

FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS.

THE HAPPINESS OF TRUE Penance. Rejoice Jerusalem. (Detroit of the Mass for the Day.) This is called "Lactare, or rejoicing Sunday."

It may surprise you, dear brethren, to be told that this is a day of rejoicing; you will be amazed, no doubt, that in the midst of the rigorous Lenten fast, when men should bewail their sins and do penance for them, and sounds of mirth and joy are hushed, the Church should bid us rejoice. Yet thus she does to-day. Her children rejoice, would have them forget for the moment penance and turn their hearts to thoughts of gladness, that, by so doing, she may teach them that the rigors of this season, the self-denial and curbing of the flesh she imposes on us, is undergone that we may realize more fully the spirit of her teaching—that we may, in truth, preserve, or get back if we have lost it, that interior joy, that spiritual jubilation which is the portion of every one who serves Christ as he should be served.

Our religion is one of joy, because we are Christ's and He is ours; and what more can we ask, or what greater can be bestowed upon us, than the having of Christ—Christ, at once perfect man and true God; Christ, whose life is the model of our lives, whose grace is the source of all joy; Christ, to have whom is to have a brother, and, at the same time, the eternal and, the God by whose word were made all things that are, who knows no limit to His power, who has in Himself all perfections that man can desire or conceive of; a brother, a man like ourselves, with a human heart like our own, with affections like those of other men; a brother burning with tender love for us, knowing our weaknesses, knowing our wants and ready to succor us; a man who was Himself tempted, who has Himself suffered the miseries of this life, who, in a word, was made like to us in all save sin. This is whom we have when we have Christ, and should we not rejoice at having such a one?

We should and do rejoice; our hearts are always full of gladness when we are in God's grace, and Christ is ours and we are his; and this is what the Church wishes for all her children—the friendship and the love of God. She ever has Christ herself, and so is never sad; though she may mourn with Him suffering, still there is joy behind all her sorrow.

If she puts on sombre garments, if she calls man to penance, if she fasts and covers her head with ashes, she is still glad in the depths of her heart. She is calling you and me to share the gladness, to get it back if we have lost it by mortal sin; she is bidding you and me to keep that gladness by chastising our bodies; she is warning us that we may lose God's grace, as, alas! too many before us have lost it, unless we are vigilant.

Dear brethren, listen to the Church's voice to-day; come, all of you, come and share her joy. If you are not in God's grace do not let another day go by without making your peace with God. Oh! how much you are losing, and for what? For some trifling satisfaction which cannot bring true happiness; some mean gratification of your lower nature; for sin you are letting slip by the offer of God's friendship and the joy of a good conscience. Do you want to die as you are living? If you do not, repent of your sins to-day; before you leave this church promise God that you will sin no more; that you will be in fact what you are in name—a Christian.

Five Millions of Them Unbaptized. The impression prevails generally among Catholics that the negroes of the South are Christians of some sort—Methodists, Baptists, or the like. But the truth is that nearly five millions of them are not Christians at all. All the Protestant sects claim an aggregate of less than two millions; and the Catholic Church has less than two hundred thousand. All the rest still cling to the pagan superstitions they brought with them from Africa, mixed up with some scraps and shreds of Christianity gathered from their surroundings. It is safe to assert that five millions of them have never been baptized.

Whatever else we may say of the negroes we must admit that they have a great fund of natural religion and piety. We must also admit, to our shame, that if a greater number of them are not Catholics, it is not their fault, but ours.

"The little ones ask for bread, and there is no one to break it to them." (Lam. iv. 4.)

Monthly Prizes for Boys and Girls. The "Sunlight" Soap Co., Toronto, offer the following prizes every month till further notice, to boys and girls under 18, residing in the Province of Ontario, who send the greatest number of "Sunlight" wrappers: 1st, \$10; 2nd, \$5; 3rd, \$3; 4th, \$1; 5th to 14th, a Handmade Book; and 15th to 25th, a picture to those who send not less than 12 wrappers. Send wrappers to "Sunlight" Soap Office, 43 Scott St., Toronto not later than 1st of each month, and marked "Competition." Also give full name, address, age, and published in The Toronto Mail on first Saturday in each month.

Dr. Henry Graham, Wingham, writes: "I was in North Dakota last May, and I took a bottle of Northrop & Lyman's Vegetable without it. While there a lady friend was suffering with indigestion, flatulency and headache. I recommended the Vegetable and she took it. She tried it, and the result was that it did her so much good that I had to leave the balance of the bottle with her."

G. A. Dixon, Frankville, Ont., says: "He was cured of chronic bronchitis that troubled him for seventeen years, by the use of Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil."

