

SEPTEMBER 1, 1894.

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FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS.

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

BEHAVIOR IN CHURCH.

And He spoke a parable also to them that were invited, marking how they chose the first seats at the table. (Gospel of the day.)

Our Blessed Saviour in this day's Gospel teaches us a lesson of good order and practical conduct which may be applied in many ways. I will make the application of it this morning to our conduct in church. We will consider the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass the great feast to which we are invited, the church the banquet-hall, and the pews the places set apart for the guests.

There is nothing more conducive to the pleasure and purpose of the assemblage than the good order and proper arrangement of everything connected with it, and we often hear persons speak of some event in which they participated as being most enjoyable because everything was so well ordered and arranged. Now, all this applies with double force to the public services of religion. Catholics greatly enjoy the public services of the church when everything is well ordered and arranged, and there is nothing to distract them or jar upon them. For at every service there is the Divine Presence, and where perfect order reigns it soon makes itself felt: its calm peace steals in upon the soul, it commences sweetly, and worships "in spirit and in truth."

But in order to secure an external condition of things in our churches, so essential to recollection and prayer, each one must know his place and occupy it without delay or confusion, and in our present system of church arrangements each worshipper is supposed to have his or her special place assigned, and the regular seat in the church has become a requirement of devotion as well as a necessity of church finance.

Hence, to secure a permanent place in the church is a duty of devotion as well as something of an obligation; and we find that truly pious Catholics almost invariably try to secure seats in their parish churches, be they ever so humble. Indeed, Catholics who fail to do this are not apt to be very steady in the practice of their religion; and there can be no doubt as to the neglect of duty in the case. To contribute to the support of religion is as much a positive law of the Church as to attend Mass on Sunday, and the ordinary revenue for the support of religion comes from the pew-rents. We insist, therefore, that every Catholic who can possibly afford it should have his seat in church: good order requires this as well as duty and devotion. It is a poor business to be all the while occupying other people's pews, and to some times, perhaps, be required to vacate them. Pew-holders have to their rights, and they must be protected in them. Nevertheless, to secure good order and harmony at the services in the church, pew-holders must be willing at times to waive their rights and allow strangers and others to occupy the vacant seats in their pews. This is no more than politeness and common Christian charity demand. To refuse a vacant seat in church to a stranger is selfishness gone to seed, and they are few, I hope, who would be guilty of such vulgarity.

But while all who possibly can should have their regular places in church, there will, no doubt, always be a very considerable number who, through poverty or perverseness, will be pew-holders at large, and to them I would also address a few remarks. The Catholic Church is the Church of the poor, nor is His Church. The poor are always welcome in her grandest temples, and none should ever miss a single service of religion because they are too poor to hire a regular seat. In this church—thank God!—everything is free to them, and there are always vacant seats for them to occupy. We not only wish non-pew-holders to occupy the vacant seats in our church, but we insist on their occupying them, for the good order and harmony of the services require that, as far as possible, all should be seated. The gospel injunction: "Do not sit down in the first place" or in the place of another; and if you are told to move up higher, do not refuse. Crowding around the doors is more objectionable than anything else, for there is nothing else that interferes so much with the good order and arrangement of the services. Let me repeat, then, in conclusion, the words of the parable: "Friend, go up higher," and don't crowd around the doors.

Nothing is greater sacrilege than to prostitute the great name of God to the petulance of an idle tongue.—Jeremy Taylor.

A Bad Habit.
Says the *Pittsburg Catholic*: "The publican took a back seat in the church in all humility, striking his breast with penitence, and calling on the Lord for mercy, since he was a sinner. The young men of the day who throng the rear of the church, so they may hide their late entrance, step quietly and unobserved during the sermon, and leave before the conclusion of the service, are not imitators of the publican, nor do they go down to their homes justified."

No appetite? Then do not try to force food down; but use the most scientific means for restoring tone to the stomach. How? Why, by taking Ayer's Sarsaparilla, and in a surprisingly short time, your appetite will come again, and come to stay.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

THE VOW OF THE SHAMROCK.

BY MRS. CASHEL HOYE.

CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK.

Pierce Carrick was going up to Dublin on the following day on a business errand for his father, connected with an unlucky tenant who had made an impossible bargain by which he had shut himself out from the privileges of the Land Act. He told Mave all about it in the airiest way, and did not even see the shadow that fell upon her face, the look of pain and doubt that settled upon it. So they parted. A day or two later Mave left the cottage.

