

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN.

Some Practical Advice. When a young man first goes out into the great world and is thrown among other men of all characters, habits and professions—especially if he is away from home and has had little training in social intercourse—he is apt to make many blunders if he be all forward. He should lay down certain principles for his own guidance, so as to be benefited by these meetings with other men, so as to establish a reputation for nice manners and good sense, and so as to participate in no evil by any of the ways in which that may be done.

Reference to superiors. First of all, the well-bred young man will be respectful toward age, superior wisdom, and high station. The failure to show this reverence is due to a false notion of one's own importance. Real worth is modest and is quite ready to recognize the just claims of others to their fullest extent. The conceited thrust himself forward and occupy the places of better men, often to their own confusion when they are called back.

Slowness to express opinions. When a young man is in a company largely composed of his elders, it is a mistake for him to see, as if he knew it all. Even if he be a college graduate and his acquaintances be only poorly educated, they know more than he does of the wisdom that is garnered in the great university of life. When he is talkative, positive and dogmatic among them, a quiet smile often rests upon their lips. They pity his presumptuousness. They know that the day will come, if he has any common sense at all, when he will regret his confident self-assertion. To listen to others, to think, to compare, to learn, these will occupy his attention. He may help the talk along in a quiet, pleasant way, especially if he has any special information on the subject or if his views be asked. But it is not well for him to take the center of the stage and monopolize it.

Avoid detraction. In almost every company of men the absent are spoken of disparagingly. Do not discuss the failings of others. Say, nothing, as a rule, behind a man's back that you would not say to his face. Unless charity require you to make a man's shortcomings known, so as to prevent him from doing further injury, give him the benefit of silence. Make a practice of finding out the good qualities of your acquaintances, and get the reputation of always speaking kindly of the absent. Give no countenance to immoral and filthy language. Never by word, act, or smile, lend any encouragement to those depraved men who relate dirty stories. They intrude into almost every society. Do not listen to them. Do not laugh at them. If you cannot prevent them from telling their vile jokes, go away from them. If you cannot prevent your manner that obscenity is odious to you. When it is a duty, hesitate not to speak out and denounce such talk—not necessarily with temper or with feigned speech, but gently yet firmly so as to excite to repentance rather than to anger. Nevertheless if a story can not be put to improper conversation except at a loss of the story teller's temper, stop it no matter how troubled he may get to be.

Be true to the present. It is the one duty that rests upon you—the one that no man can neglect and win the crown. You may find only a cross where you confidently looked for a crown. It is God's way. The day of your coronation is not yet. When it time for the crowning, the crown will be ready. In the cemetery of your apparent failures there will be a resurrection, and it will be to newness of life, and your eyes will see it. Your buried influence and energy and hope and love will rise again and these will come to your coronation waving their palms. Be true to your best. It is all God exacts.

Good Men. The men who have served their fellowmen the best are those who have most cheerfully sacrificed for their good. They may be young and out of their generation—for the thoughts and aims of the good are often beyond the grasp of the masses for whom they toil—but they have planted the harvest. Humanity is not unkind. Nature is not forgetful. As rains filter into the earth so do the philanthropies of the noble-hearted sink into generous soil, and of that soil there will grow forth the gladness of the Lord. God never allows any good to go to waste, and so if you have any kindness to show, show it now.

Quick Decision Necessary. If, in the battle with difficult circumstances, we are thrown down, we must pick ourselves up with quick decision, and not waste a moment in complaint or discouragement. We should emphasize to ourselves the necessity for picking ourselves up immediately, and going directly on, over and over again—both for our own benefit, and the benefit of those whom we have the privilege of helping.

Your Appearance. Poverty is no excuse for a bad appearance. No business man, no progressive man will accept it. There is no excuse for it, as any one will find if he makes a bad appearance anywhere or under any circumstances. No recommendations as to ability or trustworthiness will outweigh the testimony you give of yourself in your person and dress. "A young man bearing a letter of introduction and recommendation," says "Men," called at an office, seeking a position as bookkeeper. The letter was invalidated by the young man's appearance. Though but twenty-five, his shoulders were bent. His sentences were uncertain, his eyes wavering, his linen soiled, his frayed necktie askew, his teeth disgustingly black, his face and his clothes unbrushed and worn awry. A business man who respected himself would not have such a frowny man about his office. Every one of these faults could have been corrected without cost, save of care. Poverty could not be pleaded as an excuse. That young

man will have a hard time, and will probably blame his friends, the times, and his luck for his failure, when his disgusting slovenliness is responsible."—Success.

