

FIVE-MINUTE SERMON.

Fourth Sunday in Lent.

ECONOMY.

"Gather up the fragments that remain, lest they be lost." (St. John vi. 12.)

Here is a lesson, my brethren, in economy which it would be well for us all to consider this morning, for many of us will, I fear, have to answer to God for the wilful waste not only of spiritual goods but also of temporal blessings.

There is, I know, a false economy, better called stinginess, and which comes from a miserably spirit, and this is certainly very displeasing to God. There are some, and thank God they are few, who are foolish enough to starve themselves and live in meanness and wretchedness while their money is stored away in bank. But the not uncommon fault which we have to meet, and which with all the energy of our soul we deplore, is the wasteful, negligent, unthrifty spirit found among many of our people. People, indeed, not lazy nor idle, but people who make hay while the sun shines, and then are unwise enough not to gather it in and lay it aside for a needy day.

"Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof," says the man who in the spring and winter months makes three or four dollars a day, lives like a prince, eats the best and drinks the worst—"Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." "I know winter will come and with it no work for me, no bread for my children, and the cold shoulder from former friends; but no matter, 'Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.' I have money now, and to-day I will eat, drink, and be merry."

Brethren, it is to such as these that our Blessed Lord would say this morning: "Take care, be saving, gather up the fragments. Be more economical when the sun shines; lay aside a dollar now and then of the fragments; save those fragments you spend in the saloons on Saturday evening; save those fragments you waste in gambling; save those fragments you squander in useless and needless amusements; gather them all up lest they be lost, and in the day of need you be found penniless."

And for those upon whom God has bestowed an abundance of temporal favors the lesson is as grave and important. For among such there is a wastefulness, an extravagance which is often disfiguring to the worthy poor, and deplorable in its results to their own spiritual good. People of means may smile or turn up their noses at the suggestion of being prudent and economical about the fragments they are warned to gather up lest they be lost. Oh! how many such fragments are lost to the poor; that needless extravagance in dress, that wilful and useless expense, those fragments of every whim and every selfish desire gratified, which might not be lost if properly gathered up and given to God's own, the poor.

Brethren, the lesson is the same for us all, whether we are rich or poor; all the blessings we receive come from God, they are His and we are only His stewards, and the practical lesson He would have us learn from His Gospel to-day is this: In the day of our prosperity, whether that be great or small, we should avoid all wilful, criminal waste, we should learn to gather up the fragments that remain after ordinary and necessary wants are supplied; gather them up carefully lest they be lost. Then, if we have lived honestly, and demands on our generosity are made, we shall be able to meet them out of the fragments we have gathered up; and if poverty through hard times overtake us, we shall have the consolation to know in our distress that we have not wasted or squandered the blessings God gave us in the day of our prosperity. Remember the lesson—gather up the fragments that remain, lest they be lost.

Attending Church

The Brooklyn Eagle this publishes some Protestant reasons—very suggestive ones—for not attending church, and for the little influence which churches nowadays exert over the poor.

A logical Protestant has no need to attend church on principle; he relies on divine inspiration to guide him in his interpretation of Holy Scripture. He holds that each one should read and judge for himself; consequently he stands in no need of the ministry of the preacher. The Protestant church has put aside the Sacrifice of the Mass and hence there is no need of assisting at divine service. In fact, the logical Protestant should not attend church, according to his own principles. There is no place in the Protestant church for the poor. True, indeed, a mission church, or Bethel, has been set aside for their use—usually a goodly distance from the parent church. But the poor, with keenest instinct, have discovered that the good preaching and singing are not for them. The crusts and the crumbs are given to them, while the savory food is reserved for those who are clothed in purple and fine linen.

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OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

The Ermine.

There is a beautiful snow white animal which is called an ermine, and there is a pretty legend about it, which you must know is not a true story, but is a most beautiful one.

The ermine really has not a black hair on its exquisitely white body, and it steps very softly over the earth, that it may not soil even its snowy feet with the dust.

It is said there were once some naughty men, with dirty hands and faces, who thought it would be great fun to drive an ermine into the mud.