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

Little Joe. When Little Joe appeared on the streets of New York two years ago, he was small and slight, with great brown eyes and pinched lips that always wore a smile. Where he came from nobody knew and few cared. His parents, he said, were dead, and he had no friends. It was a hard life. Up at four o'clock in the morning, after sleeping in a dry goods box or in an alley, he worked steadily till late at night. He was misused at first. Big boys stole his papers or crowded him out of a warm place at night, but he never complained. The tears would well up in his eyes, but were quickly brushed away and a new start bravely made. Such conduct won him friends, and after a little time no other boy dared to play tricks upon Little Joe. His friends he remembered and his enemies he forgave. Some days he had especially good luck. Kind-hearted people pitied the little fellow, and bought papers whether they wanted them or not. But he was too generous to save money enough even for a night's lodging. Every boy who got "stuck" knew he was sure to get enough to buy a supper as long as Joe had a penny. But the hard work and exposure began to tell on his weak constitution. He kept growing thinner and thinner till there was scarcely an ounce of flesh on his little body. The skin on his face was drawn closer and closer, but the pleasant look never faded away.

He was uncomplaining to the last. A few weeks ago he awoke one morning after working hard selling "extras" to find himself too weak to move. He tried his best to get upon his feet, but it was a vain attempt. The vital force was gone. "Where is Little Joe?" was the universal inquiry. Finally he was found in a secluded corner, and a good-natured hackman was persuaded to take him to the hospital at Flatbush, where he said he once lived. Every day one of the boys went to see him.

On Saturday a newsboy who had abused him at first, and learned to love him afterwards, found him sitting up in his cot, his blue-veined hand stretched out upon the coverlet.

"I was afraid you wasn't coming," Jerry, the said, with some difficulty, "and I wanted to see you once more so much. I guess it will be the last time, Jerry, for I feel awful weak to-day. Now, Jerry, when I die I want you to be good for my sake. Tell the boys—"

But his message was never completed. Little Joe was dead. His sleep was calm and beautiful. The trouble and anxiety on his wan face had disappeared. But the expression was still there. Even in death he smiled.

It was sad news that Jerry bore back to his friends on that day. They had feared that the end was near and were waiting for him with anxious hearts. When they saw his tear-stained face they knew that Little Joe was dead. Not a word was said; they felt as if they were in the presence of death itself. Their hearts were too full to speak.

That night one hundred boys met in front of the City Hall. They felt that they must express their sense of loss in some way, but how they did not know. Finally, in accordance with the suggestion of one of the larger boys, they passed a resolution which read as follows: "Resolved. That we all liked Little Joe, who was the best newsboy in New York. Everybody is sorry he has died."

A collection was taken up to send delegates to the funeral, and the same hackman who bore Little Joe to the hospital again kindly offered the use of his carriage. The burial took place the next day. On the coffin was a plate purchased by the boys, whose language was expressive from its very simplicity. This was the inscription: LITTLE JOE. Aged 14. The Best Newsboy in New York. We all liked him.

Each boy sent a flower to be placed on the coffin of his friend. This is not a fancy sketch. Every word of the above story is true.—Selected.

"Be Gorra, I Saved The Stars." "I was present not long ago," said the Colonel, "at a banquet where an old army officer of English antecedents was on the programme to speak to the sentiment, 'The Irish in the Union Army—courageous and loyal Americans, they were as true as the truest, as brave as the bravest.' This puzzled me greatly. Why should an American of English descent be called upon to compliment the Irish-Americans. I did not understand the situation until my friend, one of the hard fighters of the war, arose to speak. His speech was simply a little story, and yet it stirred me as few speeches ever did.

"My friend of English antecedents sat near the center of a long table. Almost opposite him sat a stoutly-built man who would have been handsome but for the fact that his eyes were sightless. This blind man received little attention except from the men who sat on either side of him, both of whom were Irishmen and strangers to the majority of the guests. When the toast was read, speaking in such enthusiastic terms of the Irish soldiers of the war, their faces flushed, and they sat erect, looking straight across at the man who was to respond.

"My first surprise was in the manner of the speaker. I knew him to be one of the coolest and most unexcitable of men, but as he rose to his feet I saw

that he was controlled by strong emotion. He stood for a minute looking down the line at the table, as if studying the thoughts of every man present. Then he began in a quiet tone, saying that when this toast was assigned to him he was puzzled to know why he should be selected above all others to speak of Irish courage in the Union Army.

"He had said as much to his wife, but, as he said it, there came to his mind an incident of his army life that made the whole matter clear to him. Then he proceeded to relate the story of his experience at the turning-point of one of the fiercest battles of the war. In the midst of a hand-to-hand contest, where everything depended on every man doing his best, he received a blow that sent him headlong to the ground. When he regained consciousness he realized that a terrific struggle was being fought to the death above him.

"The first objects to catch the eye were two sturdy legs in blue—the legs of someone standing astride of him. The owner of the legs seemed to be bending this way and that to shield the prostrate officer from blows that were falling on his own devoted head. The fight was over the flag, which was torn into fragments as the men struck and cut each other in the fury of their wild excitement, but, happen what might, the one man standing astride the captain never moved his feet. The captain did not know who this stout defender was until, in answer to a demand to surrender, there came in Irish brogue, 'To Halifax with you!'

