

JUNE 18, 1921

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

MEN TO LEAD

There isn't a boy but wants to grow Manly and true at heart, And every lad would like to know The secret we impart, He doesn't desire to slack or shrink— 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 boys the game to play Just as a man would do? Village and slums are calling—come, Here are the boys, indeed, Who can tell what they might become?

Motor and golf and winter sport Fill up the time a lot, But wouldn't you like to feel you'd fought?

Even a boy a knot? Country and home depend on you, Character most we need; How can a boy know what to do If there isn't a man to lead?

Where are the men to lead 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? —Catholic Telegraph

A GOOD TEMPER

Amidst the many vicissitudes of daily life good temper is found to be a valuable asset and a panacea for most ills. It is a Christian virtue of great worth and merit, and its moral influence is boundless. It is graceful, and sits well on old and young. It is the best of all good company, and adorns the weaker more than rubies and diamonds set in gold. How delightful does it make social converse. Here it looks on the bright side of human nature, and is kind in its judgment of others. It is charitable, gentle, and truthful; it scatters comforting words, which produce others in return; and thus good thoughts are cherished and deeds of kindness done.—Intermountain Catholic.

HAPPIEST DAYS

Many who find themselves restricted in their pleasures by limited means or by the necessity of daily toil are often inclined to think they would be much happier if they could escape these limitations and have full opportunity to enjoy themselves in any way their fancy might suggest. But observation of those who have plenty of money and ample leisure does not justify this idea. Probably the most unhappy people in the world, as a class, are those who do nothing except seek after happiness. As a constant employment the pursuit of happiness is a failure. The greatest pleasures come to those who have few opportunities to enjoy them. A much needed vacation after a long season of work; a holiday breaking the monotony of weeks of toil; a rare journey to new scenes by those who are not often able to leave home and work; or a quiet Sunday at home with the family after a busy week of bustling toil, these are the happiest days of life.

MAKING THE MOST OF LEISURE

Too much can not be said of the value of the hours which most men waste. One of the prime qualities of a man of force and ability is his clear understanding of what can be done with the time and tools at his command. Such a man wastes no time in idle dreaming of the things he would do if he could go to college, or travel, or have command of long periods of uninterrupted time. He is not guilty of a feeble evasion of "no possibility" for his career by getting behind adverse condition. If the conditions are adverse, he gets in front of them and so gets away from them. Conditions look very solid and formidable, but a plucky man often discovers that their portentous show of strength is a sham, and that the great guns which frown upon him are merely wooden imitations. Everything yields to a strong hand. The question for each man to settle is not what he would do if he had means, time, influence, and educational opportunities; the question is what he will do with the things he has. The moment a young man ceases to dream or to bemoan his lack of opportunities, and resolutely looks his conditions in the face, and resolves to change them, he lays the corner stone of a solid and honorable success.

THE PLODDER WINS

Argo, the great French astronomer, tells us that he became so discouraged in the study of mathematics that he almost resolved to abandon his effort. He was just about ready to give up when he happened to notice something printed or written under the paper binding of his book. He unfolded the leaf and found it was from D'Alembert. The letter said: "Go on, sir; go on! The difficulties you meet will resolve themselves, and the light will dawn and shine with increasing brightness upon your path." This struck the young mathematician's mind in a way which he never forgot. It was a perpetual spur to his ambition, and came to him just in the nick of time. He resolved then and there that he would surmount every difficulty; that he would become a great mathematician himself. He tightened his grip and urged himself on until fame took him up and told the world the story of one of the greatest astronomers of his time.

The race is to the plodder. I have in mind several very brilliant graduates, who promised a great deal, and of whom friends predicted great things, but somehow they have disappointed all expectations simply because they lack sticking qualities. They are good scholars, and they imagine because they rank high in college that they would rank high in life without effort. But they lack the hanging on quality.

AN EDUCATION

Every boy has been assailed by the temptation to leave school and go to work, says a man who has been very successful. Why bother with books, why putter around with geography and physics and Latin and English literature when one can get \$30 a week clerking in a store.

There never was a time when an education was as necessary as it is today. The one class that is being pushed rapidly off the earth is the untrained class. When you read about the magicians and Edison and other great men who never went to high school and yet succeeded, just remember that times have changed. The untrained boy of today simply has no chance. Automatically the doors of opportunity are closing against the uneducated. A generation or so ago human beings did the dirty work; nowadays the machine is doing the lifting, hauling, and digging, and the men that are wanted are men who can run machines.

The boy who will not go to high school is cutting off all hopes of ever entering any one of dozens of remunerative callings. He can not enter college, go to a first-class medical school to become a doctor or enter an aviation school. He can not be a newspaper reporter nor rise very high in a bank, railroad office, consulting house or steamship company. He is condemning himself to mediocrity. The greatest advantage, however, in getting a high school education is not the dollars and cents you will gain by it. Going to school brings you the inestimable benefit of learning to think. It cultivates the intellectual life. It transfers your aims and ambitions over from things that are cheap to the higher satisfactions. You learn to read and to like books. The doors of culture open. And you are put in the way of getting a lot more out of life.

