

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN.

One of the most unprofitable ways of spending time is the practice, to which many persons are addicted, of brooding over the mistakes one has made in life, and thinking what he might have been, or achieved, if he had not done, at certain times, just what he did do.

Mistakes in Life. Almost every unsuccessful man, in looking over his past career, is inclined to think that it would have been wholly different but for certain slips and blunders—certain hasty, ill-considered acts into which he was betrayed almost unconsciously and without a suspicion of their consequences.

As he thinks of all the good things of this world—honor, position, power, and influence—of which he has been deprived in some mysterious, inexplicable way, he has no patience with himself; and, as it is painful and humiliating to dwell long upon one's own follies, it is fortunate if he does not imply to others—friends and relatives—in his disappointments. Perhaps, as education has never been free from mistakes—mistakes, indeed, of every kind—he imputes the blame to his early training, in which habits of thoughtless and accuracy, or, again, of self-reliance and independence of thought may not have been implanted. Perhaps a calling was chosen for him by his parents, without regard to his peculiar talents or tastes and preferences; or, if he was allowed to choose for himself, it was when his judgment was immature and unfit for the responsibility. The result was that the square man got into the round hole, or the triangular man into the square hole, or the round man squeezed himself into the triangular hole.

Nothing Exceptional in These Mistakes.

Now the fact is that, in all these mistakes, there is nothing exceptional. They are just what befall—all, or in part—every man who is born in a civilized country. No circumstances under which any man has been born and fitted for a career have been entirely happy. No man's parents or friends have, in all respects, acted wisely by him. In every person's education, hundreds of things have been done amiss—hundreds of helpful things omitted, and hundreds of injurious ones perpetrated. After centuries of investigation and experiment, the wisest educators are all "at sea" regarding some of the most crucial questions—are utterly at variance in reference to the best methods of training. They cannot agree about the value of Greek and Latin; about the co-education of the sexes; about the value of exercises in elocution, rhetoric, and debate; how far courses of study should be elective; how far education should be practical or have direct reference to one's future calling; and about many other vital matters. There is, probably, not a man living who, in reviewing his life, cannot discover in it a multitude of mistakes, as contrasted with an ideal life, one of duty, discipline, and wisdom. Compared with his early dream, it is a thing of shreds and patches—imperfect accomplishments, endless fluctuations of purpose—so that he can hardly recognize his identity in all the shifting moods of mind, and changes of plan.

In view of these considerations, it has been justly said that to see a man, poker in hand, on a wet day, dabbling at the cards, moodily counting the world's mistakes against him, is neither a dignified nor engaging spectacle; and our sympathy flags with the growing conviction that people are constantly apt to attribute a state of things to one particular condition or mischance, which, sooner or later, must have happened from some inherent weakness and openness to attack, and which, when that, which when themselves attribute will success or mischance to separate distinct mistakes—as, for instance, to the choice of a certain adviser, or the engaging in some special speculation—those who have to observe them trace all to character. They see that, if failure had not come at such a juncture, it must have come at some other, from certain flaws in the man's nature—that mistakes simply mark occasions when he was tested. We see a career a hundred chances thrown away and wasted, not at all from accident, though the actor, looking back, does not know why he chose the wrong—being the last to remember that a crisis is the occasion for hidden faults and predominant influences to declare themselves, so that his mistakes were, in a manner, inevitable.

Organize Victory Out of Mistakes.

Many of the complaints men make of their miscarriages arise from an exaggerated estimate of their abilities. It is the only way they can explain why they do not occupy the places to which, as they think, their talents entitle them. If they are at the end of the competition in life's race—poor when they should be famous—it is all owing to their not having seized opportunities and to their having listened to bad advisers or permitted some conquerable obstacle to discourage them. They forget that thousands of men make such mistakes, yet succeed in spite of them—that as Rev. Frederic W. Robertson says, "He is not the greatest general who makes the fewest mistakes, but he who organizes victory out of mistakes."

