

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

THE OLD YEAR'S BLESSING

I am fading from you, but one draweth near, Called the Angel-Guardian of the coming year.

RING OUT THE OLD: RING IN THE NEW

Once again the pendulum has swung to the close of the Old Year and the beginning of a New.

THE NEW YEAR

The old year is passing, the new year is coming. Mankind is looking forward to the days that are ahead with the enthusiastic optimism of the new beginner.

Now and then, through the fretted days of our life, there comes a strain of sweetest melody through the crowded Street of Adventure of our earthly life.

Mozart, that ever young, ever radiant genius, whose music greets us like the pure bright rays of morning sun, offers a striking response to the insistent question: Life for him was not unmix'd with sadness.

When weary of the stress of striving, we gladly lie to such a genius that he may speak to us, as the stories heard in our childhood of that magical land of beauty where joy and pain alike conduct to peace.

Who does not sometime desire to be led, at least occasionally, out of the crude realities that surround us, into a beautiful world that knows no care, but lies for ever bathed in the sunshine of cloudless happiness, a world in which every loveliness of which fancy has dreamed has taken life and form?

The New Year has opportunities for those who have fallen as well as for those who have journeyed far on the path to contentment and peace.

All lives are more or less alike in their salient features. There is pride and joy and sin and sorrow and rapture and desire. Today one, tomorrow the other, for man's life here below is a constant warfare.

Another year comes with its promise of hopes renewed and courage strengthened. What resolution shall be ours at this sacred time? For resolution is always good, even though through human frailty it is not always faithfully followed.

One who through a strong and useful and sunny life has learned many interior secrets gives us one recipe for success and happiness: Never be discouraged.

At the beginning of a New Year things look singularly bright and hopeful. The swift hours bring again the old unceasing, unsatisfactory battles of this mortal life.

How shall we receive them? Will they prove the cause of our undoing or will they become the stepping stone to a glorious triumph of the soul.—The Pilot.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

NEW YEAR'S EVE

Good old days—dear old days When my heart beat high and bold. When the things of earth seemed full of life.

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limit or reserve. Break distinctly with some one thing which is not for God, and pray that God will show you that one thing within your soul. Do not think whether it will be a failure or a success, it is the battle not the victory that is the real success in this struggle. Find it more deeply in prayer than your other beginnings were. And whatever the beginning is, accompany it with greater efforts after humility.

LEO XIII. AND THE "CLOSED SHOP"

A document has recently been sent to a large number of priests by the manager of the Open Shop Department of the National Association of Manufacturers. It, unfortunately, contains a gross misinterpretation of the Pope Leo's Encyclical "On the Condition of the Working Classes."

"Under these circumstances the Christian workers must do one of two things: either join associations in which their religion will be exposed to peril or form associations among themselves—unite their forces and courageously shake off the yoke of an unjust and intolerable oppression. No one who does not wish to expose man's chief good to extreme danger will hesitate to say that the second alternative must be all means be adopted."

The Holy Father had no purpose to defend or attack the "closed shop" in his famous Encyclical on the labor question. The very words "closed shop" are a full justification of the principle of labor unionism, which no Catholic can consistently oppose.

Should the great American labor movement ever accept European Socialism and the un-Christian unionism condemned by the Church, our own American laborers would be confronted with the same situation described by the Holy Father.

The further statement that the Catholic Conference on Industrial Problems, whose first meeting was recently held at Milwaukee, failed to call attention to Pope Leo's condemnation of the "closed shop" while professing to follow his great labor Encyclical, is, therefore, based upon an erroneous supposition. It is a very ungracious remark in view of the perfect equality accorded at the Conference to capital and labor.

In place of a letter to the clergy the writer of the document, which has called forth the present editorial, should have made his statements in the Conference itself, instituted for this particular purpose. Such was the course followed by Mr. J. B. Bell, secretary-manager of the Milwaukee employers' council on the "open-shop" organization, who publicly maintained his position as promoter of the "open-shop" movement, and later wrote to the Conference: "I am glad to be able to say that I thoroughly endorse the spirit of these conferences, and that I do not question for one moment the sincerity of the open-minded atti-

tude which you assert." It should finally be remarked that the Catholic Conference on Industrial Problems, whose national meeting is to take place annually, has no connection of any kind with the National Catholic Welfare Council, as the document in question might lead one to suppose.—America.

