

FIVE-MINUTE'S SERMON.

Sixth Sunday After Pentecost. ON DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

"And they did eat and were filled." (Mark 8, 8)

The astounding miracle, which our Saviour works before our eyes in the gospel of to-day, is daily repeated in nature. For God's providence watches over all creatures, gives to everything that lives and breathes food and drink at the proper time, directs and guides even inanimate beings to that great end for which they were created.

For thousands of years the system of the universe has existed in all its glory and magnificence. It is the Almighty who has thus long preserved and upheld it, and for an instant, it would be, not simply in ruins, but altogether annihilated.

Innumerable heavenly bodies, worlds larger than the earth, we see glittering high above our heads. Since the beginning of the world they run the course assigned to them, each in its definite time. And it is chance, rather than the hand of the Ruler of the universe, that has prevented these immense bodies from rebounding one against another, and thus bringing destruction to the world?

From the innumerable creatures of God, select the most insignificant, for instance a swallow, and ask the wisest of all unbelievers, if, in looking at this little creature, he has the courage to deny God's paternal providence in nature. When in the fall, thick fogs arise, the swallow leaves our regions and flies hundreds of miles away into warmer countries. As soon as spring has come again, this little bird returns from his journey, and how wonderful! it not only finds its former abode, but even its little nest. Now, tell me, proud creature, who is it that shows this little creature its way back? Is it blind chance? Oh, most nonsensical of words! Chance, and what is chance? An "I do not know what," which all the world knows, but no one can explain. Chance! An empty word, invented by infidels, and put in the place of God, the Supreme Being, whom they so much fear. Chance! A word which appears as though it could explain something, whereas, in reality, it is a nonsense, an insanity. And should such a nonentity, which men are pleased to call chance, be capable of governing the universe? Ah, you sagas, if for very fear of the name of God you wish to fit yourselves for the insane asylum, do not suppose that others will do the same.

No, it is not chance, not fate, nor a mere perhaps that governs the world, but it is the God and Creator, who has produced both great and small. His omnipotence, omniscience and paternal love directs the universe, as well as the little grain of dust that floats in the air, as easy as it was for God to call everything out of nothing, just as easy it is for Him, the Being of all beings, to provide for His creatures, and to direct them altogether, as well as each individually, to that end for which each was destined from eternity. Therefore it is related in Holy Scripture: "God hath equal care of all." Wis. 6, 8. He maketh grass to grow on the mountains, and herbs for the service of men. He giveth to beasts their food, and to the young ravens that calleth upon Him." (Ps. 146, 8.)

And how touchingly does not Jesus call to us in the gospel: "Behold the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor do they reap, and your heavenly Father feedeth them." (Matt. 6, 26.) Yea, our Saviour assures us in the gospel, "the very hairs of your head are all numbered." (Matt. 10, 30.)

With what filial confidence, therefore, should we not, in every condition of life, trust to God's wise and loving providence, commend all our ways to this heavenly Father, cast on Him all cares and afflictions of life! Oh, the God who clothes the lilies of the field and gives food to the young ravens, will certainly not forget us, but according to His promise, give us the requirements of body and soul. And should He in His inscrutable designs, strew our path with thorns and briars, send us trials and tribulations, we will not offend Him by murmurs and complaints; for He knows better than we what is good and profitable for us. We will, rather, humbly adore His decrees in all trials of life and submit to them with childlike resignation. Then a day will also come for us, when we will gratefully exclaim at the throne of God: "The Lord hath done all things well." (Mark 7, 27.) Amen.

There is one little maxim that now I will name. Which may bring what is better Than riches or fame. All those who will heed it Good appetite find, Strong nerves, rosy cheeks, And vigor of mind. It will banish dyspepsia, Rheumatics and gout, That Tired Feeling conquer, Drive sorrows out, And here is the maxim— Its wisdom is sure— Take Hood's Sarsaparilla And keep your blood pure.

PARMELEE'S PILLS possess the power of acting specifically upon the diseased organs, stimulating to action the dormant energies of the system, thereby removing disease. In fact, so great is the power of this medicine to cleanse and purify, that diseases of almost every name and nature are driven from the body. Mr. D. Carswell, Carswell P. O., Ont., writes: "I have tried Parmelee's Pills and find them an excellent medicine, and one that will sell well."