"And so this is your last word, Mave," said Pierce Carrick in a voice hoarse with anger, "this is the way you keep your promise! Of course I'm no saint, and no hypocrite, but just a man like other men, only horribly unlucky, and likely to be more so; for the place is going to the devil, and the creditors are out of patience. And now you are going to give me up! That is a nice notion of true love and woman's faithfulness, and all the fine things they talk about! It's more than a year since you gave me your word, and what have I done to make you take it back? I'm no worse now than I was then, and at all events, whatever good there's in me brings me to you, and now, you want to turn me adrift. Why won't you marry me, Mave? Marry me, and save me, as you are so very sure I need saving. My father won't care a hang; and it's nobody's business, unless indeed you make it so," he added slowly, and with a heavy frown. Mave understood his meaning; she knew that he regarded the resolution she had arrived at, after a year's experience of Pierce Carrick's waywardness and weakness, as the result of Father Farrell's persuasion, and that his ill-will to the priest had increased with time. Her heart was aching, bursting with grief, the weight of bitter disappointment lay at it, and in her troubled mind was a cruel strife between love and duty, between self-delusion and plain common sense.

"I know this is not your own doing," he went on, with growing anger. "You wouldn't give me up unless you were advised or frightened into doing it."
"No one could frighten me into doing anything," she said calmly, and her look confirmed her words. "What I do is my own act. But I confess I am afraid—not of man, but of God, in this. I dare not marry you, Pierce, because I cannot trust you. I dare not take a vow in the presence of God to do what I could not do. I know you have no religion, and therefore no guide, no law, and no help—wait a little, hear me out! I do not deny that you love me; that I love you, God knows—and so do you. But I deceive and flatter myself no longer. You told me I could make you all you ought to be, and in my pride and vanity I believed you; I know better now. I don't condemn you. I love you, but I no longer trust to myself for what only the grace of God can do. May He pardon my presumption, and teach me the evil of my sins! But I dare not marry you, Pierce."

"Not even to reform me?" he asked bitterly.
"No. Have you ever thought what such a purpose means? That it implies the blindest vanity, and the beginning of marriage with a falsehood?"
"I have not thought at all about it," he answered fiercely. "I don't understand your cold-hearted reasoning, and your boisterous religion. What's clear to me is that you have listened to every story that has been told to you about me, and that you never cared for me. Do you think I am a fool, to believe that if you did you would give me up, because I don't work like a nigger, when I've nothing to do, or take the pledge like a moral coward? But why should I go on talking to you; you are all head and no heart, and you never loved me!"

"Oh, do not say that, Pierce! Have pity on me, and do not say that! I love you better than my life, and if my life only were at stake, I would gladly risk it for you; but there's more than my life at stake. There's my soul and yours. For, if I break the law of God, how shall I dare to ask Him for your conversion; and for what else do I live to pray?"
He stared at her in genuine amazement.

"You don't know what I mean! Ah, no, how should you?" She covered her face with her hands, and walked about the room in great agitation. In this change from her accustomed calmness, Pierce saw his opportunity, and he made such an appeal to her, with fond words and caresses, and passionate entreaties, that with a sudden vanquished helplessness, she yielded. Thus the interview, which was to be their last for some time, ended in protestations of reform on his part, with which she was only too familiar, and on hers with a pretty fantasy, as Pierce Carrick thought it then.

"Pierce," said Mave, when the transport of his relief and gratitude had subsided, and the moment of parting was near, "I want you to make me a promise. Will you do so?"
"I will promise you anything in the world you like," he answered, with his characteristic fatal readiness. "Aye, and keep the promise, too. You need not be afraid of me, this time, Mave, bad as I have been so often. You have given me too great a fright."
"This is St. Patrick's Day," she

said, "and here is one of his own shamrocks." She took from the bodice of her gown a cluster of the sacred trefoil, and selecting one slender, graceful stem, with its triple crown, held it up to him, then spoke, touching each tiny leaf in succession.
"Look at these, Pierce; they are to Catholics the emblems of the Ever-Blessed Trinity, and also the emblems of Faith, Hope and Charity. I want you to take this shamrock, and to make a vow to me upon the three leaves that every morning and evening, until we meet again, you will say a 'Hail Mary' for each leaf, as a prayer for my intention. Will you do this, Pierce?"
"Of course I will," he answered, but she was aware that her words puzzled him. "I thought it was some big thing that you meant to pin me to. I don't know much about Hail Mary's and intentions, but I'll do it punctually, all the same."

