

FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS FOR EARLY MASSES

By the Paullist Fathers. Preached in their Church of St. Paul the Apostle, Fifty-ninth Street and Ninth Avenue, New York.

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST. "When thou art invited to a wedding, go sit down in the lowest place, that when he who invited thee cometh, he may say: Friend, go up higher."—Words from the Sunday's Gospel.

Of the sins which men commit, some excite horror and detestation, others shame and contempt, others even pity and compassion. There is one sin, however, which, on account of its extreme foolishness, moves men to laughter and mirth, and that is the sin of vain glory. The sin of vain glory, I say, not the sin of pride; for, although people often confuse the one with the other, yet they are really as far asunder as the poles. Pride consists in despising others and all they say, do and think; may even, when carried to its full extent, Almighty God Himself. The proud man makes to little account of others that he does not care what they think of him. He is entirely taken up with his own superior excellence and abilities. But for the vain glorious man, the good opinion of others is the very breath of life, in and for which they live and move and have their being. I am inclined to think that there are not very many really proud people among us, but of the vain-glorious men and women the number is infinite.

For, consider for a moment the way in which people are acting every day. How many women there are who spend all the money they can spare, and more than they can well spare, in buying dresses and bonnets and fine ribbons, and give up all their leisure moments either to decking themselves out in their fineries or to displaying them to the rest of the world. And what for result? Well this is not the place for me to repeat the remarks which all these efforts call forth from other women; suffice it to say that the desired effect is produced upon persons of the other sex, it is not a humiliating thought that success should be due to any personal excellence, but to the clothes that are worn?

Again, how many men there are of whom it is the supreme delight and the topmost object of ambition to have their names appear in the papers. Should they realize their desire how proud they are, and how carefully they keep their copy. I wonder they do not have it framed and hung up in their rooms. But it passes comprehension how any man of sense can take pleasure in seeing his name in such papers as most of ours are nowadays, filled, as their columns are, with accounts of adulteries, elopements, suicides and every kind of disgraceful action. And even if the papers were more decent than they are, among the thousands and tens of thousands of copies that are sent out every day, how long would they be remembered?

These are but specimens of the foolishness of the way in which people are acting every day, and ordinary intelligence is sufficient to show the folly and emptiness of it all. I wish to point out, however, one consequence of this pursuit of worldly honors which is not sufficiently adverted to, and it is this—that by seeking glory which is worthless we run the risk of losing that which is of infinite and everlasting value. For it is not wrong to seek glory and honor. Our Lord Himself said that He might be glorified, we have an inalienable and an insatiable desire of honor and glory, and to cherish and cultivate this desire is not only right, but a duty. What is wrong is the seeking it in the wrong way, and from the wrong source; because by seeking it in the wrong way we shall fall short of that which is set before us as the reward of our actions. And what is that?

"We all beholding the glory of the Lord with open face, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord." It is the attainment of this glory which our foolishness endangers.

How to Avoid Calumny.

"If any one speaks ill of thee," said Epictetus, "consider whether he hath truth on his side, and if so, reform thyself, that his censures may not affect thee." When Anaximander was told that the very boys laughed at his singing, "Ay," said he, "when I must learn to sing better." Plato being told that he had many enemies who spoke ill of him, said: "It is no matter; I will live so that no one will believe them." Hearing at another time that a very intimate friend of his had spoken detestably of him, he said: "I am sure he would not do it if he had not some reason for it." This is the surest, as well as the noblest way of drawing the sting out of a reproach, and the true method of preparing a man for that great and only relief against the pains of calumny—a good conscience.

A Modern Miracle

In a recent letter from R. W. Dowton, of Deloraine, Ont., he states that he has recovered from the worst form of Dystepnia after suffering for fifteen years; and when a council of doctors pronounced him incurable he tried Burdock Blood Bitters, six bottles of which restored his health.

In Good Repute

James McMurdo, writing from Kinross, says: "B. B. B. is a remedy for diseases of the blood, liver and kidneys, has an excellent reputation in this locality. I have used it, and speak from experience, as well as observation. It is the only medicine I want, and I advise others afflicted to try it."

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STRANGE SCENES IN CHARLESTON.

Freeman's Journal.

