

FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS.

FREQUENTING THE SACRAMENTS. "Let the peace of Christ reign in your hearts." (Col. iii. 15.)

Frequent confession and Holy Communion are, my dear brethren, the food which we need to take with us in climbing the mountain of heaven. If we try to get along without them, we shall faint by the way. Do not imagine, then, that confession is only a means of getting rid of mortal sin; do not think for a moment of putting off confession till you have fallen into a mortal sin, or, perhaps, into quite a number of them.

For though we are not required by any positive law to go to confession unless we have fallen into mortal sin, still we are required to keep out of mortal sin, and we cannot do this without going to confession before we have fallen into it. So it comes to the same thing: we really are obliged, for the honor of God and the care of our own souls, to go to confession when we have nothing but venial sin on our conscience, and to go quite often too.

Confession and Holy Communion may be compared, not only to food, but to medicine; and to medicine such as people would take in a place, for instance, where the fever and ague, or some other disease, is prevalent, not to cure themselves of the disease, but to keep from taking it. For we all are in a place where the terrible disease of sin prevails; and we ought to go to confession often, so as not to take it.

But some good people do not seem to understand this at all; and there is a remark, common enough, and which I suppose you may have heard made about this matter of frequent confession. It is this: "I don't see what these people have to tell who go to confession so often." One who makes such a remark as that cannot, it would seem, have any idea of the reason why people are urged to frequent Sacraments at all. He would stay away from confession, for his part, till he "did something,"—that is, fell into some mortal sin. For such a one, if when the time came for his Easter duty, he had by good luck fallen into no mortal sin, the only course would be, one would think, to "do something" on purpose, so as to have something to tell. He does not understand that these people who go to confession often are not supposed to have any grave burden on their consciences.

Of course they will be likely to have venial faults, which, though the Easter penitent might not think them matters for absolution, really are so. And by the help of the sacraments they may be overcoming these faults. But a good enough reason for their going to confession once a month, or even oftener, would be simply to avoid grievous sins; on the principle that "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

They go so often, also, in order to get light, as well as strength, to avoid sin; to know beforehand what they ought to do. You may think that they ought to have sense enough to tell for themselves without bothering the priest about it; but if I am not mistaken, many who think so will find, if they look back a little, that there were some occasions when they did not know exactly which course to take, and had to go very much at hazard. Perhaps they asked about it afterwards, and perhaps they forgot all about it. But why not ask about these matters beforehand? For, after all, though you can read, there are some things rather special to yourself and your own circumstances that you cannot get from books. It is good to have a guide sometimes, who has more thorough knowledge than you, to show you the way; to point the road up the mountain which you have to climb.

You consult a lawyer, or a doctor, about your temporal matters; why not consult a priest about spiritual matters; in the place where he waits to help you so far as he can, and where the Holy Ghost also will help him to help you? For Almighty God has commissioned the priest, specially to guide the faithful in spiritual matters, as you know; and he can often show others the way where he cannot well find it for himself.

But even if the priest does not help you much, our Lord Himself will, in the Sacraments which He has provided. He will guide and direct you by means of them, if you will only come to Him in them. That is one great reason why He is there.

I hope I have now said enough, my dear brethren, to give you some idea of the necessity of approaching the sacraments frequently, if you really have a purpose of amendment, and a desire to save your soul. Too much could not be said. Think of the matter seriously, and you will see this necessity more and more, and will seriously purpose to go often and regularly to confession and Holy Communion.

A young man in Lowell, Mass., troubled for years with a constant succession of boils on his neck, was completely cured by taking only three bottles of Ayer's Sarsaparilla. Another result of the treatment was greatly improved digestion with increased avoirdupois.

A Dinner Pill.—Many persons suffer excruciating agony after partaking of a hearty dinner. The food, instead of being a ball of lead upon the stomach, and instead of being a healthy nutriment it becomes a poison to the system. Dr. Parmentier's Vegetable Pills are wonderful correctives of such troubles. They correct acidity, open the secretions and convert the food partaken of into healthy nutriment. They are just the medicine to take if troubled with Indigestion or Dyspepsia.