The healthy glow disappearing from the cheek and moaning and restlessness at night are sure symptoms of worms in children. Do not fail to get a bottle of Mother Graves' Worm Exterminator; it is an effectual medicine.

Are your corrus harder to remove than those that others have had? Have they not had the same kind? Have they not been cured by using Holloway's Corn Cure? Try a bottle.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

A Dream of Stars. Last night as I knelt at my window And gazed at the star-jewelled skies, I heard the soft winnow of dream-wings, And sleep touched my wondering eyes.

And 'round every star I saw angels— The beautiful angels of God— Who whispered: "Each star is a footprint Where Mary in heaven hath trod."

And then I drew near to the angels— Not one of them stopped me or spoke; And just as I kissed the sweet star print My heart beat so loud I awoke.

A TRUE STORY OF A FIRST COMMUNION.

"Aunt Anna" in Ave Maria.

In the dimly-lighted chapel of a magnificent palace in the city of Warsaw, one evening in the year 18—, knelt a woman and child. They were the Countess Sokolinski and her little son, Stanislas. Prostrate before the image of the Sorrowful Mother, the weeping woman begged her intercession for him who now lay condemned to death in the prison not far distant,—destined to an early and shameful doom for having taken part in a recent uprising of the Poles. With sighs and bitter tears the Countess supplicated the Queen of Heaven, crying out: "Holy Mother of God, pray for us, hear us, save us! Restore to the wife her husband, to the child his father. O thou to whom no one has ever turned for help in vain, hearken to us in this moment of anguish; and by the love thou didst bear and the sorrow thou didst endure for thine only Son, listen to our one petition! Spare him to us, O Holy Mother,—in thy tender mercy spare!"

Darkness fell, and still they remained on their knees,—the child motionless and tearful, the mother alternately filled with hope and plunged into despair. At length the Countess arose, looked about her, and, seeing that it was night, left the chapel, followed by the boy.

"It was an inspiration!" she said to herself as they passed down the long corridor to her own apartments. "I shall act upon it at once, lest I lose courage. Come, Stanislas, my boy! Your father must go free."

An hour later the unhappy but now hopeful woman might be seen going in the direction of the prison, wrapped in ungainly furs, and wearing an immense cap on her head. She held the child by the hand; while at a short distance behind followed an old servant, Peter, who was devoted to his master and mistress. On arriving at the gate of the prison, a piece of gold placed in the hand of the guard gave her and the child admittance to the cell of the condemned man; from whence, after the lapse of three-quarters of an hour, two forms again issued, and passing the guard, retraced their steps the way they had come. But at midnight, when the turnkey made his rounds, he discovered that the Count Sokolinski had fled; and in his cell, reclining on the miserable cot where he had lain, was his wife the Countess, who had enabled her husband to elude the vigilance of the jailers and make his escape.

Some time after this the Count found himself in Paris, but without any tidings of his devoted wife, on whom he had not at first apprehended the authorities would take vengeance for his departure. But as time passed and no news came, he began to fear that they had made her a victim in his stead, and his heart was torn with anxiety and sorrow. He knew not what had befallen her; fearing that she had been condemned to Siberia, he could not answer his little son when he asked the oft-repeated question: "Papa, when shall we see mamma again?"

Meanwhile the education of the boy had been confided to the Fathers of the Jesuit college, where he increased in knowledge and virtue. He was nearly eleven years old, and began to prepare for his first Holy Communion. One day, after having once more interrogated his father as usual, he continued: "I wish her to be here for my first Communion, and I am sure she will come." Acting at once upon the wish to see his mother on the all-important day, the thought of which now occupied his mind, at study time that evening the little fellow drew a clean white sheet of paper from his desk, took a fine new pen, made the Sign of the Cross, and wrote the following short letter to Peter, the old servant, who still remained in Warsaw:

Peter:—Will you please tell mamma that in about a month's time I am to receive my first Holy Communion, and that she must be here without fail on that day? I do not write to her, because our letters are intercepted; this is why I rely upon you to give her this message. Tell her that I am at the college in the Rue—, Paris. I embrace you with all my heart.

