

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

BY THE REV. F. P. HICKEY, O. S. B.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

SINS OF THE TONGUE

"Be slow to speak and slow to anger." (James 1: 19).

This warning of St. Paul is utterly neglected, day after day, by a great part of mankind. The sins of the tongue, and the unhappiness and sin caused by them, affect every one of our lives; so that St. James says, "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man" (Jas. iii. 2): and the wise man bears the same testimony, saying, "For who is there that has not offended with his tongue?" (Ecclus. ix. 17); and again, "Many have fallen by the edge of the sword, but not so many as have perished by their own tongue" (ibid., xxviii. 22).

If, then, these sins are so common and their consequences so direful, is it not well for us to take the warning to heart, and study to bridle our tongue and "be slow to speak"? Uncharitableness is at the root of the evil—lies, backbiting, unkind gossip, detraction, calumny—do not they all spring from this, that we do not love our neighbor as ourselves? Our neighbor—our brother, indeed, for are we not all children of our heavenly Father?—has a right to his good name, and to injure that, to rob him of that, is an insult against our Blessed Lord, Who loves him as much as He loves us. And a sin of the tongue is not a single, isolated sin, as a bad thought or envy or hatred might be—but "may trouble many that were at peace."

There is the friend, or friends, to whom the evil word is spoken. An evil, impure word or suggestion, that may blight and sully an innocent soul; a slanderous word that may teach him to think evil of his neighbor. How often have we given ear to such discourses, afraid through human respect to check it, or perhaps giving a willing ear to it! Thus we become partner in its wickedness, and increase the sin of the speaker, for he will have to answer for the harm he has done our soul. The Scripture calls an evil word a poisoned dart, but it is worse. A dart, however deadly, usually finds but one victim. But an evil word may be as widespread in its havoc as the explosion of an infernal machine! For who can tell how many victims it may find?

One person is guilty of the calumny, for instance. He tells it to one or more. But the person calumniated knows nothing of it; he is at peace as yet! But, alas! for how long! Presently, the false friend, the talebearer, the mischief-maker—call him or her what you will—comes and repeats what is said. The Scripture says: "Hast thou heard a word against thy neighbor? let it die within thee" (Ecclus. xix. 10). But instead of that, how many, for gossip's sake, through mischief or perhaps through foolishness, come hot-footed to spread the evil, to destroy one's peace of mind, to enkindle anger and un forgiveness for the injurious words that have been uttered. It has always been the same with poor human nature; and in the Old Testament we read, "The whisperer and the double-tongued is accursed, for he hath troubled many that were at peace. The tongue of a third person hath disquieted many. The tongue of a third person hath cast out valiant women, and deprived them of their labors. The stroke of a whip maketh a blue mark, but the stroke of the tongue will break the bones" (aye, break hearts) (Ecclus. xxviii. 16, 22).

The third person it is that makes the mischief. There is the backbiter, who utters the lie or the vile aspersion; the victim, the one maligned, as yet at peace in ignorance; but it is the third person, whose "wicked word will change his heart," who, by being a talebearer, wounds his soul, fills it with anger, malice, and hatred. The injustice of it rankles. His peace of mind is gone. What misery, what sins are caused every day by the mischief-maker and the talebearer! If he had only been slow to speak and to repeat, the victim would have been left in peace.

In life we each may be one of these three—the liar or calumniator, or the talebearer, or the one injured and provoked to anger and resentment. To avoid sin we must be on our guard, and careful to be slow to speak. We must respect our neighbor's good name, and neither truly nor falsely speak ill of him. Who are we to pronounce judgment on our brother? Let him that is without sin cast the first stone.

Secondly, we must beware lest we become partner in another's sin by giving ear to malicious talk. If we listen we may repeat. Be brave enough to show that such talk is repugnant to you. And lastly, if we have been maligned, we must "be slow to anger." If what is said against us is false, "blessed are ye, if you suffer unjustly," says St. Peter. If we deserve the evil words, let us humble ourselves, and remember, if we forgive, we shall be forgiven! This is hard, and human nature may find it impossible of itself. But though we are hurt and our hearts well-nigh broken, and resentment seething within us, we must be slow to speak and slow to anger, and turn to our Blessed Lord, and pray for patience and a forgiving heart; to

do as He bids us, "pray for them that calumniate you; that you may be the children of your Father, Who is in heaven" (Matt. v. 44, 45).

WORLD TOURING MISSIONARY

By Rev. Michael Mathis, C. S. C.

Dacca, Feb. 16.—Father Hennessy and I had timed our visit to Goa so as to be on hand for the Catholic All-India Conference. This happy coincidence enabled us not only to venerate the body of St. Francis Xavier but also to meet the leading Catholic clergy and laity of India.

We had hardly arrived at the Patriarch's palace at Goa when Monsignor Teixeira insisted on our going with him to the committee meetings of the Conference. These and the general sessions of the Conference took place in the Church of St. Francis of Assisi. It's life-sized statue of the seraphic Saint, clinging to Christ crucified, and the repository for the Blessed Sacrament, are two of the most precious relics of ecclesiastical art of the once magnificent city of Goa.

