

FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS.

Easter Sunday.

THE TRIUMPH OF CHRIST.

This is the day which the Lord hath made: let us rejoice and be glad in it. (Ps. cxviii. 24.)

The festival of Easter is, above all things, my brethren, a day of joy. Just as we love the sunshine more after days of cloud and tempest, so also is our joy keener and more intense when it follows sorrows.

It is for this reason that the joy of Easter is greater than that of Christmas, or of any other season of the Christian year. For we have been passing through a time of sorrow. We have beheld in Passion-tide our dearest Lord in suffering. We have beheld Him as the King of Martyrs, worthy of the title, because his pains were so far in excess of anything that mere man has ever suffered or could ever suffer. We have seen Him in His agony in the garden, when the sins of the whole world and of all time were presented to His vision and pressed heavily upon Him, filling His Sacred Heart with deepest grief. We have called to mind His betrayal by His trusted friend and disciple; His arraignment before impious and unjust judges; His cruel condemnation and death. Despised and rejected by His own chosen people whom He had come to save, a robber and murderer preferred before Him, we have beheld Him abandoned to the tortures of the heathen soldiers, scourged and spit upon, and crowned with thorns, and finally led forth to die a malefactor's death upon the cross.

And worse than all is the thought that He was forsaken by those whom He held most dear, those whom He had chosen to be His special friends and disciples, and who had been His constant companions in His public ministry. They all forsook Him and fled, leaving Him to die.

Then we have followed Him along the sorrowful way of the cross: we have meditated deeply upon His three last hours of agony; we have almost heard His deep, expiring groan as He rendered up His soul to the hands of His Father.

Now, if we have thus learnt well the lessons of Passion-tide, the joy of Easter will come to us in all its fullness. If we have pondered well the depth of humiliation to which our Lord subjected Himself in His death upon the cross, we shall well realize the greatness of His triumph to-day. The joy that filled the hearts of the Apostles, of the holy women, and, above all, the Immaculate Heart of our Blessed Lady when they knew that the Lord had risen, will indeed, be ours to-day, and we shall cry out in the words which the Church puts into our mouths: "This is the day which the Lord hath made: let us rejoice and be glad in it!"

"The Lord is my strength and my praise, and is become my salvation." Therefore, to-day the voice of praise and of salvation "is in the dwelling of the just throughout the world."

"For the right hand of the Lord hath wrought strength; the right hand of the Lord—that is, His almighty power—has raised up Jesus from the dead. He has risen gloriously and triumphantly, and in His glory and triumph all mankind are sharers. For by His resurrection He has overcome death and opened unto us the gates of everlasting life. He has triumphed over sin, which brought death into the world, and which was the cause of His death. His resurrection, therefore, means our deliverance from sin and death, and is a pledge to us of that life which He will give to His faithful ones.

Surely, then, we can have no greater cause for rejoicing than this. Pray then, my brethren, that your hearts may be filled with the true spirit of Easter joy. "Ask and you shall receive, that your joy may be full; and your joy no man shall take from you."

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OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

The Easter Bells of Feldkirch.

Zealously and victoriously the armies of the great Napoleon were sweeping over Europe. No fort was strong enough to resist them; no number of men large enough to defend a city, at that time, when the French battered at its walls.

On the frontiers of Austria was a little town called Feldkirch. It had no more than three or four thousand people, mostly God-fearing men. The great Napoleon found Feldkirch in his way as he advanced, and gave an order to one of his generals to take it, just as a housewife would order a servant to kill a fowl for dinner. The general selected was Massena; and one beautiful Easter morning, as the people arose to go to the first Mass of the Festival, they saw General Massena's forces, numbering eighteen thousand men, encamped on the heights above the town. The sun as it arose shone on long files of French muskets, a sad though glittering sight to the people, who had been thinking only of their Risen Lord.

Naturally there was the greatest consternation. No one knew the best course to pursue, so a hurried meeting of the town council was held. One thing all were agreed upon—that it was useless to oppose the overwhelming numbers of the enemy. Then some one arose and suggested that a suitable person be sent to the French camp with a flag of truce and the keys of the town, asking for some degree of mercy, that at least the women, children, and old men might be spared, and a general sack, the awful accompaniment of war, averted. At this juncture an old and reverend priest arose, and all listened with close attention; for his counsels had always been loving and wise. "My children," he said, "this is Easter Day. Cannot God, who arose from the dead, protect us in our distress? Shall our first act in this calamity be to forsake Him? We of ourselves can do nothing. What are we against that vast number awaiting the order to attack us? Let us go to church as usual, and trust to God for the rest."

At those brave and earnest words hope sprang anew in the breasts of the faithful, and the various sections were ordered to ring all the bells of the town as joyfully as possible. Troops of people thronged the streets and entered the churches, and one would not have known, except for that menacing host upon the hill, that anything had interfered with the happiness of those who were rejoicing in the Resurrection.

And so the joy bells rang and rang and rang; and the French, hearing them, took word to their general that they were ringing because of the arrival of reinforcements; that the place had been relieved in the night by a large portion of the Austrian army. The general, believing this, ordered his troops to retreat at once.

Thus, while the bells of Feldkirch rang, the French army stole away; and the people fell upon their knees and gave thanks to God for their deliverance.

