

FIVE-MINUTE SERMON.

Third Sunday of Advent. ON SINCERITY IN CONFESSION.

Who art thou?—John 1, 19. Who art thou? is the question asked of St. John by the ambassadors of the Pharisees, the priests and Levites from Jerusalem. We should often put the same question to ourselves, especially when we are about to approach the tribunal of penance, to be reconciled to God. For then it is an imperative duty imposed by faith, to acknowledge to ourselves in the examination of conscience, what we are before God, and to accuse ourselves to the priest, as we feel guilty before the Omniscient Sanctity. Unfortunately, however, there are Christians, yes, many, who, when they are in actual communication with God Himself, make an outrageous mockery of truth. Governed by pride or shame, they either conceal their sins or put them in such a light that the confessor finds no guilt in them.

The terrible consequence is that their confession is unworthy and they receive no forgiveness of sin. Still greater evil follows, for the confession is of no value in the sight of God, and another crime is added to the unforgiven guilt, a crime greater than which cannot be imagined, viz: the profanation of the holiest gift of religion, one of the sacraments of the New Law. But even here the evil does not rest, for faith teaches us that every sacrament received in such a state is a new sacrilege. Behold! to-day you make an unworthy confession, to-morrow you, as Judas, receive holy Communion. After six weeks you again approach the sacraments, and add two more sacrileges to your fearful guilt. After some years you receive the sacrament of matrimony or of extreme unction, new sacrileges, and then a chain of sacrileges is forged and interminably continued, until you repair all the invalid confessions by a good general confession.

Unfortunate sinner, who thus accumulates mountains of sin, I must ask you, and justly so: why do you not remain away from the tribunal of penance? If you insist upon going to hell, the sins you already have committed will plunge you sufficiently deep into that eternal abyss; you need not, by a sacrilegious confession and by the crime of Judas, force yourself deeper into the eternal fiery gulch of divine wrath. Remain away from confession, even from your Easter duty, remain away, for by a sacrilegious reception of the sacraments you will not fulfil the commandment of the Church, but you will make yourself more culpable and more criminal before God.

But no, what did I say? Remain away! No, do not remain away, my dear brother, come to confession, but come in all sincerity and humility. What have you to fear; of what have you to be ashamed? Can that be a disgrace which God commands? No, my dear friend, to commit sin is a disgrace, shameful before God, the world and yourself, but to confess the sin, and to obliterate it, is no disgrace, but an honor to the angels and a consolation to the confessor. What is easier, I ask you, to confess to the priest of God, bound to eternal secrecy, or to be tortured during your whole life, by fear, by the remorse of conscience, as by the stings of a serpent? Which is easier, to confess now to one, whose mouth is as silent as the grave, or to confess before Heaven and earth, before all angels and men, and to burn in the fire of hell for all eternity? Unhappy Christian! there is no middle way, and you still hesitate. Oh, no, cast yourself before the blessed Sacrament, that throne of mercy, and promise your Saviour there really present: I will regain peace with God and my conscience; I will no longer hide what, unhappily, I concealed in confession, no matter how enormous the crime may have been, no matter if it reaches back to the earliest days of my childhood. I will atone for all my sacrilegious confessions and Communions by a good, general confession, and by sincere works of penance make myself worthy of the infinite mercy of God. Thus, my dear Christians, you must speak to-day to God, and to yourself, and do not hesitate to carry your resolution into effect, so that you may regain the peace of the children of God, and that this consoling thought may comfort you in your hour of death: I have, on such a day, made my peace with God, and can now confidently approach His judgment-seat.

You, however, my dear Christians, when you approach the tribunal of penance, never forget what faith teaches you: either acknowledge or burn! Confess or be tortured! You must go to confession, or to hell! Go to the priest or to the devil! Always make a sincere and contrite confession, without which there is no forgiveness, and present it to God as an offering of penance. Say, with the royal prophet, David, Confitebor, I will confess, and God will answer, Remittam, I will forgive. Amen.

Fever and Ague and Bilious Derangements are positively cured by the use of FARMER'S PILLS. They not only cleanse the stomach and bowels from all bilious matter, but they open the excretory vessels, causing them to pour copious effusions from the blood into the bowels, after which the corrupted mass is thrown out by the natural passage of the body. They are used as a general family medicine with the best results.