ON INDIVIDUALISM

Rudyard Kipling has lately declared his opinion that life's highest aim is independence. He did not take the word in its political sense. "Let every henning," he is reported to have said, "hang by its own head." This has moved a correspondent of the London Tablet to answer this depressing emanation of worldly philosophy, with the words of one of poetry's sweetest singers, and of Catholic literature's brightest stars, Francis Thompson.

"In practice self-help has meant, 'devil take the hindmost.' By its fruits you shall know it. Look at your darkest England; look at your darkest London. You have seen your dragons' teeth, and you shall reap armed men? Nay, I tell you, but dragons. From dragon's teeth, dragons; and from devil's teachings, devils. His evangel you have preached by word and deed throughout this century; do you fear his kingdom at hand? You have prepared the way of your lord, you have made straight his paths; and now you tremble at his coming. For diabolical this doctrine of Individualism is; it is the outcome of the proud teaching which declares it despisable for men to bow before their fellowmen. It has meant not that a man should be individual, but that he should be independent. Now this I take to be an altogether deadly lie. A man should be individual but not independent. The very laws of Nature forbid independence, which have made man in a thousand ways dependent upon his fellows."

Man is by nature neither a solitary or a misanthrope, but a social being. He was made to live and move and have his being among his fellows. There is no man so absolutely self sufficient as to subsist in himself. God is the only being who is Pure Act. He alone can say of Himself, "I am Who am." God subsists in Himself and needs no other being to complete His perfections.

Yet from earliest times we have evidence of the desires of some men to pursue the false individualism that teaches that they are sufficient for themselves, a law unto themselves, and unbound to their fellow men either for service or assistance. This spirit is perhaps an echo of the old temptation with which the evil one enticed our first parents, when he held out to them the alluring prospect, "You shall be as God." Marshal Foch a few years ago in his speech at the Napoleon centenary summed up the character of the greatest military genius of the modern world has known, in the damning phrase, "He forgot that a man could not be God."

And it may be permitted to inquire with all reverence and humility if the modern world in the spirit of Individualism that it is popularizing is not making the same fatal error, forgetting that man can not be God. How much of the rebellion against authority, the self-greed that desires to appropriate everything, the uncharity that cannot forgive an injury, and the injustice that can see only the right of might—evils that good men deplore and are striving so hard to remedy against overwhelming odds,—are not directly due to pushing to its logical conclusion the dictum enunciated by Kipling, that life's highest aim is independence. The highest aim of life as revealed by the founder of Christianity is Love, love of God and love of neighbor. This was the new commandment He gave unto us, vitalized by His sublime promise. This, do, and you shall have Eternal life.—The Pilot.

A WALK THAT LED TO GOD

The Baltic port of Memel, once pressed into service by the great nationalities, and the focus of what looks like a little war, says the Catholic Times and Catholic Opinion, of London, has an interesting link with the story of the Catholic Church in England and Australia in the nineteenth century.

A hundred years ago something happened there that was of inestimable gain to both these countries. In the summer of 1822 there arrived in Memel harbor the brig Anne's Resolution, of Scarborough, chartered to bring a cargo of timber back to England. In her small crew there were two Catholics—the mate, a well-educated, zealous man, who had spent some of his school years at Stonyhurst, and a young sailor from Scarborough, a boy of sixteen, who, though the son of Catholic parents, had not yet made his First Communion, and since he took to sea had been careless about religious duties generally.

When the first Sunday in port came round, Craythorne, the mate, said to the sailor boy, "William, let us go to Mass." Long years after the boy wrote his recollections of the day, and told how they walked through "the flat town of Memel" and how he noticed the many windmills that drove the saws in the timber yards, and the

old churches all in the hands of the Lutherans.