Where can I get some of Holloway's Corn Cure? I was entirely cured of my corns by this remedy and I wish some more of it for my friends. So writes Mr. J. W. Brown, Chicago.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

Steady and Stick do the Trick. A rat is good in its place, lad. But not at the start, I say. For life's a very long race, lad. And never was won that way. It's the stay that tells, the stay, boy. And the heart that never says die; A sport may do with the goal in view. But steady's the word, I say. Steady's the word that wins, lad. Grit and sturdy grain; It's sticking to it will carry you through.

Oh, Snap is a very good ear, lad. To frighten the traps, I know. But Holdfast sticks like a burr, lad— Brave Holdfast never lets go. And Clever's a pretty nag, boy. But Stumble and slip, they say— So Steady I count the safer mount To carry you all the way.

The iron bar will smile, lad. At straining muscle and the bow. But the patient teeth of the file, lad. A warrant will gnaw it through: A snap may come at the end, boy. And a bout of might and main. But Steady and Stick must do the trick— Roll up your sleeves again.

The Old Stone Church. BY L. C. WILLIAMS. "Ralph," said Mr. Kline, as he wearily dropped into a chair in the kitchen, "you'll have to ring the bell; I'm clean played out! The rheumatism's got me again. I lighted up the church and turned the lamps low before I came home; but as for going back again I can't do it."

"All right, I'll do it," replied Ralph, a sturdy boy of fifteen. "All I'll have to do will be to turn up the lights and ring the bell twice, I suppose."

Mr. Kline had been the sexton and bell-ringer of the old stone church for twenty years, and Ralph Kline had many a time been with him when he opened the church for Mass, and even had helped him ring the bell. Therefore, though the church was a quarter of a mile from the nearest house, it was with no hesitation that he started out after eating. A bright moon lit up every thing and made the snow sparkle as if strewn with diamonds.

Arriving at the church, he pulled the big key out of his pocket, unlocked the door and walked in. The body of the church, which was not large, was dimly lit by a dozen lamps which Ralph speedily turned up so that the building was cheerful in a glow of light. Then he walked to the vestry, and opening a small door at one side, glanced at the nickel clock which was suspended on the wall.

Five minutes to six," he exclaimed to himself. "Time I was ringing!"

The bell at the church was always rung twice, with a period between of ten minutes. Most of the congregation lived at a distance—from a quarter of a mile to a mile or more away. So a "warning bell," as it was called, was rung at five minutes of six, in the early winter morning, when Mass began at half past six and a second bell at ten minutes after six. Thus everyone within hearing distance of the church had ample time to get ready.

Ralph closed the door of the tower room and took off his coat. By lamp light the bell rope seemed like some great snake stretching down from above, where the darkness hid every thing. But Ralph was too accustomed to the interior of the place to think of this. He reached up and took a firm grasp on the rope, threw his weight upon it and slowly sank to the floor.

The bell, which was a big one, hung in a cradle, and the bell rope, passing up into the belfry, was fastened in the groove of a large wheel, which when turned by a pull on the rope, rocked the bell and threw the iron tongue against the sides. The bell was very heavy, and it took two vigorous pulls, even when Mr. Kline himself had hold of the rope, to bring any sound forth. Twice Ralph pulled and hung upon the rope before the cradle began to move perceptibly. Even then the bell did not ring, and the boy threw all his strength and weight into a third effort.

As he did so it seemed to him that the rope came toward him much more quickly than it should, and then, before he could let go, it suddenly loosened up above and fell in great spirals to the floor. Fortunately, none of the heavy coils struck him, but it gave him a big start, notwithstanding, and he jumped quickly to one side. There he stood, staring up into the darkness, and wondering what could have happened. Then realizing that the only way to learn was to go up into the belfry and investigate, he picked up a lantern which stood in a corner and lighting it at the lamp, started up the ladder which led to the tower above.

It was a long ladder, and climbing it was no easy task. The lantern as hanging from his arm, banged against him, and cast shifting and uncertain lights. The rungs of the ladder were covered with a thick coating of dust. Yet he toiled slowly on. It seemed as if the ladder would never end. It grew cold too, for it was freezing out, and a keen wind blew through the openings in the belfry above.

