

FIVE-MINUTE SERMON. Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost.

OUR NEIGHBORS. "And who is my neighbor?" (St. Luke x. 29) There are two opposite faults to both of which almost everybody are more or less inclined. The first of these is meddling with other people's business; the second is shirking one's own.

It is rather the second of these than the first which is rebuked in the Gospel of to-day in the persons of the priest and the Levite who went by without helping the poor wounded man.

Now, in the first place, let me explain what I mean by shirking one's own business or duties. It is not simply leaving them undone and expecting that they will remain so; but it is putting off what one ought to do on the self or to somebody else, and expecting somebody else to do it for you.

This is a very natural state of mind for a person to get into, and how common it is, in such a case as this, we can see from the common proverb that "everybody's business is nobody's business."

There are very many good works that really are everybody's business, that everybody ought to do something towards at least, but which are in great danger of not being done at all on account of this habit of shirking which is so common.

Well, this might be all very good if those people did really help in some things generously, and the case before them was one of no very urgent need. Of course we cannot contribute to everything. But the difficulty is, that too often we find them shirking, not occasionally but all the time.

CHARITY, PRE-CHRISTIAN AND CHRISTIAN.

TOPIC OF PAPER READ BY REV. M. M. BASSETT, D. D., RECTOR OF HARRISBURG CATHEDRAL, AT THE MEETING OF THE PARTICULAR COUNCIL OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL, AT YORK, PENN. Probably few of us advert to the fact that the commandment to love our neighbor as ourselves is really a law of nature, which was enacted into a positive law at Mount Sinai for the best of reasons, namely, that it was universally ignored.

for theory, which is quite a different thing from practice.

Passing over some fifteen centuries from the date of the Exodus, during which the condition of the rank and file of the human race in every land, save, in a certain degree, the land occupied by the Chosen People, became essentially what it was in Egypt, we approach the time when the union of the civilized world under the rule of Rome prepared the way for a new and better era.

Such were the conditions when the Word was made Flesh. A few lived in boundless luxury, while all the rest, in chains, ministered to that luxury. At the head was an absolute, irresponsible monarch, whose lightest frown meant death, without the shadow of a hope of escape.

One can readily understand that the term charity, love of God and love of one's fellowman, no matter what his condition socially, had no meaning in a society such as this. A German writer of the highest scientific attainments, Professor Ernest von Dobschutz, gives, in a work published a few years ago, an account of the conditions existing in the Roman empire in the first century, which those whose ideal is a country without religion would do well to study carefully.

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LIQUOR AND TOBACCO HABITS

A. McTAGGART, M. D., C. M. 75 Yonge Street, Toronto, Canada. Reference is made to Dr. McTaggart's professional standing and personal integrity printed by: Sir W. R. Meredith, Chief Justice, Hon. J. W. Ross, ex-Premier of Ontario, Rev. N. Burwash, D. D., President Victoria College, Rev. Father Tealy, President of St. Michael's College, Toronto, Rev. Wm. McLean, D. D., Principal Knox College, Toronto, Rev. J. Thomas Coffey, Senator, Catholic Record, London.

are pure as virgins, and their daughters are modest; and their men keep themselves from every unlawful union, and from all uncleanness, in the hope of a recompense to come in another world.

Such was the transformation which the great doctrines of charity, brotherly love founded on the love of God, had begun in the corrupt society of imperial Rome. In a later age when misfortune of every form poured like an avalanche on the great empire the sphere of action for this doctrine became still broader, until there was no form of human misery with which Christianity did not cope, and cope successfully.

The conclusion from this brief comparison between paganism in its natural state and Christianity is, I think, obvious. In the days before the establishment of the Church, the worst forms everywhere were in the human family, reduced to a state of slavery were regarded as mere chattels, to be disposed of like beasts of the field.

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COVENTRY PATMORE'S CONVERSION.

John Freeman, in the London Academy discussing the unique spiritual quality of the poetry of Coventry Patmore, says that Patmore's conversion to Catholicity was, from the poet's nature, an inevitable step. Yet Mr. Freeman would not have it imagined that Patmore was drawn to the Church by the beauty of its symbolism or the splendor of its ceremonies. He writes:

There is a common notion that a poet is likely to be wooed and won by the ritual of the Roman Church, but of any such influence there is no trace in Patmore's poetry. I am reminded in this connection of the names of two great English prose writers, Pater and Newman. The author of "Marius the Epicurean" was indeed strongly attracted, I believe, by this noble feature of the ancient worship, but did not "go over," while Newman did, yet not at all for that persuasion. Nevertheless, while the commonly-supposed impulse was apparently imperative in Patmore's

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There is, also, another view of the subject deserving of some consideration. Why should the patent inside makers supply such matter to Catholic clients? It has been recently charged in a non-Catholic paper that there is a movement on foot among Catholics to capture the secular press of the country. Nothing could be more absurd. But does not this action of the makers of patent insides suggest an effort to poison the Catholic world? And how surely they will succeed, in part at least, if Catholic papers continue to lend such fruitful aid as those complained of are doing?—St. Louis Church Progress.

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