It is the thinker who rules. It is brains that count. The man with the mind that is trained to plan, to foresee, to co-ordinate and to judge is the one who comes first, and those who can only do what they are told and follow a certain routine, where they do not have to use their own initiative, are inferior. Go to school!—Catholic Transcript.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

MOTHER

Speak kindly to your mother, boy, in her declining years, For little words of kindness may spare her many tears. Oft-times come days of worry, and nights of broken rest, When she has heard an unkind word from lips that once she pressed.

When baby tears rolled down your cheeks and you were wont to weep, She took you in her loving arms and rocked you off to sleep; Then gently laid you in your bed, and breathed a silent prayer, That God above would guard her love, the infant nestling there. You cannot pay your mother for her sufferings of the past, Or for the tender love she bears, that time will not outlast; For when by all forsaken, bereft of every friend, You still can turn to mother, whose love not death can sever.—EDWARD J. LEAHY

THE APOSTLE OF HIS FAMILY

Percy Brown, without doubt, is in Heaven with the angels and saints. Indeed, his short career was so unusual that he deserves a place among God's apostles. When a little fellow of five years he was a frequent visitor at a neighbor's home next door to his own Protestant home. And for this reason, in one of the rooms of this good Catholic family there hung a large and beautiful picture of the crucifixion of Our Lord. It was something new and strange to Percy, and the very first time he saw it he demanded an explanation, which was given with due deference to the supposed infantile intelligence of the inquirer. He was awed and inquired, and constantly spoke about it at home. He was not understood, of course, and no attention was paid to his prattling. His visits to the picture continued, however, and the good mother of the Catholic home instinctively felt that there was something unusual about Percy. His two brothers took him to the public school when he was little over six years old. But he was not satisfied there, and left after a few days, and without the knowledge of his parents, went to the parochial school with a little Catholic friend of his own age. His brothers mentioned the matter at home, but when Percy seemed so happy his parents said it "made no difference," and permitted him to continue.

The next year, during the Ember Days of September, the younger children of St. Mary's School were prepared for first confession. Percy, who had learned his Catechism and the method of confession, marched

to the church with the rest and took his place near the box.

A lady who was making a visit to the Blessed Sacrament in the church had her attention attracted to the children and was surprised to see the little "Protestant boy" who had never been baptized, seated with the Catholic children before the "box." She knew Percy fairly well, and was quite a friend to the little boy; in fact, the picture of the Crucifixion to which we have referred was in her house. She immediately spoke to the Sister in charge of the class. "Sister, isn't that Percy Brown?" "Yes; Percy is going to make his first confession. He is well prepared."

"But, Sister, don't you know every one belonging to him is Protestant? Why, the child has never been baptized in any church?" "What?" exclaimed the Sister, frowning pale. "Percy not a Catholic—not baptized, you say?" "He is not a Catholic and has never been baptized," repeated the lady. "I live next door."

The Sister lost no time in going over to Percy and telling him that he could not go to confession—that she did not know that he was not a Catholic. The effect upon Percy was startling.

"Oh Sister," he sobbed, "I am a Catholic. I do want to go and tell my sins. I ain't a Protestant."

His grief was heart-breaking. The children all stood up and looked at the little fellow, thinking he was reproved for some misdemeanor; and the priest, hearing the noise, came out of the confessional and asked what was the matter. The Sister told him. Looking at the tear-stained little face and the swimming blue eyes, the priest smiled and said:

"Why, my boy, what is the reason you want to go to confession?" "To tell my sins," said the little six-year-old between sobs.

"But your sins cannot be forgiven by absolution. You have never been baptized."

"Well, then, baptize me, Father, and let me go to confession!" The priest hesitated. The little face was thoughtful, even though drenched with tears.

"Well you may come into the confessional. But you must stop crying and not distract your companions." And the priest returned to the box.

Percy was quiet at once, and when his turn came he went into the confessional. When he came out he knelt there in prayer. As he left the church he said to the Sister: "I'm going to bring my mother to Father tomorrow. I am going to be baptized a Catholic."

The Sister was rather surprised at the emphasis of the little fellow, and said warningly: "Don't make your mother angry, Percy. You ought to wait until you are older."

"But suppose I should die!" said the little philosopher. "You told us yourself, Sister, we would never see God without being baptized."

The Sister acknowledged the fact but, not wishing to cause trouble in a Protestant household, told Percy to say a fervent prayer before he asked his mother.

What Percy told his mother he do not know, but the very next afternoon she came to the rectory with Percy.

She explained that the boy gave her no peace, insisted on being baptized, and was so serious and earnest that she and his father saw no great harm in gratifying him, and she asked the priest to baptize him. Percy was radiant with joy. The good pastor baptized him, and the mother, with a few others who were present watched the ceremonial.

Percy received the name of Joseph, and was so delighted that he would answer to nothing else, except from his father, who always called him Percy.

He bought a small crucifix and wore it around his neck, and continued his attendance at St. Mary's school. He was obedient and attentive and possessed the usual amount of boyish liveliness. After a year or two he began to tease his mother about his two brothers. He told her that they would never go to Heaven if they were not baptized, and he continually spoke of the beautiful instructions and the many interesting things that happened at the parish school. In the end he persuaded her to send the other two boys to St. Mary's with him.

