
OUR
CURBSTONE
OBSERVER.

ON NICKNAMES

It is a dangerous thing to give children nicknames; they often cling to them throughout life and not infrequently become impediments in their pathway. It would be a very curious study to investigate into the origin of some of the nick-names that have been associated with people of importance in the world. Some of them have not been offensive, rather were they intended to designate some fine or heroic characteristic; but many were nick-names all the same, and may have, at some time or other, been disagreeable to those upon whom they were imposed. I am not going to enter upon a review of all the nick-names that I have met with in connection with the lives and achievements of prominent personages, but I have been going over in my own mind several of those that were given to boys and young men with whom I have been personally acquainted, and I found it quite amusing to trace them to their original sources. It may not be very instructive, nor even amusing, for the readers, but it is a whim that has come upon me this week, and I may just as well indulge it.

THREE QUEER CASES.—"What" Hogan was the name of a boy with whom I went to school, and whom I subsequently knew as a very successful criminal lawyer. I never knew his real name. He signed "W. Hogan." It may have been William or Walter, or any other Christian name beginning with W. In the class, on the playground, in the town he was spoken of as What Hogan, and if any person met him on the street and wished to call him, he would certainly shout out "What." I know that, in after years, when he was practicing his profession, his conferees and the judges spoke to him and of him as Mr. Hogan, or Lawyer Hogan, but the general public never called him anything other than What Hogan. If the tone of the voice indicated a point of interrogation, the name would seem to suggest an answer, "What Hogan?" would certainly be confusing. But no person ever dreamt of associating the "What" with a question. It was his name—and that is all about it. How he came to have this nickname is peculiar. When a lad he had the habit, between almost every two sentences that he spoke, to say "What! what!" It was a habit contracted I know not how, but which became so remarkable that some of the boys began to use it, in fun, as a nickname. Another instance was that of Charles Long of Eardley. Mr. Long had been for fully thirty years one of the leading citizens of that section of the country. His name figures as foreman of the Grand Jury in the criminal term of 1868: his name is to be found on the county records as Mayor, during three terms of his municipality; also his name,

as Justice of the Peace, has been signed to a score of commitments. Mr. Long's father left a large farm, divided between his two sons; they lived side by side, and brought up their two families, and constantly associated together. Their father's name was William Taylor; one brother was James Taylor and the other brother was Charles Long. Their two sons came to the same school; they were both Johns; John Taylor and John Long. John Taylor is now an insurance agent in Winnipeg, I think; John Long is conductor on the electric street cars in San Francisco. How one branch of this family came to lose the family name was this: James Taylor was five feet four inches in height, while Charlie Taylor was six feet two inches. Hence the nick-name Charlie Long.

INJURIOUS NICK-NAMES.—I will not attempt to give a list of the many instances in which I found nicknames to have been injurious to those to whom they were applied. One case will suffice to illustrate my subject. In a certain town in Ontario, some thirty years ago, there was a family named White; there were three brothers—John, Henry and Albert. They were all clever young men, all honest, hard working and ambitious. If, however, there could be any distinction made, it would have been in favor of Albert. Yet while John was exceedingly successful in life, and Henry did very well, poor Albert was a miserable failure—still through no fault of his own, simply because he had a nickname. In their younger days John was quite a reserved and stately fellow; Henry was a dude, and Albert was a rough-and-ready, good natured soul, without malice or vice, but very much of a half-fellow-well-met. The consequence was that John was known as "Gentleman White," Henry was called "Dandy White," and Albert was always spoken of as "Rowdy White." This unfortunate nickname caused Albert to lose scores of chances. The moment a merchant or other person with whom he sought to secure employment heard that he was called "Rowdy" White, his application was sure to be rejected. In reality he was the very opposite of a rowdy—he was a fine, gifted, generous, sober man. I had the melancholy duty of attending his funeral; he died at the age of thirty-four. His life had been a failure, and he was broken-hearted and broken spirited for a long time before death came to relieve him. And, I repeat, this sad story would never have been told had it not been for that unfortunate nickname—given thoughtlessly, but sometimes repeated maliciously. The conclusion I have long since come to is that nicknames should be avoided: life is too short, and too serious a matter to be thus played with or embittered.

SAVED BY MARY.