As soon as he had written this letter, Stanislas took a small picture of the Blessed Virgin, which he prized highly, pasted it at the end of the paper, and, having folded and sealed the letter, sent it off. Alas! at that same moment his father was reading a dirty slip of paper on which was written, in an unknown hand:

"No longer any hope! She goes to Siberia. Peter will do all he can, but it is likely that she will succumb to the fatigue of the first march. We love and sympathize with these always."

Nearer and nearer came the day of the First Communion. Neither to his father nor his teachers had the boy said anything of his letter, but he had spoken of it frequently to Almighty God. He had counted the days and the hours, and had said to himself: "Before the time of my First Communion I will make a novena to Our Lady, which will end on the day when for the first time I am to receive absolution; and I shall try to be so good and so

ferent that she will grant my prayer to have my dear mother on that day." And so he prayed his confiding, fervent, childish prayers; never doubting but that they would be answered as he desired.

It was now the eve of First Communion day, and, according to custom, the parents came to give their blessing to the little ones. Count Sokolinski was there with the others. Stanislas threw his arms around his father, and then knelt for his blessing.

"That is yours, papa," he said, when he arose from his knees; "and mamma's will come a little later."

The father sighed. "Ah!" he replied, turning away his tear-dimmed eyes.

"Yes, papa," continued the boy. "She will come. I wish her to come, and she will be here. Let me tell you the whole secret, papa. I have been making a novena to the Blessed Virgin; it will be finished at five o'clock to-day. At four I will receive absolution, and then I shall be as pure as an angel, and the Blessed Mother will not refuse me anything I shall ask. You know what that is, papa. To-night or tomorrow morning early mamma will be here."

"Let us be content now," said the father, scarce knowing what he said; and, in order that the boy might not discover his sorrow, he hurriedly took his departure.

It was 5 o'clock in the afternoon, and Stanislas went up to the porter's room. When the old man saw him he asked: "What do you wish, my child?" "I have come to see if any one has asked for me."

"Your father was here this morning."

"I know, but I am expecting another visitor—my mother."

"But, my dear boy, your mother is not in Paris."

"No, but she is coming. She will be here for my first Communion. I know it quite well."

"How do you know it?"

"I have asked our Blessed Lady to send her either to-night or to-morrow morning. For nine days I have prayed to her; my sins have all been forgiven—I have received absolution—and my heart is as pure as an angel's now. That is why I know the Blessed Virgin will refuse me nothing, and that my mother is coming to see me receive my first Holy Communion."

The old man looked at him sadly, as he answered: "I share in your wish and your prayer, though it is almost too late to expect any one to-night; the hour for visitors is past. Go back to your companions, my little fellow."

Stanislas obeyed with reluctance. The novena was ended; the hour when he had expected his mother was nearly over, and she had not yet arrived. He longed to remain near the door, so as to fall into her arms the moment she appeared, but he consoled himself by thinking: "When my mother comes, the porter will call me."

Six o'clock struck; 7, 8, and—no one appeared! Supper was over, and now the boys were filing through the long hall on their way upstairs to the dormitories. Suddenly the bell rang loud and long. A pale and emaciated woman appeared at the portal and eagerly asked to see Stanislas Sokolinski.

The porter hesitated—she seemed so forlorn and poverty-stricken that he thought her an impostor. Stanislas, who had purposely lingered behind the others, saw her through the glass door, recognizing her form and features in spite of the changes, suffering and imprisonment had wrought. Thrilled by the sound of the dearly loved voice, trembling and weak though its accents were, with a loud cry of joy he rushed forward. In a moment he was in her arms, sobbing and laughing on her bosom.

"I knew you would come, mamma darling!" he cried. "I told papa. I knew you would come, because I prayed to Our Lady to send you, that you might see me receive my first holy Communion."

Her story was soon told. She had contrived to escape on the way to Siberia, by means of a file, given her by Peter, secreted in her clothing, with which she cut the handcuffs that bound her to her companion, who also escaped, and had gone she knew not whither. She had already learned from Peter the address of the boy; and on reaching Paris, footsore and weary, had gone directly to him—arriving at the very time he so confidently expected her. Her husband's address she did not know, as all his letters to her had been intercepted.

The Count and Countess Sokolinski, once more united and happy, assisted together at the first Communion of their son; kneeling later themselves to partake of the celestial Food, with hearts full of thankfulness to the tender Mother who had heard and answered the fervent prayer of a spotless soul.