The Best Pills.—Mr. Wm. Vandervoort, Sydney Crossing, Ont., writes: "We have been using FARMER'S PILLS, and find them by far the best pills we ever used." For delicate and debilitated constitutions these pills act like a charm. Taken as directed, the effect is both a tonic and a stimulant, mildly exciting the secretions of the body, giving tone and vigor.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

House of Never. The house of Never is built, they say, just over the hills of the By-and-By; its gates are reached by a devious way, hidden from all but an angel's eye. It winds about and in and out the hills and dales to sever, once over the hills of the By-and-By and you're lost in the house of Never.

The house of Never is filled with wails, with just-in-a-minute and pretty-sons; The noise of their wings as they beat the gates Comes back to earth in the afternoons. When shadows fly across the sky And rush in rude endeavor To question the hills of the By and By As they ask for the house of Never.

The house of Never was built with tears; And lost in the hills of the By and By Are a million hopes and a million fears— A baby's smiles and a woman's cry. The winding way seems bright to-day. Then darkness falls forever; For over the hills of the By and By Sorrow wails in the house of Never.

Don't Snub. Don't snub a boy because he stutters. Demosthenes, the greatest orator of Greece, overcame a harsh and stammering voice.

Don't snub a boy because of the ignorance of his parents. Shakespeare, the world's poet, was the son of a man who was unable to write his own name.

Don't snub a boy who seems dull or stupid. Hogarth, the celebrated painter and engraver, was slow at learning, and did not develop as soon as most boys.

Don't snub a boy because he wears shabby clothing. When Edison, the great inventor, first entered Boston he wore a pair of yellow linen breeches, in the depth of winter.

Don't snub any one, not alone because they might outstrip you in the race of life, but because it is neither kind, nor right, nor Christian.

A Companion in Poverty. A waif of a boy was eating a stale half loaf on the street corner with the air of a starveling, when a stray dog came along and crunched at his feet. The hungry look remained in the boy's eyes, but he glanced down at the vagabond dog, and said, in a friendly way, "What you want? This ain't no bone. Git!" The dog moved off a little, and again it crunched and looked wistfully at the food. "Say, do yer want this? No, I do?" asked the waif. "Speak, can't yer?" The dog gave a quick bark, and the boy threw him the rest of the loaf. "Nuff sed," he remarked as he watched him eat ravenously. "I ain't the feller to see a pard in trouble." The boy went one way, and the dog he had befriended another, both the better for the encounter.

Helps to Patience. A woman, whose life has been long and chequered with many reverses, said lately: "Nothing has given me more courage to face every day's duties and troubles than a few words spoken to me when I was a child by my old father. He was the village doctor. I came into his office, where he was compounding medicine, one day, looking cross and ready to cry. "What is the matter, Mary?" and washing dishes all day, and every day, and what good does it do? To-morrow the beds will be to make and the dishes to wash over again.

"Look, child," he said, "do you see these little empty vials? They are insignificant, cheap things, of no value in themselves; but in one I put a deadly poison, in another a sweet perfume, in a third a healing medicine. "Nobody cares for the vials; it is that which they carry that kills or cures. Your daily work, the dishes washed or the floors swept are homely things and count for nothing in themselves; but it is the anger or the sweet patience or zeal or high thoughts that you put into them that shall last. These make your life."

No strain is harder upon the young than to be forced to do work which they feel is beneath their faculties, yet no discipline is more helpful. "The wise builder watches, not the bricks which his journeyman lays, but the manner in which he lays them."

"They also serve," said John Milton, "who only stand and wait."

This is How They Rise. A young woman recently found employment in a queensware store. She immediately began a course of study, in her leisure moments, upon glassware and china. Then she read some recent works upon the appointments of the table, and in a short time, by applying herself to her business, became the most valuable employe in a large store.

In a millinery establishment the young woman who found time for reading a book or two on colors and their harmonious combination, found her own taste greatly improved and her ability to please patrons much greater. She was soon a favorite with the employers and customers.

The young woman, who, to earn an honorable living, went into a lady's kitchen, and instead of gossiping every evening, found time to read a few good books and household papers, was soon too valuable a housekeeper to be kept in a subordinate position in the kitchen. She knew how a table should look for a formal dinner; she knew what dishes were in season; she knew how to serve a meal in its proper courses, and, more than that, she knew something about the food value of different dishes.

Of course, this sounds like an old-fashioned Sunday school book; but the fact remains that there is always "room at the top," and that no unusual amount of intelligence is needed to reach the top. A fair average of good sense and a proper amount of applica-

tion will accomplish everything.—Womankind.