Some sixty years ago a young merchant came into the neighborhood of Hal, Belgium, to dispose of his wares. While walking in a thoughtful mood, on the banks of the river Senne, he heard suddenly a shrill cry; and, looking around in surprise, towards the large green meadows bordering the river, he saw, within a stone's throw, an infant in a cradle floating down the Senne. The young man sprang into the river, and seizing the cradle, swam with it to the shore. "God be praised," exclaimed he, "the child is still alive!" He placed the little one in the arms of its mother, who had been attracted to the spot; and through her care it was soon out of danger. Moved by gratitude, the mother offered the stranger some money. "I thank you, madam," he said; "I do not want the least recompense, for I am not short of money; and I did nothing more than was demanded by Christian charity." Again the delighted mother urged the merchant to accept the money, and again he refused it. Presently a small silver medal suspended round the infant's neck attracted the woman's attention, and she said to its preserver: "It was Mary who helped you to save my child from death. Since you are unwilling to receive my money, accept at least this little medal of Our Lady of Hal, as a souvenir of your

courageous deed; and in gratitude for your own safety, I beg you to say one 'Hail Mary,' daily in honor of that good mother."

The young man, who was wholly indifferent to religion, shrugged his shoulders with reluctance; but, overcome by the entreaties of the good woman, he promised to comply with her request, and placed the little medal round his neck.

Years glided by, and the merchant, extending his trade from day to day, made several journeys to different countries, with the object of winning greater gains. When the child that had been saved grew older, he was sent to the seminary of Mechlin. He soon outstripped his school-fellows in knowledge and virtue, and passed successfully through all his classes. When he was on the point of leaving school, he felt himself called to devote his life to God. Visibly led by the Queen of Heaven, whom he had always honored in a special way, Desany—for such was the young man's name—determined to embrace the priesthood in the Order of Premonstratensians, of which the Immaculate Mother herself had laid the foundation stone. He was thus invested with the white robe of innocence, which made him forever a defender of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, and he chose the Abbey of Grimberghen to spend his days in rest and peace.

But scarcely had he been raised to the priesthood when he felt his heart burning with zeal for the salvation of souls. Like his patriarch, St.

Robert, he had learned to appreciate the value of a soul. He had often asked permission to go to Africa, to bring the light of faith to the nations that sit in the valley of death. The superiors had hitherto refused his request; but when, in 1848, the cholera raged in the country about Grimberghen, and they saw Desany more than once risking his life in the care of the plague-stricken, they were persuaded that his call was from God, and at last granted his request. The Cape of Good Hope was the scene of the young priest's labors, and great was the harvest he reaped in the vineyard of the Lord.

One day, whilst he was taking his accustomed walk, he was informed that a foreigner was on the point of dying in the hospital of the town—a man, it was said, who did nothing but blaspheme. The Norbertine hurried to the hospital, and was surprised to learn that the blasphemer spoke Flemish. His last moments were near, yet the unhappy man uttered the most terrible imprecations against God and all that is holy. The priest, however, was not discouraged. He questioned him sympathetically, and endeavored to excite him to contrition; but the dying man was wish was to die as he lived.

The priest was about to give up in despair, when he noticed something glitter upon the dying man's neck. He reached out to examine it, and was very much surprised at the discovery. In answer to his eager questions, the man said:

"Some twenty years ago, in the neighborhood of Hal, in Belgium, I saved a child from drowning, and its mother gave me this little medal as a souvenir. To please that woman I promised to recite one 'Hail Mary,' daily, and this I have done." The Norbertine sobbed aloud, and, embracing the unhappy man, exclaimed: "O, my preserver! I am that child!"

The dying sinner, illuminated by a heavenly light, could no longer refuse the powerful grace of God. He wept bitterly; and for a time they remained with clasped hands, unable to utter a single word. At length the religious cried out:

"Now do I know why God has called me to this distant country."

With sorrow-stricken heart and eyes bathed in tears, the dying man confessed his sins. And hardly had the priest lifted his trembling hand in absolution over the contrite sinner, when the man, now thoroughly repentant, fixed his eyes, beaming with gratitude upon him; and, with the holy names of Jesus and Mary upon his lips, broke the bonds of flesh, and stood before his Redeemer.—From "The New World."

Catholic Journalism And Public Opinion

"Some good folks excuse themselves from taking a Catholic paper because, as they say, they can get all the Catholic news in a daily paper. If this were true it would be a conclusive answer, but it is not true."