Tests of Character. The things that oppose us are the things which God has sent to try us. He is laying adversity at our feet to test our patience or stimulate our faith; He is breaking up our nest that we may try our wings; He is casting us adrift that we may learn to use our oars. Strength of character is disclosed by the occasion, and God sends the occasion that we may see our character in its proper light. There is always opposition going up stream, there is none going down, yet no man with his boat's prow up the river goes over the cataract. There is no test of character in drifting; there is in battling against wind and tide.

Riches that are Worth While. What is more common than to see men starve the soul, and paralyze the growth and expansion of the finer sentiments, which alone make life worth living, for the sake of the coarser pleasures of the senses, or in order to pile up material wealth, the effect of which is, as a rule, to draw us farther and farther away from the life of the spirit? There are hundreds of wealthy homes in this country in which one will not find a single inspiring book, picture, or statue, or any work of art of spiritual significance,—anything, in short, that elevates the thoughts of its inhabitants or touches their lives to finer issues. There is a great display of vulgar wealth, rich carpets and tapestries, and costly furniture,—a fortune in decorations,—but nothing whatever to appeal to the spiritual qualities.

In many a home of poverty we find more that inspires to noble living, that lifts life above the commonplace and the sordid, and that stirs the souls to higher flights, than in the mansions of some of our millionaires. There are no costly paintings or tapestries, it is true, no priceless bric-a-brac, or crowding of useless ornaments,—perhaps not even carpets on the floors; but one sees a few well-worn volumes whose character reveals that of the owners, feels a sense of real refinement, and an outflow of spiritual atmosphere and an outflow of love and helpfulness that invests the humble dwelling with a beauty and charm more mousy-wealth can not command.

Beauty of soul, goodness of heart and a cultivated spiritual nature are the furnishings that transform a hotel into a palace, and without which the most luxurious mansion is poor and tawdry and desolate. It is not the possession of money that constitutes wealth, that gives the highest satisfaction and awakens the consciousness of noble achievement, the assurance that he is reading aright the sealed message which the Creator placed in his hand at birth. Only soul-wealth, generous disinterestedness, the love that seeks not its own, and hands that help and hearts that sympathize constitute true riches and fill the possessor with the joy of one who knows that he is fulfilling the real purpose of his life.—Success.

Some Helpful Thoughts. We know how the love of God has preserved the saints in tranquility and peace amidst all the greatest troubles and anxieties and persecutions of this world, the most violent sufferings of mind and body. Let us ask for love like that. The conquest of the senses is an essential part of gaining the spirit of prayer. We must study to use them modestly and reverently, keeping them in order, and subjecting them to discipline.—Father Coleridge. How many days have been spoiled by the unkind word, the angry mood, the foolish spite, or unreasonable prejudice. It is very easy for us to go forth any day and make life miserable for those we meet. It is well to have a past of which we may feel proud, but it is better a thousand times to be making a past to which which generations to come may point with even a greater measure of pride.—Leigh Mitchell Hodges. It is the living deeds of men and not the toiling words of finished discourse that tell the true patriots. It is not our green fields that make us love so tenderly our native land; it is the noble lives of our citizens, the glorious achievements of our forefathers, the characteristics of our people, these and a thousand other living things around which cling our fondest memories and hopes, and make us love the land we call our home.—Father Corrigan.

The Joy of Overcoming. There is something in the very consciousness that we are master of the situation that confronts us, especially if it is difficult, that is a wonderful tonic. The sense of mastery, of victory in what we undertake, is a perpetual uplift to the life. It is a powerful tonic to ambition, a perpetual stimulus to endeavor. A man feels larger every time he surmounts an obstacle which, perhaps, seemed insurmountable. There is a sense of added power in every victory, a feeling of enlargement at the very thought of overcoming. A feeling of exultation thrills through the whole system when we have conquered, when we have proved ourselves master of the situation. There is an exhilaration which accompanies the sense of victory that makes us long to undertake even harder things. Achievement is not only a mental, but also a physical tonic. Thousands of semi-invalids and people who have been ailing for years have suddenly blossomed into health and vigor after some great success or good fortune has come to them, which has changed an iron to a velvet environment. The feeling that the wolf has been banished forever from the door by some great effort of ours is a wonderful stimulant to the physical being. After a man has struggled years and years, perhaps, on some invention, and has been balancing 'twixt hope and despair, suffering defeats and discouragements—barely able to keep his