They tried a long time without succeeding, for the ermine could run very fast, and crept into very small places.

At last these cruel men made a pen all around the ermine, with ditches full of muddy water on all sides but one, and on this side they built a hot fire; and then they laughed cruelly because the ermine must go in the mud or be driven into the fire.

When everything was ready they shouted and ran after the little ermine, which went bounding toward the muddy ditch; but it would not put a foot into it; it ran to the other side and dashed from side to side; and when the cruel men pressed closer and shouted louder, reaching toward it with their foul hands, the glorious little ermine went flashing like a snow flake straight toward the fiery wall that guarded the last side. The men began to feel that there was not much fun after all in such sport as this, for they were not so wicked as to wish to burn the pretty ermine; but the ermine dreaded their unclean touch as much as she dreaded the mud, and while the men fell back in astonishment, the ermine leaped into the flame, but in the flame appeared the dear Christ Child, who took the ermine in His arms and turned a glowing face upon the cruel men, saying:

"This my ermine, white and pure as I made it. How dare you seek to harm it? I quench the fire that it may not be burned, for I am the Christ Child who cares for all things pure." Then gazing pitifully upon the men, He whispered softly: "Go, make yourself clean." The ermine was carried to a beautiful garden, where it was never again afraid, and the men became gentlemen who never teased another creature.—Elizabeth Stuart Phelps.

Lessons in Politeness.

Any boy or girl who has at all observed the ways of animals must have noticed how many even insignificant little creatures have very good manners indeed. You may think it strange that an animal can give lessons in politeness, but after all politeness is necessary in a community, and the animals that live and labor together, that lead any sort of social life among themselves, have to be considerate of one another's feelings. You cannot be sociable and selfish.

Have you never seen a number of ants working to move a large morsel of food to their lair? It would be perfectly absurd for one ant to try to lug away the delicacy by himself, and he has sense enough not to attempt it. Instead, he calls as many of his friends as he can summon together and they all work with a will. There is no disorderly jostling or quarrelling, because that would interfere with the accomplishment of their purpose. They politely help one another for the common good.

Of course, ants, we may say, belong to one family, and it is only natural that they should be polite. We have heard of members of families not treating one another politely, but we do not care to take up that question. Many animals are polite to others that are not of their species. A little girl friend of ours was lately much distressed by the loss of her pet cat. For several weeks nothing was heard of the cat. Then one morning he appeared on the doorstep of his home and seemed so thankful to be taken in and petted that it was supposed he had been stolen and kept a prisoner. After he was warmly welcomed by his human friends, the fox terrier of the family rushed into the room, showing that he had only just learned of the cat's return. The scene that followed was the funniest you can imagine. With every demonstration of joy the little dog ran to the cat and began licking pussy's face as he might have licked his master's hand. All that day he never wavered in showing the cat every attention. He was indefatigably polite. Very likely the two animals talked to each other in their language, which we are not clever enough to understand, and the dog sympathized with the trying experience his poor friend had been through. We dull human beings never found out where that cat had been or what he had suffered, but whether or not the dog understood, he was kind and loving and polite to the cat, and in a few days pussy seemed as happy as if he had not a care in the world. All his troubles were forgotten under the influence of kind treatment.—Our Animal Friends.

He Became Famous.

Tenacity is a good word, although a picturesque Americanism has substituted for it "stick-ativeness." Phrenologists find a bump for the faculty and call it *continuity*. It is always easy to make a beginning; most young people are ready to begin anything. But, "wae's me," what a beautiful lot of tangled threads they presently find in hand! The beginnings are broken off near the head; the unfinished are enough to discourage further undertakings. And that's why some girls

and boys lose ambition and become doleful before they accomplish anything worth while.

Most of our work is laid out for us; what we do (or don't) of our own accord is what differentiates us one from the other. Because nothing is worth while commencing unless it can be successfully completed, we should be cautious about making a beginning. Anything good once begun must be perseveringly kept up. In fact, if it gets a good impetus, say half-way, it will almost keep on of itself to the end. We must disregard every mood that would withdraw us from our design; we must hold firmly to our purpose, losing it, we fall into the incapacity of discouragement.

