

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

WHAT HAST THOU DONE?

The time is short. Life's little day is closing.
And night doth hasten on.
Eternal years of God shall bring reposing—
Christian, what hast thou done?
The time is short. Forgive thine erring brother,
Thou too hast need of grace;
Perchance thou soon shalt stand beside that other
And view his dying face.
The time is short, reach forth to all the falling,
E'er they shall sink for aye.
Despairing souls to these for help are calling,
Haste, or they die!

The time is short. O man of ease and pleasure
Rouse from thy dream so sweet!
The eternal call! Lay down thy hoarded treasure
Low at the pierced feet.
The time is short. O sinful soul and weary
There's One can make thee blest
He seeks for thee; lo, through the midnight dreary
He comes to give thee rest.

The time is short. Fill it with high endeavor,
With noble deeds and pure,
Then time o'erpassing, within God's great forever,
Reward is sure.

—Catholic Columbian

THE FIGHTING MAN'S CREED

Don't whine. Endure what you can't alter. Get over the hard bits of the road by pushing forward. Never know when you're licked. Never be elated when you've won. Whether you win or lose, don't sit down; seize on the next most difficult thing that may conquer. For it's not the winning or the losing; it's the eternal trying that counts.—Coningsby Dawson.

THE HOUR OF FATE

What is the hour of fate in a young man's life? I should say 7 p. m.
That hour is the springboard from which most men leap to success or fall off to failure.

I am also convinced that 7 p. m. is the fork in the roads, one of which leads to character and the other to the lack of it.

There are twenty-three other hours in a day, but there is no hour so potent as this 7 p. m.

Why? This is the answer: a man's waking hours are divided between industry and leisure. To a majority of mankind, 7 in the evening marks the end of work and the beginning of leisure. It is the hour when a man makes a choice of the kind of leisure he is to have. If he turns to the leisure that means improvement to his mind, his body and his soul, he wins; if he turns to the pleasure feeding frivolities, he loses. It is a cold blooded proposition, but it is true. Genius is 99% hard work and the best of leisure is a shift from one kind of work to another kind of work. Ninety-nine out of every hundred men who win in this world use the time, when they are not at work, in activities which look like work to the loser.—Victor Murdock in Association Men.

HELPING OTHERS ONWARD

Encourage those around you to believe in themselves and in their power to achieve success. Show appreciation. Give praise. Don't be a fault-finder. Sometimes a kind word is a more welcome gift than money. Any kind words are easy to give. Get the habit of giving them. They are welcome. They leave a pleasant memory. They stimulate to good will and to noble endeavor. For most persons an atmosphere of disapproval, of criticism, of discouragement to incentive and to self-respect, is hard to bear. It is also the cause of many a disaster to character, since it leads to the self depreciation and to the indifference that makes effort seem useless. Those who take us at a generous valuation inspire us to our best. Even if what we regard as our best may not be much more than seeming, it nevertheless draws from us a recognition of true worth. Furthermore, it plants in the mind an ideal that may flower into a reality.

Many a weak character has been made strong through being trusted and loved. Many a strong character has been maintained and ennobled by mistrust and disapproval. "My wife makes me feel that I can really be something," a man once remarked. At the same time what he called luck was running against him. But it was a powerful foe in those two spirits, united by love and sustained with confidence. Now the man is successful and vigorous. He has become the power that this hopeful wife made him feel he was.

There has been an immense amount of power lost through the discouragements of the world, physical, mental and moral. On all sides one sees them operating. Sometimes they are inspired by unworthy motives, such as envy or jealousy. Often they are ennobled by the critical habit so common in our life and by the spirit of conservatism that instinctively recoils from enterprise.