As I was correspondent of the N. C. W. C. News Service, I was asked to join Father Gille, S. J., the gifted editor of the Catholic Herald of India, and the Catholic Press Committee of which he was the chairman. The successful experience of our American Catholic news agency helped to determine one of the most important resolutions of the Conference, viz., that all Catholic editors take up at once the question of a Catholic Indian News Service.

The father of the Catholic All-India Conference is Mr. F. A. C. Rebello, a wealthy and most enterprising Catholic who now resides in Bombay. He hails from Mangalore, which has produced so many prominent Catholic laymen of India. Mr. Rebello, with his long beard, clear voice, and keen power of analysis, made an impressive figure as he argued his points before the Conference. He confided to me that the inspiration to go on with the Catholic All-India Conference came principally from America. He is a subscriber to almost every Catholic periodical in America. He was most anxious for us to accompany him to his summer home on the coast not far from Goa, but the brevity of our visit made that impossible.

The president, Mr. Raymond, the Judicial Commissioner of Sind, was an ideal chairman and several times prevented clashes that might have interfered seriously with the work of the Conference by his fine judicial temperament and ardent enthusiasm for the cause of the organization. Mr. Pais, the secretary of the Conference, has done much to circulate Catholic news through the daily press and is especially keen on the organization of the Catholic Indian News Service.

Typical of Catholic Young India was Mr. Aloysius Soares, M. A., LL. B., Principal of Gloria Church High School, Bombay, and Mr. George F. Papali, B. A., correspondent of the Madras Mail. Their attitude was marked by a fine respect for the hierarchy and the clergy and keen interest in the latest developments in social problems.

I was particularly interested in the committee for the advancement of the missionary spirit among the Indians themselves. My own convictions about the grand accomplishment of the Catholic Students' Mission Crusade in creating a missionary spirit in America, emboldened me to speak a word on this subject. The Committee agreed heartily with the suggestion and a movement something like our Catholic Students' Mission Crusade will be inaugurated in India.

SCHOLARSHIPS

FOR MATRICULATION STUDENTS

The Ursuline College of Arts, London, Ont., affiliated with the University of Western Ontario, offers five partial residence scholarships of \$100 each, and one tuition scholarship of \$50, for competition for Matriculation classes to be awarded to girl students obtaining highest average on at least six papers of Pass or Honor Matriculation, and fulfilling requirements for admittance to the University of Western Ontario. For further particulars address: Ursuline College of Arts, "Brescia Hall," 556 Wellington St., London Ont.

ENGLISH CATHOLICS COOPERATE

There is considerable cooperation in Great Britain between Catholics and Anglicans and Protestant Non-conformists on social and moral matters, in which the Catholics can give considerable help without compromising Faith. This cooperation has made for very good relations between Catholics and non-Catholics, and, to a certain extent, had broken down a good deal of prejudice.

There is, for example, the question of the drink traffic. The Catholics have always worked along their own lines in this sphere of moral influence; but the first prominent act of cooperation with the non-Catholics took place under the episcopate of Cardinal Manning, who was a great temperance advocate himself, and came forward prominently to speak on the public

platform when he was Archbishop of Westminster.

Cardinal Bourne has taken up the task that the late Cardinals Manning and Vaughan laid down at their deaths, and he is taking an active part in the campaign which the Temperance Council of the Christian Churches is inaugurating at the Mansion House in London. The Archbishop of Canterbury is presiding, but with the Anglican Primate appears on the platform Cardinal Bourne, who joins his support to that of the leaders of the Free Churches.

Another good instance of this cooperation comes from Brighton, a seaside resort made famous by George IV., and where the Catholics and the High Church Anglicans are in the religious ascendant. Catholics and Anglicans and Free Churchmen are cooperating in this town for a Christian policy in politics, economy, and citizenship.

N. Y. PARISH SCHOOLS

New York, March 21.—An interesting item which figures in the annual report shortly to be issued by the Superintendents of Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of New York by the Right Rev. Joseph P. Smith and the Rev. Michael J. Larkin is that nearly one and one-half million dollars was spent for the maintenance of the parochial schools within the diocese last year. The exact amount totals \$1,448,995.

In the archdiocese there are 179 parochial schools, with a property value of \$19,048,500. During the school year of 1922 these schools had a total registration of 97,960 boys and girls. The teaching staff of the 370 schools consisted of 1,423 religious, 526 lay teachers and 811 special teachers, making a total of 2,260 teachers. The number of graduates of the parochial schools last year was 6,463, and of that number 4,566 are continuing their studies in higher institutions—2,336 in Catholic high schools and colleges and 2,230 in public high schools and colleges.


The New York archdiocese consists of three boroughs of the city of New York—Manhattan, Bronx and Richmond—the city of Yonkers, the counties of Westchester, Orange, Rockland, Ulster, Sullivan, Dutchess and Putnam, and the Bahama Islands. In that portion of the archdiocese within the bounds of Greater New York, there are 112 parochial schools, with 80,406 pupils and 1,876 teachers.

In the boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens which are a part of the diocese of Brooklyn, there are 105 parochial schools, making a total of 217 Catholic parish schools in Greater New York.

Considering the present overcrowded conditions of the New York Public schools, the city educational heads would find it difficult indeed, if not impossible, to provide for the education of the pupils of these parish schools if the various Catholic parishes were not maintaining their own schools.

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