

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN.

Easter has come again. The awakening spring, arising out of the torpor of winter, symbolizing the renewal of life. With it come warm winds, bright sun, birds, buds, grasses and flowers, as befits a season of gladness. Nature rejoices, after the gloom of the season of snow, and smiles in her most winsome mood. The dead past is forgotten and new life has begun.

So when the God-man resolved to conquer death, after apparently being conquered by it and lying, cold and wan and rigid, in a tomb for three days, his soul, that from Friday at 3 o'clock in the afternoon until dawn on Sunday, had been in Limbo, if not also in other places, glided back into his corpse. At once the sacred body felt the influence of the returned spirit, and throwing off the yokes of death, awoke and arose to a new life.

Similarly young men, who now make their Easter duty, recall their souls from death. Physically they have been alive, but spiritually they have been dead. The devil has profaned the temple of their minds, that should have been the dwelling of the Holy Ghost. Darkness, cold, bitterness, doubt and hopelessness have beset them. Now they return to the sacraments. The blood of Christ washes away their sins. The power of the evil one over them is broken. Peace takes the place of disquietude. The angels are willing once more to come near them. Their dead souls have been restored to life.

What then? Shall they now return to their old ways? Shall they not avoid the occasions of sin? Shall they tempt God to let them fall again? Shall they stay away from the sacraments as soon as they get rested and refreshed, and had returned to his prodigal life, what would have been thought of him? And if he had done this, not once, but a dozen times, what would have been thought of him? And if he had made it a practice to do so every year, rioting the most of his time with vicious companions and then going back to his father for forgiveness and the sacraments, expecting to stay at home only a few days what would be thought of him?

"Men, if you don't purpose to sin no more, don't go to confession at all; for, to go there without sorrow and without a resolution to resist temptation, is to get no good from the sacrament, but rather to add to one's transgressions, and to sink deeper towards hell."

But if you do intend to sin no more and have at least attrition for your past offenses, go, in God's name, and go soon. Then, with a new life, begin to oppose the world, the flesh and the devil. Live for God with God. Stay united to Christ. Let His thoughts, be your thoughts, the words that He would have you utter, the only ones you will speak, and the actions that please Him, the only ones you will perform.

How shall you persevere in virtue and keep from relapsing?
1. By an iron will to give yourself irrevocably to God, to do His will, to follow His ways, to persevere in His service.

2. By a cheerfulness of soul that is conscious that it serves a noble Master, who is quite able to overcome the adversary, and that remembers daily that heaven is a mighty nice place in which to spend eternity.

3. By living the day at a time—yes, one hour at a time. The adversary tries to discourage the saints by whispering to them: "You can't keep this up all your life. Think of the long years before you. You can't go on making sacrifices for ever." He is a deceiver, men brethren, we live only from second to second, and no man is sure of five minutes more of life. Tell him to go to hell. Let us live this minute well, and let the future take care of itself. Right now we are strong enough to stand on God's side. If we should get too weak next week, next month, or next year, well, that time must bear its own responsibility and stand its own judgment. Right now we can be good, and with God's help we will be good.

So we shall chase off the tempter from hour to hour and put him to flight all our lives long, simply by living in the present time and giving now to God.

4. By kneeling down every morning at our bedside and consecrating the day to God with prayer.

5. By spending one quarter of an hour every night reading some pious book like the New Testament, The Following of Christ, Christian Perfection, Growth in Holiness, Think Well On't, or the Lives of the Saints.

6. By avoiding the occasions of sin—the persons, the places, the actions, the drinks, the heavy suppers, etc., etc., that made us easy victims of sin.

7. By joining a Catholic society and attending its meetings regularly.

8. By frequenting the company of good practical Catholics.

9. By learning a half dozen indulgences ejaculations like "My Jesus, mercy; We adore Thee, O blessed Lord Jesus Christ, who hast redeemed the world." "Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood of Jesus in satisfaction for my sins and for the wants of holy Church;" "May the most just, most high and most amiable will of God be done in all things, be praised and magnified forever," and using them often during the day in order to cultivate the life of the soul.

10. By turning the mind away to thoughts of the weather or of some news of the day, when it is inclined to be tempted towards impurity.

11. By practising some little act of mortification every day, for the sake of Christ crucified, if it is only the denial of a second spoonful of sugar in the coffee—any trifle, done cheerfully, that may grow and grow until it develops into heroic virtue.

12. By going to Mass every morning if reasonably convenient.

13. By receiving the sacraments once a month.

14. By having no friends among young women except those whose motto is "Hands off!" and who promptly resent any impropriety in speech or manner.