A favorite form of self-upbraiding is to blame oneself for not manifesting more force of will in some crisis—as if will power were something which a man can put into himself when it is lacking, or as if it will, unprovoked by power to use it, is of any value. As a rule, the man who fails in a career in consequence, as he thinks, of some particular mistake, may be sure he would have failed from some other one, had that which he deploras not been made, simply because the origin of his mistakes is in himself, and not in external circumstances.—William Matthews, in Catholic Union and Times.

The Test of Good Breeding.

What can be more cruel to a sensitive soul than to be conscious that you are thinking of and observing his deform-

ity or misfortune—that you are wondering "how it happened?"

"Think of the tremendous handicaps which those poor people have to struggle against, and never remind them that you ever notice them. No one knows the struggles, the embarrassments, the chagrin, the mortification, the discouragement which these poor people suffer."

A noted cripple once said that he always gauged his friends by the degree in which they reminded him of his deformity. A well-bred gentleman will never apparently notice any defect or deformity in another, or remind him even indirectly of his misfortune; but they will try to make him forget them.

Never to notice or speak of that which can possibly give pain or embarrassment to another is the test of good breeding. We often see people in the cars and on the streets stare at deformities, physical defects and deficiencies of unfortunates, in a manner which almost brings tears to our eyes.

Horace Mann says: "If there is a boy in school who has a club foot, do not let him know you ever saw it. If there is a boy with ragged clothes, do not talk about clothes within his hearing. If there is a hungry one, give him part of your dinner. If there is a dull one, help him to get his lessons."—Success.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

COAINA, THE ROSE OF THE ALGONQUINS.

By Anna H. Dorsey.

CHAPTER VII.

LIKE A SHEEP BEFORE HER SHEARERS, SHE WAS DUMB.

When Coaina saw Tar-ra-hee watching from the crag, and knew that he must have seen her leave the Iroquois lodge followed by Ahdeek, she felt as if some one had given her a heavy blow on her head; she staggered and grew faint and dizzy; then everything like brightness faded out of the air, and she fell to the earth, beneath a consciousness. Ahdeek stood, for a moment, perplexed and irresolute, but an idea suddenly presented itself which not only solved the difficulty of his position, but turned the accident to account; so, lifting the light and insensible form of Coaina in his strong arms, he sped swiftly to the village of the Algonquins, passing a wondering group he met without speaking, until he reached the lodge of Altonnon, who met him at the door with her hair dishevelled and her face disfigured with weeping, surrounded by three or four of her relatives, who all pressed silently but eagerly forward to look upon the pallid face lying so helplessly upon the shoulder of the Iroquois.

She had alarmed the whole village, the night before, by reporting Coaina's disappearance, professing all the time, the greatest grief and uneasiness about her, even while she secretly exulted in the certainty that she had fallen into the snare spread for her by her malicious arts. Now, when she saw Coaina brought to her door dead, as she thought, her pretended grief was changed to genuine alarm, and wringing her hands, she uttered the mournful and peculiar cry called by the Indians *wah-wah-wah*, prolonging its shrill cadences until the whole air echoed with its sad notes, and one after another, within range of its sound, hurried hither, until quite a crowd had collected in and around the lodge.

"She is not dead," said Ahdeek, laying his light burden down upon a pile of skins and rugs hastily thrown together by Winonah and some of the women. "She is not dead," he continued, as Altonnon passed in her lamentations, and sorrowful look came over her ear was strained to catch all that he had to say, "but the *Tah* was too much for her."

"The *Tah*!" screamed a woman, drawing her two little girls close to her. "Was Coaina—the child of our Blessed Mother—the Rose of our tribe there?"

"Esa! esa! she the head of the Confraternity of the Rosary!" exclaimed another.

"And to think we were always taught to try and be like her," added a young girl.

"I almost felt afraid to touch the hem of her garment!" said Winonah.

"Oh, the detestable hypocrite!" said an old squaw, wagging her head.

