

FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS. Second Sunday in Advent.

THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION.

The beautiful feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin being so near at hand, let us consider it this morning. The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, then, my dear brethren, is simply this: that our Blessed Lady, though the offspring merely of human parents, like the rest of us, and naturally liable to inherit original sin from them as we have inherited it from ours, was nevertheless by the special providence and decree of God entirely preserved from it.

She was preserved from it entirely, I say. This may be understood in two ways. First, it was never in her. It was not taken from her at the first moment of her existence, as it has been taken from us at baptism; no, it was not taken from her, for it was not in her even at that first moment.

Secondly, she was entirely saved from its effects, not partly, as we have been. None of its consequences remained in her, as I have said they do in us. No, she was as if there had never been such a thing; except that her Son willed that she should suffer together with Him, on account of its being in us.

Now, my brethren, I hope you all understand this; for a great deal of nonsense is talked about this matter, especially by Protestants, most of whom have not the least idea what is meant by the Immaculate Conception of our Blessed Mother, and who yet object to it just as bitterly as if they did. They either confound it with her original motherhood, in which they themselves believe and yet seem to object to our believing it, or they accuse us of saying that she was divine like her Son, our Lord.

If they would only examine they would find that what the Church teaches is simply this: that our Lady is a creature of God like ourselves, having no existence at all before the time of her Immaculate Conception; but that she is a pure and perfect creature, the most pure and perfect whom God has ever made—immaculate, that is to say, spotless—free from any stain or imperfection, especially from the fatal stain of original sin. And that the reason why God made her so was that she was to be His own mother, and which no higher dignity can be conceived. If they object to this, let them do so; but let them at least know and say what they are objecting to.

Let us hope that some Protestants, at least, will not object to this doctrine when they understand it. But perhaps some of them may say: "This is all very good, but what right has the Pope, or any one else at this late day, to make it a part of the Christian faith?" And it may be that even some Catholics will find the same difficulty.

I will answer this question now, though it is a little off of our present subject, on account of the prominence which has been given to it of late. The answer is simply this: The Pope has not added anything at all to the Christian faith in defining the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. He has no more done so than the Council of Nicea did in defining the doctrine of the Divinity of our Lord.

You remember, my brethren, perhaps, that from this council the Nicene Creed, which is said or sung at Mass, takes its name. It was called together to condemn the errors of some who maintained that our Lord was not truly God. And it solemnly defined that He was. Very well; was that adding anything to the Christian faith? Of course not; it was simply declaring what the Christian was to put an end to the doubts which were arising about it. That is plain enough, is it not?

Now what was it that the Pope did in defining the Immaculate Conception? Exactly the same thing. He defined what the faith really was to put an end to the doubts about it. The only difference was that those who opposed or doubted the Immaculate Conception of our Lady were not so much to blame as those who opposed or doubted the Divinity of our Lord, or even in many cases not at all to blame. It was not such a prominent part of the faith, and had been more obscured by time. But the action of the Pope and the council in the two cases was just the same.

Rev. Sylvanus Lano Of the Cincinnati M. E. Conference, makes a good point when he says: "We have for years used Hood's Sarsaparilla in our family of five, and find it fully equal to all that is claimed for it. Some people are greatly prejudiced against patent medicines, but how the patent can hurt a medicine and not a machine is a mystery of mysteries to me."

Cure of Sick Headache. Mrs. D. A. Campbell, North Segram, Ont., writes:—I cannot praise Dr. Williams' Pink Pills too highly. My daughter was a terrible sufferer with sick headache for twelve months, and no medical aid could relieve her, but, by the use of two boxes of your Pills, she is completely cured. From all dealers or by mail at 50c. a box, or six boxes for \$2.50. Beware of imitations. Dr. Williams' Med. Co., Brockville, Ont.

A Remarkable Case. GENTLEMEN.—About five years ago I noticed on my hands a great number of soft, spongy warts, very painful, and which bled when touched. I never witnessed anything like it, and was quite alarmed. We were never without Hagar's Yellow Oil, and one evening my little girls applied it to each wart. They did this several nights and in the morning the pain and itching were so bad I had to cool my hands with snow, but finally the warts dropped out and I have never been troubled since. Mrs. W. W. CRAIG, Brighton, Ont.