We may always find examples of tenacity among those who have achieved success. Rudyard Kipling, though still a young man, has been a famous author these ten years, and his renown is constantly growing. He is not one of the flash-lights that dazzle us for the moment and then disappear forever. The light of his genius is a steady flame, fed by his own indomitable perseverance. It is related of him that when he was a boy of twelve he went on a sea voyage with his father, Mr. Lockwood Kipling. Soon after the vessel was under way Mr. Lockwood Kipling went below, leaving the boy on deck. Presently there was a great commotion overhead, and one of the ship's officers rushed down and banged at Mr. Kipling's door.

"Mr. Kipling," he cried, "your boy has crawled out on the yardarm, and if he lets go, he'll drown."

"Yes," said Mr. Kipling, glad to know that nothing serious was the matter; "but he won't let go." Later in life young Kipling gained a place in public favor, a somewhat difficult undertaking, as such a place is as slippery and insecure as the yardarm of the anecdote. He might have grown weary and fallen into the oblivion in which all spasmodic effort is lost. But he continues to hold his place firmly. Characteristically "he won't let go." He knows, as does every earnest worker, that whatever the measure of one's talent may be, there can be no permanent success without tenacity of purpose.—Catholic Standard and Times.

Seeking and Accepting the Best Side of Things.

Every one presents a good and a bad side, and there are people whose mission seems to be to seek with exasperating fidelity the worst side of men and things.

A book is published: instead of profiting by the good and useful pages which it contains, a look for inaccuracies, commonplace thoughts, infelicitous expressions, and errors which may have escaped author and editor, and he rejoices to glean a harvest of faults.

Show him a picture, he is sure to find it out of drawing, the light badly managed, the drapery stiff, etc. Go with him to a social reunion, he will entertain you on his return with how he was bored by the stupidity of one, the pedantry of another, the affectations of another, and by the faults of the company generally, which seem to have occupied his mind to the exclusion of everything pleasant in the evening. Hence nothing pleased him; the house was furnished in bad taste, the conversation was dull, certain voices grated on his nerves, etc. He is dissatisfied with everything, and with the world generally, which, alas! pays him in kind.

B accustoms himself to see the best side of persons and things; hence there is an air of geniality and good humor about him which seems contagious, and he is greeted with pleasant words and smiles wherever he goes.

If some one blunders in company, he never sees it; if the conversation is dull about him, he manages to amuse himself; if he meets with an accident, he repairs it as well as he can without lamenting over it, or retailing it to everyone; if he is left alone, he enjoys his solitude, the charms of which he has discovered. He enjoys his reading, thoroughly relishing in the book the qualities which please him, and rapidly passing over those which are not to his taste.

Every one loves him, for he has a happy knack of discovering everyone's best qualities, and making them appreciated.—Which of these two people is the happier?

We cannot change the weather, we say; so we accept it as it is. Why not apply this maxim to men and things? Let us not rebel against events, and learn to yield to the inevitable.

Instead of struggling fruitlessly against an obstacle, turn aside and pass on.

If the stream is calm it is because it peacefully follows its course, but when it attempts to flow over a rock, see how it scolds and foams, and breaks its banks. If we cannot remove the obstacle, let us learn to wait until it disappears. Impatience exhausts our strength to no purpose and never remedies anything.

The nature of things does not change, it is for us to change our will. Instead of lamenting over weather which interferes with our plans, let us cheerfully do something else.

Persons who understand how to be happy are like good workmen who always have a reserve of tools to fall back on. Knowing how much occupation contributes to happiness, they are never without something to do.

We would have all about us yield to our views; but it remains to be seen whether it is not for us to yield to theirs.

We would be the figure about which our little world centres, but with what reason?