"To think how we all loved her!" said a young girl, sadly.

"Think of her deceiving Father Etienne and our young chief! I is good she was caught in time!" said a grave looking woman, who had not yet spoken.

Old Ma-kee now edged his way feebly through the crowd, and stood looking down on the still, piteous face of Coaina. The muscles in his old withered cheeks worked, and a wonderfully tender and sorrowful look came over the usual fierce expression of his eyes. He stooped down and smoothed her small dusky hand, and laid his own shrunken, tawny hand lightly upon her forehead. Then he stood up and said: "Tahic has done no evil. I saw a white kid stung to death by a moccasin; I killed the snake. I was young then; and now I am old, but my arm is not too withered to strike down the snake that stung Tahic. Where is the Iroquois?"

There was a fierce, deadly gleam in the old pagan's eye as he looked around the circle of dusky faces who were watching him; they moved back, for as he moved his arm it lifted his blanket, and they saw that he wore a long, bright knife in his girdle, and a hatchet, keenly sharpened. But Ahdeek had long since slipped away, and was heard of, except afterwards, hunting in the forests of Maine. A grin look of contempt stole over Ma-kee's features, then he turned to Altonnon and said: "The snows of nearly eighty winters have brought me wisdom. I see what I see and know what I know. I found a young pigeon once in the forest, with its wing broken. I put it into a nest of young crows, and watched. The old mother crow came home and tore the pigeon to pieces to feed her own young." Then he

marched off, well satisfied that he had struck no chance blow at Altonnon.

"It's no wonder old Ma-kee likes her," said Winonah, "since she goes to the *Tah*, and is a pagan like himself. But see! Coaina opens her eyes!" she cried, gazing down with gratified smiles on the mournful and beautiful face of her cousin.

"Go for Father Etienne, Winonah. Friends, stand back, and give the unfortunate one air and water. She must not perish in her wickedness. Oh, to think, after all my care—oh! oh! oh!"—cried Altonnon, quite overcome, or rather pretending to be so.

Every one Winonah met on her way to Father Etienne's, she told the news that Coaina had "spent the night in the medicine lodge of the Iroquois, and assisted at their superstitious rites. She went with Ahdeek, and everybody knew Ahdeek; yes, she was at the *Tah*, and everybody knew what that was."

"So," thought some, "we have been deceived." But most of those who heard the strange and dreadful news were shocked and bewildered. If that bright and glorious star, worshipped with divine honors by their fathers in the primitive days, and still regarded by the Indians as the most splendidly beauteous of all that spangled the blue robes of heaven, had fallen a black and shapeless mass at their feet, they could not have been more amazed than at the fall of Coaina, in whom they had never seen speck or flaw, and who was, after the Blessed Virgin, the purest model of womanly and Christian virtues they knew on earth. So blithe, so modest, so amiable towards all; "who," they wondered, "could ever feel envy or bitterness for Coaina? What enemies had she to plan such slanders? None. Then, alas! it must be true!" Alack-a-day! the evil days had indeed come for the young Algonquin maid, since even her best and dearest friends and kinsmen were deceived. There was none to help her on earth. Only the Great Spirit and His Immaculate Mother knew the innocence of that soul, which was to suffer such keen sorrows, holding it in a divine sanctuary; the powers of earth might crucify her flesh, but never pluck down or wither a single blossom of her crown; for there she was eternally safe. But having formed her life on theirs, she must drink, with resignation, of their bitter chalice—be, like Mary, suspected of evil, and, like Jesus, be reviled and cast out by her own people.