Presently Ralph struck his head against something, and he knew he had reached the end of his journey. Holding on with one hand, with the other he unfastened the hook which held down the trap door. Pushing this back, he drew himself up through the opening, and was in the belfry.

cover where the break had occurred when a draft of air stirred the rope, and as it moved he saw that it did not go through the hole at all. It came to an end just where it reached the floor. Ralph placed the lantern beside him and bent down to examine the rope. It seemed to have been severed by some jagged edge, for it was torn and frayed, and bits of hemp strewn the floor near by. He concluded that it must have been worn through by rubbing against the sides of the hole through which it had originally passed.

While he was looking at it he was startled by a sharp squeak at his very elbow. He glanced quickly about and a bright spark in a dark corner of the belfry caught his eye. He picked up the lantern and swung it in front of him, and a small gray animal darted under a beam. It was a rat.

All at once Ralph recollected that the old belfry was said to be infested with these animals, and raising himself he turned to go. As he did so, his foot struck the edge of a floor board and he fell knocking over the lantern and instantly extinguished the light.

Somewhat startled now for the first time, he groped about for the trap door, but could not find it. The moonlight which came from above, lost itself in the narrow tower, and where he lay it was almost entirely dark. At last, however, his hand came in contact with something which he knew was the trap door, but even as he touched it, it fell with a bang. He nervously tried to raise it again but in vain. The door was flush with the floor about it, and there was no ring bolt or projection by which to secure a hold on it.

While Ralph was struggling to get a finger beneath the trap door, the same sharp squeak which had startled him before sounded again and this time it was almost immediately echoed from half a dozen other places.

As he turned about, in every direction there shone in the darkness tiny specks of light. Ralph knew that these were the eyes of rats. One, or even a couple of these animals, he would not have feared. But a dozen of them, boldly surrounding him in the darkness, sent a shiver down his back. He noted, too, that they did not seem afraid of him, though he banged on the floor and yelled at them.

Ralph now sprang to his feet and rushed at the enemy. Those in front of him at once retreated, as he could tell by the disappearance of their eyes. But as he moved several jumped at him from behind, and one fastened its teeth in his leg. He kicked wildly at this and the rat was flung to one side. Another instantly sprang at him, and then half a dozen at once, a couple of the vicious little animals fastening themselves in his clothes.

Ralph whirled about, dashing his assailants off for a moment. It was only for a moment, however, for he was attacked again immediately, and this time more fiercely than before. Thoroughly terrified now, he yelled loudly and kicked and struck out with fists and feet indiscriminately; but no answer came to his cries. The walls of the tower echoed his voice and the squeaks and squeals of the rats, but that was all. Something struck him in the face. Instinctively he made a pass at it with his hand, thinking it was a rat. But his fingers came in contact with the bell rope, which shook with the blow, then swayed into his face again.

At the second blow an idea came to him. He reached out quickly with both hands and grasped the rope and pulled himself from the floor. Then with one tremendous kick, he shook off the last of the rats which clung to him, and hand over hand raised himself a half a dozen feet into the air.

The rope slowly descended with his weight, as the wheel slowly revolved. The bell at last struck a solitary, muffled note, as the tongue fell against its edge. Then it was silent, remaining tilted in the air, and he rested.

But the strain on his arms so warned him that he could not stand on his present position, even with his feet twisted about the ropes as they were. To go down he did not dare. To go up was the alternative, so slowly he pulled himself higher, until his head struck something hard. He quickly put out a hand and felt for the obstacle. A short examination told him it was a beam. Then he remembered that a couple of stout timbers ran across the belfry and have support to the frame in which hung the bell.

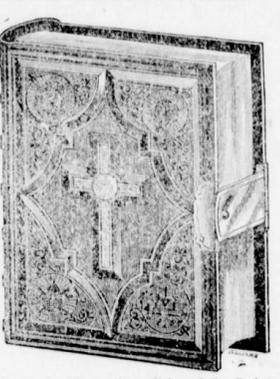
Ralph twisted himself about and tried to force himself between the two beams, but the intervening space would only admit his head and shoulders, and having worked himself that far upward, he found his legs so confined that he clutched the rope with one hand and the most convenient beam with the other, and for a full minute remained motionless, resting. Below him he could hear the rats squeaking, and occasionally he felt the rope shake as some particularly active animal sprang at it.