If eight persons about me hold an opinion opposed to mine, who should yield? Self-love tells me they should yield to my superior wisdom. Common sense tells me, when there is no compromise of conscience, I should yield to the greater number, as a principle, an opinion in which eight persons agree is more likely to be correct than the opinion of one, individual.

Three-fourths of our troubles come from an exaggerated idea of our own merits, and from our efforts to exalt our position in the world at the expense of others.

Let us take people as they are; frequently what we call faults in those about us are simply the qualities in which we are lacking; let us beware of exacting too much of others. Rather let us learn to use them according to their ability and their aptitude, and we shall satisfy ourselves and content them. "We do not use a broom to write, but to sweep," says an old proverb; require of those about you only what they are capable of doing, and do not ask anything more.

Do you remember that pretty couplet in the "Miller Without Care"?

"Whatever way the wind blew, He set his vane and slept content."

Let this be our spirit in everything. "Those who visit me," said a sage, "do me an honor; those who never visit me give me pleasure,—so I am satisfied with everybody."

Do you know the principal cause of that restless, discontented feeling which finally becomes a permanent condition? It springs from a habit of repining at our position, which is not what we would have it, at our work, which is not what we would choose, and at all that we lack.

Let us gently accustom our will to love our position, our work, and willingly bear anything that it lacks.

The greater part of our trials comes upon us so swiftly because we meet them half way.—Catholic Columbian.

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

Life is not all made up of work. No one can work incessantly, and the attempt to do this always defeats itself and often brings its own swift penalty. He who would acquire and retain great capacity for work must rest and play.

When young Governor Russell of Massachusetts, the gifted and lamented son of Harvard, said that he would rather hear that Harvard had won in a game of football than in an intellectual contest, he did not wish to disparage scholarly attainments, but rather to emphasize the physical conditions which make them most valuable. Too many people are undervalued, over-worked. We want health and heartiness and a bounding pulse.

The opposite of work is not idleness, but play. Nature's penalty for idleness is no less stern than for overwork. She demands the joyous alternation of work and play. Every person whose life is to be robust must have his periods of play. Recreation must turn his thoughts into new channels, relieve the pressure upon the brain, and the tension upon the nerves and give tone and vigor to the muscles and vital organs.

I am sorry for the man who no longer likes to play. He has lost one of the most precious gifts with which nature endowed him. He is like railroad train without an engine, or a day without a sun.

Three principles may guide us in the pursuit of recreation: 1. Play should be invigorating. Its purpose to promote cheerfulness, buoyancy and a healthy glow. If it is athletic, it should quicken the circulation and purify the blood. If it is mental, it should be interesting enough to divert the thoughts from their previous channels. If it is both athletic and mental, double benefit will be received. It should be hearty and somewhat exciting; it fails of its purpose if it is too quiet and passive. Loafing is not harmful to ourselves or to others. Here is a young man who likes to play certain games, but who says they are not interesting enough unless he makes some money on the result. If he does that he makes a fatal mistake and is entering the path which is trod by spendthrifts and gamblers—a steep decline from which few escape. Another, rejoicing in his strength, craves the excitement of personal encounter. Hence we find students in German universities fighting a kind of sham duel and young men in certain American colleges taking their exercises with boxing gloves. But we have prize fighters enough without trying to develop them in our institutions of learning or Association gymnasiums! Let us choose amusements which do not develop in us low tastes or false standards of right and wrong.

2. Play should not be excessive. Nowhere is self-control more important than in those amusements which tempt us to excess. I recall a young man whose name was known all over the country a few years ago. He was famous in a certain line of athletics. His whole soul was in them. But his interest in other and more important things was lost and his college course was a failure. His enthusiasm for athletics was a good thing if properly controlled; not so controlled, it became the rock on which he was shipwrecked. One's recreations afford a sort of character. The strong man puts them in their true place. They are an incident, a pleasant change in the routine of his daily life. He enjoys them keenly, but he gives them up at the proper time. The weak man is absorbed by his amusements and forgets

everything else. They usurp the place of his work, blind his reason, and stifle his conscience.

