

MARCH 18, 1916

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

THAT LENTEN HEADACHE

"Father," said the convert, rather earnestly, "do you know I sometimes feel a bit uneasy about this coming time of Lent? What can I do to keep it? I can't fast, you know; I tried it last Ember Days, and got a roaring headache. Yet it seems very odd to me for a Catholic to do no penance at all during the Church's penance time."

"Fasting from food isn't the only way of doing penance," said Father Carson, with a twinkle in his eye. "You might guess that it was if you watched some of your fellow-parishioners, but it is not. Did it ever occur to you, for example, that one's soul can do a bit of fasting, too?"

"Why, bodily fasting," answered Father Carson, "is curbing the body's appetite for food. Now hasn't your soul her appetites, too? And can't you mortify them?"

"How?" answered the convert, with some eagerness. "Tell me how!"

"You need only think of some of the soul's appetites," answered Father Carson, "and you'll readily catch what I mean. There's the appetite we all have for doing as we like, for instance. Our way is the only way. If we can't have it, we sulk and fret. Now, if we were to say to our self-will, when it wants its own way very badly: 'No! You can't have it this time. You must do some one else's will for change. You must be accommodating, obliging. You must yield and give up your own desires, isn't that curbing our self-will fast? And it won't give you a headache, either, do you think?'"

"Whew! I believe I'd rather fast from food," said the convert, with deep conviction and sincerity. "No doubt you would. It's excellent penance, be sure to make your self will fast. Then there's that other appetite of our soul, the desire of praise, esteem, good name. You might make that fast a bit, too, every now and then. Do some good deed and carefully avoid getting any credit for it whatever. Or keep silence when some one casts a harmless slur upon you, nothing, but insignificant. Don't answer, don't defend yourself. There's good penance in that!"

"I should say there was!" agreed the convert, rapidly. "Then there's the tendency we all of us have to grow fussy, and cross and snappish—bad tempered, in a word. A good strong outburst would relieve us. If we could only vent our impatience on somebody, or something, we'd feel relieved. But that's wrong; make your bad temper fast. Crush down the ugly mood. Hold back the angry words. There's penance for you, isn't it?"

"Thank you, Father," said the convert softly. "I have enough ways already to last me all through Lent."

"We haven't nearly exhausted the subject though," said Father Carson, his eyes twinkling brighter than ever. "There's being obliging. What a penance that is at times! Some one at home asks us to do them a little service. We straightway think of a good excuse. Away with it! Say: 'Yes, of course I will,' with a bright face and a cheery tone, and you have made your selfishness fast to good purpose. I can tell you. No headache, either, I think."

"Then there's almsgiving; that's another way of doing penance. That's making our greediness fast. You're well-to-do, let us say, but not rich. If you keep all you have, you have just enough to be comfortably off. But in comes some good cause, or some deserving fellow in hard luck, and asks you for aid. Say: 'Why certainly! Here! It means a little inconvenience for me, but it may be life or death for you. Here's the money, and welcome! Isn't there penance in that?'"

"Penance and common sense too," said the convert. "But how few of us see it that way. I always thought that I was excused from almsgiving, because I have always needed all I had. Needed it for my comfort, I

mean. But your point is good. It's a Christian way of looking at things. Mine was rather a pagan way, I'm afraid."

"Well, you see our life is full of ways of doing penance," went on Father Carson, "which don't hold a single headache between them all. Even the Morning Offering, which you make every day, I hope,—the convert nodded assent—"is a true act of penance, too, if only it is deep and sincere; because we naturally love to do things, for our own sake, for our own interest, our own good, our own comfort, our own pleasure, our own praise. Now, if we honestly say: 'Not for myself to-day, but for the sweet Heart of Jesus,' and say it honestly and earnestly, and mean it all the day long, there's a touch of penance, you see, even there."

"Thanks, a thousand thanks," said the convert, holding out his hand. "You've opened my eyes. If I have the nerve to do as I mean to do now, I believe I shall perform some downright good penance before the end of this Lent. But I see it takes nerve. To fast, after all, is largely a question of meal-time. But this sort of penance will keep one's will power in action pretty well through the whole day."

"Don't think for a moment, though, that I mean to decry fasting as a means of doing penance," said Father Carson, as his visitor rose to depart. "Fasting is the official penance which the Church has chosen for her children, and it is sanctioned and made holy by our Lord's long fasting, and by the faithful practice of all the saints. It has a double merit, too, because it is also a work of obedience. But if a man can't fast from food, I think you realize now that it is simply foolish for him to say, 'I'm free.' There are a hundred appetites within him besides his hunger for food, and he can always make some of these fast to good purpose, indeed."