15. By getting married as soon as that is properly possible.

With such principles, a young man will be good and stay good. He will arise from the deadness of sin. The springtime of his heart will come again, and the Lord will have a new Easter in his soul.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

AN EASTER INCIDENT—A CRIPPLED LAD'S BEAUTIFUL VOICE.

BY MARION THORNE.

Choir practice to-night at St. Paul's. The light falling on the stained glass windows gives to passers-by no hint of the beautiful colors that charm the eye when the light is outside instead of in. Soft, low notes float gently on the quiet air. The organist is playing while the choir is gathering.

The clock points to 7 as a tall, slender boy comes hurriedly down the aisle, and the frown fades from the brow of the little professor.

"Ah, at last!" he exclaimed; "one moment more and you would have been late, Morrell."

It is not often that a choir boy is late at St. Paul's. It is too difficult to get into the leading choir of the city for any boy to risk a dismissal. In fact, Dwight Morrell is the only one of the twenty who would dare come so near as this to being late; but Morrell has the finest voice of them all—and is perfectly well aware of that fact.

He glances at the clock with a careless smile that exaggerates the fiery little director, who calls out, sharply: "We will begin at once." The rehearsal goes on, but it is not satisfactory to the professor. He glances impatiently once or twice at Morrell. Finally he raps angrily on the table with his baton.

"Stop! stop! That will not do, Morrell. You are not singing well to-night."

The hot color flushes the boy's face. A quick retort trembles on his tongue, but he does not dare to utter it. He does not realize how clearly his feeling is written on his face. The professor understands as well as if he had spoken.

"If you are not willing to practice, Mr. Morrell, I can find some one who will," he says, brusquely.

Morrell started angrily and bit his lip. He had been so long the leading singer of St. Paul's choir that it had never occurred to him that he could be dispensed with. That the professor must have some one else in view, or he would never have ventured such a remark, seemed to him certain. He choked down his furious anger, and said, coldly:

"Can we try that passage again, sir?"

This time there were no false notes, and the professor's brow cleared.

"That is better," he said, heartily, as the last sweet notes died away.

The rehearsal over, the boys quickly disappeared. Half a dozen of them left the church together, Dwight Morrell among them.

"What allied the professor to-night, anyhow?" he began, then—"Get out of the way, you little beggar!" he burst out, angrily, to a pale-faced little fellow who was leaning on his crutch, in the vestibule. As he spoke, his foot hit the crutch, which went flying down the steps, while the boy, with a sharp cry, fell heavily to the stone floor.

Morrell half started, as if to help the boy up, but another was before him—a bright-faced lad, who sprang forward and, lifting the little fellow to his feet, held him till another boy handed up the crutch.

"If you meant to do that, Dwight Morrell, it was a mean, cowardly trick!" exclaimed the bright-faced boy, his blue eyes blazing with honest indignation as they looked straight into Morrell's back ones.

Morrell shrugged his shoulders. "Much ado about nothing," he quoted, airily, and went down the steps without a backward glance.

"What was that little fellow doing there, anyhow?" he said to his classmate, Dick Wilson, who had stood silently by during this little episode, and now walked on with him. Dick was Morrell's ardent admirer; he could see no fault in his friend.

"He's Matthew's nephew, I believe," he said; "came to live with him lately. Matthews is down with chills 'n' fever, 'n' that little chap is doing his work at the church."

"Humph!" growled Morrell. "Pretty looking fellow, he is—for St. Paul's. But say, Dick, what did the professor do to-night? He never dared come down on me like that before."

"He was mighty peppery to-night—that's a fact," said Dick. Then, with a side glance at his friend, he added, hesitatingly: "His son is back from Germany. They say he's no end of a singer."

Morrell was silent for a moment. His heart beat quickly, and the blood rushed to his head. "So that's what it means," he said, presently. "The professor wants to pick a quarrel with me, so's to have an excuse for turning me off 'n' putting his son in my place."

"Looks kinder that way," assented Dick; "but you needn't ter bother. I don't believe he c'n sing any better'n you can."

Morrell raised his head proudly. His belief in his own musical ability was unlimited. He made up his mind that at the next rehearsal he would astonish the professor a little.

Whether or no the professor was astonished, certainly he was well pleased with the next rehearsal. His face

beamed with satisfaction as he listened to Morrell's fine rendering of the solo which he was to sing on Easter morning when the great church would be thronged with the strangers who would come to hear St. Paul's choir.

"Very well—very well, Mr. Morrell," he said. "If you sing as well as that next Sunday I shall have no fault to find. You have all done well this evening," and he dismissed them with a gracious smile.

