

## CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

## GRAY HAIRS SEEKING A JOB

One of the most pathetic sights in this land of opportunity is gray hairs seeking a job. It is easy to tell an old man looking for work that he must brace up; that he must dress well, look prosperous, walk and talk like a young man, and show no indication of weakness, no mark of age. But it is not an easy matter for the old man; he started in life with high hope, with an ambition to make a place for himself in the world; now he finds himself approaching old age without a competence, with his ambition thwarted, his life dream faded. It is bitter; it is hard for him to keep heart and courage and life zest; hard not to show his life disappointment in his face; hard to be buoyant, enthusiastic, and to appear as though he had plenty of his best work still in him.

A fine appearing man fifty-seven years old called upon me recently to help him. He lost a good position in a bank because of its failure several years ago, and since that time he has not been able to get a position; except now and then a temporary place in some trust company or bank. He is still vigorous in the prime of his strength, a hard worker, educated, skilful, well trained, but he is so discouraged because he has been turned down so many times that he has come to believe that the struggle is almost hopeless, and he shows it in his face. When he applies at banking houses and trust companies for a position, he does not go in with that assurance and sense of victory and power which give confidence. His mental attitude is not that of the conqueror, but of the conquered. Instead of making a favorable impression, he leaves a doubtful one, which, coupled with his age, brings an unfavorable decision.

How can a man expect to gain victory when he admits that he is already beaten in the life race?

No one wants an employee who has lost his freshness and fire; who confesses by his conversation, his appearance, his manner, and his every movement that he is "too old." He goes about from place to place looking for work, bemoaning the fact that "nobody wants a man with gray hairs," that "everybody is looking for the young and vigorous," and "there is no more chance for a man who is getting on in years." This sort of policy will kill anybody's chances.

Then again, there are not so many openings for old men, no matter how worthy or able. Very few will employ them in manual labor, no matter how skilful they are or how good the letters of recommendation they bring.

The best field for men who are getting along in years seems to be in clerical work where they are more likely to get good salaries.

Everybody seems to be interested in the achievements of young men. Boys never tire of reading how Alexander conquered the world at twenty-six, how Napoleon came near to doing the same at thirty-seven, or how Pitt, the younger, was the master of England at twenty-five.

There is a peculiar fascination, the expectancy of what the future will bring to the young in following youthful fortune.

Most of the great things, the daring things, the effective things are done by men before they have reached the half century mark.

A man's business is largely what his employees make it. It is vigorous, strong, energetic, full of life, on the opposite, largely according to the condition and quality of his employees.

The employer knows that young men are more progressive, more active, more pushing; that business is likely to be more progressive, more up to date, with young employees than with old ones. He knows that young men are likely to be not only more hopeful, optimistic, but more inventive, more resourceful. As a rule they have more red blood. They are quicker, more alert, more enthusiastic and buoyant; more cheerful and energetic. They are not so cranky and hard to get along with. They can avoid accidents better, and as a rule, they are more attractive. The employer wants a winning material. He wants to employ vitality, grit, courage, energy. Older men are looking into the future with the hopeful, expectant, ambitious eye of youth. They would rather take things easy. They think more of their comfort. They shrink from exposure, hardship.

There certainly is a prejudice in many business houses against those who show signs of age, because there are so many who have failed and have become side-tracked through incompetence, or through lack of system or luck, slovenly habits. Many of them are turned out men. The embers of their former force and energy are all that remain.

There is no denying that this is a young man's age. We see young men at the helm everywhere. We used to be prejudiced against youth, but now we find young men at the heads of our railroads, our great manufacturing institutions, our colleges and universities. There are a great many large concerns with young men for presidents which have scores of old men as employees.

What all employers are after is the longest possible span of prime availability, and employers know that this would be very short for those who do not enter until they are thirty or thirty-five.

Many men deceive themselves by thinking that because they moved on

so vigorously when young, when they were full of force and energy, they are still moving at the same speed. The slackening process has been so gradual that there was no jar or shock, and they have not realized that they have been gradually slowing down.

It is easy gradually to drop the standards when a man thinks he is beginning to show signs of age. He grows less careful about personal appearance, and unconsciously, drifts into slovenly, slouchy habits of dress. He lets his manners deteriorate. Often he lets his hair and beard grow long; then he looks old and feeble old.

