

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN.

A man's character is shown by his thoughts. They are an index to his inner life. They reveal his true self. One may put on a front of respectability, but if his thoughts are foul, he is a whitened sepulchre—outwardly fair, but inwardly unclean and of bad odor.

The level of some minds is in sin. They add evil to evil. They are busy only with what is base. They think only of nothing else, and as soon as they are free from the pressure of circumstances, they spontaneously return to their habit of vice. They are slaves of the devil.

The level of other minds is low, selfish, lazy, common-place. Serious thought is a labor for them, intelligent conversation is an effort. The reading of an instructive book is a task. They like trifling tasks, gossip, fanciful stories, chit-chat, that does not require intellectual effort, the reading of newspapers and the society of persons of little education.

The level of other minds is high. They are studious. They like to know things worth knowing. They are acquainted with the treasures of literature. They have no time for trash novels. They go on daily adding to their store of information. They usually have a specialty, concerning which they know almost everything.

The level of other minds is noble. It is the altitude of saints. Evil thoughts may assail them but are instantly repulsed. Ideas in any way contrary to the good, the true, and the beautiful, are persistently driven away. Thoughts fit for angels are welcome. Peace and light and innocence are in such minds. They may be illiterate or they may be learned, but they certainly are pure. They love wisdom. They treasure happy sayings, pleasant deeds, grand lives.

In three ways may we endeavor to be high-minded: 1. By a resolution to habitually tend upward; 2. By frequenting the company of persons who put us on our mettle to keep up with them intellectually.

Books are the surest source of noble thoughts. The Bible, the Imitation of Christ, poetry, history, the lives of great men, etc., are high in elevated ideas. They are always ready to share their wealth with whose will.

If a man fills his mind with lovely ideas—with aphorisms, with sentences from the psalms of David, with extracts from the Sermon on the Mount, with passages from the poets, with memories of glorious achievements, etc., he will have a shelter in which he can take refuge from the attacks of evil.

The eyes are the main thoroughfares through which knowledge of the outside world reaches a man's soul. He must close them to things that he does not want to disturb the serenity of his consciousness. It is easier to close the door of the mind to evil ideas than to drive them out after they have once obtained admission.

Prayer, too, is a means to keep the mind purified. It raises the soul to God. No set form of words is required. The thought of the presence of the Almighty is enough.

By persistently keeping the bad out and exercising the mind to think of good, it forms a habit of virtue. High-mindedness is then its accustomed state. It rests content there as on its proper level.

Don't Spoil the Boy. The young man who is petted too much at home is seldom any good. What is wanted now-a-days is a practical man who can do something else besides smoke cigarettes and twist a cane.

The time to learn to work and to learn business habits is in one's youth. He who leads the life of a butterfly until he is twenty-five or thirty years of age and then recognizes the fact that he has made an ape of himself has precious little to recommend him when he applies for a job. This may be a chestnut, but it fits not a few young men in every city in the union.

The boys on the farm are better off if they only know it, than thousands of the boys who are at large, wandering hither and thither, searching and looking for "rich bonanzas" to turn up. There is nothing like being practical, and there is but one way to be so—acquire business habits and train yourself to do good, honest, hard work. Don't waste your time learning to tie a cravat. You can buy a cravat already tied.

Duties of Parents. In a case before Judge Pollock, United States Judge for the district of Kansas, he advanced an argument that will form the groundwork of discussion in many homes, bearing as it does upon the responsibility of parents. A man twenty-one years old had been arrested and had confessed to many thefts from letters in the post-office at Topeka.

The youthful criminal sat beside his aged and broken-hearted mother and the tears in his eyes plainly told that he felt keenly his disgrace. Rev. Thomas S. Young, pastor of the First Baptist church, of which the young man's mother is a member, had been summoned to speak a few words before Judge Pollock should sentence the prisoner.

"From what I can learn through his sister," said Rev. Mr. Young, speaking for the prisoner, "his actions are traced back to the weakest part of his nature." "It should have been whipped out of him," suggested the judge.

"I understand, but the boy's mania appears to be one of the kind that whipping will not take out." "That may be true," admitted Judge Pollock. "Still it appears to me that had his parents devoted the proper attention to him in his youth he would

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not be here to face this mass of disagreeable evidence. Parents too often get the idea that the government is designed to regulate and correct children and relieve themselves of the responsibility. I regret to send any young man to the penitentiary, but parents should be made to know that if they neglect their children they will come to grief. If some of these duties that are heaped upon the courts of the land were cast back on the parents the children of this nation would grow up to be more law-abiding and would become useful citizens.

Good-Natured, Not Kind. "How could he do such a cruel thing?" was the comment on a hasty action that seemed almost indefensible on the part of a college senior. The reply was deliberate.

"I have always thought Bland was good-natured enough, but not kind. That is how he did it."

Many young men trust to a natural good nature, an easy-going heartiness, to carry them along through the world. But good nature that is only haphazard, that exists only because its possessor is really selfishly comfortable, is the weakest sort of ground to stand on. We are used to thinking that the rough man may conceal a kind heart; and to wishing he might learn to overcome the roughness. But with just as much reason the merely good-natured fellow, who likes to say the easy, pleasant thing, must watch carefully lest he depend too much on words, and find that his real kindness, in disagreeable circumstances, does not stand the strain.

Kindness must come from determined faith in the law of love. It grows stronger or weaker from day to day, and it grows strong by a persistent belief in our lives as most worth while when they are most spent in service. So does kindness stand all tests, and become the simple, happy, good way of living which mere superficial good nature can never reach.

His Level. It was said of one of the best men of our generation, "Whenever he entered a room of any kind the conversation that was going on, and the discussion, immediately sprang up to a higher level than it was before. And to find it grows strong by a persistent belief in our lives as most worth while when they are most spent in service. So does kindness stand all tests, and become the simple, happy, good way of living which mere superficial good nature can never reach."

