

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

SEEING OURSELVES

One of a few recorded prayers of a famous Scotch poet was to the effect that it would be a good thing to see ourselves as others see us. He, however, admitted that the results would not be conducive to devotion. Many another good thing, too, besides devotion, would go with this true reflection of oneself; self-satisfaction, glowing autobiographies, comforting assurances from consciences, laudatory interviews with one's own recollections, patience and much unfounded contentment. "Why do you bring suits for libel two years after you were called a hippopotamus?" asked the judge. "Well, your honor," replied the plaintiff, "it was only yesterday that for the first time I saw the animal." The number of suits for libel against self-reflection would certainly crowd the docket if seeing ourselves as others see us came to be the fashion.

There are immense difficulties to producing in a man this true reflection of himself. How many editors have succeeded in making their rejected contributors see themselves as they have been seen? We pause for a reply, but as eternity is long, let us ask rather whether it is the mirror or my lady's eyes which are responsible for what parades the avenues. Here is a tale which gives one reason why self-ignorance has so long a life: There was once a lad who must have derived his ideas of man's anatomy from an onion. At any rate, he believed that every one grew up by building around himself another layer. If you peeled off the man, you could find, he thought, the boy. In certain cases there would be numerous layers, and the labor would be immense, for example, to get from an expert dentist to a baby. But apply that notion to self and try to peel off the layers built up around the true knowledge of what you are. Take a cross section of your soul and you would have to cut through successes, dreams, ideals, flatteries, congratulations, dotings of fond parents, ambitions, deceptions, various hand-shakings and shoulder-clappings of friends, until you finally reached the shrunken and wrinkled kernel of self. No wonder the Greeks admired the man who said, Know thyself and considered him one of the seven wise men of the world.

There was a certain Spanish soldier who had hidden himself behind a life of distractions, of loves, hates, gambles, dissipations, day-dreaming, novels, quarreling, soldiering. He broke down all those intertrenchments and got to a knowledge of self, but it was a heroic struggle. The process started with a cannon-ball, and a surgical operation, and a long sickness, and the process ended by his giving up home and wealth and honors, by fasting and mortification on Christ's life and by many months of retirement alone in a cave. He wrote a book in which he formulated the science of seeing yourself as God sees you, which is an improvement on the Scotch formula. The Spaniard was Ignatius of Loyola, his recipe for self-knowledge is called a retreat. In those exercises he does not seem to have left out much of his own experience except the cannon-ball. He would likely use that in extreme cases. Surgery, however, and prayer and fasting and exile and silence and caves of solitude are used to cut away self-deception. Besides this external surgery, as it might be

called, there is an immense amount of internal surgery also, but we can not go into that here.

Retreats will not be popular until people cease to be afraid of hippopotamus. There was a short retreat given once upon a time. The supreme excellence of the Director dispensed with long explanations. His exorcists saw themselves as God saw them, and they dropped their stones and went out one after another, beginning with the oldest. Self-seeing is a potent discourager of stone-throwing.—America.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

THE PRICE SHE PAID

Adele could not sleep for thinking. At last she slipped out of bed, and stepping lightly over the carpeted floor, paused beside the window. How fair the summer night was! The moonlight enhancing the beauty of the foliage and the lake, shimmering in the valley, and the hills standing dark and cross, it was a night to be content, yet Adele was possessed of the very spirit of discontent. "I want the bracelet, I want it!" she said, half aloud. "I want it more than I ever wanted anything in all my life. Mona will never know if I borrow the money from her trunk and put it back when my remittance comes from father on Monday. If I wait till Monday to buy the bracelet it will surely be too late. Yes; I'll borrow the money. That settles it."

But it did not "settle" the matter, for though Adele crept back into bed, intending to sleep, it was only to toss and to fret till dawn, when she fell into a troubled sleep, in which she dreamed that numberless seal bracelets were chasing her through thickets of green. At last her foot caught and she stumbled and fell, with the bracelets jingling about her ears, and she suddenly woke to find the sunlight filling her room. Adele sprang out of bed, made a hurried toilet and arrived downstairs late for breakfast.

Two weeks before, Adele and her cousin Mona had come to the lake district, and the rays had flown happily and quickly for both, till the day before, when Adele had espied the seal bracelet in a souvenir shop window.

"Do come inside and look at it, Mona," Adele had coaxed. Together the cousins had examined the bracelet, and Adele had tried it on her pretty rounded arm. But \$10 was more than she could afford to pay for it, even though the proprietor of the shop assured her that it was "dirt cheap at the price."

All the way back Adele had dwelt upon the bracelet, until at last Mona had laughingly said: "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity with you, cousin mine."

To which Adele had retorted warmly, "It's all very well for you to talk like that, Mona, when you have more money than you know what to do with, and enough jewelry to set up a store."

