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The Miracle of Polite Persistence. When genius has failed in what it attempted, and talent says impossible; when every other faculty gives up, when tact retreats and diplomacy has fled; when logic and argument and influence and "pulls" have all done their best and retired; when the field, gritty persistence, bulldog tenacity, steps in, and by sheer force of holding on, wins, gets the order, closes the contract, does the impossible. Ah, what miracles tenacity of purpose has performed! The last to leave the field, the last to turn back, it persists when all other forces have surrendered and fled. It has won many a battle even after hope has left the field.

Confederate commanders, in the Civil War, said that "he never knew when he was beaten." When Grant's generals thought that his army, with only two transports, would be trapped at Vicksburg, they asked him how he expected to get his men out, urging that in case of defeat he could get only a small part of his army upon two transports. He told them that they would be plenty for all the men that he would have left when he surrendered.

It is the man in the business world who will not surrender, who will not take no for an answer, and who stands his ground with such suavity of manner, such politeness, that you can not take offense, can not turn him down, that gets the order; that closes the contract; that gets the subscription; that gets the credit or the loan.

He is a very fortunate man who combines a gracious manner, suavity, cordiality, cheerfulness, with that dogged persistence which never gives up. Of course it takes grit to persist when everybody else would stop; to keep on pleading your case when others would give up in despair; but it is just this ability to stick and hang, and yet not lose your temper or suffer your good sense or good judgment to fail you, that enables you to get a big salary when others get a small one, that gives you a reputation for being a king in your line while others are content to plod along in mediocrity.

Polite persistence plays a large part in the success of many business men. It is the man who will not be turned down, no matter how gruff or impolite or insulting the would-be customer may be, who succeeds. He goes a second or third or a fourth time, and often gains the customer's admiration for his pluck and determination, but also gets the order or closes the contract because of his persistence and genial manners.

The man who can be easily turned down never amounts to much. It is characteristic of human nature to be prejudiced against all solicitors and agents, people who are trying to get an order, a subscription, and when a man finds that it is easy to turn one down, to get rid of him, he will do so. But when he finds some one who will not be turned down and yet will not offend him, it is not so easy to get rid of him. He knows that when polite, dogged persistence confronts him he has a difficult task ahead of him, and he often succumbs out of sheer admiration of the solicitor's or salesman's persistence, especially if the man has an interesting personality and charm of manner.

Our Habitual Thought Radiation. Some people bear for years a bitter hatred to a great jealousy toward some one or more persons, and this mental attitude under the possessor for giving out the maximum of his ability, and destroys his happiness. Not only this; but he radiates his inimical atmosphere, thus prejudicing people against him, arousing antagonisms, and constantly harrassing himself all along the line. Just think of the big wage, corresponding influence of carrying some hatred or great fancied wrong or grudge against another constantly in the mind and continually trying to get square with him. Why, in a little while it would cut the efficiency of a genius down to mediocrity.

The mind must be free from bitterness, jealousy, hatred, envy, and uncharitable thoughts; free from everything which hampers it, or pay the penalty in impaired efficiency, inferior work. No one can carry a grudge against another, a bitterness of any kind, a desire to get even with him, without very disastrous results to his own mind, his own efficiency and happiness.

Mental discords whittle life away at a fearful rate; they waste energies, destroy happiness, and age one very rapidly. Then, again, no one can carry secret hatreds and grudges, jealousies, and revengeful feelings, without seriously impairing his own reputation.

Many people wonder why they are not popular, why they are disliked socially, why they stand for so little in their community, when it is really because of their bitter, revengeful discordant radiations. These radiations kill personal magnetism, personal attractions, for their very nature is to repel.

On the other hand, those who send out kindly, loving, helpful, sympathetic thoughts, those who feel friendly toward everybody, who carry no bitterness, hatred, or jealousy in their hearts, are attractive, helpful and sunny. We can not help loving these characters, because there are no discordant, bitter rays in their radiation.

By analyzing the light of a star, though millions of miles away, we can tell what metals are burning in its incandescent atmosphere. Each metal casts a bar across the spectrum when the light is passed through a prism, which is characteristic of its own quality.

An experienced mental chemist could analyze a person's character, and tell what discordant thought or vicious ideal

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OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

LOUIS' PRAYER.

