

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

WASTED OPPORTUNITIES

Brethren, we exhorted you that you receive not the grace of God in vain. What is this receiving of God's grace in vain, my brethren, against which St. Paul warns us in these words of the Epistle of to-day? It is receiving it and making no use of it, receiving it only to waste it and throw it away.

We are all the time receiving graces from God. Every day, every hour He is giving them to us. For what is a grace? It is a help, a means to our salvation which comes from Him. And these helps He gives us continually, by instructions, by admonitions, by good examples, by the evidences which He puts all around us of the shortness and uncertainty of life, of the instability of earthly riches and the happiness of the peace which virtue gives, of the misery which comes from sin. All these and countless other helps to lead us, almost to force us, into the way of His commandments are lavished on us incessantly. They come more or less to all men, but most of all to us children of His holy Catholic Church, who have the full light of His faith, the full teaching of His law.

But more than all He Himself is every day speaking in our hearts, inviting, urging, begging us to turn from mortal sin; or, if we have indeed done that, to rise higher, and serve Him more perfectly. If we had listened to all these calls, if we had availed ourselves of all these helps, we should now be far advanced on the way of the saints; we should be like St. Stephen at his martyrdom, see heaven opened before us and our salvation morally secure.

But we have not done that. We have been doing just what the apostle warns us against; we have been receiving these graces in vain. We have received them, and it has been worse with us than if we had not; for we have received them, many of them at least, only to throw them away and trample them underfoot.

What would you think, my brethren, of a man, who being anxious to reach a distant country, which was his true home, and where were his loved ones, and having no means to do so of himself, should throw away with contempt the sums which from time to time might in charity be offered him to enable him to accomplish his desires, should throw them absolutely away, not even using them to supply his daily wants or to secure some passing pleasure? You would say that he was a madman or a fool; that he had not the gift of reason, which raises man above the brute.

And yet this is what we have been doing; and even more than this. For there have been some, perhaps many, graces which God has given us which would even alone, if rightly used, have answered for all our needs. They would not have been mere contributions to our passage money for heaven, but would have put us aboard the vessel, and made our reaching port little more than a question of time. But these like the rest, are gone without being used; they are strewn on the road behind us, and we cannot turn back to pick them up.

Such a great grace is the one which in spite of our unworthiness, ingratitude, and folly, is now once more offered to us by Our Father in heaven Who does not alter the rules by which an earthly benefactor would be guided. This season of Lent on which we are, the great opportunities which He gives us to reach that country where He awaits our coming. One who spends even one Lent as it should be spent will be at its close well established in the way of solid virtue and peace, the way which certainly to the kingdom to which we all hope to go.

It is for this that Lent is given us, not merely for a season of penance and suffering, but to get through with somehow or other as best we can: it is for this reason also that the Church to-day solemnly warns us to use it as it should be used. Listen, then to her warning voice; listen out of love and gratitude to God; listen out of love and holy fear also for yourself; for it may be the last great grace that will ever be brought to your door.

TEMPERANCE

A CATHOLIC PAPER SHOULD ADVOCATE TEMPERANCE

A correspondent (somewhat indignantly, we should judge, since that is the way with a certain class of correspondents) having asked our esteemed co-laborer of the Catholic Chronicle (Erie Pa.) if he were running a temperance paper the editor replied:

"We would say that at the Council of Baltimore the Catholic Church in this country took a definite stand on this question and in her decrees declared that the abuse of intoxicating drinks is to be reckoned among the most deplorable evils of the country." As a means of remedying this deplorable state of affairs she exhorted pastors, "to make every possible effort to exterminate the vice of intemperance," by warning their flock against its dangers, admonishing them to keep away from saloons and crying out fearlessly against drunkenness and whatever promotes it. These decrees also call upon Catholics engaged in the saloon business to choose a more becoming way of making a living,

and if they persist in this line of business they must keep their saloons closed on Sundays and never allow blasphemy, cursing or obscene language." In view of this official attitude on the part of the Church towards the saloon traffic it would seem that Catholics ought to be among the most determined opponents of the liquor evil. And by the same token it would seem that a Catholic newspaper that is worthy of its name, can not be anything else than a temperance paper. Does this answer our correspondent's query?

WORSE THAN WASTED

"With desolation is all the land made desolate, because there is none that considereth in the heart" (Jer. xii. 11). The money spent for drink, whether in the saloon, the club or the home, is worse than wasted. Those who spend would have been better off if it had been stolen from them. They got nothing in return for it that did them any good, and all it did their family was harm. This is so self-evident that all one had to do to recognize its truth is to turn his attention to it. "Why do you spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which doth not satisfy you?" (Is. lv. 2).