"The daily press, believing its duty to be the reporting of all readable news, does not stop—because it has not time to stop—and investigate the truth or falsehood which is sent to it by news agencies. Its business is to give the news, and in pursuit of that object it does not always pause to consider the motives impelling some of its news-gatherers."

"The business of a religious paper is to make the business of disseminating slanders on Catholics an unprofitable and even dangerous business for the careless or the malicious propagator thereof."

"It is easy to say that one can afford to despise idle, slanderous talk spoken or printed; but I need not say to anyone who has experienced it, that there is hardly any suffering keener than that of having to listen to insults levelled at one's creed, or race, in the atmosphere and surroundings of his daily life. 'Hard words break no bones,' saith the proverb, but they sometimes break hearts."

"Therefore I say it is useful for any man or woman in the living world to have with him an organ of his faith which will give him the true side of any and every question."

—Extracts from a letter addressed by James Jeffrey Roche to Holy Name Society, Allston.

Charity and Its Solace

In his recent lecture on "Charity" Mr. Bourke Cockran, the well known American orator, said:

"There is just one place where sadness always prevails and gloom

always settles. It is not the hospital, not the almshouse, nor the prison nor insane asylum nor house of correction. That one place where no merriment ever enters is a safe deposit vault. The most melancholy sight in the world is a millionaire face to face with his securities."

"If you exclude the spiritual element from life, every man must either be worried or bored. And here lies the danger. If a man is without luxuries, he is worried; with them he is bored. Charity alone can solve the problem, safeguard the danger, and make glorious the possession of wealth. Our profit as well as our virtue lies in charity; not the charity confined to the giving of alms; (that is the smallest part of it), but the higher, nobler duty of man to man,—the duty which is the looking out with eyes of another at the danger facing him; that charity which means the brotherhood of man in its truest sense. The reign of abundance will become perpetual when the dominion of charity shall become universal."

FREE SCHOOL BOOKS FAD ABANDONED.

Our school board will recall its action in ordering free books. The experiment has proved a dismal and disgusting failure. It has taught children contempt of books, and that was about the only form of reverence they had left.

We told the school board when they ordered free books in the schools of the city that they had committed a blunder. We are glad to see that they even now recognize the truth of what we said. Wise men change their minds sometimes; fools, never. —Western Watchman, St. Louis, Mo.

Notes for Farmers.

LIVE STOCK—Good shelter for the stock is absolute economy. With warmth there must be an ample supply of pure, fresh air. The time may come when we shall find coal cheaper than the extra food needed under extreme cold. At present we must keep our stables warm and dry. But pure air, with severe cold, and plenty of food, is preferable to warm, impure stables, with food saved.

Many farmers now keeping but a pair of horses which are ordinarily of the heavy type, could, judged by the writer's experience, keep three of lighter weight and quicker movement to good advantage. More available horse-power will be furnished, pound for pound of live weight, by the three horses than the two, when employed together, and the great convenience and number of uses to which the third animal can be put need no depicting.

Proper ventilation in poultry-houses during the winter is of quite as much value to the poultry as proper ventilation is to your own sleeping-rooms. Where the houses are closed on very stormy days, ventilation comes through windows that may be let down from the top. When the fowls are confined in the house during winter, these windows should be opened every day, rain or shine, unless the weather is so very bad as to make it impossible to do so. If curtains or screens made of thin muslin or cloth of some kind that will admit the light, are placed in front of the open windows when it rains or snows, fresh air will pass through the cloth screens, and the screens will prevent the rain and snow from coming into the house. Proper ventilation of this kind will prevent much of internal dampness that might otherwise be present.

MANURE—Farmyard manure is the most natural and perfect plant food available, and it has indirect results that no other commercial fertilizer can give, because it adds to the soil much vegetable matter by which all clay and sandy soils especially are greatly benefited.

WOOD—The question of the farmer's woodlot must be brought down to one of simple home consumption, each average farm requiring twenty or thirty cords of wood annually, and for this purpose needs a woodlot of thirty or forty acres, for the care and preservation of which common sense is the first requisite. The usual size of woodlots is inimical to the production of timber for market, and does its duty well if it supplies the farm.

