

CHAITS WITH YOUNG MEN.

Much Reading.

A young man once wrote to the celebrated lawyer, Charles O'Connor, of New York, for advice as to a projected course of reading—knowing that Mr. O'Connor's experience was considerable, and that his advice would be of value. The reply discouraged the reading of too many books. The gist of the advice was to read less and think more. Reading without reflection and deep thought may be a waste of time.

It is hard work that makes people grow old or is it because they do not have enough to do, or, rather, do not find the thing they are best fitted to do? The hardest worked people in the world are the actresses, yet some of them without mentioning names, are even greater than the men who have never worked either with body or mind. Driven around in bath chairs or hobbling about on canes, while men absorbed in business are often quite robust at seventy. Where hard work ever killed a man laziness and inaction have killed a score. It is the class that feels above work that nature has little use for. Work and look young!

A Vocation.

Father Faber tells us what even greater men have told us before—that each human being has his vocation in life. And we nearly all accept it as true, but the great difficulty is to realize it. Ruskin says that work is not a curse; but that a man must like his work, feel that he can do it well, and not have too much of it to do. The sum of all this means that he shall be contented in his work, and find his chief satisfaction in doing it well. It is not what we do but how we do it that makes success.

The greatest enemy to a full understanding of the work vocation is the belief that it means solely acquisition of money. And the reason for this lies not in the character of the American—who in no more mercenary than other people—but in the idea that wealth is within the grasp of any man who works for it.

The money standard, therefore, is the standard of success. But success to the eyes of the man himself. The accumulation of wealth often leaves him worried, dissatisfied, with a feeling that he has some how missed the best of life. That man has probably missed his vocation and done the wrong thing, in spite of the opinion outside of himself that he has succeeded.—Maurice Francis Egan.

Achievement under Difficulties.

Some one has said that "when God wants to educate a man, He does not send him to school to the graces, but to the necessities." Poverty often call out talents which would never be discovered but for her. Not unusual opportunities, not ease and comfort, not wealth or luxuries, but poverty, has ever been the great university of the race, and by far the larger number of success graduates call her alma mater. What statesman, what orator, what philanthropists, what scholars, what musicians, and what artists have been graduated from her halls!

It has not been the men favored by fortune, but, as a rule, the poor boys with no chance, who have done great things. It is a Fulton with a paddle wheel; a Michael Faraday with old bottles and tin pans in the attic of an apothecary's store; a Whitney with a few tools in a southern cellar; a Howe with crude needles and shuttles making the sewing machine; a Professor Ball, poor, experimenting with the simplest apparatus, who have given an uplift to civilization.

There is nothing else so fascinating in history as the romance of achievement under difficulties,—the story of how men, who have brought great things to pass, got their start, and of their obscure beginnings and triumphal ends, their struggles, their long waitings amid want and woe, the obstacles overcome, the final victories; the stories of men who have seized common situations and make them great, or of those of average ability who have succeeded by dint of indomitable will and inflexible purpose.

What grander sight is there than that of a stalwart man made irresistible by the things which he has tried to do him—a man who stands without swaying or trembling, with head erect and heart undaunted, ready to face any difficulties, defying any cruelties of fate, laughing at obstacles because he has developed in his fight with them the superb strength of manhood and vigor of character which make him master?

No fate or destiny can stop such a man—a man who is dominated by a mighty purpose. Thousands of young men of this stamp type every year burst the bonds which are holding

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

STORIES OF THE ROSARY.

By LOUISA EMILY DOBREE.

The Annunciation.

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THE LUKEWARM CATHOLIC.

HAS A VAGUE DESIRE TO WIN HEAVEN AT THE SLIGHTEST POSSIBLE COST TO HIMSELF.

Rev. Father Clement Holland in the Catholic Weekly, London.

I would thou were cold, or hot. But because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will begin to vomit thee out of my mouth. (Apoc. iii, 16). Terrible, indeed, brethren, are those words spoken directly to that most dangerous of all states into which the sinner can fall—the state of those who seem to be religious, yet are totally unconscious of their many grave spiritual wants, because they are proud and self-confident, and, having deceived themselves, are blind to their many crimes and failings.—Here the word "heat" represents the fervor of the true love we should have for God. "Coldness," on the other hand, means the absolute want of such a love, or even the very thought of it. But "lukewarmness" is that stage in which there is no real fervor, no real love, and yet there is an appearance of it and a pretence to it. So odious, then, is the lukewarm man in the sight of God that he seems to say: "I would that thou were cold or hot, a downright sinner or a saint; but because you are neither, because you are lukewarm, I will begin to vomit you out of my mouth, to abandon you and leave you in your present state."