In Vacation. While free as the very birds are In these vacation days, They'll teach a lesson unto you, If you but note their ways. They're always happy, and they sing To make our hearts more glad, And they're snug in their nests before the dark, And never are they sad. They keep their feathers neat and trim, And get up early, too, And so you see, the birds teach Some lessons unto you. Be merry-hearted all the day, Shed happiness around; And when you say your prayers at night, Sweet peace will then abound.

Look Out For the Engine. We mean your heart. Keep it strong. Don't let it flutter or beat with a weak stroke. Scott's Emulsion feeds the blood. It makes the heart beat stronger, and greatly improves the circulation.

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CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN.

When It's Not a Good Thing. Be careful how you grasp an opportunity; it is often terribly hard to let go.

No Vacation for Five Years. A most senseless boast is that of the man who prides himself on not having taken a vacation in five years. More than likely he could have done more and better work in the balance of the year if he had and would have been more fit to live with at the same time.

Keep up the Interest. Have something always going at the rooms of the young men's society. Aim at variety in this direction. Find out what young men need. The gymnasium, clubs, educational classes, etc., should all be of the very best. At homes, socials, etc., are immensely popular with young men.

Man Weakest in the Morning. A man is precisely his weakest when he turns out of bed in the morning. The muscular force is greatly increased by breakfast, but it attains its highest point after the midday meal. It then sinks for a few hours and then rises again towards evening.

Some Rich Incomes. The income of the Emperor of Russia for one day is \$25,000; that of the Sultan of Turkey, \$18,000; Emperor of Austria, \$5,000; German Emperor, \$8,000; King of Italy, \$6,500; Queen Victoria, \$6,500; King of Belgium, \$6,500; President of France, \$5,000; President of the United States, about \$130.

To Talk Well. Many are the uses of conversation. Besides obliging a man to formulate his knowledge and to exercise those faculties which would otherwise soon rust and actually decay from want of use, it helps to strengthen or throw doubt upon the knowledge that he already possesses, and also to enlarge its boundaries. It is by the process of continual experiment and sifting that a man's ideas are gradually crystallized into the clear transparency and symmetry of real wisdom. No school-teaching would ever make a man talk well. All that is required of him is that he should be patient in listening, desirous and quick to learn, frank and honest in his reply; and then, if Providence has given him wit and eloquence sufficient to meet his opponent, he may taste the joys of a combat by the side of which other contests seem flat and unprofitable, and give as much pleasure to a worthy adversary as he receives from him in return.

Flirting on the Streets. Street flirting may seem to a youth to be an innocent pastime, but it is a straight cut to the road to perdition. Without evil design, perhaps, a boy is caught and swirled into the current of evil thought and basest life. He knoweth not that the dead are there and that their guests are in the depths of hell. Take a word of advice from an older man. Speak to no woman on the street with whom you are unacquainted. Never be found in company with anyone whom you would not willingly introduce to your mother or gladly see a companion to your sister. Any fool can be a loafer. Have some self-respect, young man; if your present self is not worth respecting, it is about time to stop and have an understanding and begin over again on a new plan.

Work and Play. The difference between work and play is very simple. Work is what you do because you have to, and for the sake of what you earn by it. Play is what you do because you like to, and for the sake of the pleasure you find in it. Of course a man may learn to love his work more and more, so that at last he cares infinitely more for it than for his wages; and then it is almost like play to him. And, on the other hand, he may stupidly give up his play to the slavery of fashion, or make it so serious by the spirit of rivalry or gambling that it becomes like work to him. But for the great mass of mankind the two things are quite distinct, and both are elements of a well-rounded life. When you have done your work, and done it as well as you could, and received your wages, and set out on your vacation, then your true duty is really to play at anything that pleases you; and your idleness will be profitable if it makes you more contented with life, more kindly disposed toward your fellow-men, and more grateful to God for creating such a good world to work and play in.