A Courageous Rescue. Courage is often spoken of as a 'manly' virtue, but would it not be a truer definition to say a 'Christian Gift,' since it is given even to young girls to exercise it, as well as to brave, unselfish men? This was illustrated some years ago by Alice Ayres a young servant living as nursemaid in an old man's family. Not a grand position as likely to bring her public admiration, but one where she did her daily duties so faithfully that her master and mistress felt they could leave her in charge of the three children usually confided to her care. One night she put them to bed, and had no misgivings till the terrible cry of "Fire!" close below the window came to frighten her; nor even did she realize that the awful enemy was within the very house in which she was, and had so fast gained ground that the only hope of escape for her and her charges must be through the window. "Jump down!" the bed will catch you!" sounded in her ears from below; but I do not believe she for a moment thought of leaving her charges to save herself. Carefully she carried each of the three little ones through the blinding smoke and ever-increasing heat, dropping each safely on the bed below held by kindly outstretched arms. Then came the time to save herself and the attempt was made, but whether the strain of what she had just done had been too much for her powers, or the fast increasing smoke and heat of the fire stupefied her, she reeled as she jumped from the window, and fell, not on the bed but on to the pavement, breaking her spine, and so ending service and life. And so also she escaped the danger of praise from her fellow-men, receiving, we may confidently believe, the praise which cometh of God.

Three Little Girls. Gretchen, Marta and Lena sat upon the doorstep twirling their thumbs in the "sm."

"Get up, Gretchen, thou lazy bones, the porridge burns while you sit dreaming away; Marta go to the barnyard and feed the hungry fowls, who are crying from your neglect; Lena, go fetch the unfinished stockings and knit until the sun sets. You are a pack of shiftless good-for-nothing wenches, who needs must have the idleness beaten out of you."

And with these words, the angry mother lifts from the nail above, a heavy sheep skin lash, with which she beat the bare ankles of her three idle daughters until they howl with pain. "Let us run away!" cry Gretchen and Marta and Lena together.

So the three little maidens leave kitchen and barnyard and gardens and run away, through the valleys, and over the mountains, until they can no longer see the chimneys of the old, red farm house.

"We are free!" cried the little maidens, dancing until their long braids coil and twist themselves like golden serpents.

Thus they dance and laugh and sing until they come to the banks of a dark, flowing river, near which sits an ugly, dirty, ragged old woman, moaning and walling as she beats her withered flesh, and tares the gray hairs from her head.

"Prithese, good mother," cry the three little girls in one breath, "why do you beat yourself so cruelly?" "Alack-a-day, my pretty maidens, because the old woman, "I beat myself because when I was young like you and shunned honest work, my mother did not beat the idleness out of me; that is why I am to-day friendless and penniless. Alack-a-day, alack-a-day."

With these doleful words, the old woman resumed her journey, and the three little maidens, turning their faces to the wind, run as fast as they can over mountains and through valleys, until the chimneys of the old farm house come into sight.

"O mother," cried Gretchen and Marta and Lena, running into the bright, fire-lit kitchen, "let us stay with you and learn to make porridge, and feed chickens and knit; we would rather have you beat us now than to have to beat ourselves when we are old."

GERMAN CATHOLICS.

From the Ave Maria. In an interview granted to a representative of the Sydney (N. S. W.) Freeman, Cardinal Moran told of a pleasant memory he cherishes of Seckingen, a little German town which he visited in 1888, and where is still preserved the shrine of St. Fridolin, an Irish missionary of the early times. His Eminence said:

One of the churches at Seckingen had been handed over to the Old Catholics. The parishioners numbered 300, and how many think you attended the service? Six! When we visited the place in 1888 the church had been restored to the parishioners, who had erected a marble slab commemorating the happy day. On the slab I read that through the hostility of the State, the church had been handed over to the enemies of the Catholic faith. Then followed the record that the whole body of parishioners, walking in procession with their children, with banners flying and all singing joyous hymns of thanksgiving, had re-entered their church. I tell you this to show the loyalty of the devoted Catholics of Germany. Such examples of firmness in clinging to the faith are not at all rare.

The Children's Enemy. Scrofula often shows itself in early life and is characterized by swellings, abscesses, hip disease, etc. Consumption is scrofula of the lungs. In this class of diseases Scott's Emulsion is unquestionably the most reliable medicine.

