

FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS FOR EARLY MORNINGS By the Paulist Fathers.

Preached in their Church of St. Paul the Apostle, 1005-1011, Street and Ninth Avenue, New York City.

"The laborer is worthy of his hire."—St. Luke x 7. A SERMON BY A STEAM ENGINE ON CAPITAL AND LABOR.

"The laborer is worthy of his hire." That is what I said to the great, hot, panting engine as I passed by it on leaving the railway station, after a journey of two hundred miles, travelling at lightning speed, and arriving "on time," and as safe as if I had been rocked in a cradle.

"Yes, old fellow," said I, "you did your work (I was going to add "like a man," but I corrected myself and said) like an engine, and the laborer is worthy of his hire." You look dirty and smoke-begrimed, as all laborers do, and as I hear you panting for breath, it is evident that you are quite heated and exhausted. You are an honest engine, and you deserve all the water you can drink, all the coal you can eat, and a good thick coat of sheet-iron to keep your blood, I mean your steam, warm, for the laborer is worthy of his hire."

"That is twice you have quoted Scripture to me, Mr. Clergyman, and I have no doubt I'll get the water, coal, and sheet-iron coat, and more an hour, and with my hard steel arms, drag a long train of cars filled with passengers and baggage after me, will see that I get all these things. It is your business to expound Scripture, and if I heard right, you expounded only water, coal, and a sheet-iron coat as being all the hire I am worthy of as an honest laboring engine," and opened his big fiery mouth and glared savagely. "I was rather taken aback to hear an engine, a mere machine, speak up for himself, but being in the humor, I asked it:

"What are you growling about? Are you not getting your hire? Capital always has that against the laborer, that he is not satisfied even with his hire." The engine gave a tremendous puff, as if hearing a giant sigh, and replied: "And is that I am worthy of, and is that enough to satisfy me, you ungrateful passenger? Haven't I a heart as well as you, and can water quench the thirst of a heart, and coal satisfy the hunger of a heart, and a sheet-iron coat warm a heart, even if it is the heart of an engine, a mere machine? Do you think I pour out my life-steam, and speed along the track at forty miles an hour, through all weather, by night and day, and through dangers, you never see nor dream of, only for the hire of water, coal and a sheet-iron coat? Do you think I take no joy out of being an honest and mighty engine that can do honest and mighty work? Do you think I glow only with the heat of coal, when on a dark and stormy night I drive through the rain and sleet and blinding snow, and defy the raging tempest? Do you think I do not seek happiness as you do in doing my work well, in knowing that I am bringing you safe and quickly to your journey's end, and that when it is well done, and I come thundering into my station all safe and 'on time,' my piercing shriek is not as good a sign of my contentment as your song and laughter and 'Ah! that is good! it is yours!'"

"Do oblige me by continuing," said I, deeply interested in the engine's talk. "Oblige you?" said the engine, with considerable show of warmth, "that is a text for what I was just coming to. You moderns seem to have forgotten the old Catholic Christian maxim, Noblesse oblige—Nobility is under obligation. The one who is rich and has a poor man employed, is obliged to the employed. The one for whom work is safely and well done is under obligation to him who does the work well and safely. That is the happiness which every workman seeks in working. He works to give his employer satisfaction. He works not only to give his employer the fruit of his labor, but to give him satisfaction. Water and coal and a sheet-iron coat may pay me, but the world's hire for the labor of bringing you home safely and quickly, but where is the worthy pay for the satisfaction you enjoy, I tell you, Mr. Clergyman, water and coal and sheet-iron coats do not pay for that, nor clear up that obligation from you to me. Gratitude, gratitude, an affectionate thankfulness, a feeling of indebtedness, which not the water of the ocean, nor all the coal of the earth, nor all the iron of the world made into coats put together, could make one ounce of worthy repayment for, and which the laborer does not want to collect either, but wants to let stand on the books of God between you and Him forever.

"How is it with the best of you men? You hire a laborer, a working man, and at sunset you say, 'Take your hire and go away.' You engage a mechanic. He is proud of his fair piece of work. Of that you never take any notice. You pay his price for the article, and all is over between you. You hire a servant. She does her work, no matter how long nor how well. You pay her wages and bid her begone. You hire a lawyer, a doctor, a nurse, and some people also talk of hiring a clergyman, which are goods of a painstaking merchant, or books of an enterprising publisher, or you hire an editor by taking his paper; and what is the devil's maxim you all utter against them when you pay their score of just charges, which you call the worthy hire of the laborer? 'Oh! if you say, 'they are all on the make.' You don't even give them that hire with the willing heart and generous hand that my engineer and stoker give me mine in water, coal and a warm sheet-iron coat. Go to! There are other laborers, hard and honest-handed, and warm-hearted, and skilful workmen, besides all those who among you to-day go under the name of laborer, and well you know it, Mr. Clergyman. Do you think they also do not seek happiness as well in the faithful discharge of their duties and profession. Where is your noblesse oblige, the sum of gratitude and affectionate thankfulness which all hearts crave for and ought to

have, in the laborer and the mechanic and others when they are the employer, when they hire a lawyer, a doctor or a clergyman? When they are Capital and he is Labor! Go you and preach Christian charity, the virtue of lowly and sweet humility, which gladdens the heart to be under obligation. Take the word of a hard-working steam-engine for it. No man will oppress the other to whom he is grateful, and to whom he feels glad to be under obligation quite over and above all the money he pays him for his labor. Expound that text and preach that doctrine, Mr. Clergyman, and preach it loud, and it strikes and discord and war between high and low and rich and poor will end."