family from starving while he has been struggling to supply the missing link in his device—when the consciousness first dawns upon him that he has found the secret, that he has solved the mystery, and that henceforth all that has troubled and perplexed him is destined to be wiped away, that in place of the dejection, scorn, and contempt which have been poured upon him as a crank, there will be admiration, praise and fame, the change wrought both in the physical and the mental man is almost miraculous. The rebound makes a complete revolution in his life. Hope takes the place of despair, confidence of doubt, assurance of uncertainty.—Success.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

STORIES ON THE ROSARY. BY LUCIA EMILY DOBRY.

FOOL'S PARADISE. Cora Hazelton passed through her convent school days as a great many girls do. Surrounded by religious influences, with the faith and practices of the Church carefully taught her, she entered into the spirit of it all as little as she possibly could. Religious instruction was to her only another kind of lesson, duller than geography but not quite so disagreeable as history which she cordially disliked. Of course when the other girls of her own age made their first Communion she did the same, going afterwards to the Sacraments as seldom as the convent rules permitted, and that in a very perfunctory way. She escaped as many of the extra devotions as she could, refused to think of being a Child of Mary, and what she was obliged to do in the way of visits to the Blessed Sacrament, the Rosary, etc., all seemed part and parcel of the school regulations from which, on her introduction to society, she would be freed.

Bright, clever and quick, Cora was adored by her schoolmates and liked by the nuns who grieved in secret over her thoughtlessness, hoping and praying that some would one day take root. It was impossible not to like her sweet manners and charming ways, which won her the popularity she so thoroughly enjoyed. Convent days having come to an end at last, Cora returned to her aunt, Lady Charrington, who owned a big London house, and who, wherever she was, lived the life of a fashionable woman of the world. Cora's parents having died when she was a baby, she had been sent to her mother's sister, together with binding instructions that she was to be brought up a Catholic, her mother having been received into the Church when she was a young girl. Lady Charrington, who took everything concerning this world and the next very easily, had expressed a little mild surprise at the brief letter announcing her sister's change of faith, and there her interest ceased. Her natural virtue of honor obliged her, according to the terms of the agreement, to send her to the aforementioned convent.

There certainly never was any one more bent upon enjoying herself than the said Cora, who was a tiny person rather reminding one of a robin. Her restless eyes were very bright, there was a lovely flush of red through her dark complexion, and as when she talked and dreamed they revealed nutmeg teeth, she had a very good looking figure, and the laugh so often heard was very childlike and musical. Cora smiled on the world, and her world smiled on her. Until she came out she had known very little about gay society, and she here to know was to love, and she was so absolutely fascinated and charmed by it. Pretty, rich and young, she attracted the attention she loved to receive, and her little head was soon filled with thoughts of amusement and frivolity of every sort and kind, to the exclusion of deeper thoughts. As Lady Charrington was a very easy-going person, and her cousins playful girls, her home was an agreeable one. Cora had not long been in society before the impressions, slight as they were, of her convent days were thoroughly effaced, and she became imbued with that "worldliness" which a holy writer says is "only not a sin, because it is rather a state than an act, or if you will, it is a name for an attitude of the soul towards God which is not a sin because there was no reason to suppose that she had a vocation for the religious state, it was clearly her duty to take her appointed place in that position of life to which she had been born, but as a Catholic, in making pleasure the end and aim of her existence, she was distinctly wrong. Amusement with her was not taken by way of recreation; moderation was not considered at all in the matter, and it never occurred to her to devote a due proportion of her time to God. She would not at all have agreed with the saint who said that balls should be enjoyed as we eat mushrooms, "few in number and far between." She liked as much as she could get of everything of the kind, gradually becoming more and more absorbed in the pursuit of pleasure, and more forgetful of Almighty God, more indifferent to all and everything not connected with this world.

