

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

PROTECTING THE FACULTIES YOU ARE USING

The man who is determined to make the most of himself will be very jealous of the faculties which he uses in his specialty...

The sense of fatigue applies only to the faculties you have been holding on a stretch for a long time.

If one weary of his work will pick up a book he likes, he will feel an immediate relief from the strain...

All the faculties are never tired at one time, and by the systematic changing of one's work so as to use a different set, one can work many hours without fatigue or injury.

Men in the swirl, the rapids, of our modern strenuous life, need to have some fad, by which to gain relief from the terrible strain...

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HEADED TOWARDS A GOAL There is nothing more evident in the construction of the human body than that we were not only intended for action, but for forward movement towards a goal.

WHAT HE WANTS TO DO Is there nothing that Christ, as your friend, your Lord, your Saviour, wants you to do that you are leaving undone to day?

And yet he speaks. I know what He—there in all His glory, He is here in my heart—wants me to do to-day, and I know that I am not mistaken in my knowledge.

A REMINDER If you choose to remain ignorant of your duty you are to blame; if knowing your duty, you refuse to do it, you are to blame again.

Small kindnesses, small courtesies, small considerations, habitually practiced in our social intercourse, give a greater charm to the character than a great display of talents and accomplishments.

Pray for the poor souls, especially for those who have no one to pray for them; for those who have dropped out of this world suddenly, perhaps died in some distant forest, or a shipwreck at sea; or many who, unfortunately, are forgotten by their friends and the world.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

HOW HENRY PASSED THE EXAMINATION

A big board stood at the door of the venerable old school house. The boys as they passed into the building stood and gazed, for on that board there was a paper, tacked there by the good Brother Superior himself, and the paper told of the coming examinations that would close the spring term and such examinations would tell whether the boys had applied all of their time to study while the lessons of that term were in progress.

Now Henry was among those little chaps who stood with awe gazing at the wonderful yet awful news of the approaching exam., as the boys would abbreviate the long word examination. In truth, Henry and some others were given to the abbreviation of their study hour inasmuch as they cut the prescribed time rather short of the true mark and gave the greater part of their energies to baseball and kindred sports that have tendency to develop healthy bodies and envelope healthy minds in a shady ignorance of that particular study that had been thrown aside for the more interesting games.

You may think that Henry was both sickened and annoyed by the unwelcome examination. On the contrary he was not; he rather felt that he could squeeze through in some which way, and in the long run that was all that was expected of any of the defenders of the school's sacred heroes.

Squeezing through life is sometimes harrier and more difficult than just passing tame examinations, but Henry was young, too young to know the truth of this saying. His father should have known that his boy was not liable to pass the great test with glorious colors flaunting and with his 100 per cent. mark pinned on the sleeve of his coat, but to tell the sad truth Henry's father did expect his son to pass with all of these noble honors.

But Henry, have you helped your father to train you along those noble lines that would be the surest path to the fulfillment of what he expects of you? Have you not played baseball when he said not to? Yes, I know he let you disobey without punishing you, but what of that? Is it honest for a horse to run away because the driver leaves the horse untied? No, and no honest working horse would treat a kind master so, but you have done these things and you are one of God's creatures bred in the faith of Holy Mother Church and taught by the noblest and truest and most learned men of that faith.

"Henry, my boy, I suppose you are prepared to pass the examination, are you not?" his father asked him as he returned from school that afternoon.

"Sure," Henry answered, as he went to get his ball and bat, for there was to be a big game in the afternoon and he, Henry, was the captain of his side and could not very well allow an old examination to keep him away.

Yet he was kept away and he gave up the idea of baseball for some time to come, for his mother having worked very, very hard at cleaning the house, became very sick just as Henry and his father were speaking of the examinations.

In God's mercy she placed her trust when the doctor announced that she was far too sick to get up or even to move, or to talk much. She knew that the hand of sickness comes only at the command of Him who commandeth the waves to recede and they did His bidding. Henry's mother was very religious and she knew that there was some reason for God's visitation of sickness upon her. She lay propped up on her pillowed bed and thought of what it could be.

She lay thus for a long, long time, being rather more fatigued than sick, but over-work and too much worry, as a rule, makes one sick in peculiar way. That is, such a sickness is very seldom attended by fever or is the patient even morose, yet the person so afflicted is sick in every sense of the word.

Henry was very much alarmed but he had a little tete-a-tete with temptation, before he at last gave up the idea of playing baseball. It was his love for his mother that won out in the battle and he put his ball and bat away and crept softly into the room where she lay still, thinking.

Mother, deary, I will stay at home this afternoon and help take care of you.

His mother did not hear him so he repeated his proposition.

