

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

JUST THIS MINUTE

If we're thoughtful, just this minute,
In what'er we say and do,
If we put a purpose in it
That is honest through and through,
We shall gladden life and give it
Grace to make it all sublime;
For though life is long, we live it
Just a minute at a time.

Just this minute we are going
Toward the right or toward the
wrong;

Just this minute we are sowing;
Seeds of sorrow or of song;
Just this minute we are thinking
On the ways that lead to God,
Or in the idle dreams are sinking
To the level of the clod.

Yesterday is gone, tomorrow
Never comes within our grasp;
Just this minute's joys or sorrow,
That is all our hands may clasp.
Just this minute! let us take it
As a pearl of precious price,
And with high endeavor make it
Fit to shine in paradise.

—Church Progress

FALSE NOTIONS ABOUT LUCK

There are those who are always bewailing their ill-luck. To them it seems that everyone has "good luck" but themselves. But we must stop to consider if it is true that they are so ill-fated and that they themselves are the only ones who have so-called ill-luck. First of all let us put ourselves clear as to luck. For the Christian there is no such thing as luck. Luck is defined as chance, fortune, lot. Now we as Christians, know that nothing happens by chance. All that happens in this universe is regulated by the divine providence of God. Fortune is a pagan term and means the course of events of our lives being ruled over by the goddess Fortuna. This idea again, has no place in the mind of a Christian. Lot is a word used in connection with a throw of the dice and meaning the winning or losing throw. This frivolous practice is in an applied sense used to represent the success or failure of the tasks of our life. All these terms are meaningless if the idea of the providence of God is kept in mind.

The truth is we get pretty much out of life what we put into it. If we have bad luck, so-called, we are usually to blame for it. This may seem a broad statement, but a little investigation will bear out the fact. Why do we not succeed? Either for one or two reasons, because we do not wish to succeed or because God does not want us to succeed. Who does not want to succeed? Every man says that he wishes to succeed, but does his action and conduct of life accord with this statement. The one may be positively lazy and still expects success. Another is only half-hearted in his efforts in life and he expects success. Still others have some lurking fault of character which is not seriously combatted and they mean to succeed, or as the popular phrase has it, expects to have good luck. Is anyone to blame but themselves if they do not have the course of life which they wish for, since there are the above impediments against it.

The sluggish motion of heavy oil in a creek-bed would not turn a mill-wheel to set the machinery in motion for grinding wheat. The fitful little zephyrs of summer will bring the sailor nowhere. The broken cog in a wheel will interfere with the working of the whole machine. If in the natural order effects are not greater than their causes why expect that they will be otherwise when considered in connection with what is called luck. To continue using this word luck, in the sense, however, meaning effect from a cause, how can good luck be expected if the individual does not make it good. The following quotation from Cobden will illustrate: "Luck is ever waiting for something to turn up. Labor with keen eyes and strong will, will turn up something. Luck lies in bed and wishes the postman who would bring him the news of a legacy. Labor turns out at 6 o'clock and with busy pen or ringing hammer lays the foundation of a competence. Luck whines while labor whistles. Luck relies on chance while labor relies on character."

After all this has been said there are still some cases which cannot be explained by placing the blame upon the individual whose life is seemingly not a success. This class has been placed under the heading of those whom God does not wish to be a success. Here again two reasons may be adduced for the seeming paradox that God wishes anyone unsuccessful. This first is to draw the person nearer to Himself, and in the event of this succeeding the seeming lack of success of such a life is in reality a very great success. Again it may be that Almighty God wishes to punish for some past imperfections. When such is the case the life of one thus afflicted is really a genuine success for this mode of procedure is a refining and beautifying of character which exalts the individual and fashions him for a glorious life to come. The second reason may be that God keeps a person down, if this drab term may be used in connection with God, for He knows that success would be the downfall in this particular case of the person involved, at least for his soul. Hence the seeming ill-luck is truly

a blessing in disguise. So consider as you will nothing happens to us except it be by a decree of the Almighty. This decree is always just and merciful. Either it is the result of our own conduct or when we have no fault to be blamed for, it may be ascribed to God's will, which ever has our good, physical and spiritual, in consideration.

By no means should anything be ascribed to blind luck. And only when we can sincerely find no reason for a lack of success in ourselves may we impute it to the direct will of God. In most cases we shall have, if we are honest with ourselves, to lay the blame to ourselves. As one writer says, "luck" is a very good word if you put a "P" before it.—A. R. in The Echo.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

A PRAYER

Let me be a little kinder,
Let me be a little blinder,
To the faults to those about me;
Let me praise a little more;
Let me be when I am weary;
Let a little bit more cheery;
Let me serve a little better
Those that I am striving for.

