

FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS.

Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost.

MARRYING OUT OF THE CHURCH.

In our course of instructions on marriage, my dear friends, we have so far spoken chiefly of the care which should be taken in the selection of the person who is to be one's constant companion through life, and shown that not only earthly happiness, but even the salvation of the soul, may depend on this choice being made wisely. We will now go on to consider the ceremony of marriage itself.

Some people, though they have always been Catholics and lived among Catholics, seem to be entirely ignorant of the laws and requirements of the Church on this subject. They appear to think that nothing has to be done but to call on the priest some fine evening, and that he will marry them then and there. And if it is not convenient to go to the priest, or if he makes any difficulty about it, why, then a Protestant minister or his honor the mayor will do at a pinch.

Now there are several points which these people need instruction about, and several mistakes which they make in this very important affair. We shall have to consider them separately. And we will begin with the greatest mistake of all which can be fallen into by Catholics who wish to get married, and that is to go to a Protestant minister for the purpose.

What is, then, the harm exactly of going to a Protestant minister to get married? Is it that a Protestant minister is an immoral or vicious character, with whom we should have nothing to do? By no means. He is, indeed, more likely to be to blame for his errors in religion than his people, for he has, from his greater knowledge in religious matters, a better chance to know the truth; but even a minister may be in good faith about his doctrine. And in other respects he may be a worthy and estimable gentleman.

But the reason why Catholics should avoid going to him for marriage is that marriage is one of the seven sacraments which our Lord has entrusted to the keeping of His Church. These sacraments, then, belong to the Church, and we cannot recognize the right of those who separate from her to administer them or to assist officially at them, though they may have the power to do so validly. Therefore, though marriage be real and valid when contracted before a Protestant minister, and though his own people, of course, are not to blame, if in good faith, for availing themselves of his services, we cannot do so. Indeed, this would be the case even if marriage were not a sacrament, but merely a religious rite or ceremony; we cannot allow the ministers of any sect separated from the Church to act as such for us in any religious function: to do so would be to allow their claim to act in the name of Christ. This we can never do, and, above all, where the sacraments are concerned.

Another, and a very weighty reason, why Catholics cannot go before a minister for marriage, is that no one but the Catholic clergy can be supposed to be sufficiently acquainted with the laws of God and of the Church regarding Christian marriage. There are impediments, as they are called, which make marriage invalid unless a dispensation is obtained from the proper source. Some of these are commonly known, such as those which proceed from a near relationship of the parties; but there are others which are not known even by name to the great mass of the faithful, and which a Protestant minister, even should he happen to know them, would never for a moment regard. Catholics, therefore, if they go to a minister to get married, run a great risk of not being really married at all, owing to these impediments not being detected or attended to. By the law of the State their marriage may be a good and real one, but in the sight of God it will not be so, if any such impediment should exist, and not have been removed by dispensation; and this holds, even though no suspicion of such an impediment should have arisen. You see, then, how important it is in this matter to consult those who are competent to advise them.

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How They Worked Their Way.

By MAURICE FRANCIS EGAN, LL. D.

IV.

Dermot had his trials. While Mary was debating about the fate of her white frock, his beloved bicycle had hung in the balance. To tell the truth, Dermot was in debt. His father had always been very liberal. It was Mr. Beresford's custom to allow the boys a certain sum, every quarter, for spending money, and Dermot expected, as usual, \$30 on the first day of the coming month. But when Mr. Beresford made his announcement at the breakfast table, Dermot felt that he ought not to ask for it, and his heart sank. He owed Arthur Morris \$5 for his share in a lawn tennis set; he owed \$13 for his rowing suit to a tailor, and \$10 more for a big collection of stamps to a stationer on Tenth street. He had in his pocket-book exactly \$1.50. He said to himself that he ought not to ask his father for more money, and he must depend on his allowance to pay his debts. Dermot thought and thought. What a fool he had been to spend last quarter's allowance so recklessly, and to run in debt. He would never run in debt again! But now, how was he to get out of it?