Thank you, my dear Henry, and I will be glad to think of mother and I will remember you for it when I get well and strong again.

Oh bother rewards. You always promise a reward for everything you ask me to do, but I do it no better nor no worse. Now there's the examination coming; if I could pass that I will be out of school and able to work for you and father. Poor dad doesn't do much at law lately; I suppose he's down and out with the party in office now and they give their cases to more favorable lawyers.

will not when I tell you that I have a very severe headache.

Henry, crestfallen, left his mother to her thoughts and pains. He was a willing chap and good was Henry. He did not think it womanish to set the table for tea, nor did he stop there, for he made a batch of the lightest, most wholesome biscuits, his father secretly told him he ever ate. But father didn't know that Henry had made a mess of the first batch by using tooth powder instead of baking powder.

The youthful cook was obliged to throw the biscuit dough away. The second try was more successful and joyously so when his father saw it to compliment the substitute cook on his biscuit baking.

After supper Henry had a long talk with his father, and as he had thought of many things while working at the oven that afternoon, Henry greatly surprised his father by many expressions of his that had both good sense to them and real ambition as well.

Yes, my boy, it wouldn't be bad at all. You could study nights and work perhaps a little during the day. Lawyers get big pay nowadays when they are good and honest with their clients.

But how do you stand in class now, my lad? I notice you are not reading grammar and translating Latin, yet I suppose it is quite unnecessary, as you apply yourself to the work at school.

Henry looked at his father with an almost piteous stare. No, he neither worked at school nor offside of it. He knew nothing about his studies, that is, not half of what he should know in order to pass the big test.

Father I feel that I have loafed a good deal too much this term and in the three days to come I will have to study like the mischief to get back in my class. I want you to help me, dad, will you? I know it wouldn't have been necessary had I studied each day, but truly I did not and I must pass, I realize it all now when it is too late.

Yes it would be well for you to get out of school this term and earn a little money for us. We need it now, Henry, with the mortgage and the poverty stricken aspect of my law practice—so, my boy, it is about time for you to help us along. Mother and I have worked for you a long time and now it's your turn; so pass that examination if possible and pass it with the highest mark you can get, for you know what a good chance there is for a high honor graduate.

So they went to work. Henry's mother was absent for many long days, but she was sitting up in the morris chair on the day of the examination.

How pale and weak she looked. Henry was very sorry for her and as he kissed her goodby, he murmured to himself; I'll pass the examination to day if I never pass another. He prayed all the way to school, he prayed in school, he even prayed as he wrote the answer to the questions. He prayed when it seemed as though no answer was ever fitted for the question asked on the paper.

He had studied late with his father every night for the past three days. Perhaps it was this cramming of knowledge that had helped him, or rather was it because he prayed to the Blessed Virgin to assist him? More likely the latter; and in my heart I feel that it was nothing but the love he had for God's Mother that enabled him to bring home the highest average per cent of any in his class.

Henry had won. His heavenly Mother had helped him to make his sick and weak mother happy.

Henry did help his father in many ways and to-day he is one of the county judges, having studied law and in his practice had won the esteem of his fellow citizens, so they elected him to a responsible position. It was his devotion to the Blessed Virgin that showed him the way to pass his examination. If you are in need do as he did and in your faith so shall you be aided by Her who is the interpreter of our wants, to Her who is the sister of mankind.—F. E. Byrne in Sunday Companion.

WHY I AM A CATHOLIC

I cannot answer as an old-time Democrat did, and say I am one because my father and grandfather were, for my paternal ancestors were Presbyterians and my great grandfather was a Presbyterian minister.

I am a Catholic, first, because I could not be anything else. By the process of elimination after investigating all the other creeds, the Catholic Church is the only existing religion that possesses the marks or attributes of the one true Church founded by Christ.

Every earnest Christian must admit: First—That Jesus Christ founded some Church.

Second—That the Church of which He was, and is, the head was to last for all time and therefore must exist on earth to day.

Now, accepting my premises, the one Church of Christ cannot be divided into many branches teaching different doctrines. Many good Protestants say that if we believe in Christ and keep His commandments, it matters not with what denomination we affiliate, unless—Oh, shades of logic—we are Catholics! If Presbyterians are right then Baptists and Lutherans are wrong, for each sect teaches different things; and Unitarians certainly cannot be included in a church of which Baptists and Episcopalians claim to be branches.

Yes, we admit that during the seven or eight centuries after Christ there was a Church which was founded by Him and which taught truly the things He told His apostles to preach.

Without admitting the accusation, I will acknowledge that if all Protestants had united together and formed one Church, and if all the members of this Church believed the same things, their position would at least be more tenable. In this respect the Greek Church has an advantage over Protestants.