But let us not for this reason deprive ourselves of the needed recreation and healthful glow which come with well-chosen sports. Amusements are a necessity, restoring elasticity and vigor. They are a discipline of judgment, of temper, of will. They keep the heart young, the tastes simple, the sympathies warm. Without amusements the body, mind and spirit alike lose their rightful gladness and tone.

Respect for Authority. In civil life the same kind of respect for authority as is maintained in a military establishment cannot be observed, but even in civil life there should be respect for authority.

In the army the private must obey his captain without question or hesitancy; the captain in his turn must yield implicit obedience to the colonel of his regiment, and the colonel must respect the authority of the general in chief. The purpose of this discipline is to form the units of the command into an army or lesser force moving with the precision of machinery at the will of the commanding officer.

In civil life the units have more freedom of action; each within limits can assert his individuality, but even in civil life some have authority over others, and some degree of discipline must be maintained for the transaction of the most ordinary business. It has been urged in support of projects to give military training to school children that it inculcates habits of obedience useful to them in civil life. Whether it has this effect may be doubted, for the reason that the rigorous discipline of the army cannot be, or, at all events, is not, enforced in schools; but it is true that the military habits of prompt obedience and respect for authority are of value to young men in business life, and they should cultivate these habits. Sometimes they will be authorized to think and act for themselves; sometimes they will be obliged to assume responsibility in the absence of their superiors, and they at times respectfully make suggestions when they think they have some knowledge superior to that of their employers; but they should at all times keep in mind respect for authority and avoid being officious. Nothing is more annoying than for one in authority who has settled upon some course of action without mentioning it to his subordinates to find that one of these has upset all his plans by officious interference. The employee's explanation that "he did not know," or that he thought so and so, aggravates rather than excuses the offense, for if he did not know he should not have acted.

In nearly all business establishments one will find an employe whose egotism and self-complacency lead him to interfere with the affairs of other people. In their absence he undertakes, possibly because of his good nature or devotion to the interests of the establishment, to transact their business or answer for them in some way. Sometimes he is of assistance, and is, therefore, tolerated; but occasionally he does the wrong thing, and thus gives rise to troublesome complications.

The officious young man may have respect for authority while his superior is present, but in his absence assumes to speak for the firm or corporation and makes engagements or promises which are wholly unauthorized. No matter how good his intentions may be, he becomes a nuisance and thereby injures his prospects of promotion.

The young man who is engaged in making his reputation in office or workshop should at least take some lessons from the military. He should respect authority and yield prompt obedience thereto, and should never answer or act for his superior unless authorized to do so. He will have many more things left to be decided by his own judgment than the common soldier, and can assert his individuality in many ways, but he should be careful to keep within the bounds of his own authority, and maintain respect for those above him. In this way he will come to deserve promotion, and may some day be given the authority which he cannot usurp without risk to his reputation.

How to Make Money.

About a month ago I saw an advertisement in a religious paper where Dept. G. B. of the Iron City Dish Washer Co., of Sta. A. Pittsburg, Pa., wanted a few good agents to sell their latest improved dish washer. I wrote them, and they sent me full particulars how to sell the household article. When the machine arrived I showed it to my neighbors, and I took orders in every home that I visited. It is the easiest thing to sell, and without any previous experience in selling anything I sold a dozen the first five days. The firm gave me full particulars how to sell it, and I found that by following their instructions I did well. The machine washes and dries the dishes in less time than it takes to tell it. Then a woman don't have to put her hands in the greasy dish water, and everyone knows how disagreeable that is. I am making lots of money selling the dish washer, and any other energetic person can do the same. Write them for circulars.

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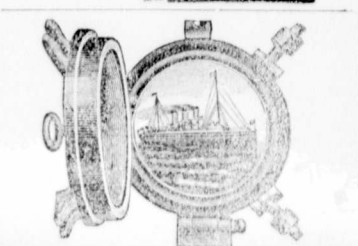
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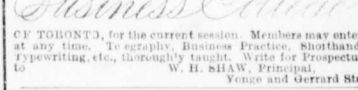


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