Two persons were sitting near the door at the back of the church as the boys passed out. One was the little pale-faced cripple with his crutch at his side. He loved to sit in the semidarkness and listen to the sweet music that made him happier than anything else in the world. The other was a tall, slender lad with very dark eyes and hair.

"The professor's son," whispered Dick, in Morrell's ear.

Morrell scowled at both the occupants of the back pew as he passed. "Choice company he keeps," he said, in a low tone.

"What makes you hate that little kid so?" Dick asked, curiously, as they walked on together.

"Oh, he makes me sick. Cripples and hunchbacks ought to be shut up for life, like lunatics and murderers," said Morrell, roughly. "I'd as soon see a snake as a cripple any time."

"Pretty hard on cripples," Dick remarked. "I reckon they wouldn't be that way if they could help it."

"Probably not," said Morrell, carelessly; "but come, let's talk of something pleasanter."

The next rehearsal was the last before Easter. Morrell was there; but he looked pale and ill, and asked to be excused from singing. "I've taken a heavy cold," he said, uneasily, and I guess I'll have to save myself up for Sunday. I'll be all right by that time, I'm sure."

The professor readily excused him, but shook his head as he looked after him. "I doubt if he's all right by Sunday," he said to himself; "he looks to me as if he were in for a fit of sickness."

The professor had taken a fancy to Matthew's little nephew, and often sent him on errands, for which he paid him well. He sent him the day after this rehearsal to inquire how Morrell was. The servant who answered the bell took the boy upstairs to see Mrs. Morrell. He could hear her talking to her son in the next room.

"But Dwight," she was saying

"what is the use? You might just as well send the professor word that you can't sing next Sunday. You know that the doctor will not hear of your going out so soon."

And then Morrell's voice, so thick and hoarse that the boy in the next room would not have recognized it, answered, fretfully:

"I must be well. I must sing Easter. If I don't I'll lose my place. They say the professor's son has a splendid voice, and if he sings Easter in my place—he'll have it for good—that's all. On I'll do—only knew somebody who would sing for me just this once, and not try to get my place!" he groaned.

A little pale face—a slight twisted body appeared in the doorway. Morrell's face was covered with his hands. He looked up quickly as a clear voice spoke beside his bed.

"Mr. Morrell, if the professor will let me, I think I can sing the solo for you, Easter."

"What do you mean?" said Morrell; "what do you mean?"

"Of course, I can't sing it half as well as you can," said the little fellow, modestly; "but you know I've been there at all the choir practice, and the part you sing is the most beautiful of all. I couldn't help learning it, and I've sung it pretty often at home. I'll sing it for you now, 'n' you can see if I'll do—the professor will let me," he added, shyly.

"Sing! sing!" said Morrell, with feverish eagerness. And standing there in his shabby clothes, leaning on his crutch, the child sang in a voice as sweet and thrilling as any meadow lark's—the beautiful Easter music. He looked anxiously at the sick boy as he finished.

"Will he do?" he said; "the gown would cover this, you know"—touching his crutch. "I'd be so glad to do it for you if I c'd do it well enough, 'n' you wouldn't be afraid 't I'd try to get your place, you know."

Morrell had covered his face again now, and tears were running down his flushed cheeks.

"Do!" he said, when he could speak; "you sing it better than I ever did. I'm sure the professor will let you take my place, and, and"—he held out his hand to the little lad. "I've acted like a brute to you, but honestly, I didn't mean to kick your crutch that night, in the vestibule."

"Oh, that's all right," said the little lad, cheerfully. "Course I knew you didn't. A fellow that can sing as you can couldn't be so mean as that. I'll

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SURPRISE SOAP

A PURE HARD SOAP

go and ask the professor," and he hurried away as fast as he could limp. Some who listened to the Easter music at St. Paul's were disappointed because Dwight Morrell did not sing; but the clear child-like voice that sang the solo in his stead sent to many a heart a strangely sweet thrill that lived in the memory long after that Easter service was forgotten.

And the little lad from that time on lived no more with Matthews, the janitor, for the professor took him into his own home and trained his voice so well that in the years that followed many a one would have been willing to use a crutch as he did if also he might have had a voice that could so move human hearts.

A Necessary Union.

In the opinion of the Cardinal-Archbishop of Sydney the cessation of Government subsidies will result in a closer union of the clergy and their congregations in France. "The real hope of religion," said he, "as the world is situated nowadays, is the union of the priests and people, and I think the system by which the clergy have to rely on the religious spirit of the people even for their subsistence is most desirable and the one that ensures the happiest result to both parties."

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