

FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS.

First Sunday After Epiphany.

DUTIES OF CHILDREN TO PARENTS.

"And was subject to them."  
The idea of subject to any one else, is one which is very repugnant to the feelings of people in this age of the world, and especially in this country. It is against all our principles. Why, the Declaration of Independence, which Americans consider as at least of as much authority as the Gospel, says that all men are created equal, and that they are endowed with certain inalienable rights, one of which is liberty. Now, of course, liberty, as we understand it, is the right of doing just what one pleases. If, then, one person is going to be subject to another, what becomes of liberty?

A few years ago, it is true, the fact that a good many Americans were slaves seemed to be rather inconsistent with the Declaration of Independence. But then that was explained by their not being white. Of course when that document said men, it meant white men. Now, however, there is no trouble on that head. Nobody is a slave now, at least among us: every body has liberty, we are all sovereigns; there is no one to whom any one need regard as his superior or master.

But how about children? Ah! there is a division of opinion on that point. The parents do not fully believe in the Declaration of Independence when it is applied to children. The children, however, do; and their opinion is the one which is gaining ground. They think, as soon as they are old enough to think anything, that they are just as good as their parents, if not a little better; that they know as much as they do, if not in fact more; and that if anybody is going to be subject, it ought to be their parents, and not they to their parents. So they make up their minds to have their own way, and their parents generally let them have it; and the parents at last really begin to believe that the children may be right after all, and that the Declaration of Independence covers their case too.

Now, of course, all this is a great mistake. So far from there being no such thing as subjection, we are all subject to the authorities which God has established; and we make fools of ourselves if we imagine that we are free from them. The right to do what we please. That liberty no one can have till his will is in union with the will of God. If any one loves God perfectly he can certainly do what he pleases; but only because what pleases him will please God also.

And it is not only that we must be subject to the authorities placed over us by God, but to ourselves. No, it is because God has given them the power and the right to command us, and we cannot refuse to be subject to Him. Now this was one of the great lessons which God Himself came on earth to teach us. He took on Himself the form, not of a ruler, but of a servant; He became obedient, even unto death; and as the Gospel of to-day tells us, He remained as long as possible entirely subject to Mary and Joseph. Far beyond the time at which ordinary children are free from their parents, the Creator of heaven and earth kept Himself in subjection, having, as it were, no will of His own. Most of His time on earth was spent in teaching us this lesson of subjection and obedience—this lesson that proud human nature is so unwilling to learn—in showing us that if we would ever really be free, we must give up what we call freedom.

Away, then, with this false gospel of so-called liberty! Let no Christian be deluded by it, when he sees his God in the form of a servant, in subjection and perfect obedience. Think, my brethren, of those words which you have heard to-day. "He was subject to them," when tempted by the world's false promises of happiness in what it calls freedom.

Be subject to God, as He has been to man for your sake; and for His sake be subject to those whom He has placed over you: children to your parents, servants to those whom you serve; all to those authorities in Church and State whom He has placed over you. In subjection, not in rebellion, is the way to true liberty.

Man's Greatest Enemy.

Drunkness! It is the greatest enemy of the State. It fills prisons with criminals, almshouses with paupers, hospitals with disease, accidents and death, and follows these to the graveyard at the public expense. It haunts the streets, defiles dwellings and sends insane victims to asylums. It fills liquor dens with broils, riots, ruffians and gamblers and consumes the time of courts, and draws from country treasuries the hard earnings of toil, and this statement does not half fill the recital of its wrongs.—Ex-Chief Justice Daniel Agnew of Pennsylvania.

Hood's is Wonderful.

No less than wonderful are the cures accomplished by Hood's Sarsaparilla, even after other preparations and physicians' prescriptions have failed. The reason, however, is simple. When the blood is enriched and purified, disease disappears and good health returns, and Hood's Sarsaparilla is the one true blood purifier.

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OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

The Years.

Why do we heap mound of years  
Before us and behind,  
And scorn the little days that pass  
Like angels on the wind?  
Each turning round a small, wee face,  
As beautiful as near,  
Because it is so small a face  
We will not see it clear.

And so it turns from us and goes  
Away in sad disdain,  
Though we could give our lives for it  
It never comes again.

How Willie Saved the Train.

