

FIVE-MINUTE SERMON.

PEACE
"Peace be to you." (St. John's Gospel xx. 19)

It was the evening of the first bright Easter day. The accounts of the rising from the dead of Him whom they had hoped should redeem Israel were being discussed, in that upper room where they had celebrated the Passover, by the disciples. Suddenly Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them and said to them: "Peace be to you."

He who burst the bands of death, He who is the Author of life, came back to earth with the same message with which He first came—the message of peace. The angels over the plains of Bethle hem sang "Peace on earth to men of good will," but to day is heard that word of Peace which theirs was but the faintest echo. When God, the mighty One, chants His psalm of triumph, will may all created things be silent.

My brethren, our Blessed Lord has for us a message of peace this day. For three years He went up and down the hills and vales of this native land, and His whole pilgrimage there seemed but a warfare. Men scorned His teachings. They despised Him and His words. He died, and it seemed as if a great light had been extinguished. But when He rose triumphant over death, when by His death He overcame him who had the power of death, then came victory, and with "victory came peace."

Is this the case with your hearts to-day, my dear brethren? Has our Lord, who perchance lay, as it were, dead in your soul—has He, I say, risen in you again? Are you in Him risen up to a new and a better life this glorious Easter morning? If such be the case, peace is yours.

For six long weeks you have been preparing for this day. To this hour you have looked forward. Lent has been a preparation for it. You piously entered on the performance of certain duties which you took upon yourself. You engaged to battle in a special way with sin. You have fought the battle nobly, and with the aid of the Sacrament yours is the victory, and Jesus now stands in our midst. He is in your very breasts, and says: "Peace be to you."

What means this word? It means a victory won in your hearts. It means that, having overcome, and being in a state of grace by co-operating with the grace of God, you are now so strong that you can say: "I never will, with the help of God, commit mortal sin again." It means that you have the power to live new lives. So put into continual practice those means which you found so helpful in Lent. Did you pray regularly in that time? Do not leave off the practice now. Did you receive the Sacrament often then? Why not keep on in the same good custom?

Alas! so many people when Lent is over ruin all the good they gained by leaving it all behind them. But the person who will put into practice all the good deeds, all the prayers and devotions, which he used in Lent for the rest of his days, he is the one who may be said to have obtained the great and inestimable gift of peace—our Lord's benediction on Easter Day.

Neither is peace exactly the same thing that we mean when we speak of a peace being concluded between two nations who have been at war. We are still at war with sin. There is no truce, there can be no truce with it. There is not and there never can be any cessation of hostilities. It is nothing else, then, than the firm purpose of amendment of life, put into daily practice, by efficaciously using the spiritual weapons which Jesus Christ in His mercy so lovingly provides for you.

Be not discouraged then, though you have yet to fight and wage war. Peace is yours, because He is on your side who overcame and by whom you, too, will conquer. What care you for such battles when Christ Himself fights for you? Your souls are in peace, for He is dwelling in you. Such, my dear brethren, is the gift of peace which our Divine Redeemer bestows upon you this Easter morning. And I can wish you no greater happiness than that when soon or late, He may stand in your midst, your ears may rejoice to hear those blessed words—"Peace be to you."

THE FARMER'S LITTLE FRIENDS.

Written for The Casket.
By Rev. I. J. Kavanaugh S. J., M. A., B. Sc., Loyola College, Montreal.
They are small indeed, these minute allies of the agriculturist, a thousand of them would have ample promencing room on a pinhead, but, in their myriads, they make the difference between big harvests and bad ones. They are of the great but not very well or very favorably known family of the bacteria, which we, in our self-sufficiency class among the lower forms of vegetable life.

SOIL MAKING.
In large measure, they are the soil makers, helping out the weathering and chemical actions, breaking down the minerals into substances the plants need and can assimilate, enriching the soil by inducing decomposition of the organic matters in it and also, through a power they share with none, by capturing the nitrogen of the air. This last most marvelous and beneficent action is the main topic of these remarks.

