

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN. THE CONTRIBUTION OF YOUNG MEN.

In one of his articles on "The Business Side of Religion," Father Roche quotes the experience of a certain pastor with the young men of his congregation, and comments upon it. The pastor said: "I found, of course, a certain percentage of my young men who are doing splendidly in the matter of contributing towards the support of our Church and its institutions. They are generous on all occasions, and can always be relied upon to do what is right. I found, again, that young men's salaries seem to play no part in their comparative generosity. Some of them receiving good wages never give anything. Others, again, with a moderate weekly allowance are what might be justly called generous contributors. About one-third of my young men belong to this last class, the other two-thirds can be divided again into two classes—the one-third that never give anything, for the simple reason that they are very irregular in their attendance at Church and very careless, of course, about everything which pertains to their duties as Catholics; the other one-third are generous by fits and starts. They give occasionally, but are by no means regular contributors. A strange thing in connection with these young men is this: the ones who give nothing are the ones who talk most about the mercenary tendency of the Church at the present day. The favorite pretext for not coming to church is that we are always taking up collections. I think at bottom it is not a question of money, but of morals, and that if we could do something to improve their moral conditions, the financial question would solve itself. It is the old story repeated daily under our eyes. They always have money when it is a question of their own pleasure. They become financially crippled only when we ask them to aid in the solution of our parish problems. We have a school with almost a thousand children. The work done in this school reflects the highest credit upon the parish. We have societies for the mental and physical advancement of our boys and young men. We are straining every nerve to fit the coming generation of men for the responsibilities of Christian citizenship, and one of the chief sources of discouragement is the indifference of those most directly interested. We do not want those young men's money so much as their souls, but my investigation has shown me clearly one thing, and that is that the Catholic young man who is a poor pay is generally a poor Christian. I do not know if this general assumption be true of our young men taken as a whole, but I do know that altogether too many of them regard themselves as having no responsibility, as far as the support of the Church is concerned. It does not seem right that young men receiving good salaries should be exempt, whilst married men and fathers of families, receiving the same and smaller salaries, should be required to make real, and sometimes great, sacrifices in order to do their duty in this matter. The burden ought to be equalized. Such young men ought really to pay more than husbands and fathers with the same means, for their own to solve. Our young men frequently complain that they are preached to and preached at a great deal, and that there is a general tendency towards fault-finding as far as they are concerned. The real truth of the matter is that they are the object of the deepest solicitude on the part of priests and pastors, and that those who show a disposition to do what is right are treated with every consideration. There is a saying amongst priests which runs to the effect that if we look out for the young men and boys, the future growth of the Church in any locality is thereby assured. This saying seems to be based on the assumption that the girls and the young women will remain Catholic, even if no specific attempts be made to keep them faithful. Experience has shown, however, that this assumption is not always a correct one. The mixed marriage has been "the great destroyer" as far as the latter are concerned, and the young men have not by any means responded to the efforts made to uplift them socially and morally. We have never yet been able to organize a Catholic young men's society similar in general scope and purpose to the Y. M. C. A. That there is a real need for an organization of this kind no one will deny. If we could once succeed in arousing them from their apathy and indifference, and convince them of the necessity of standing shoulder to shoulder in the great struggle for God and right-ness, the future growth of Catholicity in this country would be assured. There is little ground for hope from this army of careless, lukewarm, indifferent, mass-missing young men. At bottom we do not want their money so much as we want them to be true to their convictions, to be honest, upright, sober, industrious, God-fearing young men. We want to cease apologizing for that form of misnamed Catholicity which is the Church's reproach. We want them to keep out of "dirty" politics and dishonorable means of making a livelihood. We want their religion to be something more than an empty name, and when that time comes to pass we feel that they will have no complaint to register against the Church or their fathers. I have found in my experience that the men and women who complain most about the exactions of religion are they who are striving to trump up a pretext for not practicing that religion. They are giving up the service of God and they are trying to convince themselves and others that He has been a hard Master. They have yet to learn that the devil whom they have begun to serve is not by any means an easy one.—Rev. J. T. Roche in Standard and Times.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS. HOW THEY MADE A MAN OF JOHNNY.

