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CHURCH ORNAMENTS.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

SALESROOMS.

CHURCH ORNAMENTS.

SALESROOMS.

FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS.

Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost.

REVERENCE FOR GOD.

Brethren: I wish to speak to you this morning on reverence for God. But it is natural to ask, Why talk about reverence? why is not that included in the love of God? So it is. But even if one does not love God, even if he is in mortal sin, that is no reason why he should give up all respect and reverence for God. Take an example, Here is a disobedient son; yet he is not disrespectful. "I won't obey my father," he says, "but that's no reason why I should despise him; I won't spit at him, I won't insult him, even if I haven't the virtue to obey him." So with a sinner: if he gives up the love of God by mortal sin, it is a terrible state to be in and an awful calamity. He has lost the divine love. But if in addition he has no respect for God, talks slightly of Him, cracks his jokes about God's Holy Scriptures, makes little of the sacraments and the Church, ridicules her laws and despises those who keep them, do you not see the difference? Do you not see that such a one has not only lost the love of God, but that, having lost all reverence for Him, you cannot help suspecting that there is something the matter with his faith?

I will give you another illustration. Here is a man who is a hard sinner; and yet he never eats meat on Friday. Sick and well, and in all his sinfulness, he sticks to the observance of the Friday abstinence. Now, why does he do that? Because it is a test of personal reverence for what that man knows to be the true religion. It is a very conspicuous act of respect for Him who died that day. It is one of the great outward signs of veneration for our Lord and His Church. If the sinner gives up he drops away down low in his own opinion and considers himself a reprobate. Having been lost love by mortal sin, he has now lost reverence by slighting the Friday abstinence.

Take another case. You hear a man rip out a big curse; you look at him, you see him in a towering rage. All bad enough. Such habits place one in mortal sin. But here is another man, who coolly embellishes a filthy story with the venerable name of Jesus. Are you not much more shocked? Does not this last one seem to you a worse enemy of God than the former, far worse? Sinner, if you have made up your mind to go to hell by a life of mortal sin, what is the sense of going clean to the bottom?

Irreverence towards God and holy things is often by word of mouth and takes the form of some kind of blasphemy. It was so in the case of the heathen King Sennacherib. He ravaged the land of Judea and put multitudes of the people of God to death: yet God spared him. He laid siege to the Holy City, threatened to destroy the Jewish nation, and even then God gave him time to repent. But he blasphemed, he insulted the God of Israel, he cast off all reverence and respect for Him. And the angel of God came down from heaven and slew his army; Sennacherib fled to his own country and was put to death by his two sons.

We see from all this why it is that the first petition of our Lord's own prayer concerns inward and outward reverence for the divine Name—"Hallowed be Thy name." We see, too, why the great commandment of God, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain," not only forbids blasphemy, and cursing, and false swearing, but any and every disrespectful use of that Holy Name. Yet how many are there not only whose words but whose whole conduct is marked with utter indifference, total want of reverence for God, His saints, His word, His sacraments, His Church! Let us hope that such persons do not always realize the deep guilt of their offence. At any rate, let us for our part pay true reverence to God and God-like things. However conscientious we may be of our own failings, let us who hope to be in the enjoyment of God's friendship for ever show our reverence for Him. When we pray, let it be reverently and slowly and respectfully. When we are in the house of God, let us act with decorum as becomes children of God. When we speak of holy things, let us do so seriously and with reverence.

Non-Catholics and Salvation.

Amongst the popular misconceptions of Catholic doctrine—and many of these have their origin in calumny—is the obstinate Protestant notion that the Church ruthlessly condemns to perdition everybody who is not a Catholic. So unreasonable is anti-Catholic prejudice in this regard that the non-Catholic world often insists upon foisting on the Church a teaching both uncharitable and irrational. It is uncharitable because it violates the spirit of our Lord's mission to save everybody, and unreasonable because it postulates the impossible—that those who are in invincible ignorance should be held accountable for not embracing the truth which they cannot apprehend. It is only in the case of a deliberate rejection of divine light and grace to embrace the true faith that the Church declares there is no salvation without her fold.

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DAN.

A Story For Boys.

By MARY D. BRINE.

CONCLUDED.

It happened just at that time that the majority of the crowd had surged over in another direction, and as the races were not to come off for an hour or more, that part of the grounds was comparatively empty, save for a few stragglers and jockeys about the track. So Dan rode over to the track and started on an easy trot around the course, while the dealer, the gentleman who wanted to buy, and a few of the loungers about kept their eyes upon him critically. "He sits well," "He rides well," "He knows what he's about," "That's a plucky little chap," and other remarks similar, were heard by the gentleman as he watched Dan ride, and he quite agreed with each speaker. But the dealer, not ready to yield his opinion, said, "Well, he ain't really rid fast enough to scare him yet. If the boss made any speed the boy'd be thrown and kilt, sure as a gun."