Are your corners hard to remove than those that others have had? Have they not had the same kind? Have they not been cured by using Holloway's Corn Cure? Try a bottle.

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN.

Your are your Brother's Keeper. Have you no pity for the young fellow who, a stranger to that peace which you have in your own soul, makes mock of sin, and is thoughtlessly twining round himself habits which will be like iron bands to him in days to come? How will it be if at the great day no one confesses to have received a good impulse from your life, if no soul claims before the Great White Throne to be better because you have lived?

The Consequences of Drink. The superintendent of a hospital for children at Bern, Switzerland, has found by careful observation that only 45 per cent. of those whose parents used intoxicating liquors habitually had good constitutions, while 82 per cent of the children of temperate parents had sound bodies. Of the children of inebriates, only 6 per cent. were healthy. Can any man "drink and take the consequences," or must his children take the consequences?—Popular Health Magazine.

The Pledge Against Tobacco. A junior society in connection with a young men's organization, is often wisely influenced. For instance, in a certain locality, 167 boys under fifteen years of age have signed the pledge to refrain from the use of cigarettes and tobacco in any form until they are twenty-one years of age; and also give over to the Association all cigarette pictures and buttons now in their possession, with the result that hundreds of immoral pictures have been taken away from boys, and a number have been helped to keep from the use of tobacco.—Catholic Columbian.

Respect for Women. When a man habitually speaks slightlying of any women, of women as a class, he betrays himself in attempting to injure women. It is related that at a public dinner recently, at which no women were present, a man of this ilk was called upon to respond to the toast "Women." He dwelt almost entirely upon the weakness of the sex, claiming that the bestness of the art altogether, in their worst, the difference being in their surroundings. At the conclusion of his speech one of the guests rose and said: "I trust that the gentleman in the application of his remarks refers to his own mother and sisters and not to ours." This answer turned his weapon against himself with a vengeance. A celebrated author says: "The criterion of a man's character is not his creed, moral, intellectual, or religious; it is the degree of respect that he has for women." An eminent clergyman pays this noble tribute, "I am more grateful to God for the sense that came to me through my mother and sisters of the substantial integrity, purity and nobility of womanhood than for almost anything else in the world." Such golden memories color the book of life with the beauty of God.

Short Hand. Young Men's Department.—Can you give me any encouragement? I am studying phonography, but I do not seem to make much progress. I can write only about 50 words a minute. That is my top speed, on trial, when I go no faster than is safe for me afterwards to make out readily and accurately in a Chicago paper that a shorthand writer in Quincy, Ill., had written 402 words in a minute, in a test before a business college. I'll never reach that speed, but I like throwing up the sponge altogether. I've been at it six months, but only of evenings, and mostly by myself, having had little practice taking down from the reading of others.

Don't you believe that Chicago story, it is not true. No man can read 402 words a minute, much less record them in writing. Try it yourself. If you read 200 words in that time you will be doing well. Now the average speed of public speakers is only 120 words, and very few of them exceed that number. If you get up to the ability to take down correctly 150 words a minute you can get plenty of work in the Government service, in law courts, in newspaper offices. So keep on. You have done remarkably well under the circumstances. If in six months you have acquired the skill to take down 75 words a minute, with a reader, more of steady practice, with a reader, you could get up to 150. The late Dennis F. Murphy, the best verbatim reporter that ever handled a pencil, who was for many years the official stenographer of the United States Senate, claimed only that he could take down 220 words a minute, and he was the ablest and most trustworthy expert that Congress could find. Take heart, then, and persevere.—Catholic Columbian.

The Young Man in Business. Dr. Farrar, Dean of Canterbury, makes this contribution to the wisdom for young men:

"While it is the surest rule for success that a youth should make himself indispensable, he may be sure that, in nine cases out of ten, in promoting the interests of his employer, he is promoting his own. In the world of clerking, which is a very crowded world, our young Englishmen often murmur that, in many great regions of commerce, they are being ousted by German clerks. But why are they? The best things go to those who are best prepared for them. A very wealthy man of high station and a member of Parliament told me that if he advertised for a clerk who knew enough of modern languages to conduct a wide business correspondence, he could ever and over again find German youths. They had come to England and served for nothing in order to learn English, and, while they were content with modest salaries, could often speak and

write three or four languages, whereas the English candidates rarely knew anything but English. Naturally, he was obliged to engage those whose knowledge made them most serviceable.