It is so much easier to find fault, and to ridicule and to dishearten than to discriminate and to understand, and to stimulate. The real helpers of their fellow beings are few. The hinderers are a multitude,

and among them will be found many of those highly esteemed.
Let us spread encouragement. Let us be an influence for good. A word of praise has sometimes altered a young man's whole life. To have his mother believe in him, his sweetheart trust him to "make good" in the business world, his friend cheer him up when he was down on his luck, his confessor assure him that he could overcome temptation and save his soul, has saved him to begin again to turn over a new leaf, to take fresh courage, to will firmly and to make persistent effort onward and upward until the goal is reached.—Buffalo Echo.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

"WANTED—A MAN TO LEAD"

There isn't a lad but wants to grow Manly and at heart,
And every lad would like to know
The secret we impart.
He doesn't desire to slack or shirk—
Oh! haven't you heard him plead?
He'll follow a man at play or work,
If only the man will lead.

Where are the men to lead today,
Sparring an hour or two,
Teaching the lad the game to play
Just as a man should do?
Village and slums are calling—come,
Here are the boys, indeed,
Who can tell what they might become
If only the men will lead?

Where are the men to lend a hand?
Echo it far and wide,
Men who will rise in every land,
Bridging the "Great Divide"?
Nation and flag and tongue unite
Joining each class and creed,
Here are the boys who would do right,
But where are the men to lead?

HARRY'S GROUCH

It was a balmy evening in April. Grandma Spaine sat knitting by the window, from time to time glancing at the clock, the hands of which were rapidly approaching half-past five. At last she heard the click of the gate, and presently up the long, straight gravel walk hurried a curly-headed boy, whose handsome features were now somewhat disfigured by a deep frown resting between his finely arched eyebrows.

The door swung open, the boy entered, threw his cap and books upon the table, and with a curt "Hello, Grandma," passed into the kitchen, from which he presently returned, eating an apple.

"What is the matter, Harry?" asked his grandmother, as he threw himself upon the comfortable couch near the opposite window.

"Oh, nothing," replied the boy, gloomily. "I guess I've got one of my grouches on."

"I guess you have," rejoined the old lady. "What has happened to cause it?"

"Oh, nothing," said Harry again, throwing back a lock of hair from his forehead. "I'll have to have my hair cut tomorrow, Gran. The fellows are all making fun of me about it."

"I told you two weeks ago to have it done, but—"

"I wanted to use the money to pay that puzzle, and it turned out to be the easiest thing ever. I call it a fraud."

A short silence ensued, when Harry continued: "Jack Martin has gone to San Francisco to take a job. He went this afternoon."

"Jack Martin!" exclaimed Mrs. Spaine. "Why, he cannot be more than fifteen."

"He isn't. But he's tall and he'd pass for seventeen any time. He's going as a shipping-clerk or something. I wish I was eighteen!"

"Would you like to go, then?"

"Yes, I sure would."

"And leave your old grandmother alone?"

"Well, no—of course not," and the boy's face softened. "But I'm awfully tired of this dull old town. And I'm awfully tired of staying at home. Nothing ever happens here, does it?"

"Well, yes. The same things that happen everywhere, it seems to me," responded his grandmother.

"Oh, I mean fun. A circus twice a year maybe, that's all. I believe I'd like to be a farmer."

"I fancy you would find life duller still in that case, Harry."

The boy stretched himself to his full length as he lay, and presently he said: "I wish I could be a sailor, then; a real sailor, not the kind that goes across once a month or so and back again. I'd love to visit different parts of the world and have a good time."

"The hard times would far exceed what you call the good ones. You would have to work very hard if you were a sailor, Harry."

"I'd like that, to swab the decks and leave them as white as snow, and clean the brasses till they shine, and climb the topmast mast like a—like a—"

alone and cook your own food and watch the sheep and lie on the grass with a book when you're not busy. Or to go up like the Swiss guides do every summer to the heights, with just the ropes, and climb the crags and look at the snowy mountain peaks, and—"

"I am afraid you would soon tire of the life," said his grandmother. "It is dreadfully cold at night in those places and you're not particularly fond of bread and cheese, which would be your principal diet. And black bread and sour cheese at that."

Harry did not reply. His grandmother glanced toward him several times. Presently the sound of soft, regular breathing came to her ear; then she folded her knitting, quietly put a stick on the fire, went over to the couch and, gently covering him with a bright colored afghan lying at the foot of it, left the room.

