

FIVE-MINUTE SERMON

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

For you were as sheep going astray; but you are now converted to the pastor and bishop of your souls. (1st Peter 2:25)

To-day is the Sunday of the Good Shepherd, and the church sings in joyful strains: "The Good Shepherd, who laid down His life for His sheep, yea, who was contented even to die for His flock, the Good Shepherd is risen again—Alleluia!" It is in this tender, loving and, to us, most winning character that Our Lord presents Himself in the Gospel of to-day—the Good Shepherd, who knoweth His sheep, and acknowledges them as His own, whose tender care for them is so great that He is willing even to lay down His life for their sake, yet with the power to take it again for His own glory and to give life to whom He will, and for whom He rose again, for they are in the truest sense His sheep who believe in His name, and are gathered into His one fold, the holy Catholic Church.

But it is not enough to believe; we must also hear His voice. How have we done this in the past? He has spoken to us through the offices of the church, through the words of our pastors, through the still, small voice of conscience? Alas! we have been as sheep going astray. We have been deaf to His voice, as He calls them in this blessed Easter-tide. Poor, wayward sheep, they still wander in paths of their own choosing, which can only lead them into danger and into death. O foolish, wandering ones! take heed ere it is too late to the gentle voice that calls you. Your souls have need to be washed in the stream which flows from your Shepherd's side, His Precious Blood shed for you when He laid down His life for your sake. Come, wash and be made clean in the Sacrament of Penance which He has ordained for your cleansing. You were as sheep going astray; be now converted and return to Jesus, the pastor, the shepherd, the bishop of your souls. You have been famishing for the food you need for your spiritual sustenance. Come, then, to Him Who so graciously and tenderly invites you to the table which He has prepared for you. Draw out of His Sacred Body and the goodly, overflowing cup of His Precious Blood, that your souls may be fed and have life eternal. Then will you be strong in the presence of your enemies, His mercy will follow you all the days of your life, and you will remain in the house of the Lord for ever, even in that house of many mansions which He has prepared for those who love and follow Him. For He has said of those who hear His voice and follow Him: "I give them life everlasting, and they shall not perish for ever, and no man shall snatch them out of My hand." And remember that other promise of His: "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My Blood has everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day." Yes, poor, lost sheep though we have been, if we now turn from our wayward paths to hear His voice and follow Him, He will raise us up at the last day, and place us among His favored sheep upon His right hand, to be glad for ever in the light of His countenance.

WHAT THE CATHOLIC PAPER DID

A good Catholic paper is a powerful aid to every kind of Catholic activity. The story is told of a pious Catholic in Germany, who, some years ago, went to a German Bishop, offering him 20,000 marks for the reconstruction of the ancient church in the birthplace of the former. At the same time he suggested that the money should be invested, and the interest allowed to accumulate until the sum had become large enough to begin the work.

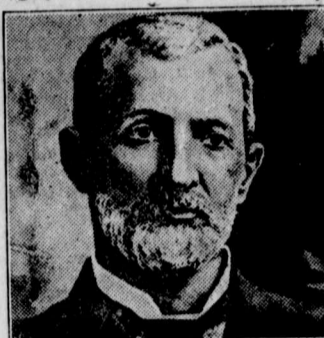
The prelate asked, "Is there a Catholic hospital in your town?" "No, Monsignor." "A Catholic daily newspaper?" "Nothing of the kind." "No working men's club?" "I suppose. Very well, then, if you agree, I will engage you to use your money, that within ten years a church shall be built, a hospital founded, a club established, and a daily paper in circulation. Invest your money in a Catholic periodical which will begin in its very first issue to promote all these interests."

This was done. The periodical started as a semi-weekly. In its second year it was issued three times a week, and in the fourth year it had grown to be a daily, with a goodly number of subscribers. Shortly afterwards the working men started a club. Its condition was soon so thriving that it purchased a house. A hospital, started on a small

TRIED EVERYTHING WITHOUT RELIEF

Until I took "Fruit-a-lives"

SARNIA, ONT., Feb. 25, 1912. "I have been a sufferer for the past 25 years with Constipation, Indigestion and Catarrh of the Stomach. I tried many remedies and many doctors but derived no benefit whatever. Finally, I read an advertisement of 'Fruit-a-lives' and I decided to give 'Fruit-a-lives' a trial and found they did exactly what was claimed for them. I have now taken 'Fruit-a-lives' for some months and find that they are the only remedy that does me good. I have recommended 'Fruit-a-lives' to a great many of my friends and I cannot praise these fruit tablets too highly." PAUL J. JONES



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TREATING AND ITS DANGERS

I am in hearty accord with Justice Barnes on the necessity of something being done to train our boys to habits of temperance and on the advisability of the Knights of Columbus undertaking to pay the expenses of a corps of ardent and energetic priests to visit the different churches periodically and impress upon our youth the dangers of intemperance and urge them to take the pledge of total abstinence, writes J. H. O'Donnell in the Columbian.