BY K. C. BARRETT.

The old kitchen clock gave a preliminary gasp, as if taking breath; and then it struck solemnly six times. Mrs. Dugan pushed back the pan of sausage which she was frying, moved the griddle to the front of the stove, and crossing the room, opened the door leading to the stairs.

"Willie!" she called gently.

"Yes, mother," came in sleepy, boyish tones from the floor above.

"Come down, son, come down at once," said Mrs. Dugan, "its after 6 o'clock."

"Yes, ma'am, I'm coming," said the voice, which now seemed as if its owner was wide awake.

Mrs. Dugan went back to the fire and began baking buckwheat cakes for breakfast, and a few minutes later, a bright-faced, ten-year old boy came running down the stairs and into the room.

"Good morning, mother," he said; and added, "I tell you that sausage smelt good up stairs."

"Did it dear?" said his mother; "well hurry now, and get ready for breakfast."

Willie went out into the little entry, and taking the bright tin dipper and basin from the nails, ran out to the corner of the house and filled his basin from the rain-water barrel, on which there was a thin coating of ice. The boy scooped the bits of ice out of the basin and coming back into the entry gave his face and hands a thorough washing.

His father soon came in from the barn, and Mrs. Dugan, having dished up the buckwheat cakes and sausages, the family sat down to breakfast.

"Hurry, our boy slept it out this morning," said Mr. Dugan. "Now, when I was his age, if I had got the chance to go to a fine new school, I'd have been up before the lark."

"Why, father, there aren't any larks around here just now," said Willie, who was at the most literal period of his life.

"Well, maybe not, son," said his father with a smile, "but there are plenty of blue birds, and they were around bright and early this morning."

"Willie may be more pleased with the new school to night than he is this morning," said his gentle mother.

"Oh, mother, I'd like school well enough," said Willie, "if I could only learn something about railroading there."

"Well," said his father, "isn't that just what you will learn? Won't your geography tell you where the places are that the freight comes from and the passengers go to? And won't you learn about figures in your arithmetic; and you ought to know that being able to do sums well will be very useful in railroading."

"I used to do sums at this school," said Willie, "but Miss Yeazel never let us cipher any further than fractions."

"Well," said Mr. Dugan, "I hear that Brother Joseph is a fine hand at figures, and he told me that he'd take a great interest in you, because you had so far to walk."

"Well, eat up your breakfast, now," said Mrs. Dugan, who was afraid that the discussion would have a bad effect on their appetites.

"Won't you eat something yourself, June?" said Mr. Dugan.

"I'm not hungry just yet," said the pale-faced mother; "I'll eat something by and by."

"Will you let me make you a slice of toast, mamma?" said the boy, who was very fond of his mother.

"No, no, dear," said Mrs. Dugan, "go on with your own breakfast and don't mind me."

After the meal was finished, Mrs. Dugan and Willie prepared to leave home; and after the boy received some money with which to buy the needed books, they took up the tin dinner-pails, which the mother had filled early in the morning, and set out to perform the duties of the day—the father going to the tool house to get out the railroad tools and handcar, and the boy repairing to the station, where he was to take the 7 o'clock train to the young city, five miles away, where the school, which Mr. Dugan had spoken of, was situated.

Blessed is the man who has found his work," says the philosopher; and thrice blessed is the boy who finds his calling early in life. Willie had found his work even before he had reached his tenth year—he was going to be a railroad man. Of course he hadn't decided just yet what department of the service he was going to enter; but he had certainly placed no limit on the height to which he was to climb in that profession. His father was only a section foreman, whose duty it was to keep a few miles of track in good order; but then, his father had begun that kind of work late in life, whereas Willie intended to begin on his work the very hour he was allowed to leave school.

In fact, he would have been much better pleased to have begun working in some department of the railroad service this morning, than to be setting

out for the "fine new school," where his father expected him to learn so much under the care of the Christian Brothers.

For Willie's experience of schools, or rather of the one little district school which he had hitherto attended, and over which Miss Yeazel presided for one hundred days of each year, was of a kind which led him to believe that schools in general were created for the purpose of torturing small boys, by making them sit still all day and then not learn anything!

This was usually hard on the active boy, who was willing to acquire all kinds of useful knowledge; but the district was poor, the children few, and the teacher, in consequence, inefficient.