When Dan came around to the starting-place again, all flushed with pleasure and excitement, he asked if he might have a "run" the next time. "Kide as you please, my lad," said the gentleman, "only don't get a tumble." So Dan started off on a run, and the horse showed off so finely, and carried himself, so well, that the question of the sale was about a settled thing. Just at that moment one of the jockeys rode into the ring, and began giving his horse a chance to limber up. "Seeing little Dan's small figure ahead of him, he cried out jestingly, "Get out of the way, you mite! Hi, there! get out of the way, else you'll be blown over when I pass you by the wind of my speed!"

Dan turned his head, and his black eyes gleamed. "Look out for yourself," he replied, saucily. "Catch me if you can, an' then blow me off! How's that?"

"Ha, ha! that's your talk, eh?" shouted the jockey, and he touched his horse into a gallop.

"Now's my time for fun," thought Dan. "I ain't had such a good time for I don't know when, an' taint likely I'll ever get the chance again. Go 'long, now! sst? go on, my fine feller of a horse, g'long!" He struck little Dan's heels into the horse's sides and spurred on, still in advance of the jockey. Faster and faster, still faster flew the horses around the course, and the cheers of the lookers-on soon drew other eyes to the scene, and the cheers grew louder. The gentleman for whom Dan was riding grew excited and cheered lustily himself, while the astonished dealer rubbed his hands together and said, "I told ye the critter could go, only give him the chance. Lor! how the boy keeps up his pluck!" If it was fun for Dan, who didn't know the meaning of the word "fear" in connection with a horse, it was far from being fun for the boy behind him, who was growing angry very fast at the idea of being beaten in this impromptu style by a boy he didn't know, a "mere snip of a boy," who dared to keep ahead of himself, "a real jockey."

But there was no help for it. The horse Dan rode, though never known as a "racer," and offered for sale by the dealer at a price the man then imagined to be "fair," but according to present appearances "not half his worth," was proving himself to be a very fine animal indeed, and there was no longer a doubt in the gentleman's mind concerning his purchase. Still on came the riders, Dan still ahead, bending to his work, and making his light weight still less of a burden to the flying horse. Now they were nearing the starting-place, and the jockey, fancying he could get an advantage over Dan by disconcerting him, threw his cap so that it might fall beside and startle both horse and rider. Foolish idea! It only turned the interest of all the on-lookers in Dan's favor, while, as the cap fell far behind Dan's tracks, the shouts "Mean!" "Shame!" reached plainly the angry jockey's ears. Nearer and nearer now, and finally Dan looked up to see the crowd increasing and the goal close by. It was close work, but just by a head's length little Dan's horse came in first, and the cry of "Bravo!" went up merrily from every throat there.

Dan slipped from the saddle and once more stood upon his now sturdy little legs, panting a good deal, and a good deal flushed, as much so, at least, as his brown skin would permit to show.

He patted the big horse, and then turned to the gentleman who had just completed his purchase and handed his check to the dealer. "I'm ever so much 'bliged to you, sir," he said. "I've had lots of fun, an' that's a good horse, sir. I ain't had such a nice ride since I was a little fellow, an' I don't s'pose I ever shall again. I'm so glad you let me ride him, sir."

"I shall want to speak to you, my lad, in a minute, just wait here a few seconds," was the reply, and then the dealer came to patted Dan's head, and remarked, "It was lucky he (Dan) hadn't been thrown and kilt after all."

Dan received a good many compliments from the people about him, and felt quite confused and embarrassed at being the centre of attraction so unexpectedly though he couldn't feel that he had done anything very clever in merely racing a horse.

"I wasn't goin' to let him"—pointing his thumb backward at the de-

feated jockey—"sass me, an' then get ahead of me too," he explained, "an' so I juss' let the horse go faster 'n his did, that's all."

But that wasn't "all" for little Dan. The gentleman whose horse he had ridden was too much interested in the boy to bid him good-by with only some coins for his service. He had a long talk with Dan, and learned the boy's history as we have known it, and discovered, moreover, that Miss Viola Carew was the daughter of an old-time business friend of his, and of course, learned that he could ever have done from the boy himself. So it came to pass that after a day or two the gentleman and Miss Carew went together to see Mrs. Carmen and talk with her. It was a very pleasant kind of talk, although it made Mrs. Carmen cry a little, and caused Dan to draw his brown hands several times across his eyes. But the tears were, after all, glad ones, and there were two very, very happy hearts left behind in the little house, when, by and by, Miss Viola and her father's old friend walked down the lane and turned towards the village centre.

And what do you think the "talk" was all about? If you had been in front of the schoolhouse one morning, just a week after this, you would have found out the reason of those happy tears of Dan's and his mother's, for the children were gathered about one of their number, listening with all their ears to the news he was relating.

"I know all about it, you see," the boy said, feeling very important because he was the centre of all attention from his mates. "I know all about it, because Dan told me himself. He's going to New York to live in that man's big house, wear a green coat with brass buttons, and sit beside the coachman when the folks go driving, and tend the door when he's in the house, and—and he's going to have real fun, and the gentleman's so kind to him, too, and—let me see, oh, his mother, she's going to live at Miss Vily Crew's house and be head servant. Dan says, 'You see, Miss Vily Crew, she lives in a big house, and there's lots of servants, and she's good and kind to 'em all, and they've lived with her since she was little, and now one of 'em's gone away, and so she's taking Dan's mammy to fill the place. I tell you, Dan's going to be real happy.'"