What could he sell? His books? No; he would not part with them. His collection of stamps? Nobody would buy them. He had tried that before.

His magic lantern? The slides were not all in good condition. He could think of nothing saleable—everything he owned was more or less dilapidated, for Dermot had never learned to be careful of things. Arthur Morris had offered him \$75 for his bicycle. But, he said to himself, that he would never part with that. It was as dear as a horse to him. He had had too many pleasant days with that pleasant companion, to let it go now. No—he would keep it. But he thought of the bills that hung over him.

"Oh, dear!" he cried, "why didn't I remember that father has always said, 'Do without things rather than go into debt. The debtor is generally a slave.' I wish I had remembered that."

Regrets were useless. The bills must be paid by the first. He had promised. He would not ask his father for the money, no matter what might happen. That would be too mean! He had heard his father's sigh when he had written a check for the household expenses of the month. His mother had given him the bicycle at Christmas. He went and knocked at the door of her room; when she answered, he asked her if he might sell his bicycle.

"I won't have much chance to use it on the farm."

"You may," his mother said, "you will not be at work all the time, Dermot."

"But I owe some money, mother, and I don't want to ask father for it."

He said this with a blush.

Mrs. Beresford was silent for an instant; then she looked at him as if she had read his thoughts.

"Be honest in spite of all, my boy," she said. "It is better to make a sacrifice than to add to your father's burdens."

Dermot turned away with a heavy heart. Somehow, he had expected that his mother would have made the thing easy for him, in some way. She had always done so. He went downstairs, feeling that he must take more responsibilities.

He would soon be a man. He went out to Arthur Morris' house and rang the bell. Yes, Arthur was at home. He had just come from school. Dermot found him in the yard. There Dermot did find him, practising with his Indian clubs.

The bargain was soon made. Arthur was eager to have the bicycle.

"I'll come over to your house and father will send you a check for it tonight."

"Very well," Dermot said, with a pang.

A little later, Arthur rode triumphantly off towards the park on Dermot's bicycle. Dermot followed the flash and glitter of the wheel until it was lost to sight.

Dermot had no real sorrows in life, and this sacrifice cut him very deep. It lightened Mrs. Beresford's heart. The children have not been made selfish by prosperity," she said to herself, "I can trust them to do their duty, I think."

On the morning after Dermot's bargain, the postman brought him an envelope. It contained Mr. Morris' check for \$75. Dermot was off like a flash to pay his debts. It did not take him long, and he went back home with a much lighter heart.

Mr. Beresford kept his promise to take the family out to the new "home."

It would be a very dreary prospect, indeed, that would have kept away smiles and jokes from the four Beresfords, on a bright day, with a railroad journey into the country before them.

Brian carried a big hamper which he had packed with cold ham and chicken. He declared that he always became ferociously hungry when traveling, and that father could not afford to buy luncheon at every stop.

Mr. Beresford, looking weak and care-worn, smiled at this.

"I am glad you accept the situation," Brian, he said, "I am afraid the railroad fares will use up all that I ought to spend to-day."

It seemed queer to the children to know that their father was quite in earnest in this. He had never considered money before.

They were a half-hour early for the train, and while they waited Dermot

went up to the ticket office and returned with six "return" tickets.

"It's my treat to-day, father," he said, with the air of a millionaire.

His father smiled, but seemed pre-occupied. Brian at once asserted that Dermot had robbed a bank.

The journey was very pleasant. For some distance they flew in the track of the silver Schuykill, sheltered by its banks of soft green. Then into delightfully rich and undulating land, past well kept farms and blossoming orchards.

At last they were told by their father that the next stop would be Sherwood Station. The announcement was a great relief. The station consisted of a room with four doors. A bench was nailed to the wall. In the centre stood a large stove. A narrow path led from the station into a thick growth of wood. A wooden cart with chairs in it, waited at the station. Two horses were harnessed to it; a man stood at their heads, stolidly chewing tobacco and now and then cracking his whip.

Mr. Beresford spoke to him—

"Are you Mr. Thorne's hired-man?"

"I'm Sam," answered the man, taking a shrewd look at Mr. Beresford.