God, then, seems to prefer a most wretched sinner to the sly and the lukewarm Catholic. And the reason for this is very clear. For the conscience of the wicked man will some times assert itself, and make itself felt and heard, and there is therefore some hope of his conversion. But the lukewarm man has squandered his conscience, has deluded it, has lulled it to sleep, and therefore it troubles him not; here, then, we see his terrible danger. There is actually more hope, yea, much more, for the conversion of the most wicked sinner than there is for that of the lukewarm Catholic. Hence, let us study well what a Lukewarm Catholic is, the terrible dangers to which he is exposed, so that, knowing both these things, we may look into our own souls and see if we are not one of those whom God warns when He says: "I will begin to vomit thee out of my mouth."

PICTURE OF THE LUKEWARM CATHOLIC.

1. St. Anselm gives us, in a few simple words, the character of the lukewarm Christian: "He is one that is worse between vice and virtue." He is one that is neither zealous nor devout, yet one who is not bad enough to be counted vicious in the eyes of the world. He is one who tries to gratify his passions in this world, yet is striving to gain a reward in the next. He strives to do what our Lord said was impossible—to serve two masters, God and the world—and of such people the Christian said: "You cannot serve God and mammon." Hence, he is more particular to know the exact limits of every obligation, so that he may have as much pleasure as he can, yet with out going too far, for he has a vague desire to win heaven, yet at the slightest opportunity he will make the subject clear. Take the obligation of fasting during Advent and Lent. Now, the wretched sinner in mortal sin does not trouble himself much about the fast, but likely breaks it at once, whilst, on the other hand, the good Catholic keeps it most exactly. But the lukewarm Catholic does not like to fast, nor does he wish to commit mortal sin. Then he begins to twist and turn the matter over in his mind, and he exclaims: "I must get a dispensation." "Let me see," he says; "I have the toothache, and yesterday I had the headache, so I must really be ill, and I will go to see the priest." But alas! he lives some distance away, about half a mile. "I need not go so far as that. I am not obliged to do so, and I will dispense myself." But if this man lives close to the priest, and cannot get a dispensation, he will take the very utmost portion the law allows in the morning, a good hearty dinner, another large allowance at the evening collation, and between meals he drinks as much as possible. Again, the Church commands us to keep Sunday holy by hearing Holy Mass and resting from servile work. The good Catholic is careful on Sunday to hear Mass well, to say more prayers than usual on that day, to read good spiritual books, and is careful to be present at the evening service. But the lukewarm Catholic reasons thus: "Oh, the Church only binds me to hear Holy Mass and to refrain from servile work. Very well, then, I will go to an early Mass, when there is no sermon, for I like during the rest of the day." So he prays no more on Sunday than on any other day. He goes to no evening devotions, but is out gossiping; reads no good books, but prefers a novel or some sporting paper.

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THE SIN OF PRIDE.

First among the capital sins, both in the order of enumeration and the many dangers which attend it, is pride. According to St. Thomas it is the inordinate seeking of the goods of the soul. It is also defined as an inordinate desire of our own excellence and esteem.

It is a capital sin because of the many other sins which follow in its wake. Among these may be mentioned hypocrisy, obstinacy, evil ambition, disobedience, discord and distastefulness. It is one of the first vices that takes root in our souls and one of the last to be eradicated.

Pride is an inordinate love of self. Its property is to cause us to attribute whatever of merit we possess to our own attainment in place of recognizing it as a gift from God. It prompts us to believe ourselves possessed of greater merit than we actually have, or that we possess merit surpassing those around us. And in so doing we attribute to ourselves a glory which rightfully belongs to God, because whatever of merit we possess is from His hand.

In a word it may be called one of the greatest and one of the most pernicious and one of the most dangerous of sins. One of the greatest, because it opposes the majesty of God. One of the most pernicious because it has worked the ruin of souls which no other vice could conquer. Because of the many families and governments which have been ruined, and of the many souls which have been ruined, because of its power to insinuate itself even into lives and places that are holy.

Well and truly it is said to be "the origin of all sin." Through it, Lucifer, "the king of the children of pride," was hurled from heaven, and our first parents were driven from paradise. And by these examples we may readily recognize how odious it is in the eyes of God. A few quiet moments' reflection upon the miseries it entails should be sufficient to constantly keep us on guard against it. To do this we should always have before us the admonition of St. Paul: "If any man think himself something whereas he is nothing, he deceiveth himself."

Humility is the blessed shield to ward off the dangers of pride. It is the sure and sweet remedy given by our Saviour Himself: "Learn of me, because I am meek and humble of heart." Great results both in time and eternity, will attend those who follow His blessed example.—Church Progress.

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