was intended to convey the meaning that the day continued, and certainly an omnipotent Being can so command. The Bible, in order to be clear, had to adapt its expressions to the astronomical beliefs of the people of that time, there being no difficulty for future generations to understand the real meaning, though Dr. Elliot does seem to mistake the meaning slightly. An Englishman may call a shoe a "boot," and yet we understand him to mean what Americans ordinarily call a "shoe."

However, we need not look in the Bible or history for miracles, but will find them occurring in our own day, and especially at Lourdes, in France, whether Dr. Elliot has ever seen them happen or not. If finite beings, such as Dr. Elliot and all of us, were to understand all that the Infinite Being understands and does, our evidently limited and finite intellects would be equal to the unlimited and infinite intellect of God—and that is contradictory! Miracles can be unmistakably distinguished from magic in this, that the former are divine, and to manifest this supernatural character, must essentially be in promotion or defense of the interests of morality and religion.

Some of the salient features of Dr. Elliot's statements have been merely touched upon in this comment. However, a protracted dissertation should be superfluous to argue such rationally evident facts as are assailed by Dr. Elliot. Notwithstanding the radical theories now and then proposed and reiterated by some well-meaning theorists of our "enlightened" twentieth century, as the same theories have been advanced with as little weight of argument from time immemorial by men venturing to force their prominence into strange, unwelcome and extraneous places, the

13,386,565 CATHOLICS IN BRITISH EMPIRE

CHURCH'S PROGRESS IN GREAT BRITAIN. OVER SIX THOUSAND CONVERSIONS LAST YEAR

The steady progress which the Church is making in Great Britain is again borne out by the figures given in the English Catholic Directory for 1914. The Catholic population of England and Wales is given as 2,100,446, as compared with 1,793,038 last year. The estimate of the Catholic population of Scotland, as compared with last year, shows a decline. This year it is 518,969; last year it stood at 547,336. For Ireland the same figures have been given in both years, namely, 3,242,670.

The returns of conversions in England and Wales during the year, with several dioceses not reporting, show a total of 6,322. With regard to priests, secular and regular, the number in England and Wales has advanced by 34, and in Scotland, by 14, there being now a grand total of 4,449 Catholic priests within the English and Scottish provinces. Churches, chapels and stations, excluding places where Mass is said only occasionally, have increased by the gratifying number of 82, the total now standing at 2,264, as against 2,182 at the end of 1912.

Altogether, the Catholic population of the British Empire in Europe numbers 5,800,526; in Asia, 288,898; in Africa, 498,965; in America, 3,271,358, and in Australia, 1,184,500. The total Catholic population of the British Empire is therefore 13,386,565. The general population is 417,148,000. The number of Catholics in the United States and the American possessions of the Pacific is 24,189,941. The total of the Catholics in English-speaking countries is therefore 37,576,506. The Catholic population of the world is estimated at 298,734,824.—Standard and Times.

world in general will still continue on the ever upward path of Christian civilization and progress. The civilization and progress of the world will ever owe its developments to the paramount influence of Christianity.—Intermountain Catholic.

AN EPISCOPALIAN MARRIAGE CASE

During the Protestant Episcopal Convention, held in New York about three months ago, the Catholic Church was vituperated for presuming to have a marriage law of its own. The Convention had not been closed very long before Episcopalians of New York were startled at seeing a gentleman, who had been set free by the civil law, married to a new bride in one of their own churches by one of their own clergy. Some asked an explanation and were told by the clergyman involved that the matter had been referred to the bishop, with whose approval he had officiated at the marriage in question. This does not seem to have stopped discussion in New York and elsewhere; for an Episcopalian periodical appealed lately to its readers to trust the bishop, giving these two reasons why they should do so: that he had consulted a lawyer and that in such matters he is extremely conscientious.

We do not for a moment challenge the conscientiousness of all concerned, the bishop, the clergyman, the bridegroom and the bride; but we think Episcopalians would be better off, if in such matters they had something more stable to rely on than counsel's opinion and the bishop's conscientiousness. We have the greatest respect for the legal profession. But if one wishes to build a great bridge he does not consult a mining engineer, nor if about to construct a system of waterworks does he quite ignore the hydraulic engineer. Similarly, in matters of ecclesiastical law one does not go to one however learned in civil law. The bishop's conscience will not supply for his deficiency in science. How much more satisfactory would it have been had the bishop been able to refer the case to a curia of his own, the members of which, learned in the letter of the law and precedents governing its application could have given him a clear authoritative decision on its merits. This was impossible, because, at best, the Episcopal marriage law is no more than rudimentary.

The fact is that Christian marriage is one thing; marriage as viewed by the civil law is altogether another. The case we have quoted shows that no body of Christians can defend Christian marriage without a definite body of law on the subject. To those acquainted with the case we would say: think of all the distinctions it may have involved, between what was antecedent to the original marriage and what was consequent, between the absolute and the relative, between the antecedent doubt and the consequent, between the doubt concerning the law and the doubt concerning the fact. Hitherto, Episcopalians, earnestly as they may desire to defend Christian marriage, have been unable to do so efficaciously, just because they have no real law on the subject. There must have been some among them to comprehend this. If they cannot induce their less understanding brethren to consent to legislation on the subject, at least they may restrain such from reviling the Catholic Church because it has its Christian law on the matter.—America.

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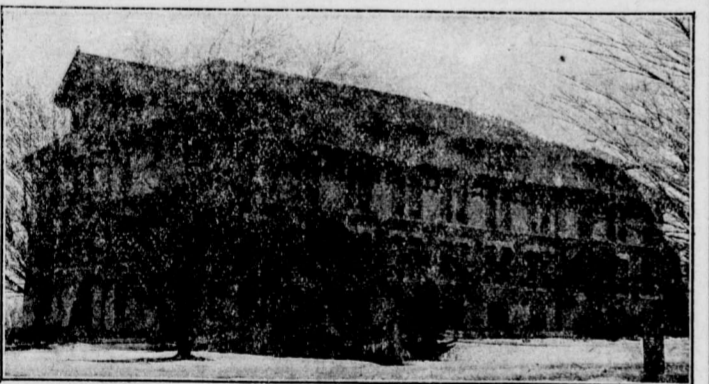
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