Following their argument, however, there is on earth to-day one Church, one form of divine worship founded by our Lord Jesus Christ, and only one. Which is it? The Church did He found? Which of the many creeds and "isms" is the one true branch that perpetuates the early Church which is to continue until the end of time? Unless a Protestant can answer this question positively and at least to his own satisfaction, he has no excuse for remaining what he is.

The Episcopalians, I believe, are the only Protestants who seriously even claim a direct succession from the apostles, but they are obliged to trace through the Roman Catholic Church, and they themselves in so doing admit that during a certain period the Roman Catholic Church was the true Church. "The gates of hell shall not prevail against her." If once the true Church, she is bound to be so still, otherwise hell has prevailed. If Episcopalians could show a true succession (which they cannot), how can they reconcile high and low Church, one claiming to acknowledge the Real Presence, and the other denying it. Can Christ's Church be divided against itself?

The direct apostolic succession has always seemed to me the simplest and at the same time the most vital test of any Church claiming divine authority. Strange to say, most Protestants admit the claims of the Catholic Church in this regard.

One thing has always impressed me. There are of course exceptions, but in almost every case of which I have had personal knowledge this rule will apply. Lukewarm or bad Catholics are the ones who leave the Church, but our converts are good, earnest Protestants who are seeking truth and their eternal salvation.

Again, "By their fruits you shall know them." Look back through the pages of history and count, if you can, the mighty names upon the roll of the Catholic Church—just to mention a few—St. Vincent de Paul, St. Francis Xavier, St. Ignatius Loyola, Thomas A' Kempis, Fenelon, Michelangelo, Raphael, Dante, Dryden, Newman, Manning, Spaulding. Is it not a privilege to be brothers in the faith to such as these? Is it possible for such men to have been wrong in their method of serving God?

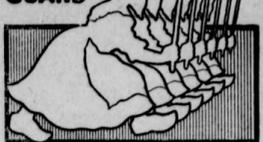
Protestants sometimes say: "I can not understand how Catholics believe this or that." Of course they cannot, otherwise, if in earnest, they would become Catholics. Right here we come to the main point; faith is not understanding, but believing what we cannot understand.

Help thou our unbelief, And give us grace to say Like the repentant thief, "Have mercy, Lord, to-day." Yes, help us to love Thee, too; Let us not love Thee, too; Let us not love Thee, too; Our failing faith renew.

We do not ask to see, Enough that we may know The path that leads to Thee, The way that we should go, Enough that Thou hast said: "Believe, believe in Me, And ye shall even raise the dead, Cast mountains in the sea.

As a rule, non Catholics do not seem to realize that if one acknowledges a Church of God through which He still speaks and teaches, that whatever His Church teaches is divine truth and, even if certain doctrines cannot be entirely understood by men's finite minds, they must accept them, and faith says "I believe." On the other hand, however, many of the devotions and practices of the Catholic Church help to strengthen our belief in her divine institution. I have always found that, even from a human standpoint, the more we study and investigate the Church the more we see how logical are her teachings. What is more natural and beautiful than to believe that the Mother of God was the ever Virgin Mary? The mind revolts at the non Catholic attitude towards the Blessed Virgin. Again, how can Christians dislike the crucifix emblem of Christ's death for sinners? What a consolation to man kind is the sign of the cross, the pledge of our salvation. Or take the sacraments, viewed merely as temporal benefits. Like a loving mother the Church takes us in infancy, and from the day the waters of baptism are poured over us she never relaxes her watchful care. She leads us gently along the path of life, ever ready with a shield in each emergency, and a balm for every pain, Are we wounded? She offers us the sacrament of penance, in which we may be healed. Then she strengthens us with confirmation and the Holy Eucharist. When we are grown and choose our state in life, there, awaiting our coming, are holy orders or the sacrament of matrimony.

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mony. And at the end, when the light begins to fade, when the weary spirit falters and we long at last for rest; then, when death approaches and the demon of discouragement strives to claim us for his own, does our Mother forsake us then? Nay, she stands by our side, gives us the bread of life, anoints us with holy oil, and as she has led us from the cradle to manhood, and from youth to old age, she now leads us to the gates of that heavenly city which she has taught us to seek. Believing, therefore, that Our Divine Lord established a Church which exists to-day, I must either believe in and accept her teachings, or doubt the truth of Christ's own words.

So if you ask me why I am a Catholic, I answer: "Because I must be either a Catholic or an atheist."

