

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

THE ROAD OF ONLY ONCE

'Tis a solemn thought to ponder Mid our daily joys and cares, Whilst we work, or weep, or wander: At our play or at our prayers; 'Tis a saintly sage's warning, Ever old, yet ever new: I am walking by a pathway I shall never more pursue.

I can tread it once—once only: Tread it well—or tread it ill: Wend my selfish course; or, lonely, Join the many of good-will: But, ne'er my steps retracing, Can I life's mistakes undo, For I'm walking by a pathway I shall never more pursue.

There are sick ones by the roadside, Weary pilgrims crippled sore: There are poor ones, there are sad ones.

There are sinful ones galore. Shall I bring them help or hindrance? Bless or ban the helpless crew? Life and Death are in this pathway I shall never more pursue!

If the good that there awaits me Be neglected or ill-done; If the evil there that tempts me I have no desire to shun: Woe is me! alas! forever, My lost graces shall I rue, Heav'n or hell must end this pathway I shall never more pursue.

GENELEMEN

In his "Idea of a University," Cardinal Newman has a notable passage defining some of the characteristics of a gentleman in the way the modern world uses the fine word. We fear that these characteristics, while giving us a pleasant associate, will not altogether fit a man to be of great service in the barbarian world about us.

CLEVERNESS A HANDICAP

"We all know that the boy with a great memory, who can keep his place in the school without an effort is generally content so long as he is in anyway distinguished himself in the eyes of the master," declares Lord Cowdray, the engineering magnate, "but believe me, the clever boy is the boy who is severely handicapped in after-life through the facility with which he has gone through his school days."

POLITE BUT POINTED

A motorist was stopped by a policeman for speeding, whereupon he became angry and called the policeman an ass. After he had paid his fine the magistrate reproved him for what he had said to the officer.

CURIOUS WANTS

"Lost, an umbrella, belonging to a gentleman with a curiously carved ivory head"; "House wanted, suitable for small family that has been recently papered and painted"; "Tenders invited for the erection of a school large enough to accommodate 2,000 scholars four stories high"; "Young man wanted to take charge of horses with a religious turn of mind"; "Nurse wanted in a small gentleman's family"; "For sale, a pony suitable for a lady without vicious habits and quiet in harness"; "Wanted, a mahogany child's chair"; "Overlooker wanted for 5,000 sheep that can speak Spanish."

KEEP SWEET

Simply don't allow yourself to say sharp things about people. To be sure, your tart criticism may be quite warranted by the facts, but just remember that your remarks are much more likely to influence your audience's opinion of you than their opinion of those about whom you say them. Don't be cynical, bitter and pessimistic in your point of view. Don't seem down on young people. Keep sweet.

THE GREAT POWER OF GOOD PRAYERS

Prayer exercises a most beneficial influence in the lives of men. Its soothing and calming effect has been experienced by all those who in great mental stress have had recourse to this wonderful means of taking the sharp edge from anguish of mind. Prayer satisfies the deepest craving of the soul for sympathetic companionship, because it brings us into the presence of the great Companion and the most loyal Friend. It brings friendly help;

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

A CANDLEMAS LEGEND

On Candlemas, so the legend goes—Down from the skies through the mists and snows The robin, the lark and the little brown wren Came flying back to our earth again— Bringing the fire that went away To warm the stars on All Saints' Day!

CANDLEMAS

Not by chance has the Church chosen the wax candle as a type of her Lord and Master. St. Anselm of Canterbury tells us briefly the reasons: "The wax product of the virginal bee represents Christ's most spotless body; the wick enclosed in the wax, and forming one with it, images His human soul, whilst the ruddy flame crowning and completing the union of wax and wick, typifies the divine nature, subsisting inconspicuously with the human nature in one divine person."

Let us then make our offering of candles for the service of the altar. Oh, what a consoling thought for us, when we are at our daily work, that perhaps our candles are at that moment burning before the Blessed Sacrament, taking the place of our hearts, silently, purely burning in their stead before the Sacred Heart of Jesus.—True Voice.