Just this one habit of being good to ourselves, of being particular about our personal habits, of cleanliness, of dress, of keeping ourselves well groomed, will make a difference of many years in our appearance. It is easy to age when other people are constantly reminding us that we are growing older; and when we see these exaggerated signs in the mirror, they only deepen our conviction that we are getting along in years; and it is difficult to overcome a strong conviction.

One of the most pitiable sights in the world is to see a man in middle life going around as if he were an old man, dressing like an old man, with long unkempt whiskers and hair, with stooping figure and slouching gait, without a smile, often cynical, pessimistic, indifferent to the things which interest everybody else about him, trying to get a situation. His very appearance is cause enough for the would-be employer to let him alone. He does not want any such signs of decrepitude around him.

A bottering gait, dragging feet, stooping shoulders, impaired memory have always been regarded as "heralds" of the day when "the dust shall return to the dust."

The man who would keep young must not wear a long, gray beard, long white hair; he must not dress like an old man and go about with stooping shoulders and slouching gait. A good barber and a good tailor would cut off many years in the appearance of one of these prematurely old-looking men.

Half a century ago people looked aged at fifty. The men were long bearded, long hair; they did not carry themselves well.

All this has changed. The barber has learned the art of covering up many years by closely cropping the gray hairs, and by the stylish trimming of beards.

We often hear people remark that we do not see any more the typical old men of former days with soft silken hair and flowing white beards, which seem to lend a dignity and add wisdom to their years. The heavy cane, which was once thought so necessary for support to the man past middle life, has been supplanted by a light walking stick, so thin and fragile that it does not even suggest that the carrier needs support.

I know a man seventy-five years old, who could get a situation in almost any great store in this country. He probably would not be out of a situation twenty-four hours. And why? His hair and whiskers are as white as snow; but he stands erect, and there is the spirit of a Napoleon in him. He radiates force and energy. He lives much with youth, and he touches the men and things of his time.

I know men in the sixties who, if necessary, could get employment in good positions without difficulty almost anywhere because they believe in themselves, because they radiate energy, life, because they are interesting, youthful in spirit, no matter what their gray hair and wrinkles may show. They have not allowed the years to count, age to double them up or make them look dry and seedy. They are trim, buoyant, enthusiastic, fresh, responsive. They have not allowed their hope or vitality to die out of them.

When an old man comes into an office to ask for a position, his very attitude of mind and manner has everything to do with his getting it. If there is a vacancy which he could fill. He must apply for the position with the expectation of getting it, and not with the conviction in advance that his offer will be declined.

He must show that there is a great deal of unused force, a lot of good work in him still. He must show this by his very self confidence and air of assurance, by the very manner of a conqueror. He should know that he needs to be more careful about his dress, his appearance and the impression he makes than a young man who is strong, vigorous and forceful.

What the employer wants is the best there is in a man. He is inclined to take an applicant at his own estimate and if he comes crawling into his presence like a whipped dog, as though he expected to be turned down, the employer knows by his attitude that he does not himself think that he is suitable for the position. The employer wants energy, force, persistence, stamina, grit, determination, and he knows that these must come from a strong vitality; that there must be the evidence of victory in the appearance and manner of the applicant who expects to be successful.

In our investigation, we have found that while it is undoubtedly difficult for men after forty to get positions in lines where they had no previous training, yet many employers are anxious to hold on to men who have grown up with the business and who have learned it from the bottom, because their greater experience and wisdom often more than compensate for their lack of the vitality and buoyancy of youth.

Some men remain fresh, aggressive, self-sufficient, all their lives. They never seem to stop growing. They are always taking on new nutriment and they keep every nerve cell, brain-cell, muscle cell growing. These people never grow old. They always impress you with a fresh youthfulness and vigor ordinarily found in young manhood.

Everywhere we see old men who are filling responsible positions quite as ably as young men. If a man has not squandered his life forces by vicious living, if he has lived simply and sanely, the very rightness of his wisdom, the strength of his judgment, the accumulation of his expert knowledge, the broadening of his mind, the brightening of his whole nature, the enriching of his experience ought much more than to compensate for his little loss of buoyancy, agility and swiftness. A life properly lived is like the rolling at the snowball. It ought to increase, to grow constantly larger and richer to the very end.

Selfishness, greed, avarice are great enemies of youthful appearance. Love, kindness, sympathy, a spirit of helpfulness, are great life prolongers, as well as happiness producers.

No employer wants to hire a whiner. A man who does not think himself any good, who has no confidence in himself, who is always telling his age, who is always pouring out tales of hard luck, and telling how everything has gone against him.