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS. Our Girls and Blessed Joan of Arc. In the course of a very fine tribute to Joan of Arc now numbered among the Beatiified, the Baltimore Sun, a secular paper, says: It has been the usage almost from time immemorial to characterize women as members of the gentler sex. Joan of Arc had the quality of gentleness to a notable degree. Her voice, it is said, was of great sweetness. She had fine grace and dignity of manner and that simple sincerity of faith which shrinks from no ordeal, however severe, to execute a lofty purpose. In every-day life women of the present generation display a fortitude, a consecration to noble service, a spirit of unselfishness and self-sacrifice, equal in every way to the high and noble characteristics of Joan of Arc. They endure suffering with an equanimity which puts most men to the blush. They spend themselves in the service of others with an altruistic zeal and generosity which takes no account of their own comfort and happiness. They submit to disappointments with a resignation of purpose and respect the braver sex, in many more persevering, the more resolute, the more helpful sex. In many a modern household there is a woman with the qualities and attributes which are inseparable from saintliness of purpose and saintliness of life. It has been said, as the final estimate of Joan of Arc, that the greatness of her career did not consist so much in her military achievements as in her pure true unselfish character, her nobility of purpose, her unswerving fidelity. The world to-day is full of women with these attributes, and every man who is capable of appreciating them recognizes what a mighty influence such women are in the elevation of humanity—what incalculable service they render in proportion.

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noting the happiness and usefulness of the human race.

This is very good. The inference to be drawn by all of Joan's sex is that in order to do noble deeds it is not necessary to do—Joan was called to do—the work of a great military leader. Opportunities for pure and unselfish service surround all our girls every hour in the day and every day in the year; and if they would be like Joan they should take advantage of these opportunities to be sweet-tempered, pure-minded, helpful and trustworthy. The greatness of the Maid of Orleans was reached through her goodness. The Catholic Church does not beatify her because she was a great leader of men, because she saved the crown of France, but primarily because of the virtuous life which she led. And a virtuous life is possible to every young woman, no matter what her position, if she will co-operate with divine grace.—Sacred Heart Review.

One Thought Only. Have you ever thought, boys, that though you may have many brothers and sisters, many uncles and aunts, and even several grandmothers, you can never have but one mother? And, oh! how many there are that realize this only when this one mother has been taken from them. Others may kindly try to fill her place, and to care for you as she would have done, but still there will ever be the consciousness, "it is not the mother I once had."

I am led to speak of this by something that touched me deeply, not long since. An old man stood near me, preparing for a long, cold ride awaiting him; and as he drew on his heavy overcoat, and tied his woolen scarf about his throat, he took from his pocket a pair of warm, home-knit gloves, and looking at them one moment, with a strange, fond glance, he raised his eyes to mine, and uttered just one word—"Mother"—and two great tears coursed down his furrowed cheeks.

Ah, boys, what a world of fond and wistful remembrance was in that one little word, and how much it told! The loving mother hands that had so carefully knit those gloves, were folded forever to rest; but rarely did that son—now an old man himself—drag them on or off, that he did not think of her, and perhaps with a longing wish that he had been more tender, more thoughtful, more dutiful while she was with him.

Will you, then, who have still a mother with you, think of this, and not wait till she is called away, to show your loving remembrance of all she has done for you?

The Fun of Doing Well. It is related of the late Lord Napier that once he played a trick on some young officers to find out the right man for a certain post. The story is that he had three ambitious officers to choose from, all of whom would like to be colonels at once. Lord Napier sent for these young men, and in due order detailed them to some ordinary routine work to be done. They went to their work without suspecting that the general wished to test them, and was having them watched for that purpose. The first two, whom I will call A and B considered the duties very much beneath

them, and discharged them in a very careless and perfunctory manner, while the third, whom I will call C, who had received in being asked to discharge those duties. The third young officer was prompt, energetic and thorough, and acquitted himself with credit.

"How is it," demanded Lord Napier, "that you thought such matters worthy of so much care?" The young fellow flushed. He thought the general had loved that he was an officer who had wasted too much energy on matters of no great moment.

"Beg pardon, general," he answered, "but it was just the fun of seeing how well I could do them."

The grim old general's face relaxed into a pleasant smile, and he said: "You are promoted to a captaincy. Go and see how much fun you can get in doing your best in that position."

Do your little bit right, and influence will in time back you up.—Selected.

The Crowded Brain. A boy returned from school one day with a report that his scholarship had fallen below the usual average, and this conversation took place: "Son," said the father, "you've fallen behind this month, haven't you?" "Yes, sir."

"How did that happen?" "Don't know, sir."

The father knew, if the son didn't. He had observed some dime novel scattered about the house; but had not thought it worth while to say anything until fitting opportunity should offer itself. A basket of apples stood upon the floor, and he said:

"Empty out the apples and take the basket and bring it to me half full of chips." Suspecting nothing, the son obeyed.

"And now," he continued, "put those apples back into the basket." When half the apples were replaced the boy said: "Father, they roll off. I can't put any more in."

"Put them in, I tell you." "But I can't." "Put them in? No, of course you can't put them in. You said you didn't know why you fell behind at school, and I will tell you why. Your mind is like that basket; it will not hold more than so much; and there you've been the past month filling it up with cheap dirt-dime novels."

The boy turned on his heels, whistled, and said: "Whew! I see the point." Not a dime novel has been seen in the house from that day to this.—Catholic Citizen.

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Is it not noble, this phalanx, . . . praying, serving, comforting, teaching without cessation or rest, their only thought the smile and benediction of their Master, while the world slanders and curses them?

Where there is least of our self there is most of God.—St. Francis de Sales.

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