However, Willie endeavored to make up, during the other two hundred and sixty-five days, for the time wasted in school; he knew his catechism thoroughly, and was able to answer every question between the covers; and by asking numberless sensible questions in a polite manner, he had managed to gain a great deal of information regarding the nature of trees and plants, and the habits of beasts and birds, and thousands of other things which can only be known to a boy living in the country.

But during the past year he had devoted all his spare time to studying the track work in which his father was engaged, and had learned the why and the wherefore of the working of that department to a surprising extent.

"Willie knows more about the track work now than any man I have," said his father one day to old Captain Ridd. "If I was off for a day I think I could trust him to take my place."

"Mark my words," said the old river captain, "that boy will make a name for himself when he grows up."

Willie overheard this remark and wondered: the phrase was new to the boy's ears. Make a name for himself? Willie had three names already—Willie, Joseph, Dugan! And they were good enough names for him. Oh, he knew now: Captain Ridd meant that if he worked very hard in the railroad service, they'd name a locomotive after him! As some of the locomotives in those days were named for the presidents and superintendents of the roads to which they belonged, while others were named in honor of the great men of the State and nation, we can see the form which Willie's idea of his future greatness assumed; and the boy thought it would be worth his while to work hard for a great many years, if in the end he came so distinguished.

But the train carried him off to the new school, where he of course arrived long before it was opened for the day; and when Brother Joseph came Willie presented himself before him for examination. The careful and thorough way in which the good Brother conducted this examination was a surprise to the small boy; and he began to believe that there might possibly be a difference between schools, and that a boy might be able to learn something with a teacher like that.

And when he was told that he might join a class of boys much older than himself, if he thought he could keep up with their studies, his respect for Brother Joseph increased ten-fold, and he felt that he was surely on the way to make a name for himself.

Then, at "recess" and during the noon hour, the city boys were very civil to the strange lad, and taught him a number of games which were new to him; and Willie repaid their kindness by telling them a thrilling story of the muskrats on his father's section, that had bored under the railroad track in the night-time to escape a flood, and when the next train had come along, the rails had sank under its weight, and so caused a wreck, in which a brakeman was killed! And he told how he had set a trap and had caught some of those very muskrats and had sold their fur to a dealer for enough money to buy himself a pair of skates and a four-bladed pen-knife.

And when he produced the knife in evidence of the truth of his story the other boys decided that the new-comer was a very valuable addition to the school.

By the time that school was dismissed at 4 o'clock the boy had come to the conclusion that Brother Joseph knew more in a day than Miss Yeazel knew in her whole life; that he wouldn't have a bit of trouble in keeping up with the older boys, and that it was the best place to have fun, at noon and recess, that he had ever struck.

But neither his pleasure at the sports nor his satisfaction with the studies prevented him from remembering that his mother was ill that morning, and had eaten no breakfast—his poor mother, who had never enjoyed good health since the awful time when diphtheria had come down along the river and had carried off three of her little ones in a day. Willie had been too young at the time to remember much about this sad event, but his father had often impressed on him, that, as he was the only child spared, he must be all the kinder to his mother; and the boy, who was very manly and affectionate, took pleasure in obeying this command.

Therefore, before setting out on his five-mile tramp for home, the boy spent the change, which remained after paying for his books, for some very nice oranges, which he put into his little dinner-pail, and he hoped that his mother might be able to eat them on some of the mornings, when she couldn't eat anything else. So swinging his pail and whistling merrily, the boy walked along on the railroad track toward his home, there being no train which stopped at that village until late at night.

After a time he reached his father's section; and soon came to the place where Mr. Dugan and the men were busy shovelling mud off the track, which the recent rains had loosened and washed down from the bank.

The boy remained for a few minutes talking to his father, telling him of the new school and of the studies which he was going to take up; and then he started for home.

"Willie," said Mr. Dugan, calling after him, "just stay in the long clay cut, like a good boy, until the express comes by; and if any mud comes down on the track, shovel it off."

"Is there a shovel there, father?" asked Willie.

"Yes," said his father, "John came down from there just now and left a shovel. It was all right when he came away, but its a bad place, and needs watching."