But it may be said that the money spent for drink gives the farmer market for his grain, investment to capital and employment to labour to put up and equip distilleries and breweries, and for rolling stock for the distribution of their product, for its sale; also to government gaugers, storekeepers and clerks, glass blowers, coopers and a host of others. Yes, that is quite true; but it is not all it does. It gives investment to capital and employment to labour to build and equip prisons, reformatories, homes for degenerates and inebriates, poor houses, hospitals, orphan asylums, etc., and to doctors, nurses and help, guards, constables, policemen, judges, lawyers, court houses, etc. But after all that can be said as to the employment of labor and investment of capital, by the liquor traffic, what benefit does the country derive from it all? The money thus expended might just as well have been stolen from the wealth of the country; in fact, much better considering the harm drink does. That capital and those men could have found investment and employment, just as remunerative to themselves, and it would have been for the betterment of the country, in the betterment of its moral, mental and physical deterioration. If men thought in their hearts would the manhood and wealth of the country be so wasted? What has been your attitude towards drink? Have you been putting an enemy into your mouth to steal away your brains and leave you unable to think in your heart? You may think that drink has done you no harm, certainly it has done you no good and it will never do so, but it will inevitably do you harm and nothing but harm if you continue it. Stop consider, act—Very Rev. M. A. Lambing.

GERMANY AND THE JESUITS

The German Centre Party's declaration of want of confidence in the Chancellor and the Bundesrat has created a very difficult situation for Dr. von Bethmann Hollweg. In commenting on the debate in the Reichstag the Kölnische Zeitung states that he directed the decision of the Bundesrat. The assertion is contradicted by the "Kölnische Volkszeitung," and it is quite certain that the correction represents the truth. No statesman who has heavy responsibilities desires to make them embarrassing, and that is what the German Chancellor would have sought to do deliberately, had he influenced the Bundesrat in making its decision so restrictive. So far from welcoming the attitude adopted by that body, he feels that it has forced him into a perplexing position. As he acknowledged in the course of the debate, he would have been glad if the Jesuit question had not arisen at all. The anti-Jesuit law, one of the features of Bismarck's Kulturkampf, was enacted in 1872. It is directed not only against the Jesuits, but also against kindred Catholic religious organizations, such as the Lazarists and the Sisters of the Sacred Heart, and forbids activity to them in their corporate capacity. To the Bundesrat or the General Council of the States was entrusted the duty of seeing that measures were taken to carry out the law. The Catholics have for forty years borne with as much patience as they could command an enactment which they have regarded all the time as unfair and oppressive. The Chancellor in replying to Dr. Spahn, the leader of the Centre Party, said that in the application of the law the tendency has been to make it bear lightly on the Catholics and that they could not complain of its having been used against them with severity or in a spirit of legal

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HUGH MCKENNA, ESQ.

St. Stephen, N.B. Jan. 17th. 1911. "I wish to tell you of the great good 'Fruit-a-lives' have done for me. For years, I was a martyr to Chronic Constipation and Stomach Trouble. I was greatly run down and my friends feared I had Consumption. I tried numerous doctors and all kinds of medicines, but received no relief until advised to try 'Fruit-a-lives' by Dr. McCready of St. Stephen, and am pleased to say that I now enjoy excellent health. 'Fruit-a-lives' are the best medicine made, and I strongly advise my friends to use them."

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chicanery. That is quite true, but as Dr. von Bethmann Hollweg admitted, they have never ceased to protest against it and to call for its repeal. In Catholic Bavaria the Premier, Baron von Hertling, issued a government decree giving to it a liberal interpretation. Practically the only exercise of their religious ministry it denied to the religious bodies named in the law was the preaching of missions. A cry went forth at once from the more combative Protestants against the action of the leader of the Bavarian Centre. Petitions for a more rigid application of the act were adopted and sent to the Bundesrat. On the other hand, the movement amongst the Catholics for the abolition of the obnoxious law swelled in volume. Resolutions denouncing it were passed at many public meetings, and petitions against it were drawn up in successive numbers by the Catholic Bishops and later the Prussian Hierarchy bore testimony that there was nothing either in the doctrines or the conduct of the Jesuits for which they should thus be penalized. The matter was submitted by Baron von Hertling to the judgment of the Bundesrat. A tactful interpretation of the Act might have appeased the excitement on one side and the other, but old prejudices held sway. The decision was against the performance of the most ordinary acts of their religious ministry by the Jesuits and the kindred Orders concerned. It was virtually a proscription, and on its becoming known a wave of indignation swept through the ranks of the Catholics in Germany.

