

THE CLOSE OF THE MISSION IN ST. ANN'S CHURCH.

It was truly an edifying and consoling spectacle which presented itself at the evening service in St. Ann's Church on Sunday, on the occasion of the close of the mission for young men given by the eloquent and zealous Father Grogan, of St. Patzick's Church, Toronto. This was the last of the series of the services of retreats which the "True Witness" announced before they took place.

There was not a vacant seat in the spacious church on Sunday evening, and the marked attention with which the young men listened to Father Grogan's closing sermon, and the loud earnest voices with which, with lighted tapers in their hands, they repeated the prayer which he read out in renewal of their Baptismal vows, showed how great and how thorough a spiritual success the Rev. Father Grogan's efforts have been.

Irish Catholics, said Father Grogan were fond of amusement and athletics. In that parish, thanks to the zealous efforts of their devoted pastor, Rev. Father Strubbe, they had an excellently equipped gymnasium. He advised them to join lacrosse and hockey clubs, and to indulge in gymnastic exercise; for these would supply them innocent facilities to gratify their love for amusement. They would do more. They would keep them out of the saloon, and they would keep them out of the reach of temptation, as well as making them strong physically.

As to the retreat which was then closing, he earnestly exhorted them to persevere in the good way on which they had set their steps. It was their duty to watch and pray, and do their best to keep the promise they had made in saying the act of contrition that they would never more offend God. If ever they should fall, let them at once seek the grace of God, which came through prayer—the grace of God to approach the tribunal of penance. The most efficacious of prayers was that to the Mother of God. They should ever ask the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, to intercede for them. Mary was above all the saints, for she was conceived without sin. Mary was next to God. Every time they said the "Hail Mary," they made an act

of faith, in the words, "Holy Mary Mother of God!" The heresiarchs of the fourth century, who denied the divinity of Christ, were overcome through prayers to Mary. Why was it that so many heretics to-day who believed that Jesus is the Son of God, and equal to His Divine Father, object to give her the divine title to which she has a right—the Mother of God? Because they hate the Catholic Church, which had never ceased to give her the honor to which she was entitled. Jesus, the Son of God, was born of the Blessed Virgin Mary; she was his Mother; and as He was God, therefore she was the Mother of God. Jesus, the source of God's grace came to us through Mary. How much, then, ought we not to love her! How often ought we not to pray to her!

Our Lord's first miracle, that He performed at the marriage of Canaan, was wrought at her request. They have no wine, she said to Him. And what was the result? He changed the water into wine. Did not that prove how powerful was her intercession. Recognizing this the Church had always turned to her in times of need, and had always received favors from her. And the Church always besought the faithful to implore her intercession. The Church, in the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, had called her "Virgin Most Powerful," because of the divine favors obtained through her intercession. Through recitation of the Rosary a dangerous heresy had been extirpated. Let them go into any Catholic Church and they would see that on the right hand side of the main altar, there was raised the altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Church also honored her by placing her above the saints; for she called the Blessed Virgin "Queen of Saints."

Let us, then, always have recourse to Mary in all our trials and troubles and temptations, knowing how powerful she was, and remembering, too, that she was, "Our Lady of Perpetual Help."

The Baptismal vows having been solemnly renewed, Father Grogan imparted the Papal Blessing to all present, and another of the many successful missions held under the auspices of the Redemptorist Fathers in the parish was brought to a close.

CENTRALIZATION IN COMMERCIAL AFFAIRS.

Under the caption of "Centralization" the Toronto "Globe" says:— It is predicted that by the end of the century all of the great staples of modern commerce in the United States will be controlled by trusts. Indeed, at the present moment this is practically the case. The tendency to centralization in business is one of the most startling social phenomena with which we have to deal. In England a mammoth organization of employers is announced, which is met forewith by a projected union of working people that will control the industrial life of the kingdom. Every day sees some new trust organized in America, and the smaller dealer finds his life sucked away by unseen forces over which he has no more control than over the procession of the equinoxes. Judging from the messages of American Governors and the tone of the public press, this question of trusts will play a striking part in the next presidential election. Meanwhile they are bringing to every man the bottom problems of his social existence and arousing in a marked degree the interest of all classes of the people.

This new order of things has played havoc with some of the cherished principles of the old-time economist. It has been taken as an axiom that prices cannot be fixed by arbitrary enactment, but the oil trust finds no difficulty in controlling the prices of oil and fixing the relation between the supply and price of this most useful commodity. The public has just been warned that the price of coal is going up, because the coal trust of the Pennsylvania region has decreed it. It is the same with all the other necessities of life, and the question naturally arises, who gives these organizations authority to exercise this unlimited and dangerous power, and to whom do the profits of such arbitrary increase of price go?