SOIL IMPROVEMENT.
It is clear that continuous cropping tends to impoverish the land, the soil gives something to the crop it bears, and is the poorer by the amount and nature of its contribution. If it gets a rest it will recuperate; or, since different crops require different feeding and therefore draw upon the soil differently, it may be that a judicious rotation of crops will enable the soil to retrieve its loss by collecting in the intervals between two similar harvests, the specific food elements this crop requires.

FERTILIZERS.
Another way of keeping up the supply of food is the use of fertilizers, such as common manure, guano, nitrate of soda, etc. The cost of these fertilizers is a considerable drain on the farmer, who is normally in a condition of stringency in regard to ready money. The value of fertilizers lies in their containing nitrogen and their being able to supply it in an available form to the growing plant.

ATMOSPHERIC NITROGEN.
The plant absolutely requires nitrogen, but why should the farmer be put to the necessity of purchasing it in the shape of expensive fertilizers, when it forms four fifths of common air. On every acre there lies thirty seven thousand six hundred and thirty five tons of this valuable gas! Why then cannot the plant drink in through its million mouths this vital fluid which encompasses it all around? No one can tell why; all we know is that the common green plant cannot assimilate nitrogen in the gaseous form. Hay may contain all the essential elements of human food, still, in the case of a man a diet of hay would have an unsatisfactory outcome. Because green plants cannot absorb gaseous nitrogen, farmers have to administer it in the shape of expensive fertilizers.

CALCIUM CYANAMIDE.
So expensive indeed are these, that the anxious farmer will hear with pleasure that the Niagara electric furnace has succeeded in capturing the atmospheric nitrogen and confining it in calcium cyanamide which may turn out to be a cheap and effective fertilizer. But alas for our vanity, this splendid achievement of the electric furnace has been forestalled by the humble work of the soil bacteria, the farmer's little friends. Here is the story from the beginning.

FERTILIZING ACTION OF CLOVER.
The fertilizing value of a crop of clover, or of any other legume, such as bean, pea, etc., has always been recognized. In the days of the Romans, according to Pliny, it was known that to take a crop of clover off a vineyard was equivalent to manuring the vineyard; the crop left the soil richer rather than poorer. This seeming paradox has been explained only within a score of years, and here is the explanation.

THE SECRET.
If the roots of a clover plant be examined, there will be found upon them a number of small nodules. Upon a further examination these are found to be made up of nitrogenous matter, and to be filled with millions of bacteria. It is a case of infection brought on naturally, or artificially by the farmer.

HELPFUL FRIENDS NOT PARASITES.
It is a disease, but a most beneficial disease, if I may say so, for comparison shows that the clover plants, which are most abundantly provided with these nodules, are the healthiest and the most prosperous. These bacteria are not growing parasites, they are profitable and well-paying roomers. Like the mushrooms and fungi, they have the wonderful power of extracting directly from the air its nitrogen compound and of storing it up in the soil, so that a crop of clover from seed properly infected at a nominal expenditure of money and trouble, will yield as much good to an acre of land as if it had been a thousand pounds of nitrate of soda at a cost of \$25! This is good news for the farmer who puts up with poor crops for lack of capital to purchase fertilizers, and it does away with all excuse for the "worked out" farmer.

SPEED THE PLOUGH.
Last year the farmers of three of our North-West provinces produced \$125,000,000, and those of the United States near six times as much. On this scale, again of five bushels an acre is an enormous increase in the country's assets and when we remember that this wealth is not a profit at the expense of someone else, but that it is an actual creation of values, we ought to be convinced of the national economic importance of agriculture, and of the wisdom of a liberal expenditure of public monies on the scientific investigation of agricultural problems. Therefore the investigation of such a question as soil bacteriology is a matter of national importance, as is also the production of plant varieties fitted to local conditions. The work is beyond the resources of the individual farmer. The United States Agricultural Department has studied this question, while in Ontario the Agricultural College at Guelph has done most effective work along these lines. The soil constitutes the one great and inexhaustible natural resource from among the men who till it, there come, as a rule, our best citizens both mentally and physically, and therefore it is the part of a wise and practical Government to foster agriculture in every way and to see that the farmer meet with opportune help and fitting reward in the exercise of his important function.