The Chancellor, as the chief representative of the government, was bound to defend the decision of the Bundesrat, but he did not attempt to reply to Dr. Spahn's objections against the law. No effective reply could be made. The law is a relic of the Kulturkampf, which ought not to be suffered to exist at the present day. Under its provisions the religious Orders cannot establish houses in Germany. If three or four members of an Order live together in private apartments the government may disperse them on the ground that the place is a fresh religious foundation. The Jesuits cannot hear confessions, cannot give Holy Communion, cannot in any way minister to the religious wants of the people. The law, as the Centre Party maintains in their formal declaration, is an attack on the Catholic Church and the civil rights of the Catholics of the German Empire. It is a standing reminder to the Catholics that they do not enjoy the same religious liberty as their Protestant fellow subjects. Dr. von Bethmann Hollweg, as a justification for its preservation, said that besides the twenty-four million Catholics there are in Germany forty million Protestants who resent Jesuit activity—a fact which could not be disposed of by reasoning or dialectics. Doubtless the vast majority of Protestants dislike religious activity on the part of any of the religious Orders, but that is not a just reason for depriving Catholics of their services. The Chancellor will not find that the anti-Jesuit law is approved by the representatives of the German people. It is because they disapprove of it he is brought face to face with such an awkward situation. The centre will without delay bring forward in the Reichstag a motion for the abolition of the law. They are sure of the support of the Socialists, the most numerous party in the House, for Dr. Frank, their spokesman in the debate, announced that they would vote against the law. The motion will be passed, the Bundesrat will then have to deal with the question once again, and if it decides against the Catholic demand the government must expect resolute opposition from the centre.

We are perfectly confident that a law so intolerant as that against the Jesuits cannot much longer be upheld in Germany. The "Kölnische Zeitung" has remarked that the present Chancellor has got on better with the centre party than Prince Balow did, and has not deserved hostility from them. Dr. von Bethmann Hollweg has undoubtedly been, on the whole, friendly to them and to Catholic interests. The "Frankfurter Zeitung" has misrepresented him in saying he told a member of the centre that Prussia would rebel against any other Papal documents such as the Encyclical on the relations between the Catholic workers' societies and the Christian Trade Unions. But his friendliness has not been quite disinterested. Since the Socialists secured a majority over each of the other parties in the Reichstag he has carried on his government by the votes of the centre and the Conservatives. He has had to rely on the members of the centre, and it is not easy to see how he can dispense with their aid. Hence, it is that we are so hopeful of the repeal of the anti-Jesuit law. At a time when the external situation is so threatening the Germans are not likely to cling obstinately to a legal injustice which gravely disturbs internal peace. The Chancellor as an excuse for the stringency of the Act pleaded that the Protestants were not alone in opposing the Jesuits. Their activity in the Church, in politics, and in the school, their international character, and their resistance to modern State conceptions had, he said, repeatedly brought the Order not only in Protestant lands, but also in purely Catholic countries, into conflict with governments and even with the Roman Church itself. Clement XIV, as a choice of evils, yielded to the pressure put upon him for the suppression of the Jesuits by powerful European Courts, but he did not condemn their doctrine, morals, or discipline. The truth is that the ideals of the Jesuits are the ideals of the Catholic Church and that both in cleaving to them must at all times look for antagonism from forces governed by less exalted motives. To advocate and safeguard their rights it would be well if in every nation where Catholics are numerous there were such a solid and vigorous organization as that of the German Centre Party.—Catholic Times.

THE "PROTESTANT"

Mr. Percy Fitzgerald, writing to the London Tablet, says that the word "Protestant" is one of the cleverest contrivances devised at the Reformation. "The 'Fathers of the Reformation' had a motley and rather discordant following—mostly with opposing interests, in revolt from the old Church. How were they to be brought into line? And how kept in line? . . . Only by devising some cogent, common formula which should cover all differences. The solemn renouncing of 'papistry' was not enough . . . there had to be discovered some flamboyant word or banner—to signify dislike and condemnation; and also to stand for the opposed as well as for the opposer. 'Protestant' was the very thing. To this hour there are protesters against 'Rome.' On this one principle all the sects can unite. The high church section it is true disclaims the name 'Protestant' and strives to take possession of the title 'Catholic,' but," says Mr. Fitzgerald, "it comes to the same, they are being legally enrolled as belonging to the one 'Protestant Church of England.'"