So worldliness, which is a very insidious form of self-love, grew up like a malignant weed in her soul, effectually crowding out the flowers of family, charity and self-denial. When first neglected her morning and evening prayers, her conscience gave a warning, or two, but the soon ceased to feel them, or to have much compunction if she broke the laws of abstinence at a dinner-party, or stayed away from Mass if she had danced too late into Sunday morning to feel at all disposed to get up in time to go. Whenever she, accompanied by Dolphine her maid, went to Mass at all, it was to a low one, where there was no sermon, so that really between seldom hearing anything to remind her of her duty,

never opening a spiritual book and knowing few Catholics, she out herself off from all that could recall her faith. Cora was extremely happy. The gay world which has much that is alluring and bewitching has a great deal in its power wherewith to reward its votaries. The cynic may say the joys are fleeting, those satiated with its pleasures may cease to care for them, people cut off from its amusements may affect to despise them, others from lack of taste for them may make other worlds for themselves. Still, there they are, the pleasures of this world—actual, tangible means of happiness which possess veritable joys of their own. The many warnings of our Lord and His beloved disciple against loving the world would not have been given had there been no danger from its attractions. People do not require to be told not to love what is in itself repellent and repulsive and they do need to lay to heart the truth that danger lies in what seems so fair.

Cora was becoming more and more selfish, her heart filled with foolishness, caring very little about the Church, the poor or the suffering. She was out of the way of hearing much about the latter, and never occurred to her that she had distinct duties to perform to all three. It was very much pleasanter not to think about helping the Church, or succouring the poor, and such being the case Cora shelved the subject very successfully. One cold day in early spring she was in a high state of glee and excitement, her face positively glowing with delight as she entered a pretty morning-room of her aunt's town house, where Lily and Violet, her twin cousins, were seated, the former at her easel, the latter with a novel. "More presents!" exclaimed Lily as she noticed her cousin was laden with parcels in brown paper. "Yes; aren't I lucky?"

TO BE CONTINUED.

GRACE BEFORE MEALS.

The Church has established prayers which should be said before and after meals. In religious communities these prayers are always said, and are somewhat long. But for the faithful generally, the Church has made them so short that even the most simple people can and should say them always before and after meals. The prayer before the meal is this: "Bless us, O Lord, and these Thy gifts we are about to receive through Thy most gracious hands, through Jesus Christ, Our Lord, Amen." And when the meal is over, we should say: "We thank Thee, O Lord, for these Thy gifts, through Jesus Christ, Our Lord, Amen."

That is not much to ask from any one of us for the food that nourishes our body. And yet how few there are who ask God's blessing on the food they are about to eat, or to thank Him for the victuals they have eaten. It seems to me that many a quarrel and many a complaint made about the food, or the way it is cooked or served, would be averted if the blessing of God had descended upon the eaters and their food before the meal began, and, again, that better health and more peace in the family would result if all when they got up from the table would, in sincerity of heart: "We thank Thee, O Lord, for these Thy gifts." And they are God's gifts. Do not forget this, dear brethren, whatever comes to us is from God. The sun with all its power to make us bright and cheerful as well as the rain that helps the earth to give us the fruits and vegetables we need, both of which are the result of God's providential ways; and we must be grateful to Him for sunshine and rain. A way with all complaints about the weather, and away with all fault finding about our food, and let us be more generous in our thanking God for rain or shine, and let us establish in every household the truly Catholic practice of saying the grace before and after meals, and we must be grateful to Him for sunshine and rain.

Begin it to-day at dinner. Let the head of the family say the prayer before and after every meal. Await the results! We promise you that God's blessing will follow. Begin to-day.—Paulist Sermon.

A MYSTICAL BODY.

The Church of God is more than a mere organization, such as are all other societies which are constituted by the aggregation of independent individuals and receive their strength and life from without. The Church is a living organism, pulsating and throbbing with a vitality more potent and active than the union of body and soul effects within ourselves. St. Paul calls the Church when this organ the mystical body of Christ, and teaches us that this mystical body depends for her very life upon the communion of all her members with Christ, the head.

The episcopate is the very heart of this mystical body; and the Holy Spirit, operating through the Bishops, diffuses the very life blood of the Church throughout her members. Therefore, to the Apostles, and their successors, the Bishops, Christ gave the commission: "Feed My lambs; feed My sheep." To the episcopate our Lord entrusted the pastoral staff of the shepherd to rule and govern, to lead the flock to green pastures of sound doctrines and right morals; and wherever the Bishop places the seat of his authority, there we find the centre of spiritual activity, whence radiates supernatural light and flows divine grace to every nook of the diocese. This seat of authority is the cathedral, the cathedra, the teacher's chair in the highest and holiest sense of the term.—Archbishop Farley.

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