PREPARATION.—The spring will soon be upon us. The hurry and bustle of farm life will be here in earnest. I have found that much time and labor can be saved by having the farm work well planned, at least, a few months in advance. Let us look over the possible needs of the farm, and see what is actually

Secular Ideals of Marriage

(By a Regular Contributor.)

Following up that peculiar system of securing information, called the symposium, the New York Herald gives the opinions of four prominent men on the question of love and marriage. The four writers are Rev. Minot J. Savage, William Dean Howells, Rev. Thomas R. Slicer and Rev. Robert Collyer. In all probability these gentlemen are very good authorities from certain standpoints, at all events their respective positions would naturally render them competent to speak from experience. But there is a great feeling of blankness that comes over us after we have read the four opinions. It is quite evident that they all look upon marriage as a purely human institution, ignoring entirely the divine or sacramental aspect of the matter. Consequently it is useless for us, dealing always with marriage from the Catholic standpoint, to enter into the sentiments or spirit of those writers. A far sublimer idea than any of the above-mentioned authorities ever conceived was that of Charles Phillips, the famous Irish Protestant orator. Speaking of marriage, in one of his inimitable addresses to the jury, he said: "It is the gift of Heaven, the charm of earth, the joy of the present, the promise of the future, the innocence of enjoyment, the sanctity of passion, the benediction of love, the Sacrament of God. The slender curtain that shades its sanctuary has for its purity the whiteness of the mountain snow, and for its protection the texture of the mountain adamant."

While this beautiful passage still falls short of what the Catholic conception of marriage is, yet it is far and away grander and more in harmony with the spirit of true christianity than any of those that we find in the symposium before us.

Turning for a moment from their statements regarding marriage, we find that in their conception of love they do not distinguish between that sentiment and animal passion. Here again is the striking difference between the Catholic and the non-Catholic teachings. So radically different are they that we may justly speak of them as white and black. They do not clash, for the good reason that they have nothing in common; they are at the opposite poles.

It is not our intention to analyze these four opinions, but simply to justify our assertions concerning love and marriage we will quote a few phrases from their contributions:

Rev. Mr. Savage says:—"I am inclined to think that marriages are, on the whole, as successful as other human arrangements. There are no ideal political institutions. There are no ideal organizations." This is plainly reducing marriage to the level of a human arrangement, a mere civil contract. Viewed as such divorce becomes justifiable and logical. But all idea of a divine institution of marriage is ignored; the Scripture is set aside; God's law counts for nothing; the sanctity of the Sacrament—which is one of the seven sources of grace—is not considered. And yet this is a Christian minister. Referring to divorce, the same gentleman says: "There are cases where it is apparently perfectly plain that it is for the advantage of the husband or the wife or both that

they separate. There are other cases where it is an undoubted injury." The result of all this reasoning is to be found in these parting words: "I would make it a little more difficult for people to get married in the first place. I do not mean that I would stand in the way of marriages. I mean simply that people should be compelled to take a little time and think before they enter such serious relations with each other." And he adds: "I would make divorce difficult to get married and then more difficult to get divorced." Rev. Mr. Savage thinks that the question would be solved. But the marriage to which he refers is a mere "human agreement," and the divorce he admits as proper under given circumstances. His attitude is not only non-Catholic, but even contrary to the true Christian conception of marriage.

As to the opinions of Mr. Howells, the novelist, we may as well skip it, for all he says is this: "I did not make a modern marriage, and therefore don't know anything about the amount of love that enters into an alliance of that sort." Such a remark is not worth the space accorded it in the paper, for it adds absolutely nothing to our information on the subject.

The most sensible of all these commentators is Rev. Mr. Slicer. He says: "I think all marriages should be entered into with sacramental seriousness (whatever that means). As the matter now stands, it is far too easy to get married, and the ease with which this bond is broken promotes immorality, and is often characterized by extreme vulgarity." This is true enough—as far as it goes—and it reminds us that the Catholic Church has, from the very beginning, established rules to meet the two objections mentioned. It is not as easy to get married inside the Church as outside of it, for the law of dispensations is rigorous, the formalities of publication and the like are severe, and the degrees of consanguinity are restricted. And as to divorce, the Catholic Church will not allow it under any circumstance.

Rev. Mr. Collyer does not answer the question at all. He merely gives us a long essay to prove that: "All men marry for love. And the women? Their motives are various and complex. Men may marry, but women must. A man has all to lose by marriage (from a worldly standpoint), a woman all to gain."