Little Jennie Was Cured. DEAR SIRS.—My little Jennie was very ill with La Grippe which left a bad cough. I gave her Hagar's Pectoral Balsam and it soon cured her. Mrs. A. MCAUTHUR, Copleston, Ont. Ask for Minard's, and take no other.

LADY JANE.

CHAPTER XVII. PEPISIE IS JEALOUS.

When Mam'selle Diane joined Lady Jane in the garden, she had gained her mother's consent to give the child a music lesson once a week. The old lady had been quarrelsome and difficult; she had discussed and objected, but finally Mam'selle Diane had overcome her prejudices.

"You don't know what kind of people her relatives are," the old lady said, complainingly, "and if we once open our doors to the child the aunt may try to crowd in. We don't want to make any new acquaintances. There's one satisfaction we still have, that, although we are poor, very poor, we are always d'Hautreves, and we always have been exclusive, and I hope we always shall be. As soon as we allow those people to break down the barrier between us, they will rush in on us, and, in a little while, they will forget who we are."

"Never fear, mama; if the aunt is as well bred as the child, she will not annoy us. If we wish to know her, we shall probably have to make the first advances, for, judging by the child, they are not common people. I have never seen so gentle and polite a little girl. I'm sure she'll be no trouble."

"I don't know about that. Children are natural gossips, and she is very intelligent for her age. She will notice everything, and the secret of your birds will get out."

"Well, mama dear, if you feel that she will be an intrusion upon our privacy, I won't insist; but I should so like to have her, just for two hours, say, once a week. It would give me a new interest; it would renew my youth to hear her angelic little voice sometimes."

"Oh, I suppose you must have your way, Diane, as you always do. Young people nowadays have no respect for the prejudices of age. We must yield to our traditions and habits to their new-fashioned ideas, or else we are severe and tyrannical."

"Oh, mama, dear mama, I'm sure you're a little, just a little, unkind now," said Mam'selle Diane, soothingly. "I'll give it up at once if you really wish it; but I don't think you do. I'm sure the child will interest you; beside, I'm getting on so well with the bird—you wouldn't have me give up my model, would you?"

"Certainly not, my dear. If you need her, let her come. At least you can try for a while, and if you find her troublesome, and the lessons a task, you can stop them when you like."

When this very gracious consent was obtained, Mam'selle Diane hastened to tell Lady Jane that, if her aunt approved, she could come for her every Saturday, from one to three, when she would teach her the piano, as well as singing; and that after the lesson, if she liked to remain awhile in the garden with the birds and flowers, she was at liberty to do so.

Lady Jane fairly flew to tell Pepisie the good news; but, much to her surprise, her merry and practical friend burst into tears and hid her face on the table among the peach shells.

"Why, Pepisie—dear, dear Pepisie, what ails you?" cried Lady Jane, in an agony of terror, "tell me what ails you?" and, dropping Tony, she laid her little face among the shells and cried too.

"I'm—I'm—jealous," said Pepisie, looking up after a while, and rubbing her eyes furiously. "I'm a fool, I know, but I can't help it; I don't want her to have you. I don't want you to go there. Those fine, proud people will teach you to look down on us. We're poor, my mother sells parlines, and the people that live behind that green fence are too proud and fine to notice any one in the street. They've lived here ever since I was born, and no one's seen them, because they've kept to themselves always; and now, when I've just got you to love, they want to take you away, they want to teach you to—despise—us!" and Pepisie stumbled over the unusual word in her passionate vehemence, while she still cried and rubbed angrily.

"But don't cry, Pepisie," entreated Lady Jane. "I don't love Mam'selle Diane as well as I love you. It's the music, the singing. Oh, Pepisie, dear, dear Pepisie, let me learn music, and I'll be good and love you dearly."

"No,—do, you won't, care any more for me," insisted Pepisie, the little demon of jealousy raging to such a degree that she was quite ready to be unjust, as well as unreasonable.

"Are you cross at me, Pepisie?" and Lady Jane crept almost across the table to cling tearfully to her friend's neck. "Don't be cross, and I won't go to Mam'selle Diane. I won't learn music, and, Pepisie, dear, I'll—give you Tony!"

This was the extreme of renunciation, and it touched the generous heart of the girl to the very quick. "You dear little angel!" she cried with a sudden revulsion of feeling, clasping and kissing the child passionately. "You're as sweet and good as you can be, and I'm wicked and selfish! Yes, wicked and selfish. It's for your good, and I'm trying to keep you away. You ought to hate me for being so mean."

