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JANUARY 1, 1910

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

"It is a wonder to me," said an organist recently, "that more young men than at present do not learn to play some musical instrument. Not only could they thereby give themelves a great deal of pleasure but they would also have many opportunities to advance in social favor. Often in a crowd of men met together for a good time, not one can play the piano. Quite a number can sing, by no means by ear, but for lack of an accompanist and a leader their singing does not last long. In almost any gathering of young men and women every other girl can thrum the piano. If there is a young man there, however, who is a player, everybody else makes way for him. Why? Because from the rarity with which men take to playing, it is judged that he must have uncommon musical talent. This judgment is usually right. A man must have a keen taste for music or he will not practice enough to become proficient. But his skill makes up for his rarity for, as a rule, if a man plays he plays well—only attention to technique, in true time, with correct expression. Therefore he is welcome. Therefore does he get many invitations. He is an acceptable guest at a party. He can give a good pro quo for the hospitality extended to him.

"Now, my point is that most young men have enough musical talent to play nicely with any prolonged effort or any great expense. Years of study and practice are not required to reach a fair degree of proficiency. I am not looking for Paganini or Paderewski. A few lessons will give a good start. With a clear text book of instructions a reasonable amount of practice, a short course of lessons from a skillful teacher a young man can make notable progress in music. If then, he feels that he has exceptional talent for the divine art, he can advance further study.

A flute does not cost much but who has not been thrilled by the ravishing sounds that come from it in the hands of a master?

A violin can be bought for \$10 that will give ten thousand dollars' worth of pleasure.

Other instruments can be had for very little, and the money paid for them, is usually well spent.

"So, I say to young men—learn to play some musical instrument. You'll be able to give pleasure to many others."

AN UNEXPECTED HERO

Some time ago a group of young people were standing on a station platform at a Milwaukee crossing, waiting for their train. The crossing safety gates had been closed, for a train was just rushing in, and it was not safe for the young people to stand on the tracks, but in front of the coming express.

In that group of people was the station agent, Edward McGrath, a cripple of no great strength. But in his crippled frame he had the soul of a hero. He showed to the child to stand back and then jumped on the track to her aid. In less time than it takes to tell, he lifted her up and staggered back, the pilot beam of the engine striking and bruising him as it passed. McGrath was injured by the beam, but not seriously. The little girl was unhurt. To the group on the platform, the rescue seemed like a miracle. They had considered it possible to save the child, though they were not crippled. It had been left to a cripple to show that a heroic rescue was possible.

The President, on the recommendation of the Interstate Commission sent to McGrath the "railroad life-saving medal" which Congress provides by law for such heroic deeds. Certainly no braver man will ever win this one than this crippled station agent. If any man in the station that day had been asked to pick a possible hero out of the group on the platform, he would have looked around, naturally, for a quick, young, active, sound-bodied man, and passed the cripple by as not expected to be heroic. But there would have been his mistake. For the soul makes heroism possible, not the body—the body is a secondary matter. Nelson was a cripple when he fought his great battle; but what did that matter to him or to his fleet? The will to be a hero—the self-devotion of heroism—that is the essential point, and everything else is secondary.

AN INDIRECT RESULT

The story is told of a young college graduate who applied for work to the manager of a big insurance and real estate company. He was not very big, possessing in his looks the only thing that his references (all from college professors) specified was that he had taken high rank in French, Spanish and German. "Languages are of no use in this business," said the manager gruffly. "I don't see why you came here."

Nevertheless, being in want of a filing clerk, he took the young man, who went to work with him, getting out and putting away the documents and papers used by the various officers of the company.

Nothing more was said about foreign languages. But soon the officers noticed that the new filing clerk knew all about the documents under his care. If they asked about a certain piece of real estate described in one of them, he could often tell the value, size and location without even looking at his files. The president of the company became so impressed with the reliability and remarkable scope of his memory that he was promoted over and over again, till in a few years, he became the head of an important department. But—and here was the root of the matter—he always attributed his success to the training his mind and memory received in mastering those three languages which he never found any occasion to use directly in business. Indirectly, however, they were worth many thousands of dollars in his pocket.

PUMPKINS REVIVED THE NOTE

A Sturgeon banker has two pumpkins in a glass case he values at \$1,000. Thirteen years ago the banker said he lent a farmer \$1,000 with which to buy stock. The farmer, of course, gave him a note. The borrower lost on the stock deal and had hard luck generally, so he couldn't pay the note. Later he went

West, and after many years he made good again and returned to Sturgeon. The banker tried to collect his note, but it was outlawed by a lapse of thirteen years. One day the banker stopped at the man's farm and admired his fine pumpkins. The farmer made him a present of two large ones.

"I'll just credit these pumpkins on your old note," the banker said. "All right," the farmer said. That revived the obligation. The banker brought suit and recovered in full for the note and interest.

