

RANDOM NOTES

For Busy Households.

The difficulties in households which are the outcome of mixed marriage was the subject of a recent editorial in the Catholic Universe of Cleveland, O. It says:

"Religious differences at home were the cause of our family trouble. Mother is a strict Roman Catholic, father is a staunch Episcopalian, the children were permitted to choose their own faith when they reached a proper age, but the arrangement did not prevent friction and discord which have led to much unhappiness." This is the explanation furnished by one of the household for a sensational domestic drama enacted by members of a certain well-to-do New York family, which figured very prominently in the press of the land a fortnight ago.

It is an old and oft-told tale. It does not require a particularly lively imagination to accept the statement at its face value. Differences of belief and practices between parents in religious matters usually lead to domestic discord, and not uncommonly to domestic disruption."

The following incident recorded in the Philadelphia Record, nicely illustrates the average man's knowledge of the culinary department.

A certain man made a display of dense ignorance the other day when he went into a restaurant and asked the waiter if he had any eggs. "Yes, said the waiter, "we have." "Well, bring me some," "How do you want them cooked?" "Oh, any old way." "My dear man," said the waiter, "that order will hardly do. We have over five hundred different ways of cooking eggs, and you will be pleased to make a suggestion or mention a choice." This astonishing fact had the effect of paralysing the customer's tongue for a while, and he finally recovered enough to whisper in awe, "Scramble 'em."

"Yes, sir," replied the astute waiter, still lingering, "which way?" "Oh, any old way." "Sir," said the waiter in a determined voice, "I must insist you will make a choice—there are seventy different ways of scrambling eggs in this establishment." "Well, then, fry them for me." "Which way? We have forty ways of frying eggs here." "All right," said the customer slowly as he reached for his hat and arose, "you have one way here that I can find myself, and that is straight out of that door. Good day."

In Paris there are hundreds of floating laundries moored in the Seine. They have from time immemorial, been an important feature in the river scenery, and also of the economic and hygienic systems of Paris. All the soiled linen of the great city is washed in the Seine. The largest of these floating laundries is that of the "Arche Marion," and by the Parisian washerwomen it is considered the best and most convenient. It consists of twelve houses in two parallel lines, upon as many flat boats. They are connected with each other by gangways and form a frontage of three hundred and fifty feet, with streets in every direction and spaces at various points where the washerwomen meet to gossip, quarrel, and transact business. In the centre is a large building having a tall chimney, where are the boilers, vats and store houses, containing carrels of an acid used in washing, parcels of carbonate of soda, tanks, and vast quantities of yellow and soft soaps.

Though the twelve houses are separate and distinct, they are virtually one establishment, having all the characteristics of a village. The buildings have two storeys, a river floor and an upper floor. The first has shop-like windows, the upper flat being devoted to the drying of clothes. Within there is a long corridor traversing the boat longitudinally. On either side of this corridor is a row of washing places, where the laundresses perform their labor. Twenty-four persons can be accommodated on each boat, so that the "Arche Marion" has places for 288 regular customers on its twelve boats.

These customers are divided into twelve classes—the professional washerwoman and those women of the working classes who, for cheapness, come there once a week to do their family washing at a charge of one cent per hour. The professionals pay only eight cents per day, and usually wash fourteen hours out of the twenty-four.

The proprietors of the establishments do not supply artificial light gratis. Those who have to work at night have to pay extra for it.

The income from a laundry having one hundred washing places is £1,600 a year, £800 being clear profit. All the families of these Seine laundries are united by the ties of interest and marriage, and they form what is called the fluvial world of Paris. The daughters of proprietors get as dowry a flatboat, and generally wed sons of those in the same profession.

Manner and manners in their relation to social life are frequently discussed; their importance in the business world seems to be realized less forcibly, though, there, too, they may be said, almost without exaggeration, to make or mar fortunes. A merchant who intended to hire an errand boy, asked a boy that applied if he thought he could do the work. "Yes,"

answered the boy. He did not get the place. When asked why he did not hire the boy, the merchant answered that a boy who did not know enough to say "Yes, sir," to his elders would not be of use to him. The incident was light, yet it revealed a lack of that courtesy which the wise employer regarded as essential. And in most lines of business courtesy is essential to success.

The show windows in the various shopping districts, especially those belonging to proprietors who remember the "True Witness" in distributing their advertising, are now dressed with all the ingenuity and taste that the most successful window-dressers have at their command. It seems to have taken for granted by the merchants that a display out of the ordinary is necessary if customers are to be attracted and money made. To attract the presence of the customers within, selling distance, they have resorted not only to an artistic and effective display of their wares, but to all sorts of mechanical devices and to certain forms of entertainment.