At this moment Tite Souris entered, and seeing the traces of tears on her mistress's cheeks, broke out in stern, reproachful tones.

"Miss Lady, what's you be'n a-doin' so my Miss Pepsie? You done made her cry. I see how she's be'n a-gwine on. You jes' look out, or her ma'll git a'er you, ef yer makes dat po' crooked gal cry dat a-way."

"Hush, Tite," cried Pepisie, "you needn't blame Miss Lady. It was my fault. I was wicked and selfish, I

EPISCOPAL ANECDOTES.

Frank Mathew tells the following amusing anecdote in the last number of the *Idler*. Once upon a time there was a Cockney and Catholic tradesman, whose shop was in the Brompton Road, close to the Oratory. It was a strange little room, so full of Church ornaments and rare vestments, that, finding yourself in it, you would have thought it was either a curiosity shop or a surtiery.

One day, as the tradesman, whose name was Jones, leaned on his counter waiting—for customers, a stranger came in, wearing the every-day dress of a Catholic Bishop; his presence was stately, and his manner had so gentle and tender a dignity that all good women and most dogs loved him at first sight. He had recently been made Bishop, he said—and he spoke with such simple humility that Jones could hardly believe him—made Bishop of some outlandish country, and he wanted an outfit of vestments and altar vessels. A proud man was Jones then; he brought out the treasures of his stock, croziers and glittering mitres, mystic vestments—with long names that no layman is worthy to remember, even if he could—jewelled and golden chalice. The stranger was full of wonder; he was too lowly, he said, for such things, and yet he asked what could be too glorious or too costly for the high office that he had been forced to accept? He knew nothing of pomp and ceremony, his work had been among the poor, but would Jones put on a mitre and vestments to show him how they looked? So Jones robed him from head to foot in the full pontifical of a Bishop; he put on wonderful vestments, stiff with jewels and gold, he leant his right hand on a priceless crozier, and a mitre shone on his head. Then, as he saw himself in the glass at the end of his shop, for a moment all the world changed to him. He forgot his drudging and huckstering life—he was no worried tradesman, but a brother of the Apostles and a bulwark of the Church; he forgot his big ledgers and his daily talk of bowing and sneaking at chance customers; instead of the clutter of the Brompton Road, he heard the echo of Litany; instead of his shop, he saw a Cathedral dimmed by incense and crammed with worshippers, and he was the shepherd of that beloved multitude. For that moment he saw all his common and prosy history become noble and beautiful; and I, for one, have not the heart to blame him. But he bought that fine moment at a great price, for the stranger seized the two richest chalice, and fled into the street. Jones rushed to the shop-door, but even if a Bishop's robes had been better suited for running, I doubt if he would have hunted that thief through Brompton with mitre and crozier for all the Roman chalice. And the thief and the chalice vanished down the Brompton Road.

The next anecdote comes nearer home. The most picturesque and forceful of our Canadian episcopates was unquestionably the late Bishop of Toronto, known to the profane as "Lock Strachan"—a Scotchman. Originally a Presbyterian, he drifted into Anglicanism, where his ability brought him early recognition and advancement. Innumerable incidents are related of his dry humor. One must suffice. A "delegation" waited on him to complain of the bibulous propensities of one of his subordinates. The Bishop, ever a staunch supporter of his clergy, listened somewhat impatiently as the misdeeds of the erring cleric were recited. "Why, my Lord," remarked an obese churchwarden, "he buys whiskey by the bottle." "Tut, tut," retorted John of Toronto, "that's poor management; I buy mine by the gallon."

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"I Cured Mother." GENTLEMEN.—My mother was suffering from dyspepsia and had no appetite. Everything failed to cure her until one day, while visiting a friend's house, I saw a bottle of B. B. B. on the table; on enquiring what they used it for, I soon found out what it cured, and when I went home told mother that she should try it. She said she had no faith in anything, and objected to try it. Notwithstanding her objection I went in the evening and brought home a bottle, but it was in the house for a week before we could induce her to take it. At last, as she was getting worse all the time she consented to try it, and on taking half the bottle found it was curing her. Another bottle cured her, and, we believe, saved her life. We are never without B. B. B. now. It is such a good remedy for headaches, etc. W. WESTON, 15 Dalhousie street, Montreal.

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