At last, just outside the town, they came to a considerable wooden structure, exteriorly not unlike a barn, with in front of it a grass grown courtyard surrounded by a low wall, and near the door a mould, on which was a great crucifix carved in wood. It was the Catholic Church. Mass had begun when they entered. The sanctuary was decorated with an abundance of flowers. The men knelt on one side of the church; the women, all very plainly dressed, on the other.

"With their hands united and their eyes recollected," he writes, "they were singing the Litany of Loretto to two or three simple notes accompanied by an instrument like the sound of small bells. The moment I entered, I was struck by the simple fervor of the scene; my heart was turned inward upon myself. I saw the claims of God upon me, and felt a deep reproach within my soul. When we came out I was again struck by the affectionate way in which the people saluted each other as if they were all one family. Whatever money was in my pocket went into the poor box and when we got on board I asked Craythorne what religious books he had."

It was the turning point in the boy's life. Next year he entered the Benedictine novitiate at Downside. His name was William Ullathorne. He was the organizer of the Catholic Church in Australia, and, returning to England, became the first Bishop of Birmingham in the restored hierarchy.

POPE PIUS AND WORLD PEACE

A writer in the current number of Harper's asks a pertinent question. He wants to know what is the matter with this world? He confesses that the more he reads about it, the less he knows, except to be more thoroughly convinced that it is not going right, but is going ominously wrong.

A great many others, seeking an answer to this question, share this writer's apprehension. They see mankind adrift in a world in a most deplorable condition. They realize that all remedies devised by merely human prudence have been futile and ineffectual. And in their bewilderment they are willing to grasp at such expedients as the offering of a hundred thousand dollars for the best plan for world peace.

And all the while the great question that is vexing mankind has been answered, and the remedy already proposed. Those who in one capacity or another are endeavoring to find out what is wrong with the world, and are striving to rebuild its shattered institutions, and to heal the wounds of humanity, should turn their attention to the program of world reconstruction that has emanated from the highest authority in Christendom. Pope Pius XI. in his memorable encyclical, "Ubi Arcano Dei," published in December, 1922, has analyzed the evils of the day and proposed unflinching remedies, by which a speedy recovery of the world may be effected.

The Holy Father tells us that there are many evils in the world springing from fatal errors which humanity has embraced and clung to with obstinate tenacity. There are international rivalries, class warfare, social struggles, there is corruption in political life, in industrial life, in family life, there is a lamentable revolt against the moral order breaking out in lawlessness, disregard of authority, greed, an insatiable thirst for pleasure, an aversion to work, immodesty of every form, and a mad scramble to possess the material things of this earth.

Yet manifold as these evils are they spring from one common root, the spirit of irreligion. The world has lost its spiritual vision, and has become indifferent to the supernatural. In the words of the saintly Pius X., "the world has apostatized from God." As Pope Pius XI. tells us, "men have fallen away from God and Jesus Christ and this is why they have sunk into the depths of so much evil."

This is what is the matter with the world. The remedy, as the Holy Father points out, lies in the restoration of the Christian religion, and in the re-application of Christian principles of morality in all departments of life. Or as Pope Pius XI. so happily phrases it, in the motto of his Pontificate, "The Peace

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of Christ in the Reign of Christ." The Peace of Christ flowing from the reign of Christ will produce order, tranquility, and happiness in the hearts of individuals, and cooperation and amity among nations. It will assuage the hunger for earthly things and allay the thirst for pleasure by instilling a taste for the things of the spirit which are better adapted to satisfy the cravings of the human heart than anything which this earth can offer.

If the world would ponder and follow the counsels of His Holiness there would be no need to ask the question, "What is the matter with the world?" But the world too often finds out its best advisers too late. Had Pope Leo's counsel been followed a generation ago, there would be today no social problem. Had Pope Benedict's exhortations been obeyed during the War, true peace would long ago have descended upon the weary hearts of men. It is not too late yet for thoughtful publicists and writers to adopt the Holy Father's remedy to disseminate it broadcast, and to put it in practice. For after all is said and done, it is the world's only way out

of the abyss of misery into which fatal errors have plunged it.—The Pilot.

As soon as we cease to pray we hasten to hell.

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