By Rev. George Hampfield. CHAPTER XVIII. CONTINUED. The Academy at last finished, Father McReady called up boy after boy who had won a prize, beginning with the little ones of the lowest classes, and the prizes were handed to them by the Bishop himself. The plan at Thornbury was not to give many prizes, but such as were given were good. "Books such as when men they will be glad to put upon their book shelves, and which will call to their minds, not unpleasantly, their old school, and their own exertions in the days of their boyhood. I have known such prizes to be of long life use to the winner." And so there was but one general prize for each class, and that one a solid book hand-somely bound and with the school motto stamped upon it. Father McReady came at last to the Head Class amidst much excitement among the boys. Was it to be Popwich or Muttieburry? The doubt was soon settled. "It gives me," said Father McReady "unusual pleasure to call up the name of a boy who now wins a prize for the first time, who has not always shown the industry which his talents deserve, who has been, never indeed a bad boy, but perhaps a little given to boyish mischief, which now in his more thoughtful youth he has, I rejoice to say, entirely given up." There was much applause here among the audience and not a little chuckling among the boys, to whom Johnny's pranks at the academy were already known. "He has," continued Father McReady, "by steady work as well as by talent fairly won the prize, and with it the esteem of his masters. The boy is John Popwich." At this the whole school, with whom now Johnny was a real favourite, burst into a roar of cheering which continued while he received his prize and a few words of encouragement from the Bishop whose ring he knelt and kissed. Nor was this his only prize. A special prize for mathematics, for a Latin composition, and not least in boyish eyes, a presentation bat as being the best all-round cricketer, fell to the lot of lucky Popwich. "Brav! Joseph Muttieburry you deserved it. Not even with every prize taken from you by your rival and with your back sore from his mischievous whip did you lose your generous kindness, and it was but the simple truth which Father McReady said, when at the end of all he asked pardon for keeping his kind friends a little longer while he gave what was better than a prize." "There is a youth who has been with us for some years, and throughout those years has steadily done his duty in every way. Not by fits and starts, but by a quiet onward course, he has made progress in every study and in all goodness of character. He is, we fear, about now to leave us; in one way or another he will have passed out of the school before the next Academy; and the masters one and all wish to present him with a token of their esteem. I need not mention his name"—and the whole school shouted "Joseph Muttieburry," and his mother shed a quiet tear or two of joy, as her son knelt to receive the Bishop's special blessing and the four handsome volumes which showed the esteem in which his masters held him. And with the Bishop's blessing and a few words of praise from him, in which he did not forget to mention the natural acting in the Greek scene, and the touching grief of Croesus at his son's bier, all went away delighted. "Oh!" said Martha, when she was relating the adventures of the day to Michael as he sat smoking, "it was a lovely academy, as they call it; and Johnny did act beautifully. How he did give it to that Joe Muttieburry!" The next day Brother Richard looked at Johnny, as they shook hands before the going home, with a puzzled doubting look that Johnny understood. "Don't be angry with me, Corney," he said, forgetting Brother Richard for the moment. "I don't mean any harm, old fellow!" But Richard stood quiet, looking after the train as it sailed out of the station. "I wonder if I shall rear him after all," was the thought in his mind. "I don't half like it. And now he's off to Bermoneys, and Bermoneys will do him no good." CHAPTER XIX. MARTHA'S LAST WARNING. Bermoneys did him no harm. Very happy was Johnny to see his father's delight in his boy's prizes; he did not tire of watching the reverent way in which he puzzled over Paley's Eschylus, which was one of them, holding it, lest he should soil the binding, in his best pocket handkerchief, now upside down, now sideways, to see if from any point of view the Greek would "look more natural and Christian-like," finally bursting into merry laughter at his ignorance, mixed with tearful joy at his son's wonderful scholarship; and he spent pleasantly, even in the dull Bermoneys cottage, as he explained to "Dad" what the pictures meant, and grand pictures they were, in the book of Travels; or in the merry contests over the pipe, which Michael still pressed upon his son, reminding him how he loved to sit on his father's knee and "have a draw" in the old days when he couldn't see over the table, before he went to Thornbury. "But what are you going to be, Johnny?" It was the question every one had asked him. Father Wittens asked it in the secrecy of Michael and Martha's room; he asked it three times a day; he asked it of himself from morning till night; and to others he answered nothing as yet, but to himself he was making an answer which grew clearer every day, to himself and to Joseph Muttieburry—for the two lads were always together—and our readers shall see the answer, as he wrote it,