PRESENCE OF MIND COWED AN ENRAGED LION

At Cape Town a lion tamer was going through a performance in a cage with a full grown lion that had been lately caught. Suddenly it was seen that the brute was putting the trainer through his paces rather than being put through itself. Softly, crouching and creeping, the big cat edged itself between the thoroughly unweary man and the door of the den, fixing its victim with two rolling yellow orbs of flaming ferocity, and saving the air with tufted tail as it crouched preparatory to springing.

Many men among the audience, used to the ways of the wild beasts, saw and comprehended, but only one man possessed the knowledge and the presence of mind to avert the apparently inevitable. Parsing up his lips as though he were going to whistle, he emitted a hoarse, low, rasping hiss. The beast heard and understood, for the sound was an exact imitation of the noise made by the giant boa constrictor when its huge body is coiled for the throw that never misses, that never relaxes and that no beast of the field is strong enough to withstand. Again and yet again the raucous sound rasped the stillness, and the angry brute drew back its head, its great eyes grew small and dull, the hackles rose and stiffened on its back, and it cowered, whining, on the floor of cage.—The Universe.

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for when we pray, we feel a strong hand grasping us and steadying our faltering footsteps. Not only the contemplative but also the man of action resorts to prayer, since prayer begets courage, self-reliance and hopefulness.

FEAST OF THE PURIFICATION

"And after her days of purification, according to the law of Moses, were accomplished, they carried him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord." (Luke II, 22.)

There is a depth of beauty in this twofold mystery of Candlemas Day that we can hope to fathom, but on which we may lovingly ponder in silent adoration. It is at one and the same time a joyful and a sorrowful mystery. It opens with the gladness of the Maiden-Mother's first visit to the temple and the joyful song of Simeon, then closes with the shadow of Calvary looming dark over the Child and a sword of sorrow piercing the Mother's heart.

Our Divine Lord came down from heaven not only to redeem our fallen race and to teach us the way of salvation, but also to restore and purify the worship of God His Father, and to train for Him adorers in spirit and in truth. He wished to teach us how to adore not only by His Divine words, but by example, and therefore Master of the law though He was, He deigned to fulfill the law of Presentation that bound every male child of Israel. He did so in order to renew publicly and officially in the temple of God, that whole and entire consecration of Himself to the service of His Father which He had made in the womb of Mary on His first coming into this world. "When He cometh into the world He saith: Sacrifice and oblation thou wouldst not: but a body thou hast fitted to Me. Then said I: Behold, I come. In the head of the book it is written of Me that I should do Thy will, O God." Hebrews x., 5, 6, 7.

Let us adore, present and living in the Sacred Host, the same Infant Jesus offering Himself in adoration to His heavenly Father on this day of His Presentation. Let us adore Him in union with Mary His Mother, submitting in unquestioning simplicity to the wholly needless rite of Purification, and offering to God the first fruit of her Virginity, the first truly acceptable victim ever presented to God in that famous temple. Adore Him in union with Simeon, the just and God-fearing old man, who lived only to see the salvation of Israel, and Anna the prophetess, bowed down with her four score and four years of perpetual prayer and adoration in the temple. How little we should have thought, when reading of the Magi's disappointment in careless and unconcerned Jerusalem, that there were in that city such holy souls as these! And so it is today. In spite of the apparent wickedness of our times, of the noisy obtruding presence of evil, God still finds many such devout souls: holy men and women, unknown to the busy world, who spend their lives in adoration, who attend daily Mass and receive Holy Communion, and who are the real mainstay of the Church and the salt of the earth.—Sentinel of the Blessed Sacrament.

HOW SHALL WE HEED THE CRY OF EUROPE?

By Rev. Henry E. O'Keefe, C. S. P. The deplorable condition of Europe is before the minds of the more thoughtful Americans. Few or none of us, however, would say that Europe must be totally left to its own slender and broken resources. The difficulty seems to be in determining on a mode of service, which will not involve the American Republic in some inextricable relationship with the diplomatic system of Europe. It must be frankly admitted, that, oftentimes, we doubt the honesty of the official representatives of the nations of Europe, as in their own dealings they do not trust each other. There is this difference with us, that we have no contiguous enemies to provoke us to defend our national existence by the methods of force. The nations of Europe are ever one the defensive, for the very maintenance of life. The fear with us, that America through its intimacy with one or two or several European nations, would be drawn into some abnormal international complication to save its own honor and respect.