If he wants anybody, he will hire you even if you have gray hairs, if you show that you are still a good soldier in life's battle; that the goals of ambition are still at their height, and that you are resourceful, progressive, original, individual. Hope is an important agent in getting a position, but despair gets nothing.

There is a powerful rejuvenating influence in always appearing young and trying to feel young. Walk as though you were young. Don't drag your feet as though age were creeping over you. Walk with a light, springy step. Don't let your movement or your brain lag.

You can not tell much about a man's age by his years. He may be old at forty—young at seventy-five.

If a man loses his interest in everything, if he does not associate with those who are full of animal spirits, young life, those who are vivacious, if he does not enter into the life around him and become a part of it, if he is as dry and joyless as a sucked orange, everybody will avoid him, and nobody will want to employ him.

An editor of a daily paper, when asked why he did not employ men over fifty replied: "Although a man may do just as much work after this age, he takes himself too seriously." He did not like to have people around him from whom the youthful spirit had evaporated. He wanted optimism—men in whom hope was large. He wanted the exuberance, the enthusiasm and the zest which usually belong to younger men.

It is not so much a question of years as it is a question of the loss of buoyancy, of hopefulness, of that exuberance which is characteristic of young life. If a man has been good to himself in his earlier years, if he has taken good care of himself, and has not squeezed out all the juices of his youthful, joyful, nature, if he has not sapped his vitality by unscientific, vicious living, if he has practised plain living and high thinking, has conserved his energy, his life force, has not overstrained his resources, he is young at almost any age.

It is the burnt out, the spent man that is not wanted.

The employer hires young people, just as he buys young horses instead of old ones, because there is more future in them.

The fact is that men who are beginning to show their age are often their own worst enemies. They admit their defeat, and yet are surprised that employers think as they do.

There is nothing so utterly disheartening as hopelessness. If a man in the vigor of his strength loses his position, his business, his property, he will get on his feet again at some time. But when an old person loses property and position the chances are comparatively small of his ever getting on his feet again, or even into a position of comparative ease and comfort, unless he possesses courage and grit.—Success.

## SOCIETY WOMEN BECOMING NUNS

By entering a convent and devoting herself to a religious and charitable life, Lord Lovat's youngest sister is following the example of a large number of ladies belonging to the Catholic families of the English aristocracy. There are many instances in the dual family of Howard.

The present Duke of Norfolk has one sister a Carmelite nun and another a Sister of Charity, while the Duchess has four aunts, sisters of the late Lord Herries, who are nuns. Lord Abingdon's sister is a nun at the Convent of the Visitation, Harrow, and Lord Braye has a sister, twin with a soldier brother killed by the Zulus at Ulundi, who is a nun.

One of Lord Killanin's sisters is an Irish Sister of Charity and two others are Carmelite nuns. A sister of Lord Denbigh is a Sister of Charity at Shanghai. Four of Lord Trimingham's sisters are nuns, and among young Lord Petre's aunts on the Petre side one is a nun of the Order of the Good Shepherd at Glasgow; another is a nun of the same

order at Hammersmith, and a third is a Sister of Charity at Carlisle Place, Westminster.

## OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

## THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS

We are Christians now, Father, aren't we?"

"Yes, child. He made us Christian by His blood." And the old man bent his head until the white hair mingled with the golden curls of the child on his knee.

"You know you promised me a story, Father, and the sun is almost set."

This was the hour the old monk always spent with his little friends, as he was the friend of all the little children of the hill country around, and he always had stories to tell; stories of the Master, the great Lawgiver, the Christ, Who, had been put to death not sixty years before.

"I wish I'd never been a Jew," said the child again.

"So do I," echoed Rachel, and the old man smiled.

"He knows we are His children, now, doesn't He?" And Daniel looked straight into the old man's eyes, and was reassured.

"Well, now the story, Father, for soon we must sleep."

The old man rested his hand on Rachel's head, as she sat on the sand beside him and began.

"Did you ever see the gate of the city?" he asked.

"Often, and I have wondered and wondered who lived there."

"It was the home of a little boy of whom I am going to tell you. He was a very little boy and he was blind. He had never seen any of the beautiful world because he came into the world already blind, and none of all the great doctors could make him well. And now he had spent eight years in this terrible darkness."