after some three weeks, holiday, to Brother Richard. Southend, Sept. 4. Dear Brother Richard—I am down here at Southend for a week with Joseph. Mrs. Muttieburry has brought all the children down for a little sea air, as one or two of them have been a little out of sorts; and Joe would have his mother take me along with them. He is a good fellow, is Joe, and we have been talking over what we are going to be, for of course they expect us to be getting our own living now, and not to be eating their salt for nothing. Dear Brother, since I was a little fellow fresh at Thornbury you have always been nothing but kindness to me, and I have not been to you as I ought. I am so sorry about my foolery in the 'Frog's' scene. I don't know what took me, but I know I would have given anything, as the train went out of Thornbury Station, if I could have jumped out and asked your pardon better than I did. What a fool I was! But about what I am going to be. Joe tells me he has written to Father McReady, and asked to go back to Thornbury as one of the Brothers. He says he owes everything to Thornbury. And if he does, I am sure I do. There are odd things to see and hear at Bermoneys; and things to learn which are not taught at Thornbury, and which I should have learned quicker or that I did the Greek Poets, which puzzle Dad so much. Now, Brother, if Thornbury has been everything to me, and Joe has been too, I should like to go back to Thornbury, and if I could only be with you still, I should keep right on with the help of God. But I don't like to ask Father McReady to take me. Will you ask him if I may come back as a Brother along with Joe. I promise you and him to do my very best in study and everything else if I may have the chance. Your affectionate friend, JOHN POPWICH. Please pardon writing; I am so jolly tired. Joe and I have been out for ever so long a row, and Joe was awfully cross because I nearly upset the boat with my larks. "Some of the old leaven in him yet," thought Richard; but the letter was laid aside before Father McReady, who said in approval, "Yes! Richard; John Popwich good fruit; he only wants ripening." Great was the joy among the boys when it was known that "plucky Pop" and "dear old Joe" were not going away after all; and there was not a little kindly fun when they appeared in all the dignity of cassock and biretta as Brother Angelo and Brother Camillus. Angelo was Father McReady's choice for Joseph; and Camillus— "Yes! please, Father, if I may, let me have Camillus. You know, when I was very ill that time, you blessed me with a relic of S. Camillus, and told me to promise that if got better to honour him, I remember," said Father McReady. "I have great love myself for S. Camillus of Lellis." "Yes; and when I was getting better, you talked to me about him, and how he loved the sweet scents of his gardens, as he called the hospitals; and showed me pictures of his devoted life's sick. I remember one where he is being lifted up in the air as he was kneeling before a sick man, and quite forgot himself, and thought he was kneeling before our Lord." "Yes; he is a lovable saint, John, so full of charity!" "But it was not that quite only—it was— "Well! my son, it was what?" "Why! Father, some saints are so very good from the beginning, that you feel as if they were quite above you, a sort of angels; but S. Camillus— "Was not always quite so good when he was young but full of high spirits which sometimes led him into mischief. You are right, my son; they are encouragements for us and are no doubt meant to be so. So we will call you Camillus; and see to it, dear son, that if you have ever been Camillus the mischievous, you become Camillus the loving and the self-forgetting, Camillus the cross-bearing, the servant of all." "I will try, Father," said John, as he knelt for the Father's blessing; and he meant what he said. An so on the same day the two friends became Brothers Angelo and Camillus; and great was the glory of Susan and Martha when they came down with their husbands on a Sunday by special invitation of Father McReady and saw their boys sitting amongst the Brothers in the Church. And certainly the hearts of wiser mothers than were Susan and Martha might have been forgiven for beating high with joy as they saw the fine young men heading the procession as acolytes, with faces comely to look at by nature, but still more beautiful with the stamp of grace and devotion. Michael fairly blubbered outright as he said good-bye that night to Father McReady. "It's your Reverence has done everything for him; he'd have been a wild lad about the streets else." Susan and her husband knelt with quiet joy for the priest's blessing; but Martha poured forth a river of words,