"I guess you're the stranger that thinks of settling on old Judge Binn's place?"

"Yes."

Sam pushed back his wide-brimmed straw hat and smiled at the party.

TO BE CONTINUED.

POPE LEO ON THE ALTAR.

A Most Touching and Impressive Ceremony—Protestants Moved to Tears.

The following extract from a letter written by a member of the high prelature is a very excellent pen portrait of the present Pontiff:

"He is a pious Pope. Those who have had the happiness of assisting at the Pontiff's Mass in the private oratory of Leo XIII. have borne away with them a never-to-be-forgotten idea of the most touching and impressive ceremony that can be imagined. The intense recollection, almost ecstasy, of the aged, fragile, white-haired celebrant and his wonderfully penetrating, clear voice are so profoundly solemn that his auditors are invariably, strangely and intensely moved."

"Many a time have we seen Protestants and members of other sects who, out of mere curiosity, have gained admission to this ceremony, moved to tears and press forward more ardently than his own flock to kiss and touch the hand of the noble and inspired-looking representative of our Divine Lord on earth. The little oratory, by the mere presence of this high priest, seems to dilate into grander proportions than the most magnificent temple. So absolute is the silence, so deep the attention of the assistants, so adoring the attitude of the venerable celebrant, that a hitherto unknown idea of majesty and peace is given to those present, which mysteriously enters the soul and can never be forgotten while life endures."

The letter continues:

"And what a pure austere life! Work and prayer are the masters of the Pontiff's days. From early morning until late at night Leo XIII. studies, reads, writes, prays and gives audience. He takes his repasts alone—eats rapidly and is most rigorously abstemious. When the weather is fine he walks in the Vatican gardens, stopping here and there, and especially at a large cage filled with birds. Here he will frequently take one of his feathered friends in his hand, and having gently caressed it, will let fly freely whither it will. May he not be thinking that they, like him, self, are captives?—a self-imposed prison, say the smiling cynics. No! enforced prison, for morally speaking the Pope cannot go out of his cage. Can he trust to the good faith and will of the present rulers of his ancient city? Golden prison, say these same cynics. Is there any one living who after twenty-four hours passed in prison would not like to jump out of its windows, be it ever so golden and lovely?"

"Leo XIII. has toiled, suffered and endured his imprisonment longer than any other Pontiff, and has given the Church more liberty and power than even his great predecessors. Compare Leo XIII. with any of the living monarchs and answer me, who among them enjoys more respect, admiration, esteem, sympathy and loyalty than the Sovereign of the Vatican Prison?"

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MARCH OF RITUALISM.

Comments of a Secular Journal on Recent Events in the Episcopal Church.

The New York Sun, in an editorial commenting on what is termed "Aggressive Catholicity," says:

A "Nuptial Mass," as it is described, was celebrated at the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer in Park avenue last Wednesday after the solemnization of a marriage; and it is spoken of as the first ceremony of the kind which has ever been conducted in an Episcopal church in this country.

The administration of the communion at a wedding is not, however, an extraordinary occurrence in the Episcopal Church, and the service at the Church of the Redeemer seems to have been novel only, if it was novel at all, in its thorough ritualistic elaboration. The display of candles, the free use of incense, the rich vestments, the procession, led by thrifter and cross-bearer, and the rest of the ceremonies were in accordance with ritualistic principles accepted by a considerable and apparently increasing body of the Episcopal clergy and laity in both this country and England.

The wedding at the Church of the Redeemer accordingly introduced no essential innovation. It followed precedents already established in the Episcopal Church by the teachings and practice of the Catholic party, as they call themselves. This party, according to Mr. Locke, formerly an assistant minister of Trinity parish, but now a communicant of the Church of Rome, "accepts every Catholic doctrine except the supremacy of the Pope," and the Holy Cross Magazine, which is its more special representative, seems to justify him in so saying. Undoubtedly, too, there was a very close resemblance between the nuptial Mass celebrated at the Church of the Redeemer on Wednesday, and the Mass as celebrated in the Roman Catholic Church. Its underlying principles were substantially, if not exactly, the same. Moreover, the inferential treatment of marriage as a sacrament in strict accordance with ritualistic doctrine, which consequently and logically, we believe, makes marriage indissoluble otherwise than by death, though under the law of the Episcopal Church divorce is allowed for adultery, and practically many Episcopalians have obtained divorces for other causes and have married again.