Some Costly Blunders
Of all things, boys and girls, acquire the habit of carefulness. Be careful about neatness in dress and cleanliness of person. Be careful about trying to speak correctly. Be careful always to be kind and polite. Be careful in your daily duties, in your letter-writing, in your intercourse with others. If you try to practice this virtue while young you will never have the serious trouble that Jane had in the following story:

"Well, Jane, did you get a favorable answer from Mr. Williams?"

Jane, a shorthand writer, had applied for a vacancy in the publishing house of Williams & Morton. A friend long holding an exceedingly important position in the establishment had informed her of the vacancy, and paved the way for her application, and had received almost a promise of the place for her.

The tears came into her pretty eyes at the question, for she had counted on success.

"No," she answered; "Mr. Williams writes me that I evidently am not suited for the position. I can't imagine what makes him think so; I have the best testimonials, some experience, and with such a friend as Mr. Jackson right on the spot to speak for me, and such encouragement as he gave me, I thought I was sure of it. It's an awful disappointment."

"Can you think of any reason for Mr. Williams' change of mind?"

Mr. Jackson, going by on his way home, came in on the question. Jane turned to him for enlightenment.

"What do you suppose did it, Mr. Jackson? You know, of course, that Mr. Williams has refused the place to me."

"I'm sorry to have to say it, little woman. Your letters of application made the trouble."

"My letter! Why, I'm sure it was very well written."

"Yes, as far as penmanship was concerned. By the way, how did you address it?"

"Why, to Mr. Williams, of course."

"You have a copy of your application, I suppose?"

"Mr. T. J. Williams, 5 and 6 Court Street, Philadelphia, Pa."

"Well, what's wrong?"

"In the first place, the head of the firm is Mr. John T. Williams. One of the partners, his brother, happens to bear the name of Thomas J. You reversed the initials and the letter went to the wrong man. In the second place, the establishment is at 7 and 8, instead of 5 and 6."

"But every one knows where Williams & Morton's is: the letter could not go wrong. And the younger Mr. Williams could see, the moment he opened the letter, that it was for his brother. I don't know how such very slight mistakes could make so much difference."

"But by glancing at the directory you could have written the address correctly at once."

"I thought I remembered it; and I couldn't see the directory without going to the apothecary's five blocks away."

"It would have been worth while."

"Of course," said Jane, the tears brimming over again. "I would have gone and looked it up, but I was almost certain I had it right—and then," falling back on her first argument, "they are so well known."

"If you were in their employment you would often have to write to people not so well known, where the mistake of an initial or a number might prove a serious matter. That was Mr. Williams' comment. Your letter, he said, revealed a lack of attention to detail, which he would not run any risks on."

The blunder cost Jane a good place, but, when finally after six months more of efforts to cure bad habits and persevering search for employment, she finally secured something, she soon proved to be the most attentive and painstaking of secretaries.

Not every applicant for work, however, is so fortunate as to learn just why an application fails which she has every reason to hope would be favorably considered.

Lack of attention to details, the feeling that "it's almost right," or "it will do," has spoiled many a fair prospect.

An Incident of the Russian Famine.
One day in the past winter, when the suffering of the Russian people from the famine had reached its height, a stranger of poverty-stricken appearance, muffled up to the ears in a patched and threadbare cloak, entered a baker's shop in the streets of Moscow. It was already dark and the shop was crowded with customers. The stranger stood silent and motionless in a corner of the shop until his turn came to be served; then, stepping up to the keeper of the shop, he asked:

"What is the price of the bread, master?"

"Three copecks and a half the pound," was the reply.

"So dear as that?"

"That is cheap for times like these."

"But I have only three copecks in my pocket."

"Go and fetch the other half-copeck and when you shall have your loaf."

"Where am I to get it from, if I have not so much as a single cent at home?"

"Then you must go without the bread."

"O master, be kind! Have pity on a poor workman, whose wife and children are starving. Take the three copecks! After all, it is a fair price."

"I have told you before and I tell you again, go and fetch the other half-copeck and you shall have the bread; otherwise you must go without it. Do you hear what I say?"

"You are very hard upon a poor man."

"Hard or not hard, that is the price of the bread. If it suits you, well and good; if not, you can go your way."

"For the sake of a few cents you would let a poor family die of hunger?"

"You have bothered me long enough with your nonsense. Be off about your business! I have no time to waste on you. Be off, I say!"

As he uttered these words he raised his arm with a menacing gesture.

The intruder did not exhibit the submission which generally characterizes the Russian peasant. Instead of withdrawing, he continued with unwonted pertinacity:

"Government has imported large supplies of corn, but you still keep up the prices—or, rather, you continually raise them. No one can deny that you are utterly without ordinary charity or kind feeling for the poor."

"Take care what you say or else I will teach you to respect your betters."

"I respect honest people, not those who grind the faces of the poor."

"Will you begone?"

"I will not go until you have given me a loaf for my three copecks; that is a reasonable price, and you bakers have no right to charge as much as you choose."

"I advise you for your own sake to be off; I cannot stand this much longer."

"And I repeat to you that I do not mean to go."

"You do not mean to go!" roared the baker, in a rage. "Wait a bit; I will find a way of getting rid of you." So saying he took up a stout cudgel and brandished it over his head, while he shouted in an angry voice: "If you do not take yourself off this moment I will beat you black and blue!"

"Will you really? Not quite so fast!" And, seizing the stick, the stranger wrested it out of his hands.

The baker cried loudly for help, and his man ran to his assistance. Amid a great uproar, with threats enforced

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