The engine gave a snort and a puff, as much as to say, "Ah, ah! that is good," and backed out of the station. Whereupon I came and wrote his sermon.

CHILDREN'S CORNER.

A Child of Mary. A Jesuit Father, who for many years was a prefect in a certain college, relates that one night he went to the dormitory to see if the students were in bed; he discovered a boy dressed and kneeling by his bedside. Surprised at this, he inquired why he had not retired with the others. "Please, Father," the young student answered, "I gave my scapular to the tailor to be mended, and I hate to go to bed without it for fear of dying in the night."

"Oh, don't be afraid, my boy," the Father said, kindly, "go to bed and sleep soundly. You will get your scapular tomorrow." "Oh, Father, I can't go to sleep without my scapular; I might die." And he began to weep. To pacify the boy, the Father went at once to the tailor, who lived in the college, produced the scapular, and the boy put it on and went to bed. The last words he heard him say were the names of Jesus and Mary.

Next morning, when the prefect went around to see if all the boys were up, he found his young friend still in bed. He called him, but there was no answer; he shook him, but he did not move. He was cold in death. One hand rested on his beloved scapular, the prayers of which were probably his last earthly occupations. No doubt our Blessed Mother took her child to heaven before his innocence could be tarnished by a sinful word.

A Beautiful Legend. One of Hawthorne's "Twice Told Tales" is that of "The Great Stone Face." On the straight side of a mountain were some immense rocks thrown together in such a position as, when viewed from a proper distance, to precisely resemble the features of a human face.

There is a legend concerning it which runs this way: The people of the village around about this stone believed that at some future day a child should be born who was destined to become a great and noble personage, and whose countenance should in manhood bear an exact resemblance to the stone face.

In this village there lived a lad named Ernest, whose mother had told him the tradition, and who used to watch with wonder and awe the great face. He never forgot the story, but in the evening, after his work was done, he used to sit and look up to the mountain side and wonder how long it would be before the great and good man would come.

Soon it began to be rumored that he had appeared in the country. A shopkeeper, Mr. Gathergold, who had gained great riches by his shrewd dealing, had purchased ground and built a magnificent palace in the valley, and the people were expecting that when he came to take possession of it he would be no other than the boy longed for by his arrival, and at last the day came. Attended by servants, and riding in a splendid carriage, he drove down the road through the crowd of people assembled to meet him, and all took up the cry: "It is he! the man of the great stone face!"

But when Ernest could get a glimpse of his face through the crowd, he saw only a little, wrinkled old man, with no likeness to the noble face on the rocks. He was disappointed, but when he went home his mother encouraged him, saying: "He will come, never fear." So he continued to gaze and wonder.

Years passed by: Gathergold lost his money, and finally died, and it was decided by the people that he had been mistaken in him. Then came the news that a great general had returned from the wars, covered with glory who had been born in that valley, and was to return to it, and that in old Blood-and-Thunder, as he was called, the prediction was to be realized. On the day of his return the people gathered to welcome and proclaim him the man of destiny. Ernest was with the crowd, anxious to see the face that should be the counterpart of his old friend.

The general came with military pomp and splendor. The people threw their hats in the air and again shouted: "It is he! it is he!" But when Ernest could see his face, though there were some resemblance, he was disappointed, for the sun-bronzed and stern visage of the warrior was not the grand, kind face of the mountain.

Again his mother said: "Fear not; he will come, Ernest." And he still looked and hoped. He was now a man of middle age. He was known throughout the village for his honesty, kindness and wisdom. Yet none ever suspected that he was more than an ordinary man; neither did he himself.

As soon as the people's minds cooled they acknowledged that Blood-and-Thunder was not the expected man, but it now began to be noised abroad that he was at last coming in the person of a great statesman. He, too, came, passing by in great procession. Again a resemblance was imagined, and "It is he!" was again shouted by the people. Again Ernest was disappointed, though the likeness was stronger than ever. He turned away sadly, but the great lips that he loved so well to watch seemed to move and say to him: "Go, I am here; fear not; the man will come."

The years passed on; white hairs came into Ernest's head. He has ceased to be

obscure; great men heard of his wise sayings and came to see him. He received them with gentle sincerity, and spoke freely of what was uppermost in his mind, his face glowing animated with a mild light. Penitent with the fulness of such discourses, his guests took their leave, and, passing up the valley, glanced at the great stone face thinking they had seen its likeness in some human countenance. Then there came word that a new post had risen in the land, who had thrilled the nation by a majestic ode. His fame was on every lip. He was coming to the valley, which was his birth place. Was he not the man? He came to see Ernest, who was raised to high expectancy of beholding at last the fulfillment of the prophecy. But again he was disappointed, the poet himself disclaiming the honor of fulfilling the hope. But he was charmed with Ernest, and persuaded him to address the people during his stay. At the hour of sunset Ernest was to speak in the open air. He began to speak. At a distance could be seen the great face lighted up with the rays of the setting sun. In a moment of sympathy with a great thought he was uttering, the face of Ernest assumed a grandeur of expression that struck all, and the poet, moved by an impulse he could not resist, arose and shouted: "Behold! behold! the wearer of the great stone face!"

And the people looked and saw that he had spoken truly, and taking up the cry, went to their homes rejoicing, and wondering that they had not sooner discovered it.

Now, do you see the moral of this legend? A ready contemplation of the good and noble in the public since character brings about slowly, but surely, a likeness in ourselves of those things we daily behold in our minds.

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