Bicycle Heart. The British Medical Journal says: Several well-known French cyclists have lately, it is said, been rejected as unfit for military service by reason of hypertrophy and other diseases of the heart. Medical men will be rather surprised that the numbers are so small. There must be few of us who have not seen the ill effects of over-exertion on a bicycle. The commonest is palpitation and temporary dilatation; but even this is sometimes very difficult to cure. In a case which occurred recently a lady, ordered for a fortnight's change of air after influenza, chose to spend it in bicycling about fifty miles a day. As a result, she has had, ever since that time—now nine months ago—a pulse which on the least exertion surges to 120, though she has not ridden again. That temporary dilatation occurs is enough to show the great strain put upon the heart, and it is an added danger that the sense of fatigue in the limbs is so slight. The rider is thus

robbed of the warning to which he is accustomed to attend, and repeats or continues the strain upon the heart. As in other similar cases, the effect is to render that dilatation permanent, which was at first but temporary, and to cause an increase in the muscle of the heart by repeated exertion. The heart produced is of large dimensions and of thick walls—a condition which may, perhaps, give little uneasiness to its owner, but which a medical man will view with considerable distrust and apprehension. Weakly and elderly people cannot be too often told that no exercise is more easily abused, though if taken in sensible measure few are more healthful or enjoyable.

THE MISSIONARY'S OPPORTUNITY.

"The waning of Evangelicalism" is the title of an editorial in the New York Sun of a few weeks ago, in which the extreme type of Protestantism is shown to be fading out. That means the decadence of prejudice, which again means the missionary's opportunity, whether he be priest or layman. Evangelical Protestantism was ever the fanatical side of the revolt against the true religion, and fanaticism is the most obstinate foe of human reason and divine grace.—The Missionary.

A PRIEST'S PRAYER AND THE ANSWER.

How Norman, Oklahoma Territory, Got Its Beautiful Little Church.

A correspondent sends an account of a remarkable answer to prayer. It seems that in the little town of Norman, Oklahoma Territory, U. S., the good Father Metter feared his mission must be abandoned. Every means had been tried without avail to build a church. No prospect of help was in view. He determined to have recourse to St. Joseph. While he wrestled in prayer, what was his astonishment to receive a telegram from an utter stranger he never had heard of, that a church would be built for him. Nor could he imagine how his name and his necessities were known in New York. Equally singular was the fact that his benefactor had never been solicited to aid him, and had only a vague idea of the situation of Oklahoma Territory, and a mere passing information that a priest in the little town of Norman needed a church. As the angel carried Habacuc to feed Daniel, so St. Joseph selected a generous heart to build a church in the wilds of Oklahoma.

Scarcely a year has passed, and the 19th of March saw the dedication of the church under the patronage of St. Joseph, built and equipped by William Cutting, jr., of New York, in memory of his beloved brother, Francis Brockholst Cutting, who died September 12, 1896, at Newport, R. I. St. Joseph was lavish. The whole outfit of the church except the seats was purchased in Paris and expressed from there at enormous expense. Nothing was forgotten. Many things most churches have to wait a long time to obtain were all supplied—stations of the cross, windows, monstrance for benediction, altar linens, decorated candles, etc.; three altars of handsomely carved and gilded oak. The church's painted in blue and golden stars; in one word, even Mr. Cutting's well-known generosity outdid itself in this memorial church for the beloved dead.

On the great day of the dedication many priests came over one hundred miles on horseback or in buggy to assist with truly Western fraternal love their brother priest on this happy day. Non Catholics closed their places of business to witness the great event, and when the Bishop alluded in his beautiful sermon to the heart-broken widowed mother, bereft of her darling child, in whose memory this church was built by his only and devoted brother, many wept. The gratitude expressed by good Father Metter for the miraculous assistance vouchsafed to him reminds one forcibly of the Cure d'Arns when he received his first benefactor. All the visiting priests offered their Masses for the departed in whose memory this little gem was constructed, and on Monday, the 21st, the Bishop officiated at a Solemn Requiem Mass for the repose of the soul of Francis Brockholst Cutting.—Catholic Review.

Bickle's Anti-Consumptive Syrup stands at the head of the list for all diseases of the throat and lungs. It acts like magic in breaking up a cold. A cough is soon subdued, tightness of the chest is relieved, even the worst case of consumption is relieved, while in recent cases it may be said never to fail. It is a medicine prepared from the active principles or virtues of several medicinal herbs, and can be depended upon for all pulmonary complaints.

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