

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

AS A YOUNG MAN SOWETH

By James Lavery in Extension Magazine

As a young man soweth, so shall he reap. Youth is the seedtime of life. The manner in which a young man spends his leisure time—those long, precious hours which belong exclusively to him—indicates as nothing else can just what the future holds in store for him.

When the day's work is done, and let us hope, well and faithfully done, his are those golden hours of the evening, to do with as he pleases, to do with as he chooses. Every hour unprofitably spent is an hour lost eternally; the minutes do not turn backward in their flight; they speed on with steadfastness and certainty.

Ah, if every young man could but realize what this means, and at the same time understand what his opportunities are for study and improvement of self; or for the doing of something useful and good! Let us say that there are four full hours in every day of the year of which the young man is master; four hours of sixty diamond-studded minutes each, that belong exclusively to him.

Well, it is during those four hours that he works out his destiny; that he lays the foundations for his future. It is during those four hours that he is proving to himself just what he is going to be. There is nothing mysterious about a young man's future—it lies glaringly revealed before him, and, if he is honest with himself, he can see it clearly reflected in his eye's mirror.

There is nothing quite so mathematically certain as whether a certain young man will ultimately be a success or a failure. In speaking of young men here, there is thought of course only of the common sense, intelligent and ambitious kind. Those who prefer to idle away their time—to fritter away their hours—will not be impressed with what is here written.

It is not desirable that a young man rush from his place of business (be it office, store, shop or factory) home to eat his dinner hurriedly and then retire to his room to study and work until late into the night. There are a few notable cases of men who sometimes forgot to eat, so engrossed were they with the work in hand.

Michelangelo is an illustrious example; Dickens another, and surely every young man has heard about Edison, who, it is said, sometimes snatches only a half-dozen hours of sleep in the course of two or three days when engaged in some special work. These cases are altogether exceptional, and since this article is intended for the average young man, it is for him that we desire to make it of practical value.

Nearly every young man has quite properly a few companions of approximately his own age, and it is natural that they occasionally meet to spend a few sociable hours of an evening in each other's company. But one point is to be emphasized here, and that is that the Catholic young man choose for himself the right kind of companions. He should not take up with every Thomas, Richard and Henry; he should be select—fastidious even—taking care that the young men in whose society he is willing to spend a portion of his time be well worth it.

His companions should be clean and serious-minded young men of character. Beware of those who habitually spend their evenings in the poolrooms or at the cards; beware of those who speak ungraciously of women, or slightly of religion. The sort of young man whose companionship is worth cultivating is the young man at whose home you are welcome, or who is welcome at your home. Beware of the young man of whom you have reason to be ashamed, or whom you would not care to introduce to your mother or sister.

Your own instinct or intuition will inform you who is or who is not a desirable companion for you; and once you have reason to question the character, or principles, or conduct of any young man of your acquaintance, avoid him as you would a contagion.

them fall while his own business has steadily expanded. It is not difficult to explain his success. He studied to master every detail of his business. Each day he gives some of his time to the reading of a select number of trade journals that have a direct bearing on his business. As a result he is well posted as regards prices and qualities of the articles he sells. He knows how and when to buy, and why. He realized that display was a great point in modern business, and so he studied window-trimming, with the result that he attracted much trade. Being well posted, and having taught himself to be a master of details he conducts his business upon a scientific basis. In brief, his success is the result of the practical and up-to-date methods he has adopted. Had he been content to merely jog along, failure would long ago have been his portion.

The whole story may be summed up in the sentence: "Master your chosen work." Master your work, and the young man ought to adopt for himself, and jealously apportion his time so that he may translate the motto into worth-while achievement. Now is the time—in his younger days, not later in life. If he has not seriously realized the urgency of his case, let him begin to-day, and not put it off until tomorrow.

Only a few items have been mentioned thus far in this article, namely, the choice of the right companions and the time spent with them; and the time spent in the improvement or thorough mastery of one's business or profession or trade. Nothing, for example, has been said of reading and study, and the acquisition of culture, matters which, the writer is informed, are spoken of in another article in this issue, entitled "Things That Should Interest Catholic Young Men."

How much time in the evenings of a week does the average young man give over to self-improvement? Some are quite content if they read the evening paper, and it is to be feared that the pages that interest them most are those dealing with sports. Many young men also devote some time to magazine reading; and again it is to be feared that the thing that interests them most is fiction. The really serious and thoughtful articles seem not to attract them. And books! How many young men can boast of familiarity with books other than novels? The reading of a good short story or an occasional novel is by no means to be commended, but fiction is to be feared that the principal article of any man's intellectual diet. There are some really fine things to read, and some subjects of more than a passing interest, to which some of your leisure time should be ungrudgingly given over.