A HINT FOR CATHOLIC READERS.
"It is certain," says the Catholic Universe, "that whatever books Catholics wish to read will and must be placed in public libraries. The most conspicuous characteristic of Catholic books at present to be found in the libraries is the virgin whiteness and the freshness of their pages. Catholics form a large reading public, but not a Catholic reading public, and our chief need is not of Catholic books but of Catholics to read Catholic books. It is time that the clergy of the United States were relieved of the sole support of Catholic publications, and that Catholic publishers found it profitable to cater to the laity. So far the bulk of the issue from Catholic presses has been in the line of juvenile fiction and manuals of theology. And this is not the fault of the publishers. Like the librarians, they are only too glad to supply what is demanded. It is hardly to be expected of them that they will publish books for the pleasing of their stockholders or the adornment of their catalogues. In their eagerness to be 'broad,' Catholics should aim to cultivate a taste at least Catholic enough to read their own literature." —Sacred Heart Review.

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CONTINUED FROM ISSUE OF APRIL 11.
A PRECIOUS HEIRLOOM.
If there be one thing prominent more than another among the historic relics bequeathed to us by the past, and without which the reconstruction of the map of Old Haronia would border on the impossible, it is Duceux's inset map, defective though it be in some of its outlines. A photo engraving of it, slightly enlarged, is given in the Ontario Archaeological Report for 1907, p. 36, and an engraving, about the same size as the original, page 56 of Mr. Andrew Hunter's monograph on Medonte. The names have not come out well in the western portion, but are quite distinct in the eastern, together with the outline, which is all we need for our present purpose.

A guess at which will show us, to ward the west, "S. Maria" (The Old Fort), on what is now Mad Lake, and a stream, the modern Wye, draining into it the waters of two lakes, Cranberry and O's. To the east of this stream are two others, basing at present the names of Hogg, Surgeon and Coldwater. Thus far all cartographers agree; but beyond this point, Mr. Hunter parts company with all those who, to my knowledge have ever touched upon this subject. This he has a perfect right to do, for one solitary authority may bring forward more cogent reasons to support his opinions than a host of others taken singly or collectively. Just as it is not the will of the majority which constitutes right, so also it is not the mere word of the many which constitutes truth either historical or otherwise. All depends upon the nature of the facts established and the validity of the inferences drawn.

Mr. Hunter's contention is that the fourth stream, in the order above followed, is the North River, and that the lake it drains, as marked on Duceux's map is Bass Lake, while Lake Couchiching is omitted. Those with whom he does not agree hold that on Duceux's map the North River and Bass Lake are ignored, and that the smaller lake, lying north of "Lacus Oseantaronius" (Lake Simcoe), is Lake Couchiching, while the river draining into it is the North River. The more over hold that if the Narrows are not marked it was owing either to an oversight of the engraver, or because, if marked, it would blur the lettering of "S. I. Baptista," which extends squarely across the neck of land between the two lakes.

THE CONTRADICTION "EVIDENT."

It is not an easy matter to prove what seems plain enough to be self-evident, for one is puzzled how to find anything more convincing than the mere inspection or consideration of the evidence, surely there must be some criteria existing by which a decision may be reached. Of this, later on.

When Mr. Andrew Hunter advances a statement or makes a declaration unsupported by proof, which not infrequently happens, it can legitimately be met with a flat denial: quod gratis assentit gratis negatur. On page 10, in his Monograph on Oro, Mr. Hunter gravely informs us: "In the Narrows issue of the Jesuit Relations, vol. 20, p. 365, I identified Bass Lake with the small lake on Duceux's map, which may have been confused with Lake Couchiching. The small lake mentioned in Champlain's narrative as lying near Champlain's also becomes identical with Bass Lake."

MR. ANDREW HUNTER "IDENTIFIES."
When a serious author states that he has identified a place, or geographical feature hitherto indeterminate, a serious reader takes him to mean, not that he himself pronounced the thing evident, surely there must be some criteria existing by which a decision may be reached. Of this, later on.

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