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## Barbarous Babies

By Rt. Rev. Magr. Peter M. H. Wynhoven  
Editor-in-Chief, Catholic Action of the South

### TALECARRYING

"Of course, I'm not saying anything, and it's none of my business; in fact, I have my nerve to talk about it, but—"  
Whenever somebody comes of that sort, beware of him at once, because he is not honest or sincere. Ordinarily, the gossip is said in a contradictory way and the same sentence.

A good, unselfish friend, who feels in conscience obliged to reveal something unpleasant or painful to you, will plainly and simply say what he has to say, scolding all

beating around the bush. One who has no friends of this caliber and disposition has no friends at all.

Distinction always should be made between truthful, beneficial information, on the one hand, and tale-carrying, on the other. The latter can be very ugly, if the purpose back of it is to injure someone's reputation, with the hope of enhancing the talecarrier's own. This should be meticulously watched in children. Explain the difference, and make them see that it is wrong not to repeat something serious and dangerous, and that this is not tale-carrying. If a boy is forbidden to smoke, and his sister sees him sneak a puff now and then, it would not be nice of her to tell on him, because, after all, there is no really serious damage done by Brother to anything or anybody. Mother easily can find out from his breath when she kisses him, if she is suspicious. However, if Brother insists upon taking his occasional smoke in the garage, or in the attic, where there are things lying around that are inflammable, then he runs the risk of setting the house on fire, and Sister, therefore, does right in warning Mother, especially if Brother does not want to listen to her sisterly admonitions.

Make them acquire the habit, in case they do report something of consequence, of first informing the culprit of the step they intend to take. The gully one, in that way, will realize that the scolding or punishment has been brought on, more or less, by his own failure to heed a warning fairly given. Impress on them that they must mention nobody's wrongdoing to anyone except to persons in authority. The principle of the common good can be explained: that the revelation of an evil which may affect everybody in a group is not unmanly or unfair. The one who informs is only protecting his own rights and legitimate interests and the welfare of others concerned. Furthermore, a really kind act is done to the one reported, for the offender may be saved from future serious consequences. There is absolutely nothing unkind or objectionable to it; it is, in fact, a duty.

Whenever one brings in an unfavorable story about another, and Milton was blind and Beethoven was deaf, but the sense of beauty was upon them and they must speak.

### Getting On In The World

IN THE MIND  
The familiar outlines of Dickens' "Tale of Two Cities" is easily within the reach of everyone's memory. Especially the character of Sidney Carton. A brilliant fellow, an able lawyer, but something of a boozier because the elusive happiness he continually sought forever escaped him. And when he found it, in giving his life for another, he told himself standing before the guillotine in Paris that this was the finest thing he had ever done, the most completely satisfying.

Heroic charity is generally beyond the reach of normal human beings. But the common ordinary every day variety, which seems much more difficult, is not. Since every good deed has its origin in the mind, charity too begins there. It's a hard beginning. Too often we like to jump to conclusions.

Opinion is king in these days, and opinions are formed all too quickly. Judgments are made all too hurriedly. Gossip spreads all too rapidly. From the combination of this recklessness, charity becomes forgotten. To think well of others, to see the good in what they do, even though we do not always follow or understand their actions, is the key to kindness in judging them, in speaking well of them, and in going good to them.

to you with an introduction. If it appears that something should be done, do not proceed. All you have ascertained is your complete satisfaction that whatever is reported is the exact truth. Further, make sure that the informant has acted with the best of motives.

If one of your youngsters seems to be inclined to take a delight in constantly tattling about things that are of little moment, make light of his tale story of trifling interest and pass it off.

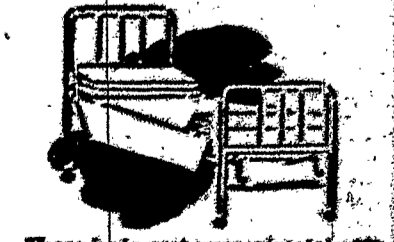
Very few children will deliberately carry tales merely out of meanness. Sometimes, their purpose may be a mixture of the bad element and an exaggerated idea of their own personal duty. The one who is downright mean may respect to untruths in an ignominious endeavor to gain an unworthy objective. He must be directly tackled, both for lying and for being unjust and uncharitable. It is an evil tendency, the roots of which have to be drastically eradicated. The best way to bring a despicable deed home to children is to reverse the situation, making them imagine how they would feel if someone reported them dishonestly. In proceeding along this line, you could mention a hypothetical case wherein they could be guilty and yet, in your heart, you would know they were conscience-stricken and sincerely sorry. You will have them feeling sorry for themselves. And, by this method, they can be brought more readily to realize what a miserable trick they played by getting Brother or Sister "in bad."

The weakness of tale-carrying may be somewhat of a mental affliction which asserts itself to a greater degree than the victim can momentarily cope with. In that case, help him patiently to correct himself by degrees. Never discourage children by elaborating your fear that they may grow up with this awful flaw in their character. Such an argument you may stress with a normal youngster; however, with one who is weak in some certain respect but who means well and tries hard but fails often, there is nothing that will depress and discourage him more than to have his falling thrown up to him repeatedly.

With an abnormally existing, it always is well to obtain professional advice when your child too often behaves distressingly. In all events, repeatedly ask him to make the cure of his particular shortcoming the intention of his prayers. That will help much; for, besides receiving God's grace, he will become forewarned against a bad habit that can hardly make him happy.

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