There is a delightful fascination about a person who possesses unlimited tact, remarks a writer in an American journal. They seem to keep everything about them in perfect harmony. They are the life of a social gathering, the pillars of successful enterprise, and a comfort to the afflicted. Their own lives, he says, is a secondary consideration,—"self last" is their motto. They come and go cheerfully. Bright smiles, kind words, loving deeds are their gifts to humanity. Their nature is not a prying and tattling one, they are too fully occupied with nobler considerations. Their very presence wards off gossip. You take a pleasure in their visits because you have no fear that they will distort and repeat your conversation. They are not rudely critical and fault-finding. They mind their own business and have a tactful but pleasant way of compelling others to do the same. They have no affinity with the questionable affairs of society. They do not rant about existing social evils but to do their utmost to uplift society by substituting good for evil. They can find good in every one and adroitly bring to the surface the better natures of those about them. They put you at your ease and find time for a pleasant word for the timid. They bring encouragement for the flustered and cheer to the disheartened. Being sincere they hate all deceit and do not stoop to flattery. Nor do they accomplish so much that is commendable by sacrificing their own self-improvement or neglecting their duties. They are here, there, and most of all where they should be. Talent is excellent, tact is better. Talent is something, tact is everything.

Catholic women can render a great service to the "True Witness," by mentioning its name when making their purchases.

Women have been invading the labor field in startling fashion during the last ten years, and proving that they have possibilities for which masculinity had never given them credit, says a writer in the New York Sun. Until very recently, however, the careers carved out for themselves by women were such as necessitated a sedentary indoor life, and from out-of-door pursuits women seemed debarred. With the rise of the athletic girl that state of things became intolerable, and now each day brings news of some new feminine venture in out-of-door work. The number of women ranch owners who manage their ranches are increasing, and in California, Arizona and Florida women are going in for fruit culture, with great enthusiasm and great success. A number of girls are studying forestry, and horticultural colleges for women are springing up like mushrooms. Germany in particular is enthusiastic over horticulture as a profession for women. Schools have been founded in Charlottenburg, Prussia, Konstanz, and Baden, and last year the Baroness von Barth-Harsting opened a horticultural school for women at Plauen, and guarantees her pupils, after two years' training, a profitable place. She says that she al-

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ready has more applications for women gardeners than she will be able to meet.

A great number of American women of good social position cultivate flowers and fruit for the market. Violet culture, especially, seems to appeal to women; and some of the most successful violet farms in the country are managed by women whose names are in society's blue books.

Women are taking up general agriculture, as well as flower and fruit culture. A fine course in agriculture has recently been opened to women in Minneapolis, but Russia has a long lead in the matter of agriculture for women. Twelve years ago a Russian Baroness undertook the management of her husband's estates while he was absent on government service. She found the land in bad condition, and set to work studying the possibilities of the soil. When, after several years of hard application, she had solved the problems that had confronted her, she decided that the Russian peasant women ought to learn what she had learned. She opened a practical school of agriculture and horticulture for women in 1889 and made it a success. Last year the Russian Government came to her aid and gave the institution money enough to establish it upon a broad and liberal scale. Courses in theoretical agriculture, drainage, gardening and forestry are offered, and there are practical classes in all kinds of farm work. Several of the women graduates have been entrusted with the management of large estates, and situations are promised to every one who obtains a diploma.

Misunderstandings lie at the root of many family discords, remarks one of our contemporaries. How often a

father dies who loved his son and was loved in return, convinced of that son's ingratitude and without knowing that the son, on his part, had been out to the heart by the father's seeming indifference. Mothers with their daughters, and sisters and brothers among themselves. A sort of recoil, an impossibility of showing one's true self, a sad reserve towards those who are truly dearest are the common lot of all creatures tender and timid. How much harm one does that would never be done if souls could be seen as they really are.

Let the rich contribute. Some observant person has this to say in an exchange, says the Catholic Citizen, Milwaukee:

There is something inexplicable in the attitude of some women in moderate circumstances regarding their financial duty to the Church. "Let the rich contribute. I can't afford it," says the woman who spends fifty cents for a buckle, a quarter for bon-bons and throws a penny into the collection box. It would be amusing if it were not so shocking to note the richly gowned, jauntily millinered, daintily gloved young person who has nothing but a dirty little copper to offer in the house of God. The widow's mite is never a despicable thing; the small coin of poverty is a general proportion of her all; but the really indigent woman is not adorned in fashionable attire. A poor washerwoman would be ashamed to give the miserable offering so unblushingly handed out by many a fine-plumaged dame and demoiselle.

The most attractive shop windows for readers of the "True Witness," should be those of the establishments which advertise in the "True Witness."



Wake up, old man! It is time to get a move on you.

HOMELESS BOYS IN CITIES.

Extracts From a Paper Read by Arthur C. Thomas, Before the Young Men's Class, Church of the English Martyrs, Preston, England.

Some time ago in one of our Catholic newspapers there appeared a series of articles which certainly led one to think that street life was by no means unattractive. No doubt these barefooted and empty-stomached youngsters do manage to steal some pleasure and amusement out of life. They have often a merry quip on their lips and a pleasant smile on their faces that may mislead an observant passer-by into the belief that the world was well for them and that they are followers of the comfortable philosophy "all is for the best in this best of possible worlds." But if these lads do draw amusement out of street life at what a terrible cost to themselves!