Throughout the entire continent there is a marked movement towards municipal ownership as a cure for private monopoly. Having been taught by the monopolies and trusts that any business can be controlled for private profit if organized upon a sufficiently large scale, the municipalities are now putting their lessons to practical use and seeking to change

private profit to public profit. It is only a question of time when municipalities in this country will either own and operate their own water-works, lighting and transportation systems to the common advantage, or exercise such control of the private parties who do operate them that these parties shall in truth become public servants. If a trust can control a great industry for private gain, why cannot the people control the same industry for the gain and profit of all? To this question a growing number of citizens are giving serious attention.

There are two perennial objections which will not down. The first one is that no community can find men honest enough to run a business for the people. Such an objection is a frightful confession, and, if valid, means that democracy is a failure. But this objection is not as weighty as it seems. It is answered by the fact that every day the conception of a city as an economic organism is gaining ground; that in England there is no municipal corruption, and that in America the Mayor is fast coming to be considered the agent or factor of the municipality, delegated to do its business for it with due regard to the general interest. Jones of Toledo, Pingree of Detroit, Quincy of Boston are symptomatic. Just as soon as the people discover that a part of their economic existence at least depends upon the administration of public affairs, there will be no difficulty in finding honest and capable men to administer these affairs. Just as soon as it is seen that social well-being is necessary to individual well-being, public servants will be found quite incorruptible.

Another objection is that this movement is advocated by only a part of the people and does not represent general opinion. Jane A. Addams, in the last number of the American Journal of Sociology, complains that society has left the trades unionists to fight the battle of the general public alone. And her charge answers this objection. Why should the laboring men be left to fight alone for short hours, for sanitary workshops, for relief from poisoning in

their work, for abolition of child labor and for other reforms they so persistently demand? Is not their cause the common cause? They have been pioneers, but nowadays their ranks is being recruited from unexpected sources. The farmer seeks relief from the speculator, the small dealer is organizing against aggression of trusts, the tax-payer is asking that the man who has the money pay

the bills, and society is fast rearranging itself into two sections. On one side are the small number of immensely wealthy folk who own everything, including the earth. On the other the rest of their fellow-citizens of all degrees and conditions, who used to own something and want at least a chance to live. The conflict between these two sections can be settled at last only in one way.

DUTY OF THE LAITY.

The Bishop of Newport, Eng., at a recent reunion of Catholics at Birmingham, in dealing with the question of the duties of Catholic laymen, in the course of an address, recently said:—

It was not, by a great many, the first reunion of Catholics of Birmingham, but it was the first that had been promoted by the Catholic Association of Birmingham. The meeting was to a greater extent than ever before an expression of the spirit of the Catholic laity of the town and district. He would not say that spirit had aroused and awakened itself, because he had good reason to believe it had never been asleep, but it exhibited a more determined temper now, and it purposed to seek wider fields and larger achievements. Few present could remember the day when the Catholic body of Birmingham gave the first lesson that English-Catholics ever had—that in union lay the power to make itself respected. It was a lesson that had been put into practice in every town. To his mind it was a lesson that as yet they had only imperfectly learned, but it was interesting and exhilarating to find that the Catholics of Birmingham, generally to the front, had, as a safeguard, taken such a step as was involved in the formation of their Catholic Association. Such a proceeding deserved to be welcomed and to be imitated. There could be no doubt that among those influences that could strengthen the kingdom of God on earth one of the most essential was the active faith of the laity.

It was all very well that the laity should be obedient and submissive; but there were two kinds of obedience, and submissiveness. There was the obedience which acquiesced and was still, and there was the obedience which was loyally solicitous to do something. The priests had their particular department work, but there were wide provinces in which priests and laity could work together. There were provinces where the

layman could work by himself, and work of this kind might be as truly work for God as were the labors of the pastorate. As to the passiveness of some who professed the faith and rested content with this he impressed upon them the fact that they must either fight for the religion or they would be fighting against it. Worldliness did not always mean being guilty of a list of crimes; the virtuous were very frequently worldly. What he desired to urge was the need for more action on the part of the Catholic laity, for the cowardly spirit had resulted in disaster for the Church in the past. Had they been brave and when needed have shown their teeth they might have saved many troubles which in the past had befallen the Catholic Church.

What was needed was a more robust faith, and for Catholics to recognize what had been repeatedly laid down by the Pope—that the Church stood on the same footing as a man's native country. They were proud of their native land of whatever nationality they might be; they must be proud of their religion. The Right Rev. gentleman then went on to speak of five provinces in which the laymen could give valuable co-operation in Church work:—

- (1) By sympathy with the priest, who necessarily must be the organizer of everything in his Church; (2) by obtaining proper representation for Catholic on public bodies, and taking an active interest in public affairs; (3) clubs and social institutions in connection with the churches; (4) by the press, nearly the greatest power of the age, as he termed it, and in this direction laymen should use means to make Catholic literature pay; and (5) by the purse, and no good cause could be helped without spending money. In connection with the last-named province the Bishop again earnestly urged his audience to live a practical Christian life, for the kingdom of God was not entered by coin, but by devotedness.