One could scarcely call Louis a hero for any tale. He was not refined nor attractive, clever nor gently-born. Instead, he was poor, dirty, a typical street urchin and, in addition, the son of a criminal but recently sent to prison for life. When I first knew Louis his father had not been convicted, and the boy became greatly attached to me—an attachment which I attributed to the little gifts I bestowed on him from time to time, as premiums for his good conduct and faithful attendance at Sunday-school. Soon I discovered that the poor child had a more loving heart than one would dream he possessed, and knew that his affection for me was born, unconsciously, from the confidence he felt that the priest was the representative of Christ—of that Christ who blessed little children, defended their innocence, and loved them so dearly on earth.

Louis was quite an assiduous student of the catechism, and the teacher assured me that in all the class none understood or prepared a lesson better. But this state of affairs did not last. His father committed a vicious crime which shocked all the community. He was arrested, confessed his deed, and was condemned to life imprisonment in the penitentiary of St. Quentin. His family, branded with infamy, left the place to hide their shame.

More than a year went by and I heard nothing of them. One day, however, I was called to the outskirts of the town to attend a poor creature seriously ill. I never saw a more miserable being. I learned that the family who had once lived in it had given it in charity to the poor, and that she might have a roof over her head, and had given her also the coarse mattress on which she lay in one corner of the hovel. The better to hear her confession, I drew an old box over to her side. When she had finished I did my best to console her, exhorting her to be resigned to the will of God. Then I made a movement as if to rise, when I felt an arm across my shoulder. I turned and my face and my cheeks were wet with his tears. He was on the verge of death—might die at any moment.

He received me with politeness. I inquired how he felt. "Oh, very weak! I won't last much longer, Father." "Perhaps not," I answered. "So there is no time better than the present to prepare for your journey." "What journey?" "The journey into eternity." "Oh, I am prepared," he said, briefly. "You have confessed?" "Not I," he answered coldly. "I do not believe in confession."

I looked at him keenly. His coldness was not assumed. Many times I have met sinners in a similar strait who, fearing they would have to mend their lives. But this was the first time I had met a man speaking Spanish who would not confess because he did not believe. "The worst of it all was that it was not bravado—I could feel that instinctively." "Father," said Don Manuel, "if you want to come to see me you are welcome. But do not lose any time talking to me about confession. I don't believe."

I tried to talk to him of God's grace and mercy, reminded him of his pious mother, his religious father, how all his people had believed and still believed. "I know that," he responded, "I have thought that over well—and yet I do not believe. I confess to God—that suffices for me." A violent coughing shook him. I was positive death was at hand even then, and waited. But no. He recovered slightly, and shook his head at me to denote that he still persisted in his obstinacy. Three days later I called on him again, and though it was plainly to be seen that death was nearer, he had not changed. "I do not believe; I can not believe!" was all he said, in response to my pleadings. "If I were a saint!" I thought to myself, almost in despair, as I left the hospital. "If my prayers were only as

"Yes, Father," answered the boy, smiling through his tears. "Soon you are going to make your first Communion." "I went on. "You have no idea how happy you will be then." He wiped his eyes on his sleeve, hastily. "When will it be, Father?" "On St. Joseph's day, with the other boys." "And when is St. Joseph's day?" "In March—the middle of March." He counted on his fingers. "Oh, that is so far away, Father—so many weeks away!" he said. "I want to make my first Communion soon." "And you shall," I responded, "if you study and know your catechism. It depends on yourself."

From that day on the poor little fellow instead of playing with the other lads, sat by himself studying the catechism. He wished to avoid the others, for he felt their taunts sorely. Then his mother recovered enough to look for better quarters, and she went away without giving me her new address. I did not see Louis for some weeks. Finally I was sent for—he was very sick, they told me, and the doctor later informed me that he had no chance—it was a short while to live. The sight of the poor boy shocked me—but when he saw me he seemed to gain new strength. He sat up on the sofa which served him for a bed, put his arm across my shoulder with the old affectionate gesture, and laid his cheek against mine in silence. My heart ached for him.