There are many dangers in it. There is danger to health, owing to the exposure to cold and wet. Standing in the streets bare-footed in bad weather is not conducive to a strong chest or to sturdy limbs. Colds develop into consumption and consumption carries these young victims of its ravages into the workhouse hospital and on to the pauper's grave.

No doubt some of these lads are hardy and robust. Their wild sea-gull life seems not to injure them, and they live on the streets, as the gull on the waters, like it uncertain of their daily bread. But these young boys fall into temptation. When they have no money they must beg or steal. When they have some they can drink or worse. In either case they are likely to fall into the clutches of the police, and so the gull shelters one lad, while the pauper's grave shelters another.

When a lad has been once in gaol he has lost his fear of imprisonment, and soon drifts into the warder's charge again. As surely as crime leads to punishment, so surely does punishment lead to a recommendation of crime. To live honestly in the world is not less hard for the criminal who comes out of gaol than it was before he entered gaol at all. The fear, the disgrace, the shame, have disappeared. From small crimes the step is easy to great ones. The street boy grows up in the corner

man, the corner-man into the burglar, the burglar into the convict, a burden and a terror to the community, which might have spared itself both these afflictions at the end had it spared itself a little less and cared for him a little more at the beginning.

There is another danger on which I will not dwell beyond remarking that it is not in human nature to face the dangers to mortality that haunt their attractions on the streets of our great cities without falling into them. Human nature is not better in a boy without a home than it is in a boy with one. You can readily imagine how vice grows to be second nature to those lads who have had little acquaintance either at home or in the streets with virtue in any shape or form.

And when virtue has been lost, religion is not long retained. Many of them have no homes of their own and live in lodging houses. Good parents see to it that their children attend church on Sunday, practice their religion, and say their prayers at stated times. They regard it as one of the most important of their parental duties. But no lodging-house keeper does. What cares he if a ragamuffin misses church or if he never gives a thought to his Creator? He is not his brother's keeper. All he feels called upon to do is to provide the lad with a bed and to see that the lad pays for it. Here his duty begins and ends.

There the duty of the community does not end. It is, I do not hesitate to say what I think, an indelible disgrace to the past municipalities of our great cities that they do not their duty and abolish street training by children years ago. How could they allow so many young persons to grow into manhood and womanhood amid the atmosphere, morbid and socially degrading and brutalizing, of the common lodging-houses? Was mixing with

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thieves and worse, a good way to up-bringing boys? Was trading on the streets good for either? The very calling that they were allowed to follow makes their dirtiness, their untidiness, their raggedness, their barefootedness, their almost absence of clothing so great an advantage to them that, when a Philanthropic Society (The Police Aided Clothing Society) offered to give them clean and tidy covering they refused, saying that it would injure their sales. Was this training? Look at the irregular hours during which it was carried on. Late in the night, late in the morning. Was this training? Look at the absence of hard, physical labor which characterizes it. Was this training? Look at the loafing and begging, for which it was merely an excuse or a cover. Was this training? Look at the uncertainty of the income, one day like millionaires and the next day like paupers. Uncertainty of income, the enemy of thrift, the enemy of saving, the friend of dishonesty, the friend of theft. Was this training? The absence of an incentive to education in this age of technical schools and evening continuation classes. Was this training? The unsettled nightly domicile, not knowing what roof would shelter him tomorrow night. Was this training? No place to call home, no knowledge of where the next meal would be eaten, or how it was to be paid for. Was this training? Their amusements—pitch and toss, and cards, the occupation of the gambler. Was this training? The wild, unfettered life with no apparent better land in view. Was this training? People use to wonder at the number of juvenile thieves. They and their miserable social ideals let these children grow up to be thieves and worse. They allowed them to continue on the streets, (which in Father Bermy's words, are the "forcing ground of crime"), and the streets, with their

evil influences on every side, made thieves and worse of them.

It was idle to blame the children. Their circumstances overpowered them. The whirlpool of evil dragged them down and sucked them in, and they became lost to good. All notions of evil faded from their minds, and if they ever thought of it, it was only when they saw the policeman, who was in their eyes the very incarnation of evil, because he represented law, and the punishment that followed on the law violated.

And do not leave out of sight the downward path on which the facility of street trading has led many a respectable lad. Many a youth, enjoying a permanent situation, where work and obedience were powerful disciplinings his mind and heart, has been carried away by the temptations of the streets. He has seen how easy money can be earned, how joyously it can be spent. He has thrown up his employment and started out as a vendor of matches or a seller of papers. His respectability soon left him. Clothes and shoes were shabby and he found himself imprisoned beyond hope of escape, in that lower pit of misery and degradation into which the dream of a life and the streets had enticed him. Once he had fallen he could rise no more. I cordially endorse the words uttered by Sir John Gorst at Liverpool lately: Street trading "is one of the most pernicious forms of child employment." And I am shocked that the Christian sense of a Christian community should have allowed the accursed thing to last so long.

But I am afraid the most sanguine among us has no hope of abolishing this street trading. Would to God that we could. But we cannot. At least we cannot under the existing so-called conditions. Our duty then, surely is, if we cannot abolish it at least to regulate it.

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