"He realized then that Pat McBride was fighting against odds for the flag and his captain. He realized, too, as blood came dropping down in his face, that Pat was sorely wounded. He knew this when in a few minutes he was dragged out from the heap of wounded and saw Pat fall down from loss of blood. They found wadded into Pat's blouse that part of the flag containing the stars, and Pat's only remark as they strove to receive him was, 'Be gorra, I saved the stars, alas, that he could never see again.'

"This was in brief the story, but it was told by a man who felt every word, and was told so dramatically that at its close nearly every man at the table was standing on his feet. As the speaker went on to pay his respects to the man who had saved his life, and pictured him as the ideal of soldierly courage and loyalty, the blind man opposite stood like one entranced, and as the speaker closed, he plunged across the table, reckless of glass and china, and with a howl of exultation threw his arms about his old captain.

"The scene that followed was simply indescribable. The story called out all the noisy demonstrativeness of the Irish nature. The speaker was overwhelmed with congratulations and thanks. Listening to what was said, to other stories that this one called out, I understood why an officer of England and accidents had been selected to speak of the courage and spirit of the man of Irish descent in the Union Army.—Chicago Inter-Ocean.

What to do this Lent.

There are divers ways in which we can practice mortification—observing silence, controlling curiosity, abstaining from lawful amusements, from unnecessary indulgence of appetite. These must be the modes in which, exceptionally this year, we are to mortify ourselves. We say exceptionally, for owing to the prevalence of the disease which has been so general, and we may say so fatal, and is moreover so widespread, our Holy Father, the Pope, has again given power to the Bishops to dispense with fasting and abstinence.—Bishop Chatard.

Gladstone Visits a French Church.

Mr. Gladstone's affability has made a deep impression on the French. He met the Bishop of Carcassone at the railway station there the other day, saluted him deferentially and expressed his admiration of the church in the old town, adding, "I am glad not to have died without visiting it, but I am sorry to think there is little chance of my revisiting it." The Bishop, like a true-born Frenchman, was not outdone in politeness. In happy language he gave utterance to his delight at meeting the aged statesman, and to the hope that God would prolong his life to a far greater age for the good and glory of his country.

A. B. Des Rochers, Arthabaskaville, P. Q., writes: "Thirteen years ago I was seized with a severe attack of rheumatism in the head, from which I nearly constantly suffered, until after having used Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil for nine days, bathing the head, &c., when I was completely cured, and have only used half a bottle."

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Patrick Sarsfield and Robert Emmet.

London Universe. Statues to two distinguished and patriotic Irishmen are to be erected in Ireland—the one very soon, and the other at it is to be hoped, no distant date.

Patrick Sarsfield, Earl of Lucan, well deserves to be commemorated by all who honor bravery, combined with the most devoted fidelity to a sinking cause. In all history, ancient or modern, there has never appeared a nobler hero than Sarsfield. At the memorable Battle of the Boyne he fought against the Dutch invader with indomitable courage. At Aughrim he would have won the day were it not for the vanity of the gallant St. Ruth, who was killed without having communicated to Sarsfield the plan of action. At Limerick, which historic city will ever be identified with his fame, he gained immortal laurels, and proved that, even in defeat a brave and honorable soldier may be a great man. His daring exploits in the glorious defence of Limerick are among the brightest chapters in the military history of Ireland, while his refusal to take advantage of the arrival of the French auxiliaries after he had signed the (too soon violated) treaty is a splendid memento of his stainless honor. It will soon be two centuries since Limerick fell, after a noble struggle, and it is more than full time that the statue of the chief of her brave defenders should be raised by the nation for whose liberty he fought. His last recorded words prove how deeply he loved his native country, for, though some seem to doubt that he uttered, when mortally wounded on Landon's plain, the memorable words, "Oh, that this blood was shed for Ireland!" there is no reason to doubt their authenticity. It is admitted that he died in a few days at an adjoining village, of fever caused by the wound. It is well that the Irish people should honor the memory of one who snarves with Brian and Owen Roe O'Neill so much of Ireland's military fame:

"Hurrah! for the men who kept Limerick's wall, Hurrah! for old Sarsfield, the bravest of all!" Robert Emmet, too, is about to be similarly honored. It was seventy-six years lately since on the 20th Sept. 1803, that enthusiastic patriot gave up his young life for Ireland. He expressed the hope that honors should not be paid to him till better times arrived. Better, far better, times have come. Creed now makes no man the serf of another. There is no disobedience to Emmet's last injunctions in now paying homage to those virtues which have extorted the admiration, even of the enemies of the land for which Emmet died. No man ever more closely attracted the love of those around him than the young martyr of 1803. "Were I," says Moore (who knew Emmet well), "to number the men among all I have ever known who appeared to me to combine in the greatest degree pure moral worth with intellectual power, I should, amongst the highest of the few, place Robert Emmet." This is high praise, but it is not more than, by universal testimony, was well deserved.

Emmet was not wise—that is, of course, admitted—but Ireland will honor him as one who loved her and died for her freedom.

"The night dew that falls, though in silence it weeps, Shall brighten with verdure the grave where he sleeps; And the tear that we shed, though in secret it rolls, Shall none keep his memory green in our souls."

It Leads the Leaders.

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