"One day he sat in his father's doorway listening to the people pass to and fro, some going to market, some hurrying to a morning feast, others selling their street wares to the passers by. It seemed to the boy there was more excitement than usual in the street. When his good friend Benjamin would come by, he would ask what it all meant. Until then he could be patient. Now Benjamin always had a kind word for David, and many times he would take him with him to the city gate, or to the seaside."

"David loved Benjamin because he was kind to him, and the other boys took no notice of the poor blind lad. So, patiently he waited. At last Benjamin came by, whistling as usual. 'Benjamin,' shouted little David. Ben knew the little shrill voice of the poor blind boy, and came toward him. 'Good morning, how fares it to day?'"

"Tell me, Benjamin, what means all this noise? There is something going. What is it, Benjamin?"

"Benjamin's face darkened. 'There is something going on to day,' he answered David, 'but never mind that now. Tell me how are the sheep?'"

"I say never mind the sheep," answered David, 'things feel strange to me to-day. I must know. Tell me, Benjamin, I would know if I could see.'"

"Benjamin thought a while. He knew what a tender heart the boy had, and then he answered: 'There has been a Man been condemned to die, David.'"

"Poor man," said the little fellow sadly. 'I hate to hear of that.' And both were silent.

"At last the child spoke again; 'Have you seen the Nazarene lately, Benjamin?' he asked at last; then he added more timidly, 'Benjamin, I have been thinking lately that if I could see Him, and if we asked Him, perhaps He would be sorry for me and make my eyes see again.'"

"Benjamin started, but he did not answer. 'Do you think he would, Benjamin?' His friend was strangely quiet, thought the boy.

"It is too late now, little friend," he answered at last.

"Why, we can go to day; that is if you will take me. It has not been long since He was in this neighborhood, and we can find Him. Will you take me?"

"This was a trying moment for the older boy. How could he disappoint the little fellow, with his face all aglow with excitement. Yet he must tell him in the end, so he might as well say it right out; but it was hard.

"It is He that is sentenced to die, David, the Nazarene. He is to die on a cross up on Calvary."

"The Nazarene—But you said He was a good Man, and made sick people well, and fed the hungry and people loved Him. How can this be?"

"He is a good Man, but Pontius Pilate, the Roman Governor who condemned Him to death, was driven thereto by the clamor of the people, urged on by Caiaphas and the Scribes and Pharisees. He was afraid of the people. But, come, these things are too sad for you. Let me take you to the seashore to watch the ships."

"No, no, I must see Him. I must. You have told me all of the wonderful things He has done; and all these days I had hoped He would pass this way. It isn't too late, Benjamin. Take me where He will pass with His cross. Please take me. If only the shadow of His cross should fall on me, Benjamin, I believe I would be cured."

"Benjamin hesitated. He deeply regretted he had not taken the lad before to the Gracious Haler; but to day would be too sad, too pitiful. And yet thought Benjamin, David is blind. The sad spectacle would be

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hidden from him; and as for himself—well, he was a man.

"We will go," he said. Lifting the little boy on his shoulders, they started off in the direction of the city gate.

"On they went, on and on into the open, toward the hill that led to Calvary, until at last they reached a knoll by the wayside near which Benjamin knew the sad procession must pass."

"Now, little David, we will wait here," said the big fellow, tenderly letting down the little boy from his shoulders, and when I see Him coming I will tell you."

"The minutes seemed to David to stretch into hours. He had waited so long to see, and now this final waiting was longer than ever."

"At last Benjamin spoke. 'They are coming now,' he said, as he caught sight of the armed men in the distance. But there was no need to tell the blind boy. He had heard the tramp of the horses' feet; he had felt the approach of the crowd, even before Benjamin had seen them, and he drew closer to the big friend beside him."

"They are coming nearer," said Benjamin, and we are close beside where He must pass. Kneel with me. I think He cannot fail to see us, if only He will look this way." David knelt and clasped his hands.

"What if the soldiers should see us first, Benjamin?" he asked fearfully.

"Do not be afraid. They are not looking this way."

"Is He coming closer, Benjamin?" David asked again as the steps seemed to draw even nearer and nearer.

"Yes, He is close now," answered Benjamin, but his answer was drowned in the shouts of the crowd.

"Does He see us? Tell me," and David lifted an anxious face to Benjamin.

"Yes, He comes nearer and nearer," whispered the boy, and again the shouts of the approaching crowd filled the air. David shuddered. The uproar frightened him and the heavy tramp of horses' hoofs shook the ground where they knelt.