And the good Father Etienne—he was not human! There was no supernatural power to tell him that all this condemnatory, circumstantial evidence against Coaina was utterly false. He was speechless when Tar-ra-hee told him what he had witnessed with his own eyes. It seemed like the culminating proof of all else that had been whispered against her. When left alone, the good priest, with a sharp pang at heart, entered the sanctuary to mourn, in silence, over the fall of this child of many graces, who had not only given such scandal to religion, and humiliated Christians, but had afforded a new triumph to the heathen and unbelievers, and to pray for guidance in conducting the trial on the morrow. Winonah waited long to see him, and when, at length, left the chapel, she delivered her errand. Without speaking, he turned and walked quietly to Altonnon's lodge, decorated with his timbrel crowded with the friends and kinsmen of Altonnon and Tar-ra-hee, sitting or standing, in grave and boding silence, around the apartment, while in the midst, seated upon a rude bench, was Coaina, silent, pallid and drooping, her long, graceful hands folded together on her knees, while her attire, usually trim and neat, was damp and disarranged, and her long, rich tresses fell carelessly over her shoulders to the carpeted floor. There she sat, like Job, accused of a hundred sins of which she was guiltless. There she sat, like her Lord in the hall of Pilate, awaiting the judgment of an extreme penalty for the crimes of others. Way was made for Father Etienne who, to the surprise of all, was followed by Tar-ra-hee, stern, grave and decorous, his rich blanket falling in graceful folds from his shoulders, and wearing no ornament except a large silver medal of the Blessed Virgin.

Coaina looked up when she saw the skirt of Father Etienne's *soutane*, with a gleam of hope in her eyes; but when she saw his stern countenance and averted eyes, and just behind him the grave and clouded face of Tar-ra-hee, over which gleamed not a single ray of pity, a vivid crimson dyed her face, neck and hands; her eyelids, heavy with their long, dusky lashes, dropped upon her cheeks, and her lips, now suddenly grown pallid quivered, with agony.

"Coaina," said Father Etienne, "stand up and speak the truth when I question you. For the sake of your own soul and religion, I adjure you, in the Sacred Names of Jesus and Mary, to speak the truth, and nothing but the truth."

"I will, my Father," she answered, in a low, distinct tone, as she arose.

"Where did you spend the night?"

"In the medicine lodge of the Iroquois."

"What did you see there?"

"I saw the *Tah*."

"Were you taken to the medicine lodge by violence?"

"No, my Father," she said, looking up with a bewildered expression.

"Who did you see there you knew?"

"Only Ahdeek, my Father."

"Why did you go there, Coaina?"

"I got a letter from you telling me to come."

Here every dusky face leaned forward, and Father Etienne knitted his brows, while his face exhibited the strongest emotion.

"That is false, unfortunate child! It is also a slander," he said sternly. "Where is that letter?"

"I have it not, my Father. Ahdeek tore it up."

"What did it say?" asked Father Etienne.

"It said, 'two girls of the Iroquois are dying, and will not be baptized until you come. Come quickly to the

lodge beyond the pines outside the Iroquois village.' That is what I remember. Your name, my Father, was to it. I thought I obeyed you. After I got there I saw that I was entrapped, but I could escape."

"That is a well got up story, Coaina; shame upon you!" said Altonnon, stepping forward. "No letter came to her, my Father. Winonah says that she left Coaina to nurse her; but she left her and went away without saying where. It is like the mantle Ahdeek gave her. Ahdeek has been Coaina's lover since she was a child."

"Did Ahdeek give you that mantle, Coaina?" asked Father Etienne.

"I was told that—that—Tara-hee had left it for me," she replied, gently. "Oh, the bold one!" exclaimed her aunt. "I told her before Winonah that Ahdeek had brought her the mantle—she knows I did. And now I must speak. Coaina is not honest. She is not true. She steals my money, and sends it to Montreal to buy furs. She has told me many lies. My life has been worn out with her, and trying to hide her faults. Her ingratitude and hypocrisy I could bear, but I dared not let her carry dishonor into the lodge of Tara-hee."

"There are calumnies," says a modern writer, "so great as to confuse innocence itself." Thus it was with poor Coaina. She saw that the evidence against her was strong, without being true. Events had encompassed her like a net, and confirmed all the slanders of her enemies. Everything made her appear more guilty; there was no witness to disprove the charges, and, benumbed in her still anguish, she said not a word, but, "like a sheep before her shearers, she was dumb."