Dusk had fallen; a single star nestled beside the crescent moon, gleaming a down the sky. Harry sat up, peeped through the window-pane, threw back his hair from his forehead with a characteristic gesture and called, "Oh, grandmother!"

The door opened. Mrs. Spaine came in and stood near him.

"I have been asleep," he said, "and I've had horrid dreams."

"What were they?" she inquired.

"Well, first I thought I was on a ship—guess I'd gone to be a sailor-boy. There were a lot of fellows there, all much bigger than I am. And some one was telling me to climb the top mast—quick. The fellows began to roar laughing, but I started it. It looked awfully far away—that top—but I was bound to do it, if I could. I went up and up till I began to get sick and dizzy. At last I couldn't hold on any longer and I fell down—down—down—with an awful thump, to the deck. And then the fellows roared again."

Then I thought I was in a lonely mountain place, with hills and gullies going up and down, and there were a lot of goats there—not pretty gray sheep—they were gray, grannie, before they were washed—but ugly old goats with long beards and red eyes.

"I was in the middle of the crowd and couldn't get out, no matter how much I tried. And all at once, a horrid gray and black fellow rushed up—to butt me, I guess; but I don't know, for I woke then and found myself here in the dark. My, but I'm glad it was only a dream!"

Mrs. Spaine looked down into the boy's face and smilingly said: "I believe the 'grouch' has all gone, Harry. Hurry and wash your face and hands in the bath-room. It will refresh you and drive the sleep out of your eyes. And then come to the kitchen; and supper is ready."

Harry sprang to his feet. "Something smells good," he said, hurrying to the bath-room. In a few moments he appeared on the threshold of the kitchen. Mrs. Spaine looked up from the shining stove where she was cooking. The fire-light shone upon the clean, yellow walls and the blue and white linoleum floor-covering.

In a little alcove, the table covered with a spotless cloth, pretty china and shining silver sent forth a welcome invitation. In the centre stood some roses in a glass vase.

"Hello!" exclaimed the boy, "what have we got?"

"Aunt Betty sent over a quarter of ham, home cured, today. I've cooked a slice. I dux up a few new potatoes and tried them and I made some corn-bread—and there's new maple syrup. I bought it this morning from old man Dowd. Come, everything is ready."

After grace had been said and Harry, unfolding his napkin, watched his grandmother fill his plate with the good things she had prepared, he said:

"My, but this is nice! Gran, I'm sorry for those grouches; I'm going to cut them out from now on. I don't believe I am tired of staying home—after all."—Mary E. Mannix in Rosary Magazine.

THE HOLY CHILDHOOD

Catholic piety has consecrated January as a time for devotion to the Holy Childhood. The month is rich in feasts connected with and reminding us of the infancy and childhood of our Divine Lord. The first day is the feast of Circumcision. This Jewish rite corresponded to Baptism in the Christian dispensation, and was performed usually on the eighth day after birth. He who came to establish the New Law might have exempted Himself from this painful ordeal of the Old Law, but He chose rather to give an example of obedience, and to begin thus early to shed in the cause of Redemption His Precious Blood, the last drop of which He was destined afterwards to yield on Mount Calvary.

At Circumcision, according to Jewish custom, a name was given to the child by his father. For the Divine Babe of Bethlehem a name had been chosen and it had been revealed to Mary at the Annunciation and afterwards to St. Joseph. It was the Holy Name of Jesus. There is no other name so significant, so full of power and sweetness, as this Sacred Name which means Saviour. At its sound "every knee must bend in heaven, on earth and in hell." It has power to melt the hardest heart into tenderness, and to bring comfort and strength to desolate souls. For He who bore this Name, the holiest that human lips can utter, was indeed the Saviour of His people, and He conquered the world by love. With deepest reverence should all Christians breathe

the Name of Jesus, always remembering the love and suffering of Him to Whom it was given.