TALKS TO BOYS AND GIRLS.

A RHYME FOR YOUNG FOLKS.

Oh, I'll tell you a story that nobody knows,
Of ten little fingers and ten little toes,
Of two pretty eyes and one little nose,
And where they all went one day.
Oh, the little round nose smelled something sweet,
So sweet, it must surely be nice to eat;
And pitter away went two little feet
Out of the room one day.
Ten little toes climbed up on a chair,
Two eyes peeped over a big shelf where
Lay a lovely cake, all frosted and fair,
Made by mamma that day.
The mouth grew round and the eyes grew big
At the taste of the sugar, the spice, the fig;
And then ten little fingers went dig, dig, dig,
Into the cake that day.
And when mamma kissed a curly head,
Cuddling it closely up in bed;
"I wonder, was there a mouse," she said,
"Out on the shelf to-day?"
"O mamma yes," and a laugh of glee
Like fairy bells rang merrily—
"But little bit of a mouse was me,
Out on the shelf to-day!"
—St. Nicholas

BEWARE OF BAD COMPANIONS.

The evil consequences of keeping bad company are daily being brought to light; and boys cannot be too careful in the choice of their companions. The New York Telegram gives an example of a son's depravity and the anguish he caused his mother. She was a stately, comely old lady, but there was an unmistakable trace of sadness and melancholy upon her handsome features. She was well dressed, and within the ample folds of her black silk gown there were surely numbers of places where she might have found accommodation for a pocket, but in accordance with

the custom of her sex she carried her well-filled pocket-book in her hand, offering temptation to every thief or scavenging wretch that chanced to come along the dimly lighted streets. She was old enough to have known better.

As she turned down a side street, more gloomy than the avenue, a hank and ill clad youth suddenly darted out of a hallway, dashed at the old woman, and, without a word or look snatched the purse which she so lightly held and ran at the top of his speed up the street.

"Stop thief! Stop thief!" shouted the old lady, gesticulating wildly as she gathered up her skirts and attempted to follow in pursuit.

The cry was taken up by a crowd of newsboys and a few passersby, but although the thief was never lost sight of, he was fleet of foot, and would probably have made good his escape had he not run right into the arms of a burly policeman at the corner of the next avenue.

The policeman shook the young fellow as a terrier might shake a rat and held him until the old lady came puffing up. She arrived at length, with her umbrella upraised with the evident intention of striking the man who had dared to take the pocket-book she had held so temptingly in her hand.

Suddenly in that ridiculous attitude she paused and turned dumbly pale. The crowd stared open mouthed. The policeman jerked the man by the collar, but that was not the sole reason that the fellow fell upon his knees. He turned as pale as the old lady as he shook himself free, and still kneeling with hands uplifted, he gasped:

"Mother! I did not know you, and—and—I was starving!"
"John!" ejaculated the woman in accents of agony. "My boy! My poor son! This is the worst of all! Oh! this is horrible!"

The wretched man reached for her hands, but she drew them away and buried her face with them. While the crowd looked on in silence, the thief slowly reached down to his loose and tattered boot and, drawing out the pocketbook he had stolen, held it toward his mother.

"Come on!" said the policeman gruffly, gripping the man by the arm

and at the same time seizing the purse. Then to the woman he added:—

"You must come to the police station along with us, ma'am and enter a complaint."

Instantly the old lady drew herself up indignantly and with haughty manner said:—

"What do you mean? You have made a great mistake officer. This is not the man who took my pocket-book. Kindly let him go."

"But—but 'e 'ad it! It's 'ere!" bawled the bewildered representative of the law, pushing the purse toward the dignified old lady.

"Nothing of the kind," said she. "I never saw it before in all my life. Why don't you let the poor man go?"

"Because I 'as my duty to perform," was the surly reply. "E's your son, I guess, and you're a-screening of 'im."

"My son!" said the old lady, sadly and almost tenderly. The young man made a step forward.

"My son!" she echoed, with a fine assumption of scorn as she recoiled a foot or two. "My son! Absurd!"

Then, adjusting a pair of gold-rimmed glasses on her nose, she stared the culprit calmly in the face and quietly said:—

"I know this man once as a right brave, manly boy. I knew him as a tender, loving child. I knew him as an innocent, cooing baby."

A sob was heard, but it was not she who sobbed.

"I do not know him now," she continued. "Give him the purse and let him go."