He also mentioned a remarkable trait of difference between his German and his English clerks. When 6 o'clock came and business hours were over, every English clerk would jump up from his seat the moment the clock struck, shut his books with a bang, hurry them into his desk, and be off in a moment to his gymnasium and his bicycle. The German clerks would, in the interests of their employer and his business, quietly wait till they had finished the particular matter on which they were occupied. All our sympathies may be with the English lads, but the others would be more likely to get promoted and to earn higher salaries."

Work Without Waste. Not many months ago, in commenting on the death of a noted Englishman, the London Spectator spoke of the change of habit which had been forced upon him by the announcement on the part of his physician that his heart was seriously affected, and noted "the hush" which fell upon the man's life forever afterwards. It is unquestionably true that a great many valuable lives are largely wasted by a useless expenditure of nervous force, by restlessness, haste, and the physical excitement which are induced by the agitation of the body and of the brain. The hush which is imposed upon some men by the knowledge of a possibly fatal disease ought to be secured by all men of activity; for the waste of vitality comes not so much from work as from the leakage of haste and useless nervous action. There is an immense amount of activity which is generally regarded as intellectual, but which is purely nervous and which means nothing except ignorance of the laws of health and lack of self control.

The secret of prolonged and sustained working power is the husbanding of all vitality and the direction of it to a single end. The greatest as well as the most delicate machines work with the slightest possible loss of force, because they work with absolute steadiness and ease. A man like Stephen A. Douglass who was invalid for many years, accomplishes immense results by focusing his entire strength along one line and by living calmly and quietly in the prosecution of his tasks. Such a man refuses to be agitated or hurried by insignificant events and by uncontrolled emotions. He is steadied by the very magnitude of his task, and the concentration of his energy relieves him, in large measure, of the temptation to waste his power through a thousand obscure and useless rivulets.

Fussy people are rarely effective people. The greatest executive force goes with a certain calmness and absence of hurry, and it is a significant fact that the people who accomplish the most always seem to have leisure. The habit of working without waste is fortunately one which can be cultivated, and which after once being consciously adopted, becomes the natural method of work.

The wisdom of the children of the world is great. Jesus Christ declares it in the gospel, and it is often greater than that of the children of light; but there is to be found in it, notwithstanding its specious and brilliant pretensions, a terrible defect. It is death for those who take it for a guide of life.

Thousands of Girls Need the Same Remedy, for They are Suffering from Similar Diseases—Dodd's Kidney Pills Will Cure Them.

Toronto, Dec. 5.—There are thousands of girls in this city who are passing the best years of their lives in sickness and misery, when they should be enjoying the blessings of health, strength, and vigor.

The observer who will watch the crowds of girls and young women, streaming homeward every evening, after their hard day's work, cannot but be struck by the many faces of young faces—that should be rosy with the glow of health, with sparkling eyes, and well rounded cheeks, but which are pale and care-worn, with dark circles round eyes that have lost their brightness.

A glance is enough to show that these tired and worn out girls are suffering. And such a spectacle is doubly bad, because there is no need for it. Dodd's Kidney Pills would bring the brightness back to the eyes, the bloom to the cheek, the firmness to the step, the vigor to the entire body.

No other medicine on earth can produce such astonishingly beneficial results in these cases, as Dodd's Kidney Pills can and will.

Miss Mary Dinsdale, 73 Esther street, has proved the truth of this statement. She says: "I have been a sufferer from Female Weakness, Nervous and Liver Trouble, and doctored without deriving any benefit. I began using Dodd's Kidney Pills, and my recovery dated from that time. They have cured me thoroughly."

A trial will speedily convince any sufferer that Dodd's Kidney Pills will positively restore her to health.

All forms of scrofula, sores, boils, pimples and eruptions, are quickly and permanently cured by Hood's Sarsaparilla.

BUY Clemen's Salt THE BEST

HOLIDAY GIFTS.

As the holiday season approaches we begin to think about presenting our friends with suitable gifts—and what can be more appropriate than a good book? Here are a few which we have in stock and which we should be pleased to send to any one, at prices given below:

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Stories and Incidents of the Crusades, by Maria's Crucifix, by E. Marion Crawford. 1 00  
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Catechism of Familiar Things. 1 00  
Ellena, by Mrs. Augustus Craven. 40  
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The Lady's Daughter, by Miss C. M. Laddell. 75  
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