We need not quote any more. What we have above given is sufficient to show how very superficial are the ideas and conceptions of most men in matters of the highest spiritual importance. Their opinions are not worth the cost of reading them; they give us nothing new; they serve in no way to enlighten us; they furnish no food for serious thought; they consist of words and phrases that convey the common-place to our minds, and they leave the great question of marriage unsolved—save as it has been solved by the Catholic Church.

needed in the way of tools, carts, plows, harrows, etc. Make up your minds what fertilizers, seeds and farm help you actually need, and then set about procuring what you must have, and get all of such articles home before the bad travelling comes.

DOCKING HORSES TAILS—Owners and fanciers of high grade horses, says the New York Herald, are trying to discover the true significance of a bill introduced into the Legislature, entitled: "An act to prohibit the docking of horses' tails, and to require a registry of all docked horses now in the State." The bill was introduced by Senator Armstrong, of Monroe County, and is said to have originated with a rural branch of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

What makes the bill appear extraordinary to horsemen is the fact that there is already a law in the State which prohibits the docking of horses but the present bill goes still further and makes it a misdemeanor, punish-

able by heavy fine and imprisonment for any person to have a docked horse that is not registered with the County Clerk, or to import such a horse into the State. The bill provides that each County Clerk shall issue a certificate for each docked horse owned in the county and shall receive a fee of fifty cents for each certificate given.

In New York, Westchester and other counties there are thousands of docked horses which would have to be registered, or their owners would be liable to arrest and punishment. The penalty for violation of any provisions of the bill is a fine of from \$50 to \$500 for each offence, or imprisonment for not less than thirty days or more than ninety days, or both fine and imprisonment. All horses must be registered within 90 days after the passage of the act. The question is being raised as to the constitutionality of the section of the bill which prohibits the importation into the State of perfectly sound horses merely because of a sentimental objection.

CHAPTER III.

"My future, my child, you thinking of?" asked Alexia, sadly, but were to meet your Creator? intended to speak so ably but rather to wait and would not speak first; forts to elude the topic gested, this came out.

"No, Alexia," he said, am not prepared as you if that is what you want consider it necessary; I have great respect for professed by my wife and cannot believe in it. M I have always tried to be upright life, so I have death."

At that moment the ed, so no more was se subject, and when they more alone, Mr. Grey p unwilling ears of his plans he had made fo could only see you mar gan, "I could die conten proceeded to tell her ho few days before his depa home, he had promised drew Hurley, who was th to go to Europe, and h to promise to marry the soon after his return.

"Oh, father," stamm "please do not ask me to for I never can. I know good man, and I respect friend, but I do not wis ry."

"Why not, my child?" hope it is not on account foolish scruples about m rriages being unhappy, fo happily your mother and lived together."

"Yes, father, I know yo py, but your cause was o exceptions," said Alexia. I have no desire to marry "Foolish girl," said with a smile, "but you forget that whim and I will not refuse the good loves you—he hesitated at her face and said: "Y what is the matter? You though you were going to am afraid you have not enough after your long jo you had better go and lie "I am a little tired," "but prefer remaining with "No child," he said, "I ther have you rest until ev you may return, for the l are the hardest for me to The young girl went to across the hall, but not t her mind was filled w thoughts, so she sat dow window and gazed blankl the strange scene. It wa father she was thinking of the grief of losing him; t thoughts were of Andre and with many regrets sh herself if she had given encouragement to his little True she had attended a gatherings with him, bu and Robert had always l them, and she had never that he cared for her othe a friend.

Again her mind was wit ed one who stood unprepa very portals of death an moment her eye rested on which she had not seen b tering in the sunshine not away, a gilded cross, the demption, tipped the spire tiful church. The vision thrill of joy to her heart, y donning her hat and cl made her way to the chiv kneeling before the altar prayed for his conversion.

Three days later Mr. Gre his daughter to his side and that he wished to see a pri xia's happiness was und she hastened to comply w request. The next morning was thought to be his last, received into the Church, several hours after his hap appeared to be so much that hopes of his recovery tertained, but it was only t of the lightness of heart he ter two weeks more of inter ferer, borne with Christian tion, Mr. Grey fell into a slumber from which he neve Sad and lonely indeed wo been the long weary hours which Alexia scarcely left he beside, had it not been for