"Well, if everybody would fast, as you say, from all his unpleasant appetites and ugly inclinations," said the convert heartily, "what a pleasant sort of perpetual Easter time this life would soon get to be!"—St. Paul Bulletin.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

A BRAVE BOY

"Look at that chink coming out of our church," Tom McDonald shouted across the street to his chum, as a Chinaman came down the steps of St. Mary's.

"Well, what of it?" asked Brother Leo, who happened to be passing by. "There is no reason why a Chinaman can't be a Catholic, Tom. You know our Lord made the Church for men of all nations."

"Yes, Brother, but a Chinaman seems different," said Tom. "It does seem some way as if they could not be like us."

"As devout?" questioned Brother Leo. "And as brave and courageous to stand up for the faith? Well, while we are walking down to school, let me tell you about a Chinese boy who became a Catholic."

"Hullo, Arthur, come along. Brother is going to tell us a story," Tom called to his friend; and soon the three were on their way.

"This is a 'truly' story," said Brother. "The Sentinel of the Blessed Sacrament relates it. A Chinese boy, ten years old, who had been baptized by a missionary, had a great longing to be confirmed, so he went straight to the Bishop, and begged for confirmation. The Bishop was touched by his eagerness, but the boy looked so young and small that he hesitated to grant his wish. 'I shall test him,' decided the Bishop. So he asked: 'But after you are confirmed, if the Mandarin puts you in prison and asks you about your faith, what will you answer?'"

"Monsignor, I will tell him that I am a Christian."

"And if he commands you to deny your faith, what then, my child?"

"I shall say 'Never!' Monsignor,"

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THE MAN BEHIND THE FIRING LINE

(G. B. Lancaster, in the Toronto News)

Following are extracts from a letter from just behind the front, written by the New Zealand daughter of the ten-year-old Canadian, with several touches of the nature that makes the whole world kin:

TOMMY IS AN INDIVIDUAL  
It rains here without ceasing. Tears of the sky, brought down by the great guns. It is dark at 4 of the clock, and all places of amusement are shut. The French or Belgian soldier, with his troop train waiting him to-morrow and all his home folk far away, keeps his heart up by drifting through the streets in the wet dark, playing cards in half-lighted cafes, or waiting to claim his kit in some black, windy shed among the wharves where the "sapsap" of deserted fishing boats riding in the Basin put restlessness to the desolate right. It may not always be wise for the Belgian to think of his home folk. But no one seems to suggest anything that he might think of instead. Right here one discovers a fundamental difference between the Continental soldier and the British. The first-named appears to be recognized as a fighting asset only. As a personal unit he presumably does not exist. Tommy is an individual ever and always. The Y. M. C. A. are putting up "home comfort" sheds for him overseas. He has "tea rooms" for English soldiers in the towns—although I do not know if he ever goes there. He has restaurants and patisseries he may order his cup of coffee and sit for an hour in the warmth with his eternal little cigarettes.

HOW THEY ARE PAID  
The pion-pion must eat and drink standing, and go. It was his wife who first explained that to me: "He also gets a sou a day," she said. "Moi! I have twenty five sous, and each child has five. I take washing now that he has gone to the war." A sou is almost a half-penny in English money. I could have told her that the Belgian soldier waxes rich on twopenny halfpenny a day, and that Tommy's wife will shortly receive anything up to a pound a week, exclusive of a "pound" a week, or even a "pound" a week. But at seven sous? Perhaps that is why the Continental soldier is calculated in the bulk only. He has to be paid that way.

WAR UNITES BELGIANS  
He was gay when I saw him yesterday—a troop train full of him, going straight up to the trenches. We passed three troop trains in one hour and we ourselves had German prisoners aboard. The time seemed ripe for demonstration somewhere, and I waited to see how "man's inhumanity to man" would show itself. With the first draft we drew blank. They were Belgians, curly bearded and with a reserve in the eyes which set you thinking. One does not talk to a Belgian about the

few who made the arrangements and the slim audience that listened to him. It is hard to know how to deal with the class of individuals to which some special reason for public and concerted opposition, it is better to ignore entirely. All they want is advertising, for that helps them to separate their dupes from the coin. If Black had not been killed, the attack made on him would be worth a fortune to him and his associates. As it is, this tragedy will be cited against the Catholic Church by every itinerant bigot in the land and many people will believe that the whole affair was premeditated—St. Paul Bulletin.

"And if he should say you must not go to church on Sundays and holidays to hear Mass?"