He was looking, half curious, half amused, at the little sprig as it lay on the palm of his hand, and did not see the eager, solemn expression that had overspread her face.
"Take the vow, then, take the vow,"
Then Pierce Carrick formally took the Vow of the Shamrock.

Three weeks after this meeting and parting, Pierce Carrick again crossed the bay in his boat and made his way to the house at the back of the town where Mave Sullivan lived. His face was troubled, his air was gloomy, things were going badly with him all round. The inevitable penalty of the long course of sordid extravagance, extortion and tyranny, that had formed the record of the Carricks, of Shaughlin, was imminent. Pierce was thinking with sullen rage that even if Mave would marry him now it would be hard to tell how they were to live. Money had none, and although his father still adhered to the belief that the turnip (otherwise the tenant) could be made to yield blood if it were only squeezed tightly enough, Pierce knew better. It had begun to dawn upon him that in justice and mercy there was some hope for those landlords, for whom facts were proving too stubborn at last; but that improvement in his mental condition helped him not at all in the present strait of impecuniosity. He was beginning to think that Mave was right, that he ought to get something to do; but he could not make up his mind as to what he was fit for. Such useless help as he had was quite useless to him in his habits and tastes of life, and his habits and tastes were disqualifications. In moments of despondency, he had said to himself of late, that if it were not for Mave, he would enlist in some regiment going on foreign service, and get away from the old life altogether. In some such mood, but lightened by the thought of seeing her, Pierce reached the house, and asked for Mave. He was told that Mave was not there, and referred to Father James Farrell, to whose house he went at once. The priest was out, but Pierce was shown into the little parlor, and the first object his glance fell upon was a letter addressed to himself—placed conspicuously upon the mantel-piece. He snatched it with a terrified foreboding, and learned the worst in the first lines. Mave had left the country; she had taken her mother's little savings, and strong recommendations from her friends to certain persons in America who could help her to establish herself as a teacher. She loved him, she would never cease to love him; but she had learned self-distrust and fled from the temptation to do that what was wrong in itself with the presumptuous notion that it might turn out rightly in her case. She implored Pierce to believe that although she could not change him by any influence of hers, he could change himself by the aid of the always obtainable grace of God, and she reminded him of the Vow of the Shamrock. Finally she told him that although she left him absolutely free from any tie to her but that of friendship, she did not doubt that they were destined to meet in the good time to come, when he should have learned what was the intention for which he was pledged to pray daily, and so she bade him farewell. Pierce Carrick was still in the parlor, poring over the letter, when Father James Farrell came in, and an interview, stormy on the side of the lover, kindly and forbearing on that of the priest, ensued. But Pierce was calmed and comforted before he left Cromore, and he shook hands with Father James, who walked down with to the little pier, with a cordiality which amazed him when he recalled it afterward.

"Poor young fellow," thought Father James, "he never had a chance till this one, and there's a lot of good in him. I'd rather it had never happened. She might have been called to higher and holier things; but I hope, I do hope, he will earn her yet."
Pierce Carrick returned to Shaughlin, having gone through many moods on the way, passed the evening with his father in an angry wrangle about ways and means, and went to his own room tired out, and full of the notion that there was nothing better than enlistment before him.

He was perfectly sober; for the first time he had not thought of drink as a ready way of forgetting trouble. Strange to say, he was not hopeless. He meant to win Mave yet, and he religiously observed the obligation of his vow. Her "intention." What was it? He knew not yet; but he had a dim perception that with that knowledge the way to her would be found. The morning came, and Pierce Carrick was roused from his sleep by a

frightened servant, who besought him to come to the "master." This was something wrong. Mr. Carrick was sleeping so soundly that he could not wake him. His son hastened to his room, and saw, with the first glance at the set face that there would be no waking for him in this world.