numerous even for her. When at last she left the door Mrs. Popwich still found a word to say, and turned back to say it. "I give him up to your Reverence, and I know you'll take care of him; but you'll see, Father, won't you, that he wears his flannels; and don't let him leave 'em off till June sets in. It's the care now the strongest lad you have got about you. God bless your Reverence; don't forget his flannels.—There Mike," said she, as she caught up her husband, "I always said I'd make a man of him. Didn't he look fine? I'm glad he takes the shine out of that Joseph Muttieburry." "Woman!" said Michael, and some what sternly, "if you had finished the sitting on that egg of yours, it had been added as sure as eggs is eggs. Never you cackle about it again. It isn't you but Thornbury that by the blessing of God has made a man of Johnny." CHAPTER XX. JOHNNY BECOMES A MAN. Some years have passed on, and there is a day of joy such as had not been at Thornbury till then, and may never be again. It was the day for the Mid-summer Academy, but that alone would not account for the many signs of gladness in Church and school; nor for the preparations which were being going on for weeks rather than days. In the Church especially at an early hour all things had been made ready for a function clearly of another kind than the High Mass of greater Feast days. There was to be an Ordination at Thornbury Church and this was the secret of the unusual gladness. As we look along the lines of boys standing on parade, while the band plays before they march to church, we shall of course miss many a face which we had seen at the grand Academy of which Popwich was the hero. The world is ever changing, but few things in it change so quickly and so certainly as a school. The lads that were amongst others Hardwin not doing so badly with his regiment in India; others there are at home working their way upwards, none of them grumbling now at the education which as school-boys they vied 'of no good.' It was a happy day for Father McReady, but a sadder still perhaps for Brother Richard, who had been a priest for a year, and dear old Lord Cranley, whose delight it is to watch the boys grow into men, has confided to Father McReady in his own way that "that boy with the long arms—oh! yes, Wrangle—Richard will call him now makes a capital priest, and bye and bye with a little more practice will preach a fine sermon—that was a real sermon he gave us this morning." When the time came for Father Richard to lay his hands with Father McReady and the others upon Joseph and John, or Brothers Angelo and Camillus as we ought to call them, who were being ordained to be his fellow priests, his grateful happiness almost showed itself in tears. Those who knew all he had done for the young rascal Johnny, could not help feeling a little touched as they saw him kneel before Father Camillus

after the ordination and kiss his hand. Angelo's hand he had kissed with an almost reverent devotion, as of one holier than himself; but his lips quivered and his eyes moistened a little as he kissed the hand of the boy whom he had 'roared,' and his *Deo Gratias* was the fervent thanksgiving of one to whom it had been given to fulfil his task. "Yes, Father," said Johnny as he must sometimes call him, to good old honest Michael in the evening after the academy, "yes, Father, you can't thank Father McReady too much; but there is another here you must thank also, for I should have never been a priest to day except for him. "Camillus is right, Mr. Popwich," said Father Richard; "there is no power so great in a school as that of a good boy, old enough and boyishly wise enough to help other boys in doing the right. Such a boy was Cornelius Wrangle. "Not quite all the time, Father," put in Richard absently. "No, not quite all the time, Richard, but most of it; part of his reward, Richard has to say." "Yes, Father," said the cheery voice of a pleasant young man who came forward, "you will let poor old Jagers bear his cordial testimony to that; a good fellow was Cornelius Wrangle, though he did hit out a little sometimes with those long arms of his." "Ah! Jagers, old fellow!" said Richard, "is that you?" "It is my very self, Father Cor—Richard I mean, only myself doubled. I heard that Muttie and Pop—beg pardon, I haven't learned their new names yet—were to be ordained to day; so I thought I'd bring down Mrs. Jagers and the baby for their blessing. Here Elton, my dear, bring the duckling and get the new priest's blessing." "Does he still go on with his big words, Mrs. Jagers?" laughed Camillus. "Oh no!" said Jagers, "she soon cured me of that. But you should become the participator of my sublimity and happiness and vicissitudes, or some such nonsense; ah! marriage does change a man; I never use a big word now; she wouldn't let me call the boy Nabuchodonosor; said she liked John better." "But our tale is told; the long day came to an end at last. "God bless you, Father," said Mrs. Muttieburry, and "God bless you, Father," stammered Michael, while Martha happily was deprived of speech by tears, "you have made a man of Johnny." "Yes," said Father McReady, "and a good man, I believe, Mr. Popwich, and somewhat more than a man, a priest. But I say again," he continued as he laid his hand affectionately on Richard's shoulder, "it is to Father Richard that we all of us owe to-day Father Camillus. There is no power in a school like the power of a good boy, and it was years ago that Cornelius Wrangle began to make a man of Johnny." THE END. The best way to lead anyone to heaven is to help him to a good home here. The tear of pity is a good thing, but it doesn't go far in a thirsty world. Often it is the pull on our heart-string that gives us our biggest lift.

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