And no mention has been made thus far of the amount of time that should be devoted to social affairs, such as, perhaps, calling on a young lady; or going to dances, or occasionally visiting the theater, or other forms of recreation, that may be reasonably said to come within the average young man's program. Or, if he is a member of social, literary, or fraternal organizations, attending meetings or acting on committees, these things will demand of him a certain amount of his time. The pursuit of athletics is most generally a daytime occupation, and so does not come within the scope of this article; but there are forms of exercise for which the evenings seem most available to some who work all day—walking, for example—and which consume time. Indeed a certain amount of time should be devoted to whatever tends to keep the young man in splendid physical condition, but, whenever possible, the morning hours rather than the evening hours should be used for these purposes. Then, too, there are the Saturday half-holidays and a part of each Sunday, during which the young man can indulge in these innocent and salutary forms of recreation and exercise.

If this article has impressed the Catholic young man with the solemn fact that there are many things for him to do—many things that he ought to do—then it is his business to do—and that each hour is precious, the aim of the writer has been fulfilled. Let him take an inventory of himself, and count his leisure hours in an endeavor to determine truthfully whether he is making the best use of his time. And if at this moment he can not give a satisfactory answer, may he waste no time in regrets, but begin to reconstruct his conduct and plans, that years hence he may be able to look back and say that the reading of this article has helped him to discover himself.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

WHY MARSHALL WAS "ALL RIGHT"

"How do you like your new boy?" I'm interested in him because you know he came from up my way."

Mr. Holcomb leaned comfortably back in his revolving office chair and gave his inquiring friend a genial smile. "Marshall's all right!" he said comprehensively; "just the sort of clerk I've been looking for!"

"Darrow? No, he did not suit me, at least. To tell the truth, his tales of former grandeur were a little disconcerting."

reverses, and I took his boy, partly to help him out. They're old friends of my wife's family, you know."

"Well, young Darrow was never able to forget or cease lamenting the lowered family fortunes, nor would he permit me to forget it, either. I used to find it rather oppressive—his allusions to their better days. Oh, yes, he'd drop a hint merely, every now and then, but I discovered very soon that he was most apt to do it when his work for me brought him into contact with some special piece of drudgery or something that I suppose he would consider as bordering on the 'menial'! He didn't want me to forget that coming to me was a step down from what he had been used to!"

Mr. Gordon laughed appreciatively. "I see," he assented. "It's been a treat to find a boy like Marshall, ready to do any job that comes to hand, whether it's the usual day's work or not. And ah!" He broke off abruptly, for the door was opening. A boy of eighteen, with clear, frank eyes and a mouth so pleasant in expression that it gave almost an effect of smiling even in repose, came in. He bowed courteously in reply to Mr. Gordon's word and smile of recognition, and then turned to his employer to report on the errand that had called him out of the office.

"And he says he will have the papers ready by half-past five. We can't have them this afternoon, for Mr. Selvig won't get around to sign them before that!"

"Half-past five, eh? He'll send them over then?"

"No, sir, he hasn't anybody to send. I told him I'd be back after them."

"But you were to get off at five to-night, you remember—I told you that, to make up for last night!"

"Oh, that's all right. I'm in no rush!" Marshall's pleasant smile showed a set of large, dazzling white teeth. He passed on to the next room, where he could be heard making his typewriter click at a rapid pace.

Mr. Holcomb stepped to the door a few minutes later. "When you've finished your letter, you can slip along home to your lunch. Get in a little extra time that way?"

"Thank you, but I don't need it. Might as well clear these up. Work's light to-day anyway."

Mr. Holcomb stepped back to his office and resumed his friendly chat with his old friend. A few moments later he nodded toward the window. "See that?" he inquired.

Statesmen like the Jesuits of the Catholic Church are needed on the Protestant missionary boards."

Penance: Its Necessity

The forgiveness of sin is God's free gift, and only the abundance of His love for man made that gift merited or deserved for when he to whom has been given free will, the power of choosing between good and evil, sees fit to disobey the mandates of God and sacrifice the purity of his soul, he takes upon himself the consequences of that sin and gives up his heredity to the kingdom of Heaven. There remains but one way of regaining that heritage—the way that Christ has dictated. He was the free master of His gifts, and if we would avail ourselves of them, we must begin by His own teaching and through that of the Church which speaks in His Holy Name.

We learned that way, most of us, in the long ago when we were preparing for our first reception of the sacrament of penance. There is nothing new for us to learn now, but in going over the same ground again it may surprise us to find how much we have forgotten, to realize how much better our confession might be, were we always mindful of those first principles of the catechism.