"Father," he whispered, "when shall I make my first Communion?" "Soon, very soon, my boy," I answered. "Do you know your Catechism?" "Yes, Father—I know every word of it. I have it here under my pillow." He drew out a pile of leaves and showed them to me. I put a few questions haphazard, and saw that he was really well-instructed. "That is fine, my boy! You shall make your first Communion very soon now," I said. The light on the poor child's face was good to see.

Louis was not the only sick person I visited those days. There was a man in the hospital to which I had been called—a man about fifty years old, I think, and he was on the verge of death. He received me with politeness. I inquired how he felt. "Oh, very weak! I won't last much longer, Father."

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efficients as those of the Curé d'Arç. And I called to mind the picture of that venerable man, when the most incredulous, visiting, and drawing near to him, were caught in the spell of his sanctity. Without thought of their position he would order them on their knees to confess their sins. If I but knew a man like that Blessed Curé, to bring the gift of faith to the dying Don Manuel! Engrossed in these thoughts I entered Louis' poor home. I meant to give him extreme unction, and prepare him for the reception, the following day, of his Lord in Communion—for the first and last time.

With one of the strange phases of that insidious disease which was sapping his vitality, Louis appeared much better. He greeted me warmly, but I paid scarcely any attention to the poor child—my head was full of Don Manuel. I prayed and prayed to God to have mercy, to show me some way to save that unfortunate soul for whom the blood of Christ had been shed. And it seemed as if God gave me an inspiration then, from heaven.

"This little angel," I thought, "will soon see the dear Lord's face to face. I may obtain, perhaps, that which I can not." "Louis," I said, drawing closer to him, as he lay watching me. "To-day I am going to administer extreme unction. You will go straight to heaven after I give you this. You want to go to heaven don't you?" "No," said Louis, without hesitation. "I do not want to die, Father."

"And why not?" "Why, because I have not made my First Communion." "Good!" I exclaimed, touched and pleased. "But supposing you receive your First Communion before you die?" "Then all right," said Louis. "And when you are before God you will remember us all? You will pray for your mother?" "Yes, Father," said Louis, with an affectionate smile toward his mother. "And your father?"

The innocent boy looked at me. Words can not picture the ineffable sadness of his face, the weariness of his eyes. My own eyes filled with tears—here indeed I saw the guiltless victim of another's sin! A victim offered in satisfaction for the creature he called parent! Lowering his eyes, and speaking in a whisper, as he always did when his father's name was mentioned, he said: "Yes, Father. I will pray much for him!" I could not speak for a few moments. Then, trying to cheer him up, I said, smiling: "And you will not forget poor Father A—? You will pray for me?" "Oh, yes," said Louis, fervently. "Very, very much. And when are you coming to heaven, Father?" "When God wants me, my son." "But we shall meet then?" "I hope so," I replied: "pray to God that He will let us meet there, my Louis."

"I will pray that you come soon," he said, fervently. "But I am going to give you a commission which I want you to carry out as soon as you see God. You will do this for me?" He nodded, with shining eyes. "Look, little son," I went on. "I have in hand an important affair—a very important affair—and only God can set it right. Now when you see God you ask Him to straighten this out for me, will you?"

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On entering I asked Sister Dolores if he had seemed in any way well-disposed. She shook her head. "No, Father," he answered sadly, "but if you will only speak to him..." I went to the sick-bed. He was dying. He looked up at me with eyes in which defiance shone, the words, "I do not believe," stamped upon those dying lips. I hesitated—I could do nothing, nothing! Yet at that instant I seemed to hear a familiar voice which said "Much, much to the Blessed Virgin!"

With unquestioning certainty, then, I felt that this man was repentant at heart. I took my own miraculous medal from my pocket and placed it on his lips. "Kiss this image of your Mother! Believe and confess your sins!" He changed instantly—the change was startling. I heard his confession, gave him Holy Communion and Extreme Unction. By some incomprehensible misfortune he had never made his First Communion, although he understood the importance of receiving it well. As with arms crossed upon his breast, he took the Lord of heaven upon his tongue, I seemed to see behind him the figure of Louis, who knelt in heaven before the Blessed Virgin praying "much, much." A little later Don Manuel was dead. But Louis had remembered—Carlos M. De Heredia, S. J., in Benziger's Magazine.

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