In its bold obedience to the firm convictions of the Ritualists, the Church of the Redeemer seems to have followed a course of conduct which the more pronounced of the party have definitely determined upon. The last number of the Holy Cross Magazine devotes much space to advocating such a plan and to pointing out that the time is ripe for it. "In the earlier days of the Catholic revival," says this uncompromising writer, "it seemed best to go slowly, and wisely so." "The Bishops were often sharers with the people in a vague and nameless fear that something dreadful would happen calculated to bring ruin on the Church," and it was necessary to educate them to toleration, if not sympathy. But now the situation has changed. The need of caution lest the movement should be backed by such opposition no longer exists. "The conservatives," it says, "are out of the count now," and the merely "progressive churchmen" who are not yet prepared themselves to go to the extreme of "the Catholic revival" will be neutral.

Hence this ritualistic organ calls upon the "Catholic" party to cast aside all compromises and go ahead unflinchingly. The ritualistic movement must be sent along at full speed regardless of the timorous. "Incense, that most scriptural and significant symbol, is used in comparatively few of our parishes;" "proper vestments for the Holy Sacrifice" are not worn "as commonly as one might expect in these late days;" "the crucifix, in processions or above the pulpit, is not always seen in our churches;" "the use of the sign of the cross, that potent sacramental in its influence upon the physical nature of man and against the attacks of Satan, is far less urged upon the faithful than it should be." These and other defects in ritual it would have remedied forthwith by "aggressive Catholicity." It would cease from consideration for "conservatism," and would pay no regard to criticism.

The Holy Cross Magazine is even more strenuous in demanding that the full doctrine of the "Catholic revival" shall be taught squarely and openly. It urges that the "fasting communion," or abstinence from food and drink before receiving the communion, shall be made binding as "according to the observance of Catholic Christendom." It laments the "laxity in teaching the sacrament of penance," and expresses wonder that any priest should dare to "keep back from his people his truth of God." It calls "the doctrine of the Real Presence" "the meaning of Divine worship," and condemns the introduction of "the late Mass" unless "the communicants have been taught the duty of fasting." This full measure of "Catholic doctrine," according to Mr. Locke, is simply Roman Catholic doctrine with the sole exception of the supremacy of the Pope.

"We have been too slow, too slow," cries the Holy Cross Magazine; "what we need now is to make headway." It is calling upon this American Church to stand forth and show her light, teach His truth, bear witness to His glory, in her varied round of service and sacrament.

These are significant utterances, and

the spirit which dictates them is unquestionably having a powerful and a remoulding influence on the doctrine and practice of the Episcopal Church. Mr. Locke thinks that it is giving "the Catholic revival" a momentum which will eventually send it over the obstacle of the supremacy of the Pope and into the Church of Rome. The Holy Cross Magazine sees in it "nothing less than the unifying of the one people in one holy bond of a united Christianity," the "American Church" as distinguished from the "Roman Church."

Religion and Science.

The man whose faith suffers by his knowledge of science can have but little of the former to lose, and can have but slight acquaintance with the latter. The higher our conception of the magnitude of the Creator's work and its perfection of design, the greater must be our appreciation of His infinite power and wisdom, and the more intense the fervor of our love and homage. Surely He, the potency of whose word gave solidarity to this terrestrial globe, through its geologic formation, who provided its perfection of balance and motion, its light, heat, fertility and all that makes it habitable to His creatures, is not to be doubted when he speaks to the heart, the hope and the conscience of His children. True science enlarges our conception of God's power and goodness, while religion teaches us how to utilize the life that has been given us here, to the end that, having fulfilled the mission for which we were created, we may enjoy an eternity of happiness with the blessed in heaven.

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