Do we remember the interest that was awakened in you, when, as a child, you first heard why confession was necessary: what the condition of a sinful soul was like, and how it was possible to transform it again into a state that would please God? You were told a story that came from the lips of the Master Himself, when in the house of the publican, whither He had been invited to eat, He taught the sinners, gathered about Him, their first lesson of Christian Doctrine. It was the story of a certain man that had two sons, the younger of whom said one day to his father: "Father, give me that share which is to come to me of your riches." And his father gave him as he asked. A few days later the younger son gathered all together and took his journey into a far-off country where he wasted his inheritance in riotous living. When he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in the land and he began to be in want, he went and hired out to a man who sent him to his fields to feed swine. So much was he oppressed with hunger that he longed even for the husks of the swine, but no one gave him to eat. Thus suffering from starvation and degradation, his thoughts went back to the home he had left, where even the hired servants had bread enough and to spare, while he was perishing of hunger. So he said within himself: "I will arise and go to my father and I will say to him: 'Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before thee. I am no longer worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants, and so he arose and went to his father; but when he was yet afar off his father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and running towards him he fell upon his neck and kissed him and scarcely heeding the penitent words that were spoken by his son, he called to his servants and bade them: 'Bring forth quickly the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet and bring the fatted calf and kill it and let us make merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and was found.'

This was the story you heard. At least it seemed a story then, yet have you not realized since that it was not fiction, but reality; that it contained the facts of your own career? There is not one of us who can apply the same experience to our own very lives. Let us see how. Where could there be a more indulgent, loving, provident Father than the One above Who brought us into existence, and gave us not only life, but all that life has held dear; health, strength, talents, happiness, everything we have. We enjoyed all these as His natural offspring and continued to avail ourselves of His benefactions until the time came when we became dissatisfied. The beginning is the same in every one's experience. The son in the story grew weary of his father's house; he wanted to be his own master and escape the restraint that had been placed upon him. So did we, too, chafe under the restrictions that God had made for us. Just as in every well regulated house, certain rules are to be observed, so in His wisdom did God our Father lay down particular regulations for us His children, in His ten commandments, the precepts of the Church and their accompanying obligations. When we accompanied desire came to break some one or other of these rules, we, like the prodigal son, grew weary of our Father's restraint and longed for his own liberty. Like him, we beguiled ourselves into believing that if we could transgress this one rule, break this one commandment, we would be happier than we were before. It matters not what our faults have been, whether they led us to dishonor God, injure our neighbor, or whether they referred to ourselves alone, in any event if we sinned, we cut ourselves off from the company of our Father, and, treading the path of iniquity, we removed ourselves from the call of His voice and the touch of His hand. We were like the prodigal son, for when we sinned we left our Father,

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as he left his. Each of the steps recorded in the Gospel of the prodigal son affords us a parallel, in considering the sacrament of penance. We shall treat them one by one and they will serve perhaps to convince the best dressed women. All styles, all weights—all right.

Harpies and their Traffic

Harpies are detestable creatures, fond of foul deeds and nauseating sights. And when the harpy happens to wear the semblance of a man, the animal is too disgusting for consideration. Such at least is true of the unspeakably wretched monsters that, to the shame of New York, have been engaged in the hideous traffic of human souls. No words can characterize such creatures fittingly; even the genius of a Homer would strive in vain for expressions that would do justice to the depths of their degradation and the viciousness of their deeds.

But base as these outscourings of the nation are, they have rethought an old lesson that is only too often forgotten. The girls caught in the mesh of sin were born of parents, "who thought that when they had sent their children to school everything necessary for their welfare had been done." These are the words of the basest of base criminals, and though coming from lips as vile as ever moved in speech, yet are a true indictment of many a modern parent. Responsibility sits but lightly on the shoulders of only too many fathers and mothers; they shirk their duties and make light of their obligations. They are willing to turn over the complete care of their children to schools and social centers, forgetting that there is a training which the home alone can give. The consequence is that a great barrier to lawlessness is broken down, and ruin follows. For when all other motives fail, love of parents and the joy of home are still potent to keep stumbling feet in the narrow path. But alas, for a thousand or more stumbling feet! The light that should show them the way flickered out early, and the joy that should make them steadfast in the rugged path vanished all too soon. The girls "were born of parents who thought that when they had sent their children to school, everything necessary for their welfare had been done." A harpy, the most despicable of creatures, is telling fathers and mothers why their daughters are dancing to eternal death, sad priestesses of sin.—America.

THE SERPENT IN THE HOME

Some married folks do not get on very well together. Scarcely a day passes without a quarrel. Disagreements arise over the most insignificant matters. There is a constant criticizing and fault-finding until life becomes miserable for both husband and wife. This constant nagging frequently results in a lasting estrangement which destroys the happiness of the home.

In the ideal Christian home peace and contentment abide. Quarrels should not occur between persons who ought to cherish, love and esteem each other above anybody else in the world. Both husband and wife should be solicitous about keeping the affection which made them so happy in the early years of their married life, and which is so essential to domestic harmony. What a simple thing it is to live happily together! Consideration for the needs and wishes of the other and patience with each other's faults will make life agreeable and full of contentment. Do not permit constant disagreements to destroy the happiness of your home-life. If it is not congenial to you, make it so. Make every effort to restore the former cordial relations. Often a few kind words and a heart to heart talk will clear away the clouds that cause your unhappiness and discontent. Do not hesitate to open peace negotiations. Let nothing be undone to restore

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