The later accounts of the Charleston catastrophe throw strange light on the emotional religion of the Methodist colored people:

"The colored people," says an account, "were uncontrolled, and committed a manner of riotous and frenzied excess. A report of their actions as they took place would perhaps be considered blasphemous. The first object, and one that attracted everybody's attention, was an assemblage of colored boys, about a half dozen in number, who had fallen to the ground in a paroxysm of religious frenzy. They were grovelling with their faces down in the grass, and were singing a hymn in a loud voice. The hymn was: 'The Angels a Rappin' at the Door,' and the refrain, sung rapidly, was: 'Oh, tell old Noah to bill on de ark, to bill on de ark, to bill on de ark.' This song they repeated over and over again until they were quite tired, and ceased from utter exhaustion. In a few minutes they were fast asleep."

It was the startlings of the camp-meetings over again. An eye-witness writes that it was piteous to think that, with another shock, this mass of black humanity, excited to frenzy by semi-Pagan rites, might be cast into eternity. He shuddered to think that such a scene of wild superstition was possible in a country boasting of its Christianity. He was reminded of the Pagan dances of Haiti:

"Near the boys was a large tent which had been gaily decorated for some festive occasion. In the door stood a very old colored woman swaying backward and forward, her lips only moving, but uttering no sound. The crowd in front of her watched her with intense anxiety. Suddenly she burst out with the hymn, 'Oh, Healin' Jacob, Let Me Go,' and the crowd joined in the mighty refrain. The crowd swayed their bodies forward to the right and to the left, alternately, just like a sacred dance, clapping their hands in an ecstasy of emotion. Finally one man dropped to the ground, 'convinced' that the lamp was hastily brought from the tent, and he was surrounded by a crowd of women, who held his hands. He cried aloud for mercy, and eventually swooned away, and was almost as rigid as a corpse. The work of conversion then went on, and in less than a half hour about ten men and women succumbed to the emotional sensations of the occasion. Similar scenes were being enacted all over the square."

This kind of preparation for death went on constantly. Surely Protestants, whose eyes are fixed on the spiritual darkness of the Italians and Spaniards, may find food for reflection in the quality of Christianity taught the Southern negroes by the Methodists. "Just here the crowd took up the words 'promise to be baptized,' and sang it to the end with peculiar force and pathos. Then the exhorter proceeded. "Fight the battle, fight the battle; fight it out girl, fight it out boy! Oh, ye ma'am, the time is come. Wake up, wake up, de last chance is come to save old Charleston. Oh, my Lord, don't touch. Oh, my Lord, don't touch. Oh, my Lord, don't touch my city any more, I pray God to hold the world up. Ah, ah, I thank God. Take for this country people, fight for it people. Walk on brothers. Hip, hip, hip, O Lord, take me in your charge to-night. Night before last I didn't expect to see Jesus. O God I look down at these dry bones in the valley. Didn't you hear Gabriel's horn blow? O Gabriel! turn that horn to the land of Egypt on the miserable sinners and not on wa. O Lord, we are here to-night. The birds have nests, but we are here to-night for mercy. O Lord! I have mercy."

"After this hymn about a dozen people were converted, and the work was kept up in a similar strain until broad daylight. To the white people who wore their faces of Thursday night can never be forgotten."

They could not be to forgotten. And when some Charleston Boaberges in the future talks about the darkness of "Romanism" in foreign lands, they ought to be well remembered. If Methodism can give the negro nothing but blasphemous phraseology with which to cover his Pagan emotionalism, it had better confess its failure and admit that the colored people can be saved to Christianity and civilization only by the dogmas of the Catholic Church and the use of the Confessional. It will have to admit this truth some time.

A Cure for Drunkenness.

The cure for drunkenness is a task with which the regular practitioner has been unable to cope. Nine-tenths of mankind look upon drunkenness as a social vice, which a man may overcome by force of will. Drunkenness is a bad habit, we all admit, in the moderate drinker. In the confirmed drunkard it becomes a disease of the nervous system. The medical treatment of this disease consists in the employment of remedies that act directly upon these portions of the nervous system which, when diseased, demand, demerol, and the drinking habit. Remedies must be employed that will cure the appetite, for strong drink, steady the trembling hand, revive the lagging spirit, balance the mind, etc. The nervous system of the drunkard, being all sustaining or shattered, must be given a nutriment that will take the place of the accustomed liquor, and prevent the physical and moral prostration that often follows a sudden breaking off from the use of alcoholic drinks. Labou's medicine may be given in tea or coffee, without the knowledge of the person taking it, if so desired. Those of our readers who are interested in this subject, should send their address for Labou's Treatise, in book form, on drunkenness, opium, morphine and kindred habits, which will be mailed free to any address, when stamps in value of five cents are added. Labou, 47 Wellington Street East, Toronto, Ont. Mention this paper.

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