Mona's cheeks had flushed, and Adele, instantly ashamed of her rudeness, had slipped her arm around her cousin, begging to be forgiven. That afternoon Mona had gone across the lake to spend the week end with a friend who was summering in the hills. Adele had been included also in the invitation, but was prevented from accepting because of an engagement with a friend whom she had invited from the city to spend the week-end with her.

After breakfast, Adele flew upstairs and, opening Mona's trunk

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with the key left in her keeping, helped herself to a \$10 gold piece and set off for the souvenir shop. Here a disappointment awaited her. The bracelet had been sold. And yet as Adele retraced her steps to Mrs. Norton's she was conscious of a feeling of relief. After all, her remittance might not come in time for her to replace the borrowed money before Mona returned, and explanations would be awkward. Besides, she had really been quite extravagant since coming to the lakes, and she needed all of the remittances for expenses.

When Adele reached the boarding house she hurried upstairs, eager to put the \$10 gold piece back before going to the station to meet her friend. But upon opening her purse she found the money missing. For a moment Adele stood perfectly still, turning hot and cold alternately. Had she lost it at the souvenir shop? But no she had not even opened her purse there. What had become of the gold piece? Try as she would, Adele could not answer the question. She remembered taking it hurriedly, and with a guilty feeling, out of Mona's coin box in the upper tray of her trunk, and dropping it into her silver mesh bag, from which it had most mysteriously disappeared. Adele unsuccessfully searched the floor, under the bureau and the trunk, the bed and the chairs, and when she heard a warning whistle she flew downstairs and on her belated way to the station.

Adele spent a miserable Saturday and Sunday, and her friend, not knowing the cause, decided that Adele could not be well. Monday morning saw the departure of the visitor and the receipt of a letter by Adele from Mona, in which the latter stated that she would not return until Tuesday. But there was no letter from Adele's father accompanied by a check, Adele spent another miserable day, and was only comforted by the hope that her remittance would arrive on the next morning's mail, before Mona put in an appearance.

The next day was Adele's birthday, and when the mail failed to bring, either a letter or a remittance from her father she suffered another disappointment. Mona arrived about 10 o'clock, radiantly happy. "Many, many happy returns of the day, cousin mine!" she cried, gayly. "Shut your eyes and hold out your hands and see what the fairies sent you."

"Oh!" Adele cried delightedly, opening her eyes and seeing the seal bracelet. "I bought it for you that very day we first saw it," Mona laughed. But Adele's delight was short-lived, and suddenly, the whole miserable story was out.

"Take the bracelet back, Mona; I don't deserve it," she finished. Mona shook her head. "You suffered enough, dear," she said.

Adele kept the bracelet, but it never was quite the joy to her that she thought it would be, not even when Mona found the lost \$10 gold piece in her trunk.—St. Paul Bulletin.

THE RULE OF FAITH

"The Bible and the Bible only is the religion of the Protestants," so Chillingworth assures us. The Bombay Examiner comments on the above: We Catholics take as our rule of faith that which Christ has given us, namely the infallible teaching of His Church.

Our Lord sent His Apostles to the whole world with the words: "Go therefore, teach ye all nations. . . . whatsoever I have commanded you." (Matt. 28, 19) "Make all nations your disciples. . . . be you their teacher" would be the better translation of the Greek text. The apostles, therefore, have authority to teach; the faithful must listen to them in matters of faith and morals.

And previously Christ had said: "He that heareth you, heareth Me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth Me." (Luke 10, 16) And if he will not hear the church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican." (Matt. 18, 17) "To the Apostles and their successors the Lord promised: 'Behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world.'" (Matt. 28, 20) We trust in these promises and obey these commands. Christ is always with His Church; He has sent her the Holy Ghost to teach and guide her, so that she cannot err nor lead others into error.

Our Lord did not order His Apostles to write but to preach. Only a few of them wrote down a part of their teaching, and it was mostly done in a casual way, when urged by

special circumstances, but even that not in the beginning, but only after they had preached for more than twenty-sixty years.

Before the end of the first century the Christian faith had spread all over the Roman empire, but it was impossible that all the books of the New Testament should be in the possession of all the churches. Poor Christians! According to Protestant theory, they had no rule of faith to guide them or at best only an incomplete one.

The Epistle of St. Paul had first found a wide circulation. Some Christians applied the Protestant principle and we learn from St. Peter with what result:

As also our most dear brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, hath written to you: as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are certain things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures to their own destruction. (2 Peter 3, 16, 15.)

Can it be the will of God that the Bible should be the rule of faith for all? How could that be reconciled with His wisdom? How few people during all the centuries up to modern times were able to apply such a rule! In former days a very small number of men knew how to read. It was only fourteen centuries after the composition of the gospels that the art of printing was invented. During all the previous centuries books had to be copied by hand so that it took a man years to rewrite the whole Bible.