On January 6th is celebrated the feast of Epiphany, or Manifestation of the Holy Child to the Magi. No more beautiful thought can be conceived than that of the Three Wise Men, inspired by faith and zeal, leaving far behind their own country and kindred, and following the guidance of a miraculous star to the humble birth place of the long expected Messiah. From different parts of the East they had come, and the Star drew them together and conducted them to the place where reposed the Infant Saviour. Their minds were open to receive the truth, their hearts were pure, their wills were docile to the inspiration of divine grace. They cheerfully made great sacrifices for the love of God and great was their reward. Of all the Gentiles they were the first to gain the knowledge of the newborn saviour and to adore Him. They were admitted by Mary and Joseph into the earthly court of the heavenly King, wherein the angels were attendants. They carried back with them the glad tidings of great joy, to be disseminated by each among his own people, and thus they became the first preachers of the New Gospel to the Gentiles.

Their names will go down in history as prototypes of sincere Christian believers, and wherever the story of Christmas is told the Three Wise Men from the East must be a part of the narrative. Before every tabernacle where Jesus resides there is kept burning the sanctuary lamp, a beautiful figure of the Star of Bethlehem, and its rays are wont to draw multitudes made wise by faith, who find before them that same Jesus, anxious to receive their offerings of Love, prayer and penance, and to give in return His choicest blessings.

In this month the Gospels are a constant reminder of the Holy Childhood. They tell us of the flight into Egypt and the return after the death of Herod, of the Three Days' Loss and the Finding in the Temple, and of the peaceful life of the Holy family in Nazareth where Jesus was subject to Mary and Joseph. The Scriptures tell us of the Holy Child that "He advanced in wisdom and age and favor with God and man."

A heavenly beauty shone in His countenance. He was remarkable for those virtues which are associated with childhood—humility, docility, simplicity and innocence. He has told us that unless we become as little children we cannot enter heaven. The Holy Childhood therefore, has lessons for each of us who would comply with this condition laid down for us by Our Divine Lawgiver. No matter what our years or acquirements may be, we are all children of a common Father and brethren by adoption of the Holy Child—Sentinel of the Blessed Sacrament.

GOOD RESOLUTIONS

It is not necessary to mention here the place that is paved with good resolutions. However, since there is such a place we can imagine a worse pavement. Time has been kind in reducing the favored New Year resolution. The "swearing off" is no longer needful. So that the number of resolutions being cut down by one and a particularly prominent one, among them, the number that receive consideration substantially lessened, may center on one not usually insisted upon. There is little need for most of us to swear off cheating, stealing, grafting; less still of murdering, robbing and housebreaking. But one little resolution might serve well: keeping a kind tongue. There is an old Irish proverb which says, "A kind word never broke a tooth."

And if we go over our failures of last year, our troubles and quarrels, and the measure of sorrow and bitterness that came to us, we will find, if we are honest, that they are all credited under the item "tongue." Now, an inspired man has said "he who offend not in tongue, the same is a perfect man." That reduces the law and the prophets to the control of the tongue. If, then, on New Year's Day we decide to make a resolution, let us make it about controlling this wild beast that sows so much sorrow, that causes so much dissatisfaction, and that brings so much disension.

Let us put the halter of restraint on the self-hungry beast that easily runs riot through the tongue. A week will show us that here, more than in any other place, was the source of our sorrows and, unfortunately, the sorrows of others as well.—New World.

DIVORCE

"Right Rev. Paul Matthews, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of New Jersey, in an address, delivered at Atlantic City recently, made the following declaration, which is as true as it is courageous: 'One thing we need today is holy matrimony. The present divorce laws legalize consecutive polygamy. The only country in the world where more divorces are granted than in America, is Japan; and I now fear we have passed Japan's record.' The tolerance of the crime of divorce by the non Catholic churches is responsible, in great measure, for this unsavory record."—St. Paul Bulletin.

The farther the author holds himself from the crowd, the more may he hope to find thoughts in which are hidden germs of immortal life.—Bishop Spalding.

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