"He comes, David," and Benjamin saw the great cross that weighted down the form of the silent Prisoner almost to the ground.

"He is here. The shadow of His cross is falling on our path—but hush. He sees us." And Benjamin was thankful in his heart that David's eyes were held. "For a moment the little boy's heart beat fast and loud, but only for a moment. Then a great peace and joy, such as he had never felt, filled all his being, for suddenly his eyes were opened, as by a miracle the crowd parted, and He looked into the face of Christ."

"Only a second—and it was over. The crowd pressed closer, and He could be seen no more. But neither David nor Benjamin could speak, and the eyes that had been blinded all his little life by the Hand of God were blinded now by the great tears that welled up and flowed down his pale cheeks. Benjamin, too, was sobbing and trying to keep back the tears that forced themselves into his own eyes. For the Nazarene had looked at him also, and suddenly a great longing had filled the boy's soul to run after Him, to die with Him—but the thought of the child at his side had held him. He did not need to ask if the boy could see. He knew that a look from the eyes of the great Healer had dissipated the darkness forever from David's eyes. The sad procession had passed on its way, and now only the distant cries of the soldiers could be heard."

"Come, little brother," said Benjamin. "There was a peculiar tenderness in the word; he had never called David this before, but the love felt for him now was different love than he had ever known."

"Long they had knelt; but they could not stay on under the spell that seemed to hold them, and the longing in the older boy's heart could not be fulfilled—not yet. He must take the little boy back to his home, time was passing and they had come a long way. They must leave the hallowed spot."

"Oh, Benjamin, what can I do? I could not thank Him, and how beautiful He was! His face shone like the sun yonder, and there was a great beautiful light all around Him." Benjamin started and looked quickly at the boy, but he did not interrupt him.

"He seemed to tell me that He loved me, and His eyes seemed to read all that I had ever done of good or bad. How could He know me, Benjamin? If we could only follow Him and help Him!"

"But Benjamin was lost in thought. The boy's words had told another miracle. His face shone like the sun, and there was a great beautiful light around Him—these were David's

words; then the boy's eyes had been spared the fearful sight that met his own. What kindness! What tenderness! And Benjamin wondered which had been the greater miracle. Not until long after did David know what he had been spared by the tender love of the Nazarene."

The old monk paused. "This was nearly sixty years ago, and children, nearly sixty years ago," and he looked out over the distant hills towards Calvary, and his eyes were moist.

"What a beautiful story, Father—but what became of Benjamin? Did he go back and follow our Lord? What did David's mother say?" the children asked in chorus.

"Oh, David's mother cried for joy when she could look into her boy's eyes at last, and Benjamin's longing was fulfilled, for he gave his life for his Master in the great arena over there in Rome."

"I wish I could have been David. Is he still alive? He might be. You said it was nearly sixty years ago; but he'd be very old, wouldn't he?"

"Yes, very, very old, Daniel; with snow-white hair."

"Have you ever seen him, Father? Are his eyes very beautiful? Where is he now?"

"Yes, I have seen him and his eyes. They have the beauty his Master gave them."

"Where is he now, Father? I want so much to see him."

"You have seen him, child, and talked to him."

Then Daniel looked up quickly and saw a wonderful light in the old eyes that he had always thought so beautiful.

"Oh, Father, it is you? Are you David? And is that why your eyes are so beautiful?"

But for answer the old man only held him closer, as the child's arms were clasped about the old friend's neck.

The silence of the evening hour had fallen, and the sun sank behind the hill that leads to Calvary.—Youth's Magazine.

## THE CONVERT

"For those who have possessed from infancy the precious gift of faith, it is difficult to understand the situation of the convert," says Miss Burnett. "Many of us take our religion as a matter of course as we do many other blessings, which have never been denied us. It is part of our life and growth, but unconsciously so. We endure with more or less impatience, the study of the 'reasons' of the faith that is in us, as we do in the advanced catechisms. This seems part of the unavoidable routine of school life, and is soon forgotten. As to reading a controversial book, or listening to a controversial sermon—not if we can help it!"

"How different is the case of the convert! He must slowly make his way, step by step, along the road over which we are carried by circumstances. He must deliberately accept or reject that which is part of our nature from the beginning. He must, in the maturity of years, make over impressions, molded into the plastic mind of infancy. He must renounce doctrines taught in good faith by those whose wisdom and devotion were the guide and reliance of his early years. He must look for salvation in the direction in which he once sincerely believed lay the

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