In consequence one copy of Holy Scripture represented almost a fortune and only a few people enjoyed the possession of one. Poor Christians of those days! For the majority it was impossible to make use of such a rule of faith.

Should the all-wise God not have taken care to reveal the art of printing fourteen hundred years earlier? On the other hand the teaching of the Church was always with the faithful and it was always easy to apply this rule.

Perhaps the Bible is a book that can be understood and interpreted by all. Everybody who has made a study of it will say that it is a very difficult book. No book explains itself. Even an ordinary school book is explained to the pupils by the teacher. What of a book that contains the highest theology? Any uneducated workman, any poor peasant woman should be able to find out the deep and hidden meaning of this book of books! Common sense tells us that they will be quite helpless, if there is not an infallible teaching Church, which interprets it to them.

Our civil life is guided by laws. Experts have drawn them up and have collected them in a code. They studied them to the best of their ability, to state them as clearly and unequivocally as possible and yet, do we interpret them ourselves? No, we go to a lawyer. But very often the lawyers themselves do not agree. Government has therefore set up judges to give the final decision. However in matters of supernatural belief every one we are told should be his own judge! The all-wise Lawgiver should not have instituted a tribunal to settle all disputes! Impossible.

There is another, still more fundamental difficulty. You say that the Bible is your rule of faith. What Bible? That which Luther has given you or that which the Rationalists have allowed to stand? Why do you reject a number of books that had been accepted by the Christians of the first centuries as inspired writings? We acknowledge seventy-two books as belonging to the Bible. These we receive from the hands of the Church, who tells us that all of

TIME TEMPER AND TROUBLE SAVED ON SCRUBBING DAY WHEN YOU USE

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them are inspired by God, that they contain His Word. If she had not given us this guarantee we would not accept them. "I should not believe the Gospels, if the authority of the Church did not pledge her word for them." These words of St. Augustine quite accurately express the attitude of Catholics towards Holy Scripture. The word of God is for us the highest norm, but the Church must tell us what the word of God is, and then we gladly receive and believe every word. The authority of the Church is for us not higher than that of the Bible but it is nearer to us and it is recognized more surely.

People outside the Catholic Church often misunderstand our attitude, because they think that we are moving in a vicious circle. They will tell us "You believe in the Bible, because the Church tells you to do so, and you believe in the Church, because the Bible tells you to do so." This is not the case. The logical foundation of our belief is the following: We consider the Bible first as a merely historical document. As such we examine it and find that it is authentic and trustworthy in the facts and statements related. Therefore I must accept them as scientifically proved. These genuine, historical accounts tell me that Jesus Christ, who, by miracles, founded a Church and obliged all men to enter it. History besides tells me that this Church of Christ continues to exist in the Catholic Church. That being so, I am in conscience bound to join her and to believe and obey her unreservedly. From her I now learn that the Bible is not an ordinary historical book but that it is inspired and truly the word of God. There is no vicious circle in this. Of course I can also proceed in a slightly different way. The Catholic Church at any time of her history is like a city built on a hill; by her unity and sanctity, by her institutions and doctrine responding to all the exigencies of man's intellect, will, and all his other faculties. When this is once proved all the rest follows. Our rule of faith is in harmony with reason and rests on a solid foundation.

The Protestant Rule of faith, however, breaks down in its very foundation. Protestants say: 1. All the books of the canon and these only are inspired. 2. Nothing can be admitted as part of our faith and worship that is not contained in these books. 3. Any individual Christian is for himself an authentic interpreter of the Scriptures. Now, where do they find these three points in the Bible? Whence do they know them? Besides they admit many other things which are not found there either, for instance that children should be baptized, that baptism administered by heretics is valid, that the Sunday is the Lord's day, not the Sabbath, that they may take an oath, (cf. Matt. 5, 33), that they may eat blood and animals which have been suffocated, (cf. Acts 15, 28, 29) Do they follow the Bible in these and other points?

As a last test of the two rules of faith let us see what results each of them has turned out. History shows that the Protestant rule is an utter failure. Take the single sentence: "This is My Body." (Matt. 26, 26) In less than sixty years after their rule had been set up by Luther at least two hundred different interpretations and explanations of this short and simple sentence had been given. Yet, truth is one. There exist now over four hundred Protestant sects all claiming to have the right interpretation of the Bible. Yet, Christ prayed that His followers might be one.

On the other hand see the surprising unity of the 301,000,000 Catholics over the whole world, all professing the same faith. Which rule of faith will therefore be the better one?—N. Y. Freeman's Journal.

RECENT MIRACLES AT LOURDES

Dr. Boissarie, the head of the bureau of physicians who investigate the cures that take place at Lourdes, in France, where the Blessed Virgin appeared to Bernadette, has written his fifth book on that place. It is called "Heaven's Recent Wonders." It tells of the most remarkable cures wrought at the shrine in recent years. In the preface, the doctor writes:

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