"Miserable child," said Father Etienne, breaking the breathless silence, while tears rolled unbidden over his aged cheeks. "There is nothing left for you but penance for your vices and crimes. You have brought great scandal on religion, you have wounded charity, you have been guilty of base ingratitude, you have outraged decency, and, to crown your sins, you have renounced the bitter Passion of Jesus Christ, and pierced with a sword of grief the heart of His tender Mother. I cannot pronounce your sentence until the assembly investigate your case and consult upon it. I came here hoping to find you innocent; I go away believing you guilty. Go to your room, and remain there until your people decide upon your punishment, and may Almighty God bring you to repentance."

Coaina arose, folded her hands upon her bosom, and bowed in token of obedience, then walked tremblingly away to the curtained corner of the lodge called hers. Lifting the curtain, she disappeared from the eyes of her traducers and enemies, and falling prostrate upon the floor, her soul sent up its strong appeal unto Him who alone knew her innocence; to Him who would never turn away from her, and on whose strong arm she could lean on this her day of tribulation; to Him in Whom she would trust, even though He might slay her. But the passion of her grief was bitter. She was only human, and this casting of her out, this rending of the ties which had so long bound her to her friends, her director, her kinsmen, was terrible to bear, and gave separate and fierce wounds to her natural life, as each one was parted asunder. The cross was heavy to day, but on the morrow it would become almost insupportable, while the clouds hanging gloomily above her would gather more darkly around her way.

TO BE CONTINUED.

IMITATION OF CHRIST.

OF A PURE AND FULL RESIGNATION OF OURSELVES FOR OBTAINING FREEDOM OF HEART.

Aim only at this, pray for this, desire this, that thou mayest be divested of all self-seeking, and thus naked mayest follow thy naked Jesus; that thou mayest die to thyself, and live eternally to Me.

Then all vain imaginations will vanish, all evil disturbances and superfluities.

Then also immoderate fear will leave thee, and inordinate love will die.

Lost time is never found again, and what we call time enough always proves little enough.—Franklin.

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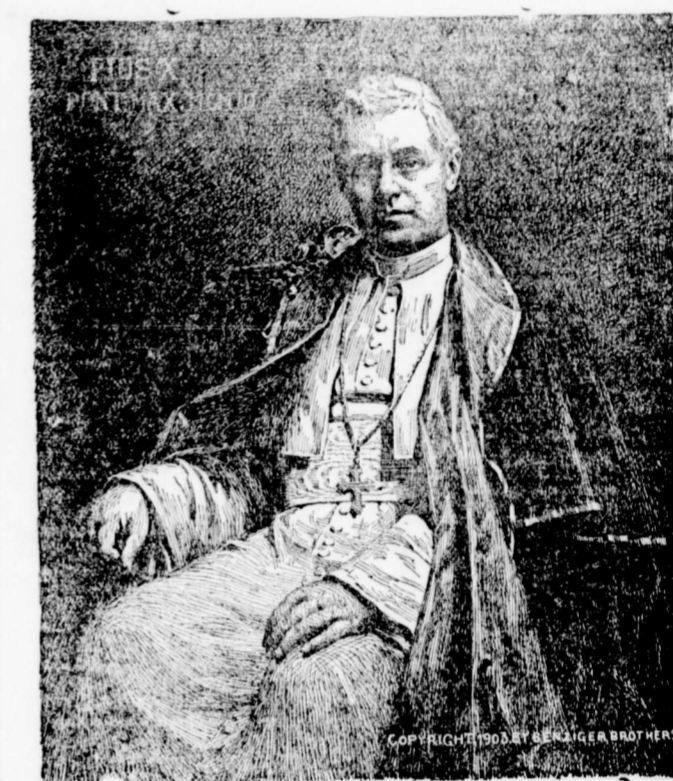
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