"I shall tell him, I must first of all obey the commandments."

"And suppose that when you tell him this, the Mandarin should call his executioners and then say to you: 'Unless you deny that you are a Christian these men shall cut your head off,' what would you say then, my boy?"

"I will say, cut it off!" answered the young Chinese.

"You shall be confirmed," said the Bishop. "You will make a brave soldier of Christ."

"He was game," said Tom, as Brother Leo ceased talking.

"He was better than game," replied Brother. "He had zeal for Christ, and the courage to profess his faith before all men. I don't think he would be ashamed to lift his hat in passing a Catholic church if he happened to be with Protestant boys."

Tom's face reddened. How did Brother know that? Yes, surely the little Chinese was vastly his superior in courage.

"I take back what I said about the chink—Chinaman"—Tom corrected himself. "Maybe he's uncle or something to that boy."

"He is his kinsman in Christ," said Brother. "As all Christians should be. You remember, boys, the first commandment bids you love God above all, and the second says: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.'"

"I never thought of the Chinaman in that way," said Tom. "But I'll try to. I won't let the fellows throw stones in his door any more."

THE LITTLE LIE  
Once there was a Little Lie flying through the air. It came to a child's heart and said, "Let me in." The child said, "I will not let a lie come into my heart." But the Little Lie said, "I'm Little White Lie. No one would ever think I was a Lie at all because I'm so different from every other Lie. You are such a nice child that I would not want you to take a common Lie into your heart."

"This sounds very well," said the child, "I will let you in." So the child took the Little Lie into his heart.

Do you know what happened? Do you think one lie can be different from another lie? I will tell you what happened. That Little Lie when it had come into the child's heart, opened the door to every other Lie, big and little black and white. The child's heart was soon so full of lies that there was a lie in everything the child said. The lies crept into all the child's thoughts and words, until everyone said:

"We cannot believe anything the child tells us."

A TRAGEDY INDEED  
Every intelligent man, no matter what his religious views may be, must deplore the tragedy which took place in Marshall, Texas, February 9, resulting in the death of William Black, an anti Catholic lecturer, and John Rogers a Catholic and Knight of Columbus, and the serious wounding of John Copeland, also a Catholic and member of the Order of the Sons of the Holy Child.

The facts brought to light at the trial, an account of which lies before us, indicate that Rogers, Copeland and other Catholics tried to prevail upon Black, who posed as an expert, not to repeat assertions in regard to the Church and Catholic women which he had made in a previous lecture. In the altercation which followed Black and Rogers were shot and Copeland seriously wounded. As a result of the preliminary examination which took place before Justice of the Peace Young, George Ryan and George Tier were indicted for the murder of Black and Clarence Hall, a companion of Black, for that of Rogers.

Southern blood is hot, and due allowance must be made for the provocation given by Black in his assault on the character of Catholic women; but when all is said and done there can be no doubt that the tragedy was a tragedy in more than one sense. There was no justification for any of these men to take the law into their own hands. It would be better, infinitely better, for all concerned, for the Church, and for Catholics in general, to have ignored Black entirely. Black lectured in the army in St. Paul some weeks ago and no one knew he was here, except the

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THE MILITARY MASS

From St. John's, Nfld., Telegram  
On Sunday, Jan. 31st, Rev. Father Naugle, Chaplain of the Catholic Cadet Corps, celebrated Mass in the Cathedral, for Catholic members of the Contingent now ready for the front.

Around the altar in their strength they came,  
Sons of the North, encircled by the sea,  
Who now the heritage of Empire claim  
For in this land it had its infancy;  
Nor wanting now shall her devotion be  
When men for England's right go forth to war  
And bear through days of stress and heroics  
The brave old flag whose tattered crest the star  
Of fadeless victory illumed at Trafalgar!

Now is the hour of sacrifice and prayer—  
The youthful priest, the comrade of the Corps,  
The clean Oblation, meekly offers there  
To God that He may on our soldiers pour  
The gifts of courage, fortitude, and o'er  
Their arms in battle stretch His sheltering hand  
Till peace of nations once again restore  
Them to the homes and hearts of Newfoundland—  
Yet, Father of the World, we bow to Thy command!

There is Gethsemane o'er all the earth!  
The bitter chalice to pale lips is pressed;  
The drain of blood goes out from every hearth;  
So must we share its sorrow with the rest.  
The land, the sea is calling for the best—  
Bring us not Jehovah in our need!  
Strike us not triumphant thro' the final crest,  
Urge to our standard still the hero's tread  
And in the battles' clash our arms to victory lead.

—D. CARROLL

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