WHY HE CHOSE US

We glory in the knowledge that God has chosen us to be His children. But how often do we stop to think why He has chosen us? St. Paul tells us, as He told the Ephesians, "that we may be holy and without blemish before Him in love" (Eph. 1:4) and "that we should be unto the praise of His glory" (Eph. 1:12). Are we living in accordance with God's purpose for us?

KNOW THYSELF

More a man thinks about himself—if he thinks clearly—the more humble he becomes. Conceit is a sign of confused perceptions, and entire inability to see the true proportions of things. "Know thyself," is really a gate to the first beatitude—"Blessed are the poor in spirit."—

LOOK UPSTREAM

A live fish can swim upstream. A dead fish can only float down. To go with the current of public opinion is not necessarily a proof that you are wide-awake and up-to-date. It may mean that you have no life in you.

MAKE GOOD

It is better to make good once than to blub twice.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

HOW BOB ELTON WENT TO COLLEGE

Bob Elton wanted to go to college, but he had little hope of doing so. Bob lived with his mother, a devout Catholic widow, and attended the Howard High School. He knew there were but two ways for him to try and enter. One was by winning some scholarship, the other, well—Bob had a very wealthy uncle who could well afford to send him through. "But," as Bob said, "one thing is as likely to happen as the other."

"You don't know, dear, what may happen," said his mother, but you will win the Blessed Virgin, and you will win for she has never disappointed anyone."

Mr. Elton had died when Bob was a mere baby, leaving his wife and young son the house in which they lived and a small amount of money. Mr. Elton had added some more to it by sewing. She had been able to keep Bob at school until the present time, but could not afford to send him to college.

Bob had been elected captain of the football team. He worked and made his men work indefatigably on the gridiron until both he and they understood the science of the game thoroughly.

The preceding year they had been badly defeated by the opposing team, the Latimer High School eleven. This year Bob was especially anxious for his team to win, now that he was captain.

Three days before the great game was to be played, Bob's uncle, Mr. Elton, came to visit Mrs. Elton. He was an old, careworn looking man, but was not as hard-hearted and miserly as Bob supposed him to be. Bob soon discovered that he had a kind heart beneath a stern exterior.

At last the day of the game arrived. As a rule Thanksgiving day is cold, or at least chilly, but that proved an exception to the rule. The sun shone brightly and warmly, and scarce a cloud was to be seen; still there was enough nip in the air to make it a pleasure to be actively engaged in outdoor sports.

At 2 o'clock the grandstand was filled and the late arrivals had found accommodations on the grass along the lines. The portion allotted to Howard was a red flag with an embroidered golden "H"—the school colors—floated from the flag-staff. The Latimer section was a mass of quivering purple, while their flag—a purple one with a white "L"—waved gaily from aloft.

Bob, though he did his best to cheer his men, felt nervous and troubled. Just before he was to go into the field his uncle called him over to where he was sitting.

"My boy," he began, "your mother has told me of your desire to go to college. Win this game and I will send you through. By the way, to what college would you like to go?"

"St. James, sir," was the reply.

"Good," exclaimed the old man, secretly delighted for both he and his brother claimed St. James as their Alma Mater.

Then Bob went out to play. Cheers for the respective eleven rent the air; to some of the players the grand stand seemed to be a sea of faces, but Bob saw only one face, namely that of his mother. It seemed to be saying, "Remember the Blessed Virgin. She has never yet disappointed anyone." "Oh, yes," thought Bob, "I'll remember."

A coin was tossed and the battle began. A scrimmage, lasting for a few moments, ensued. Others followed. The game progressed. "T's down," cried the referee, and the score board read: Howard, 6; Latimers, 0. King (a Howard man) got the kick-off and brought the ball back to his thirty yards.

"Signal," cried Bob for the third time, but no signal came. Weldon sped the ball back to him, an act that brought hearty applause from the Howard supporters. The Latimer line, caught napping, failed to charge until the oval had settled to the ground, well cocked at the goal. Then they broke through and bore down upon two Howard men. A long pass, a short one, a vigorous kick—the pigskin rose into the air. A Howard man was down, another one was shoul-



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dering valiantly; two purple arms swept toward the rising ball; there was a confused noise of falling bodies; then a Latimer man bounded against Bob and sent him reeling to the ground.

He felt very much like staying there, but he thought of his mother, the school and the conditions on which he was to enter college. Instead, he quickly picked himself up, put all his remaining strength in this final kick, and sent the ball flying over the crossbar for a goal. After this he scarcely knew what happened. He fell, half-fainting, to the ground. He heard, though rather indistinctly, the cheers for Howard and he knew they had won. Then he fainted.

After the game, and after Bob had sufficiently revived, his uncle came up to him.

"Robert," he exclaimed, "allow me to congratulate you. You are made of the right stuff; a genuine chip of the old block. I knew you'd win."

"Oh, no," replied the boy. "It was not me alone. It was the Blessed Virgin. She will never disappoint anyone."