The movement of the rope suggested a plan to him which promised temporary rest to his arms, and he at once put it into execution. First he lowered himself so his head was clear of the beams; then while he clung fast with one hand, he raised the slack rope below and twisted it about the part from which he hung, so that a loop was made into which he quickly thrust one leg. It was difficult work, for the rope was thick and heavy, but when it was done, and he held the rope so that it could not slip, he found he had a fairly comfortable seat.

He now hung some three feet below the cross beams, and though the rope rose and fell gently for a few minutes, as the cradle above slightly rocked with his motions, no sound came from the bell. There were no sudden pulls on the rope, and consequently the tongue of the bell remained motionless against the bell's edge.



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JER. COFFEY, 11 Mullins Street, MONTREAL

A LIGHT KEEPER'S STORY.

His Wife was a Fearful Sufferer from Rheumatism—Her Joints were Swollen and Distorted, Her Nights Almost Sleepless and Her Appetite Gone—After Suffering for Several Years Before Relief was Found.

From the Kingston News.

Mr. Hugh McLaren, lighthouse keeper on Wolfe Island, is one of the best known men in this section, and to his vigilance in the performance of his duties is due the safety of the many craft sailing in that part of the St. Lawrence. Mrs. McLaren, his wife, has been an invalid for a number of years, and in conversation with a reporter recently, Mr. McLaren stated that she was rapidly regaining her old time health under the treatment of the most marvellous of modern medicines—Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. Asked if he had any objections to giving the particulars, Mr. McLaren replied that emphatically he had not if such publication was likely to benefit any other sufferer. He said: "A number of years ago my wife con-



acted rheumatism, and for a considerable time was a helpless invalid. Her joints were swollen and distorted; her nights were sleepless and her appetite poor and very fickle. During those years she experienced excruciating tortures, the pain never ceasing day or night. She had the benefit of skilled medical advice, but the treatment afforded no relief, and we began to fear that her trouble had gone beyond human aid. On a number of occasions I had read in the papers of cases of rheumatism being

cured by the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and this at last determined us to give them a trial. She had used some three boxes before any improvement was noticed; and then we began to note that she slept better and that her appetite was improved. Then the pains gradually began to subside, and after using about a dozen boxes she was able to get up and walk about. She continued the use of the pills for a while longer, and although occasionally she feels twinges of the trouble in changeable weather, she now enjoys better health than she has done for years, and can sleep as soundly as ever she did in her life, while her appetite never was better. I look upon Dr. Williams' Pink Pills as a wonderful medicine, for I know they have done wonders in my wife's case, and I feel certain that if any who are afflicted as she was will give them a good trial, equally happy results will follow, and I therefore give this testimony freely, hoping that it will benefit some other sufferer."

Mr. McLaren's strong testimony proves the claim made that Dr. Williams' Pink Pills cure when other medicines fail, and that they deserve to rank as the greatest discovery of modern medical science. The public should always be on their guard against imitations and substitutes, which some unscrupulous dealers, for the sake of extra profit, urge upon purchasers. There is no other remedy "just the same as" or "just as good as" Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and the genuine always have the full trade mark, "Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People" on the wrapper around every box.

Rheumatism Runs Riot When there is lactic acid in the blood. Linitis and lotions will be of no permanent benefit. A cure can be accomplished only by neutralizing this acid and for this purpose Hood's Sarsaparilla is the best medicine because Hood's Sarsaparilla is the only true

blood purifier prominently in the public eye. HOOD'S PILLS act easily, yet promptly and effectively, on the liver and bowels.

Ecclesiastical Arbitrators.

The differences between the Union Traction Company of Philadelphia and its employees are about to be submitted to arbitration. A conference was held last week between a citizens committee, headed by Archbishop Ryan, and the officers of the Traction company. It was agreed by them that the differences should be submitted to a committee consisting of Archbishop Ryan of the Catholic Church, Bishop Whitaker of the Protestant Episcopal Church, Bishop Foss of the Methodist Episcopal Church and representatives of the Traction company and their employees.

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