It is St. Patrick's Day, in the year of grace 1886. The scholars, boys and girls, have recently vacated the spacious and orderly classrooms of an imposing-looking school-house in a square space in a wide street of a brand new "city," in one of the Western States of the Union. The city is in its teens, but life there is in its vigor, and the signs of prosperity and progress are visible everywhere. In this far western region of the New World, Mave Sullivan has become a personage and a power. Her intellect and her character had made themselves felt in that new and free community, and she got on from holding the small post which she had been offered on the strength of the recommendation she took with her, to be the handsomely-paid and highly-considered "school-marm" of the Catholic college. More than once Mave recognized faces from home among new-comers to the city, and Irish boys and girls were numerous among her own pupils; but the grave and beautiful young teacher, whose likeness to the typical picture of Erin was speedily recognized, was as much associated by the born Americans as by her own people. Her life was useful, prosperous—and happy? Hardly: it was hopeful, trustful, prayerful, and when after a while there came good news to her, faithfully transmitted by Father James, it began to be happy. The priest kept the secret of her whereabouts from Pierce inexorably, but he sent her lover's letters to her, and observed, at first with regret, but as time went on with satisfaction, that Pierce Carrick's attachment to Mave remained unchanged. The embarrassed young owner of Shaughlin and parish priest of Cromore became fast friends; to the latter, the former went for advice, as to one who knew all about the people, concerning whom, Pierce Carrick, although he had lived all his days among them, knew nothing. Of his ignorance he had now, however, got the grace to be ashamed. The state of affairs at Shaughlin, as disclosed on Mr. Carrick's death, was worse than Pierce had surmised it to be, and a period of trouble, sacrifice and humiliation set in for him which was calculated to try him to the utmost. Those days were old days now, and the end of his probation was near: the reward of his self-conquest was at hand.

Mave Sullivan sat in her spacious parlor, close by the wide window, with an open letter in her hand—it was the latest received from Father James—and her eyes were fixed upon a water-color drawing on an easel near her. The sketch represented a slope of green hillside, a cottage with a porch, and curving away on either side, thick groves of trees in full foliage. To that spot how often had her heart, untraveled, turned, with a great longing for home! But this was over now; the land of her adoption would henceforth be home, in reality, though Ireland would be ever dear and sacred to her. Her lover—faithful, true, triumphant in the hardest and noblest of fights, a self-conqueror, a doer of the right, not for her sake or under her persuasion, but for its own sake and by the grace of God, one with her in Faith, Hope and Charity—was coming to claim her and where Pierce would be "home" to Mave forevermore.

"I am not in the least afraid for you now, my dear child," wrote Father James, "you and he have both learned the lesson you wanted. He has done his best to atone for the ill-deeds of the Carricks, and he leaves the place with a blessing. I am very sorry to see him go, but he will have to work in earnest, and that is not to be done here by a man with a past like his."
Was he much changed? Mave wondered. Would it be the same handsome face she should look into, after the years of separation, and what change would he see in her? The matter of her looks had begun to interest her since she had known that Pierce was coming. He came, and the very first quite coherent sentence uttered was: "You are far more beautiful than when we parted, Mave, and more like 'Erin' than ever."
Pierce had sold land to the tenant-farmers at its fair value, discharged every debt, and left Shaughlin to a brighter future, taking with him the slender remnant that now made all his worldly wealth wherewith to procure a share in one of the stirring industries of

the Western city where Mave lived and worked. Of this project it need only be said that it has proved successful. The wedding of Pierce Carrick and Mave Sullivan was quite an imposing ceremony, and very pretty, for the friends and pupils of the Irish school-teacher made the most of the occasion, and the story of the long-parted lovers lent it a romantic interest. Only one thing was missing, the presence of Father James. If he who had received her lover into the Church of God could have joined their hands in the sacrament of holy matrimony, Mave would have had no earthly wish unfulfilled. When the bride and bridegroom were at length alone, Pierce Carrick handed to Mave a little prayer book, which he always carried, and bade her undo the clasp. She found a single stem of shamrock pasted on the fly leaf.
"Thore it is," he said, "and although it was a long time before I put the shamrock into that book, or even knew what the 'Hail Mary' meant, I never once failed to say the prayer, three times, morning and evening, once for each leaf. My darling, let me say this one word about the old wretchedness; I do believe the thing that began to cure me of drinking was the fear lest I should forget, or not be in a fit state, to say the 'Hail Mary' for my Mave's intention."
"Ceastal rosy red" she blushed, and her heart leaped up to Heaven in humble thankfulness.
"Tell me now, what was your 'intention'?"
"That you should come to feel just that," she answered, and hid her face on his breast.

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