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of thought our interest is directed, even dispassionately, toward Germany, France will be irritated. The sense of being gravely wronged still rancors in the heart of France. Then, we, too, shall have wronged France; since France (either subjectively or objectively or both) has a case. The French all over the world are considerably our own French, who are American citizens, would be perturbed at what would be thought to be, by them, our lack of gratitude and mature judgment. They would point to an ancient enemy still at the gates. They would point to the torn and ravaged face of France—a vivid and plausible argument.

If we overlooked the poverty-stricken aspect of Germany, irrespective of its political tumult, and had not the humanity to gratefully play the part of the good Samaritan among the nations, our Germans of the Middle West would, at our expense, be distressed.

The inherent opposition (warranted justly or unjustly) of a large section of our people, to the power of the British Government, which even Cecil, Birkenhead, Gibbs, Lloyd George and others have not dislodged from the American mind is likewise to be judiciously considered.

With us, the rush to arms in the World War came, as if it were overnight. The pressure of inexplicable forces took the public imagination as if by storm. Such an enhanced mental state died down with the War and there is not a vestige of it now remaining. What is the tangible result arrived at and now publicly expressed in the still air of the calm after the mighty tempest? It is this: "Let us turn our back to the European Governments until their house is put in order and then morally act."

After ten years of grief and chastisement Europe is still in an overwrought and unbalanced state of mind. Is it true that if we do not come to the rescue, white civilization is doomed? Has the American Republic the balm with which to heal Europe's wounds and bring tranquility out of chaos? Yes; is the answer from the mouths of tremendously earnest and unselfish men. Now does it not seem, even, to the apathetic, that there is in the national consciousness a moral influence which, though subtle and elusive, can nevertheless be practically exercised? But can it be operated without a distinct foreign policy, which would hopelessly burden us with the responsibilities of covenants, leagues, world-courts and treaties?

The flattery of diplomats, politicians and idealists, sometimes, disturbs reason, even in the mentally strong. Nations are not above the vanity of individuals. Political ambition and strife cloud the definite proportions of facts and truths. Political cunning, both high and low, has victimized more than once, because of their good will, the plain people. Popular furor is at best unreasoning. Unscrupulously incited, it may, radically, change between dawn and night. It is not incredible that the spirit of militarism might overtake us, if passion, evil will, an undue sense of patriotism or an inordinately elated public sentiment would upset abruptly the judgment of the whole nation. Europe diplomatically might strike while the iron was hot and beg or demand, according to some technical international contract, that we send another million soldiers across the sea. Would the outcome of events, again, warrant such a sacrifice? It is this possible contingency which is to be avoided in heeding the call of Europe to America. Yet there is a false nationalism, certainly not Christian, which would have us turn aside from the righteous moral efforts of all mankind. There is for us, an obligation to contribute our moral strength to that unitive force for good throughout the world, which is obviously an indication of an over-ruling Divine design. Nations are not ethically or even scientifically divided by fixing frontiers of demarcation on colored maps. To locate certain races within spaces upon the earth and then give their territories differentiating names, does not mean that there is a deep and far-reaching basis of human, Christian internationalism. Whatever motive was behind the utterance of the British ex-Premier he struck the Christian note when he alluded to the ancient text and affirmed that no country has the right to say to another: "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Monsignor C non Barry tells us that while reading Lord Acton's Essays and Lectures on the History of Nations he was constantly struck and not a little puzzled at his far-fetched references to the United States as being the visible genius of Democracy, which would in the future move across the Continent. Canon Barry sees in the person of the Honorable Woodrow Wilson during the War: "America receiving homage bordering on Divine honors from the nation hitherto enslaved." Is Acton's prophecy to be fulfilled? Whatever is thought of Mr. Wilson now or whether he came before his time or not, it is not apparent that Europe beheld him symbolizing that which Acton believed would yet be realized. Canon Barry's hope for Europe is Lord Acton's: "We must seek salvation in American ideas and institutions." Is this true? If it is, then how shall we heed the cry of Europe?—The Missionary.

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