A PAGE FROM A CATHOLIC CLASSIC

From The Nun by Rene Bazin

The five nuns of St. Hildegard lived together in a house, noisy by day, silent at nightfall. All were overworked. The daily recitation of the office after the evening school, the meditation and Mass every morning, the care of a certain number of pupils, who took their mid-day meals within the convent, the correction of school exercises, and then—for the elder ones, especially—the innumerable affairs of the poorer quarter of the city to which they ministered (Lyons), and in which their good will was called upon to excess, to exhaustion—these things filled all days, the months, the years.

Throughout this incessant occupation, in this forgetfulness of self, in this poverty, they enjoyed the sweetness, little known outside convent walls, that comes of companionship—albeit often silent—with elect ones, being entirely worthy of love, whose energies are all at the command of charity. They formed a group more closely united than a family; none the less had they gathered from dissimilar places and conditions, and for causes that differed also; Sister Justine, urged by her faith and by her love of action; Sister Daniele, moved by her zeal for spiritual perfection and drawn by the invisible; Sister Edwige, called by her love for the poor; Sister Leonide, by her humility. Sister Pascale, led by her distrust of herself and by her desire

that among saints, and in fact of their example, her days might be counted in unassailable security.

The home of Sisters, working for the good of humanity and building up therein a peace beyond understanding. But this human love-cote was situated in a country dominated by savages, wild, uncivilized creatures who had returned from the refinement and culture of centuries to the barbaric immorality of the stone age. Like aboriginal Indians these men could deck themselves out in gold and silver trappings and imagined that the glitter of gaudy adornments and the fierce lust for blood and persecution made up the necessary qualifications of manhood. We can imagine these nuns in the dead of night, kneeling in constant apprehension behind their close-barred doors, the prayer for protection upon their lips; for the savages were without, roaming the street in thirst for their blood.

So, in early days the settler in American forests sat behind his guarded door, his wife and children clustered around him, while without the wild Indians prowled, seeking the moment for springing upon that devoted home and doing its occupants to death.

The days came when the savages of France approached the door of this sanctuary of St. Hildegard, armed with their weapons of war. The strong government of France was about to bring the battle into Lyons, and with a cowardice unexampled in all historic records of war or peace, the strong men were to march forth valiantly to engage a company of women. Oh, the shame of it! Can France ever again claim the sword of bravery? The nation that was whipped in 1870 by men has gained a victory at last—over women. France! weave the laurel garland, and let the spirit of Zola place it reverently upon thy brow! Let the throngs of degenerate assemble around the band and shout thy glory forever—great is thy glory, O France! thou hast conquered—women! France has descended so low in the ranks of the nations that she is no longer fit to battle with men. Give her an army of women and you will see how valiantly she will fight and whip.

This was the government that sent its emissaries to the convent of St. Hildegard one pleasant evening in springtime. At that moment there was a sound at the bell. Sister Justine arose, very pale, and gave the order to the others to follow her. She treaded the corridor, and with a firm hand opened the door of the school and convent.

"Two men saluted, the one by lifting his bowler hat with a bow, having an obvious desire to bear himself correctly; the other by a mere nod of his bilious and sinister head. They were the commissary of the police and his clerk. Sister Justine drew back.

"You will allow me to come in?" asked the commissary, upright in his frock coat. He entered without waiting for her answer, pushing one shoulder forward, on account of the vast amplitude of his bust. He did not wish to come to an explanation at the door, where passersby might be attracted, for a group or two were gathering. His clerk skipped in behind him.

"You are now in the home belonging to two Sisters of Clermont-Ferrand," said the superior. "You have come to take their property from them."

"As I told you before, that is not my business."

"In their name, sir, I protest." "But you will cut your protest short, I hope," said the man, who had done the same work before.

"Sister Justine silenced him with a gesture. "I shall not make a speech," she said, "but I shall tell you, and you may repeat it, that you are doing three illegal acts; one in the destruction of my school, which was a school for the poor; another in the seizure of our property; and a third in expelling us from the place where we have a right to live. And now you can carry out the eviction. Do what you have to do, said the superior to the representative of the law. With a little genuine shyness he laid his hand on the black veil covering the shoulder of Sister Justine and with that hand upon her she went down the steps, her daughters following."

The crime was done, and out into a world, a little sympathetic, but apparently dragged into stolid indifference, the five Sisters were thrust to begin a new and strange life. It was not the life of other women in France, for the Sister, once dedicated to God, can never become really a votary of the worldly ends and aims. Out into the world they went first to be despoiled of their nun's habit, and to clothe themselves like the women of the world then to be separated, each one to seek out individually a home for herself.

When we consider too much our selfish desires and think too blindly of expediency we make mistakes. The first question to ask before we act should be "Is it right?" When the truth is plainly before you, make a definite stand. More harm may be done by a half-hearted friend than by an openly aggressive enemy. Be sure that your conduct is always courageous and that your influence is positive.

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