The Sisters were surprised and delighted one morning to see his two elder brothers (not much older to be sure) and have them placed on the school roll. This young apostle never ceased until he obtained their consent and that of their parents to their baptism, and both boys received the sacred waters of regeneration. They appreciated the grace that was given to them through their little brother, and they loved him with an extraordinary tenderness, in which all at home shared. In due time all three were confirmed and made their First Holy Communion.

Percy now became an altar boy, and his piety and diligence were remarkable. He had an altar erected in his little bedroom at home, where he hung his precious crucifix and the medals and sacred pictures he received at school. One day his father annoyed at some childish misdemeanor commanded him to take "that Popish trumpery" down.

"I will throw the whole business into the fire and take you from the Papist school."

Percy stood still, as if he were rooted to the spot. Then he large

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tears gathered in his eyes and rolled down his cheeks and his frame shook with emotion. He fell on his knees.

"Papa, papa," he cried, "you will break your little boy's heart. Oh! papa, you don't know how good they make me."

The father's heart was touched to see his darling boy, his favorite son, in anguish. He lifted him up and told him that he might keep his pictures and stuff. But as Percy nestled to his father's breast his heaving bosom and convulsive sobs showed how the little heart was wounded.

After that his father never permitted him to be crossed in his piety or his religious notions, as he called them. Percy was frail, and to his parents he seemed like an angel, too sweet and rare to belong to this earth—his face was so pure and spiritual, his sayings so unusual, so "old fashioned," as they phrased it.

After Percy left school he went to learn a trade, and sometimes had to make great efforts and even sacrifices to hear Mass on Sundays and receive the sacraments. On one occasion he was detained late on Saturday night and he cautioned his mother not to let him oversleep himself.

"You know, mother," he said, "Catholics commit a mortal sin if they stay away from Mass on Sunday."

His mother promised but when she went to call him he looked so weary and slept so soundly she "had not the heart" to rouse the poor boy. When he awoke and found the lateness of the hour he rushed out of the house without his breakfast and ran from church to church, only to find even the last Mass almost over. He returned home disconsolate. All week he was depressed and sad over this accident and his mother assured him she would never disappoint him again. It was then that Percy asked her to go with him on Sundays, and to please him she consented, and accompanied him to Mass. One grace led to another, and before the end of the year she was baptized and made her profession of faith.

Percy's whole heart was now set on the conversion of his father. But this seemed an impossibility. Mr. Brown had not interfered nor made objections when the rest of his family allowed Percy, but no example nor precept seemed to affect him. He was a good man, as far as honesty and morals go, but he had no use for special piety or religion. Percy grew more fervent, more prayerful. We know not the thoughts that filled his innocent heart, but we know that his health began to decline. He was not nineteen, yet it was evident he had not long to live. Work was perforce given up and the lad remained at home. Patient, gentle, uncomplaining, he prayed and read and held his father in the tenderest love and care.

One day he came on his father sitting on the back porch with his own little Catechism in his hands. The boy said nothing but his heart gave a great bound of joy.

"Bring him to the faith Lord, and take my poor life," he murmured.

It was not long before the propitious moment came. His father knew what was passing in the boy's mind and had set to work to learn something of the religion which surrounded him with such peace and content. He felt that his cherished son was praying for him—nay, might be offering up his pure life for him. He resisted grace no longer. He spoke to a priest, was instructed and baptized and became a member of the Holy Catholic Church.

Percy's soul was filled to the brim with holy joy. He lay on his couch, white and wan, but overflowing with happiness. He felt he was dying, but oh! it was early now to die, what should he loved—mother, father, two brothers—were bound close to him by a common faith and would be with him in the spirit world by the consoling doctrine of the communion of saints. And one day when they gathered round his bed and watched the death damp gather on his forehead he smiled an angel's smile on their bleeding hearts and fled away to receive the crown of an apostle.

Oh! can we doubt that his spirit still hovers over them and helps them to pass life's trials and its pains? "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for their works live after them."—The Rev. Richard W. Alexander in The Helper.

CHEERFULNESS

A truly cheerful person is such a blessing to his or her surroundings that it may be of interest to consider the cause of cheerfulness. First it is founded on inward power and a pure patience and capability to bear suffering, loving and cherishing one's neighbors—enduring and meeting them even though their presence be disagreeable. A cheerful person does not turn away from sorrow un sympathetically, but is armed to meet it, and endeavors to raise others above their trials also.

Like every other personal trait, it leaves its imprint on the features, and this probably is the cause of its contagious tendency. Mothers, in particular, should remember this, so their smile, tranquil and loving, may cast sunshine into the heart of the child and thus impart the founda-

GOOD HABITS

A good habit is a good inheritance, and one which no reverse in stocks and shares can effect. A child which is started in life with the good habits of virtue, of obedience, respect for authority, truth, self-control, self-reliance, modesty and simplicity, unselfishness, cheerfulness, devotion to duty, charity and piety, is wealthy.

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