I think, however, that the twenty-first birthday is the wrong time for the expiration of a total abstinence pledge for the very good reason that just at that particular time, more than any other, there is supposed to be a certain indelible restraint lifted from the new man that is all too likely to be taken advantage of by the tempter and represented as being a license to indulge in anything and everything that the appetite and passions may dictate, and the lifting of the total abstinence pledge at his particular time is like tempting fate and should by all means, be avoided.

The young man has had a whole year to become accustomed to the sensation of being a man and has begun to realize what it means, would be less dangerous. Still better, the twenty-fifth birthday, when he has grown wise enough to see the folly of drink and curiosity no longer impels him to take his first glass.

But, if it is a good thing to take a pledge of total abstinence for a limited time, how much better to take it for life, which few would hesitate to do if they had kept a pledge until the age of twenty-five; for it is difficult to conceive of a total abstinence pledge until his twenty-fifth birthday who could be persuaded to throw aside such a valuable safeguard, but, on the contrary, would gladly renew his pledge for life.

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the assistance of which not one drunkard in ten thousand would ever have acquired that irresistible craving which has hopelessly enslaved him.

And where is the drunkard, no matter how hopeless, who did not at one time cherish the delusion that he could take a drink and leave it alone; that only the weak would be unable to stop before reaching the danger point?

And there is the tippler-to-day who would not feel justly indignant if any one should intimate to him that he would ever become a drunkard? He would ever be a drunkard? The first drink is the only seed from which it can be produced, and treating is an essential requirement after the seed has been planted.

Are we going to continue planting and cultivating this seed? Or, will we do our part to root it out?

It is a most serious matter to offer your fellowman a drink of intoxicating liquor! Stop! Think! And your conscience will not let you do it.

The influence of the Knights of Columbus, if wielded in this cause, can reduce drunkennes in this country more than any other agency. Is it not worth the effort?

WHAT BOYS READ

"This," says the Pilot, "is an age of ephemeral literature. Serious reading is passing to an alarming extent. The cheap magazine is at its zenith. Some of the matter is harmlessly amusing and some decidedly vicious."

It might not be so deplorable if adults only were concerned. But the greed for money has laid heavy toll upon the souls of children. Millions of dollars are annually spent in Germany for the blood and thunder novels alone. The condition here is no improvement. As soon as the boy is able to spell out a sentence he is initiated into the cheap pamphlets that necessarily interfere with his moral and intellectual growth. He wants energy, interest, excitement in his reading, and will get it somehow even if he has to wait his turn for the tales, passed from hand to hand, of Indians, cowboys, thieves and detectives.

"No one doubts that the most of this stuff which appeals to boys and then perverts them ought to be suppressed as a menace to youths. But while waiting for the law to act, Catholic parents have a clear duty, not merely of forbidding evil reading, but of supplying in its stead something harmless and full of interest.

"The boy cherishes such reading because those who should care for him do not think it worth while to supply him with good books. And by good books is not necessarily meant the old-fashioned ordinary boy avoids books avowedly pious. But you can give him plenty of Catholic books, like those of Father Finn, David Bearnie and countless others, which are as interesting as the 'dime novel,' while they set before the boy exemplars of true manliness.

LABOUCHERE'S FRIENDLY HAND

The death of Mr. Labouchere must not be recorded by his Catholic brother journalists without a word of gratitude to the part he took, time and again, in defence of Catholic interests. Truth, despite its high name, was not a paper which on its appearance raised in the Catholic breast any expectation of a special show of fair play towards their feelings and interests. But as time went on one Catholic after another felt the friendly editorial hand, and at least one sort of "escaped" lunatic found that he or she could not, at any rate, escape his searchlight. Mr. Labouchere hated humbug; and if any other explanation of his virulent defence of Catholics against their traducers is needed, it may perhaps be found in his personal relations with members of the Catholic Church. His wife, the well-known actress, Henrietta Hodson, professed the faith; his daughter also; his nephew, Mr. Algar Labouchere Thorold, joined the Church with such conspicuousness as attaches to great talents and the conversion of an Anglican Bishop's son; and one at least of his intimate contemporaries, George Augustus Sala, was fortified on his deathbed by the Church's rites.

Among the contributors to Truth, too, Mr. Charles Jerningham has a long record, and no better tributes than his to his old chief have appeared in the daily press. One anecdote of Mr. Labouchere, told in Mr. Wilfrid Blunt's recent volume, is too racy and too characteristic to be allowed to pass unquoted. The member for Northampton had to leave a friend to keep an engagement to open a Wesleyan chapel—to such straits, he said, are we reduced at election times.—London Tablet.

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