So Willie hurried off, glad to be of service to his father, who was over-worked at this season of the year by freshets and landslides, and found it difficult to keep his section safe for traffic.

The track in the clay cut was all right, however, and the boy walked slowly through, looking at the stones which jutted out from the face of the bank. He had noticed the cabinet in the school-room, which contained a great many specimens of stones and ore, and he meant to bring some queer stones which he had often seen along the river, to Brother Joseph, in order to find out what they were composed of. He had passed out from the cut and was just stooping down to pick up one of these stones when he heard the whistle of the express blowing a crossing signal a couple of miles away; and at the same instant a dull roar from the bank behind him caused him to turn around in an affright, as an enormous mass of stones and mud came rushing down over the tracks, burying them deeply out of sight.

For a moment the boy was too frightened to move; then, as the danger to the approaching train flashed over him, he started to run towards the train at the top of his speed, knowing that if he got around the curve in time and made the engineer understand his signals, there might be time to stop the train before it reached the obstructed spot. In case that the train wasn't stopped in time he knew that there would be a terrible wreck and that many lives might be lost.

So he ran along over the ties, feeling the rails vibrate from the approaching train, and soon rounded the curve, where he could see the train bearing down upon him. The boy waved his hands, in one of which he still clutched the little dinner-pail, frantically toward the engine; but the engineer was not keeping a sharp lookout and the train came rushing along to its doom.

Willie gave a wail of despair when he saw that his signals were unheeded; and then looking quickly around, he ran back a few feet and climbed a little knoll close to the track, and, swinging his pail, with its weight of oranges, about his head, he sent it crashing through the window of the cab as the engine rushed by!

There was a sharp whistle for brakes and the engineer reversed his engine and "gave the sand," then as the speed slackened he and the fireman jumped clear of the train as the locomotive and tender piled up on the mass of mud and stones. The engineer was stunned and bruised by his fall and the passengers were flung about in their seats.

As the people got off to find out the cause of the accident Willie came running up, crying as if his heart would break, and knelt beside the prostrate engineer.

"Is he much hurt?" he cried to the crowd who soon gathered about.

"I think not," said a gentleman, who had the appearance of a doctor.

"Oh, but he must have been hurt by the broken glass," sobbed the boy, from the engineer wasn't hurt, however, and soon regained consciousness, and when Willie told where his father was working a brakeman was sent to bring him to clear the track, while a messenger was sent in another direction for a wrecking train, and the passengers congratulated themselves on their escape from injury.

Willie's remark about the broken glass, however, had aroused the curiosity of the gentleman whom he had addressed; and when he questioned the engineer and found that it was to the courage and quick wit of the boy that the trainmen and passengers owed their lives, he suggested that it might be well to show the lad that his conduct was appreciated, by giving him a substantial sum of money.

The others agreed to this at once and a purse was made up, to which every body gave generously, and Willie, who was now working as hard as he was able in shovelling the mud off the track, was called up to receive it.

The gentleman made a little speech, praising the boy's courage and forethought in saving the lives of the people and the property of the com-

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pany, and then handed the boy the roll of money.

At first Willie failed to understand what it all meant; he hadn't supposed that he had done anything which any other boy might not have done in his place; but when he found that the large roll of money was really intended for him, he took it without a word, and rushing back to his father, shouted:

"Oh, father, the gentleman gave me all this money and now we can pay the mortgage off the house!"

The father was leaning on a crowbar, with which he was prying a large stone off the track, but he stopped long enough to clasp his brave and unselfish boy to his heart, while a hearty cheer rang out from the bystanders for the honest father and noble son.

So Willie made a name for himself sooner than he expected, for that particular line, bore the name "William J. Dugan" in bright gilt letters on its tender. And when the boy had received a good, substantial education at the Brother's school, he was given a place in the general office of the company, where he worked so well, that although he hadn't yet reached his fortieth year, he has become the president of one of the largest railroad systems in the country, and is beloved and respected throughout the land for having shown in all his actions, the same regard for life and property which he showed on the day he saved the train.

Weep no More.

A few more years shall roll,  
A few more seasons come,  
And we shall be with those who rest  
Asleep within the tomb.

A few more struggles here:  
A few more partings dear,  
A few more toils, a few more tears,  
And we shall weep no more.

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