Let me be a little braver,
When temptations bids me waver,
Let me strive a little harder,
Be all that I should be;
Let me be a little meeker
With the brother who is weaker;
Let me think more of my neighbor
And a little less of me.

Let me be a little sweater,
Make my life a bit completer
Do what I should do
Every minute of the day;
Let me toil without complaining,
Not a humble task disdaining,
Let me face the summons calmly
When death beckons me away.

GRANNY'S WOODPILE
(Written for The Intermountain Catholic)

Granny lived in a cottage by the river bank. She had lived there immemorial—so long, indeed, that she had become Granny to everybody in the village, although in fact she was really grandmother to nobody. Away back in the dim and distant past Granny was the young wife of a young and handsome man, but he went off to the war and never came back. The cottage then was new, but with the passing years it had grown old with her, and now she seemed to belong to the cottage as much as the cottage belonged to her. All during the summer the little stoop at the front door was overrun with morning glories and big red roses, and in the yard were little beds of sweet-scented violets and lilies of the valley. In the garden Granny raised onions and potatoes and radishes, and over near the back fence horseradish plants grew rank from which she dug the roots for sale among her neighbors and friends.

In the spring, when the returning warmth of the sun melted the accumulated snows of winter and rains set in, the river always rose to flood height, but Granny's house was above the highest point, the water had ever attained, so that she was not troubled from flood waters. Indeed, the annual floods were a source of profit to her, for it was the custom of the men in the neighborhood to gather the wood supply for Granny's cottage from the flood waters as it floated down the stream. For this purpose an old clock weight tied to the end of a rope was used, the weight being thrown over a log or board and then drawn in. Thusthe fuel supply was kept up for the wood woman; thus it was that there was a pile of logs, boards and timbers stacked up in Granny's back yard when the frosts announced the coming of fall.

The years perhaps had passed lightly over Granny's head, but there were very many of them, and each one added its burden until the accumulated weight had bowed her head. She was never entirely out of firewood, but now that her physical strength was on the wane she felt some anxiety for the present winter's supply, and she spoke of it to some of the good women who each day paid a little visit to her, taking with them some daintiness from their own tables. During the long years of her widowhood she had lived almost alone, but on special occasions she was persuaded to pay a visit to her neighbors, at first only upon earnest solicitation, but latterly in recognition of the custom long established. On Thanksgiving day after feeding the chickens and attending to all the other details of work required about her little home, she rigged herself up in her best and died off on her annual Thanksgiving pilgrimage, which included an all day's visit. As she departed she looked at the lowering sky and remarked to herself that it perhaps would snow before she had returned. As she trudged away she failed to notice a crowd of boys hidden behind her chicken coop and just over the brink of the river bank. Had she seen them it is probable that she would have returned to her home again and failed to keep her appointment for a Thanksgiving dinner, for she had not been altogether left alone by the boys of the village. Indeed, some little tricks had been played on her that made her somewhat suspicious of boys, although it must be said to their credit that the boys never did any real damage except to her some annoyance.

This day when Granny disappeared around the corner of the street,

sixteen or twenty boys emerged from their hiding places and scrambled over the back fence into Granny's garden lot, scaring the chickens and causing a commotion which altogether would indicate some mischief was up. However, the boys dragged with them saws of every description for hand sawing. A few sawbucks were in the paraphernalia, too. Arranging themselves in convenient places and dividing up the work so that each could keep working at his topmost speed that mass of miscellaneous lumber was soon on its way to the back porch, where it was piled in straight piles over the entire width of the porch and extending out into the yard. The boys worked until noon, despite the few flakes of snow that began to fall. Then they went to dinner, but within an hour were again back on the job. The way that pile of wood decreased in size was comparable only by the startling proportions which the sawed wood assumed at the back door. The boys worked with spirit, each seemingly trying to outdo the other.

In the meantime Granny had enjoyed her Thanksgiving dinner, and on account of the increasing snow-storm decided to return home. As she was nearing the little cottage on the river bank she saw a troop of boys emerging from her back yard and was certain in her mind that they had been into some mischief, for they scattered and ran upon her approach. She was deeply agitated, as may well be imagined, and visions of depredations practiced upon her home while she was away flashed before her mental vision.

"What could those young rascals be up to now?" she asked herself. She looked at the house and was satisfied that they had not run off with that, at least. Indeed, in the gathering gloom she could see that the fence and chicken coop were still intact, but she was sure those boys carried off something, for she could see that nearly every one of them had something in his hands. She was agitated beyond measure, fearful that the boys had taken advantage of her absence to perform some mischievous thing to annoy her, so she was wholly unprepared for the sight that greeted her when she finally got around to the back door to see the result of the boy's day's work.

"Well, I'll declare?" was all she was able to say.

STRONGHOLDS OF THE OLD RELIGION

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