When the stately old lady had sailed majestically away, the big policeman gave his prisoner one powerful, hearty shake, then flung him from him.

The newsboys hunted around for mud fitted for pelting purposes.

But the young man did not run and thus afforded good sport. He stooped like one dazed for a few moments. Then he hurriedly opened the pocket-book and scattered the contents into the street.

Those newsboys had a gala time, and when the scramble was over the thief, the starving scamp, the prodigal son, was nowhere to be seen.

My young readers if you would not run the risk of being such a son and of causing your mother untold anguish, beware of bad companions. —T. W.

HE KEPT HIS PROMISE.

There once lived in a Scotch village a little boy, Jamie by name, who set his heart on being a sailor. His mother loved him very dearly, and the thought of giving him up grieved her exceedingly; but she finally consented.

As the boy left home, she said, "Whenever you are, Jamie, whether on sea or land, promise me that you will kneel down every night, and morning and say your prayers, no matter whether the sailors laugh at you or not."

"Mother, I promise you I will," said Jamie, and soon he was on a ship bound for India.

They had a good captain, and, as some of the sailors were rather nice men, no one laughed at the boy when he knelt down to pray.

But on the return voyage, some of the sailors having run away, their places were supplied by others one of whom proved to be a very bad fellow. When he saw little Jamie kneeling down to say his prayers, he went up to him, and gave him a sound box on the ear, and said to him:

"None of that here, boy!" Another seaman who saw this, although he swore sometimes, was indignant that the child should be so cruelly treated, and told the hully to come on deck and he would give him a thrashing. The challenge was accepted, and the well-deserved chastisement was duly bestowed. Both then returned to the cabin, and the swearing man said:

"Now, Jamie say your prayers, and if he dares to touch you I'll give him another dressing."

The next day the devil put it into the little boy's mind that it was quite unnecessary for him to create such a disturbance on the ship when it could be avoided if he would only say his prayers quietly in his hammock; so that nobody would observe it. But the moment that the friendly sailor saw Jamie get into his hammock without first kneeling down to pray, he hurried to the spot, and, dragging him out by the neck, he said:

"Kneel down at once, si! Do you think I am going to fight for you, and you not say your prayers you young rascal!"

During the whole voyage back to London this profane sailor watched over the boy as if he had been his father, and every night saw that he knelt down and said his prayers. Jamie soon became to be industrious, and during his spare times studied his books. He learned all about ropes, and, when he became old enough, about taking latitude and longitude.

Several years ago the largest steamer ever built, called the Great East-

ern, was launched on the ocean, and carried the famous cable across the Atlantic. A very reliable, experienced captain was chosen for this important undertaking, and who should it be but little Jamie!—for the world knows him now as Sir James Anderson.

STAND AT EASE.

Many young folks when in the presence of strangers, are constantly wriggling and fidgeting; and without seeming to be conscious of it, they are never at ease. When standing they rest on one foot and then on the other. They do not know what to do with their hands and either twirl their caps or play with their fingers when spoken to. If sitting they keep up a tapping motion with their feet, or continually cross their legs one over the other. Let every one who reads this, train himself like a soldier to "stand at ease" as well as to sit at ease.

A CATHOLIC HOME CALENDAR.

The new Catholic Home Calendar for 1899, compiled and published by the Sisters of St. Joseph's Academy, for Girls, St. Paul, Minn., is a beautiful work of art and should be in every Catholic home. It has received the approbation of His Grace Archbishop Ireland, and is profusely illustrated throughout with half-tone engravings of religious subjects appropriate for each month. It contains the feast days of all the saints in the ecclesiastical calendar, together with the principal feasts and days of fast and abstinence that occur throughout the year. These with many gems of thought in prose and poetry all combine to form one of the nicest Catholic Home Calendars that has yet been published.

THE GROWING PACKING TRADE.

Over \$5,000,000 has been invested in the canning industry throughout the United States in the last four months. While Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and the far south have their share of new canning plants, the Middle West and South West seem to be pushing along. The Spanish-American war boomed the canned goods business in all lines, and has encouraged farmers to go into the raising of fruits and vegetables of all sorts to a larger extent than ever before.

The total pack of tomatoes in the United States and Canada was 5,797,806 cases in 1898. In 1897 it was 4,149,141 cases. In 1898 the pack for the United States was 5,052,219 cases, as compared with 3,961,355 for 1897. Of this pack Maryland put up 1,918,872 cases, of twenty-four this case, as compared with 1,381,989 cases in 1897.

There was an output of canned corn in 1898 largely in excess of 897, but the average quality of the pack in several states was lower than usual. The total corn pack of the United States and Canada for 1898 was 1,398,567 cases, as against 2,408,710 cases in 1897.—The American Packer, Baltimore.

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