FINDING ONESELF

A young navy lieutenant was detailed third in command in a perilous cruise. He was timid, his brother officers despised him for lacking in courage and his admiral thought seriously of asking him to resign from the service. He was sent. The object of the expedition was the capture of a smuggling vessel. After they had been a short time at sea, orders were given to land on a small island. The captain and first officer went down with the searage. Then the timid youngster's mettle showed itself. He took charge, drove the men to their posts at the point of a gun, found the smuggler, captured her, brought her back and then collapsed. He might have left the scene branded by himself and all who knew him as a coward. The crisis enabled him to find himself.

Women are proverbially timid. But it is a fear of small things. Women ordinarily are sheltered from the perils to which men grow accustomed, but the critical moment finds many a man's courage. Bob Elton, a young man, was a mere baby, leaving his wife and young son the house in which they lived and a small amount of money. Mr. Elton had added some more to it by sewing. She had been able to keep Bob at school until the present time, but could not afford to send him to college.

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mind with the error that education is something inanimate like a book, instead of something to be used like the brain or hand. They teach children to be used by education instead of using it.

The best teaching is suggestive, tempting the young mind to exercise itself to go a little way alone; that learning is an ornament to the work, for the person, but an instrument to be employed in life. Many children not at all stupid leave school as little educated as when they entered it. It has not helped them to find themselves. After all the teacher is a gardener. He can water the plants, keep out the weeds, protect them against extremes of heat and cold, but the plants must do their own growing, and this by a process that the gardener cannot understand.

All that long series of years that children spend in desks is of little use unless it helps those youthful minds to get a personal grip on life, to think well so as to act wisely, to gain self control and confidence, in short to find themselves—"Looker On," in the Boston Pilot.

GOOD LESSON

The Herald des Glaukens, published in St. Louis, tells the experience of the editor what listening to an infidel who was denouncing belief in God. The editor says:

"I was walking out of a pleasant even- ing alone one day. I principled thorough- ly of our city. At a corner under the glare of the street lamp stood a group of men eagerly and attentively listening to one of our modern street harangues, and settling with the hatred of class against class, a literature which blasphemes of human rights, and which substitutes the foolishness of free love for the sacredness of the marriage tie. Many of you must know that its poisonous and corrupt influences have already begun their deadly work in your minds and in your hearts— influences so insipating and so alluring, that nothing but a renewal of your faith in God and His divine providence can counteract them."

"Tak' it heed, here, what difference does it make to us, provided we can throw off the influences around us and can learn the truth here, learn the sacredness of our holiest ties? That is the mission of the Church."

"We stand for truth. They would put it down, and God will give us strength if only we have courage to do his work. May God be with us. He will be with us in our faith, strength in your love of God, in the sacraments, the Mass. Come near your priests and you can defy the world."

The only pleasure which we can experience here below consists in loving Jesus and imbibing His spirit. In Him we shall find true life; outside of this element we shall not be able to support ourselves. He is my hope, my glory, my inexhaustible treasure.—St. Ignatius, Martyr.

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DREADED ENEMY IS AT OUR GATES

ARCHBISHOP O'CONNELL ADDRESSES STRONG WORDS CHIEFLY TO WORKING MEN WHO ATTENDED CHURCH DEDICATION

Who will declare that the chief step herds of the Church cannot see perils approaching? Recently in dedication of St. Patrick's Church, Cambridge, Mass., Archbishop O'Connell of Boston, uttered these significant declarations: "As I went in procession around the church to bless it, and saw the solid phalanx of splendid specimens of Catholic manhood standing shoulder to shoulder, like a noble band of soldiers of the faith, I thought to myself, 'This is no more figure; this is a fact. These men are defending the Church, and unless all signs fail, they will soon be

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called upon to show that in reality they are soldiers of Christ and defenders of the Faith." For the last fifteen years a violent propaganda has been going on against every sacred truth the Church stands for, against even God Himself and against the most sacred rites of humanity, while we, lulled by a false sense of security, have been half asleep. Conscience only of another side of the picture—namely, that while on one day of the week a large part of the flock hear our voices, the other six days of the week they are at the mercy of this violent and active agency for evil; nay, even the full seven days of the week, for thousands of our men were attending Sunday afternoon large meetings in which the principles which guided them in the morning were defied and denied. And all this time we have been living in a fool's paradise, foolishly dreaming that the socialist propaganda now menacing the peace and the very existence of every European country would never touch us. You workmen standing here before me know full well the meaning of my words. You know the deluge of pamphlets and booklets and leaflets that are put into your hands and even into your pockets in the shop and in the streets—a poisonous literature calculated to destroy your faith in God and in the Church, a literature teeming with false promises and seething with the hatred of class against class, a literature which blasphemes of human rights, and which substitutes the foolishness of free love for the sacredness of the marriage tie. Many of you must know that its poisonous and corrupt influences have already begun their deadly work in your minds and in your hearts— influences so insipating and so alluring, that nothing but a renewal of your faith in God and His divine providence can counteract them."

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