As the Catholic pressure grows stronger the forces protesting grow noisier. "The infidel is perhaps the most genuine 'Protestant' of all—for the Papists block his way more determinedly than do the orthodox, against whom, strange to say, he shows little or no hostility. Both have the one common enemy—and let the foe advance, all the discordant forces become 'Protestant at once.'"

Continuing his exposition of the meaning of "Protestant" this writer scores the ineivility of mis-naming Catholics: "Lately I was astonished to hear some intimate Protestant friends, in my presence, say of some one (and, as I know, from sheer forgetfulness), 'Oh, he's a Romanist.' As the French say, this gave me seriously to think: Why this nickname? We ourselves, in our homes, never dream of devising such offensive things; but this word 'Romanist' is the favorite one in most Protestant households. Again, I believe there is the soundest policy in this nick-naming: such as 'Papist' 'Popish' 'Romanist' and the like. For in the family, as the children are brought up, they grow accustomed to associate these contemptuous titles with those whom they are taught to 'protest' against. It becomes a habit, and a constant use of terms, they cease to recognize these unhappy beings as having any decent respectable character—followers of scheming leaders. Strange! Methodists, Wesleyans, Quakers, Muggletonians—all are mentioned with due civility; but the Catholic becomes a 'Romanist.' This seems unmeaning and illogical, until you take into account that it is an act of the never-ceasing protest. How curious, however, that we 'Romanists' have no such system, simply calling other religions by their fitting proper names. Yet the giving a nickname to any person or body is surely a sign of conscious weakness."—Sacred Heart Review.

CORNERING BIGOTS

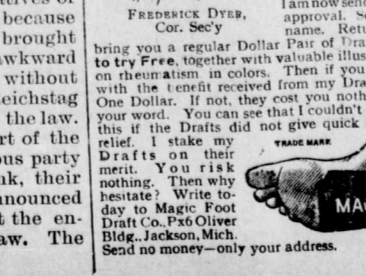
Militant Catholicism has been forced to assume a stand these days which ought to prove effective in the silencing of the bigots who do not scruple to lie against the Church. We can understand how others may differ from us; our doctrines are often misunderstood, and it is very hard to counteract traditions of centuries by any real student of history latent lies. But it is hard to understand how men claiming to be Christians can retail lies of whole cloth. But the pity is they do. Deny as you will, explain as you will, nail the lie as you will, you need never expect to kill it. When all the explaining is done, and when you flatter yourself that you have done a service to the truth, he hops up again as vigorous as ever with the proverbial nine lives of the cat.

But some apologetes have gone about the matter in a new way. They compel proof of statements or silence. That is the effective argument that is now being used against some of the vilifiers of things Catholic. During a retreat conducted by Monsignor Russel, of Washington, the question was asked, "Why have our faithful Catholics never denied their ministers as a part of their Church obligation?" The Monsignor replied that Catholics had never taken the trouble to deny such evils.

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PRESIDENT SUSPENDER NONE SO EASY

because they considered them too silly. And then instancing the lie recently going the rounds about the oath which the Knights of Columbus are said to take, he offered to give \$1,000 to the man who would prove that the Catholic clergy take any such oaths. Others, too, throughout the country have offered large sums to anyone who would prove that there was any such thing as that famous oath of the Knights. It ought to be a very simple matter to produce the facts in proof, but as yet no one has claimed the money.

Another instance is furnished by Father Bedford, of Brooklyn, who offered \$1,000 to a certain minister if he could prove the charges which he had made against the clergy of Brazil. "Brazil," said the priest, "is distant. It is customary for missionaries to publish stories of abuses they have found in remote places. I had some hope that the day had passed for beating a tomtom and shouting against Rome and her iniquities, but occasionally some missionary uses the old trick before he passes the hat. When will men see that they who really love God love their neighbor well enough at least not to lie about him?"

The minister has not yet taken up the challenge; and we do not hesitate to say that he will not take it up even with the chance of winning a thousand dollars. Perhaps the gentleman's high sense of honor will not permit him to earn money in such a manner. That at least will be his return in order to shield himself. But if he has such a high sense of honor, it is too bad it does not show itself in the way of regard for the truth. Meanwhile it is a good idea to insist that these fictionizing gentlemen should prove their assertions or keep quiet.—Pilot.

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