Some of the children were glad for Dan, and others were indifferent, but some were quite jealous that he should be so bettered in his fortunes.

"H'm" said one, sneeringly, "that little injun! He ain't worth such a fuss. Such a little sneak, afraid to stay in school 'cause he got kicked."

"And so Dan Carmen is getting a lift at last," said the teacher when presently he, too, heard the news. "Well, maybe the boy deserved it. I've never thought he was half as bad as they supposed to be. I wonder how the village will get along without its little scapegrace."

And honest "big Fred," the gardener, hearing that remark, replied gravely, "Das village ain't lose its scapegrace. Bill was still going de blace around, an' where he will be, dere also will be a scapegrace, an' more mit him. Dot Dan-boy ees a good lad to peebles vat vise enough to know gold vrom brass."

And Fred was quite right, I think, don't you?

So, now we can say good-by to little Dan, and be glad with him for all the good fortune he has started upon. A brave, honest little boy; a loyal loving, helpful little son; a grateful, appreciative little fellow; and well worth a mother's little love; and done for him! That should be the opinion of Dan, and having all those qualities, no one need doubt but he will write *finis* to this, my story for "us boys," and await the verdict.

THE END.

One Reason Why.

The Catholic Church is making converts among Protestants in every State in the Union every day in the year, while on the other hand the Protestant sects are finding no converts among Catholics. There are many reasons for this. One of them is that the Church minds its own business. It doesn't care what others do or teach; it doesn't bother itself to notice what is said of it—it keeps right on declaring: "Thus saith the Lord," like the prophets of old sent to announce the decrees of God. It knows its own doctrines and it defines them with authority and precision. But Protestant preachers and editors always keep one eye on the Catholic Church while trying to see out of the other their way to heaven by their different interpretations of the Bible. They are bothered about Rome. Instead of living in the present and going about their own affairs, they are still chattering about Galilee, the Inquisition, Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day, and other dead issues. They disgust the most refined among their own people and they anger Catholics with their tirades against the ancient Church.—Catholic Telegraph.

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THE RIBBONS OF RELIGION.

A Plea for a Return to the Simplicity of Earlier Days.

In the course of a recent address before the Catholic Social Union of England, the Rev. Bernard Vaughan quoted the declaration of a distinguished Protestant writer that "the chief facts of the Gospel history and the doctrines of the Creed were more universally known and more vividly realized in the Middle Ages than they are among the masses of our present population." It can not be denied that this indictment applies with equal force to Catholics. There is a sad lack of dogmatic teaching; the stern truths of the Gospel have been obscured in many minds by insipid books and sentimental sermons. The consequence is that many fall away from the Church, while thousands of others, though clinging tenaciously to devout practices, have lost what might be called active habit. They have beautiful ideas of religion, are eager about functions and church decorations, engrossed with the latest litany and the newest scapular, but failing in acts of virtue. The following of fashions is fatal to the devout life, and there are fashions in devotions as in bonnets and hats. It is a fact that persons much taken up with the ribbons of religion are not apt to neglect their armor. The piety that breaks out in badges is not deep, and is not likely to be enduring. But this is delicate ground, and we are bashful. Let us quote a passage *apropos* from a little book which we always keep within arm's reach,—a volume highly praised by the late Archbishop Porter, S. J., of Bombay: "Our devotions too often resemble a pot of honey, with a buzz of venial sins like clouds of flies hovering around and utterly defiling it. Daily Mass and daily gossip; rosaries and the spirit of personal criticism; enormous waste of time and a predilection for Benediction; a taste for Vespers and a taste for dress and luxury; a snappish temper and a love for lenten sermons. With all this we neither evangelize ourselves nor our neighbors. It is the whitest sepulchre over again; and, alas! the homes of the living are full of these tenements of dead bones. The whole is covered over with the frequenting of pious associations, and constantly renewed and lengthened conferences with our spiritual director, and who is often made director of a great deal which has nothing to do with the priestly functions, and only requires that amount of common sense which everybody is bound to possess. Any army of Teresas and Catherines would have found their way to heaven, through all kinds of supernatural states, with one fourth part of what these silly souls demand to keep them happily at their night and morning prayers."

There is no panacea except union with God; and outward practices are only valuable as conducing to that. They are means to an end. But if the real end remain without result, and that result is the awful one of a false conscience—a cloak of hypocrisy, deceiving our soul and vitiating our judgment. It is this abuse of practices which almost makes us grieve at their multiplicity. The seal of the Church reassures us as regards all she has truly sanctioned. But even so, may it not, as it were, be a poor compliment our great mother is constrained to pay us in these degenerate days when she, who is ever in herself (in all her essential rites, in the exquisitely delineated laws of her rubrics, which contain a whole body of practical theology) so grand, so exact, and so full of a deep inner-sense, has allowed such endless diversity in the outskirts of private devotion? While permitting it, may she not sometimes regret the noble simplicity of earlier ages, when her children chose more solid food, and craved less for variety? It is not by these that she has fashioned her greatest and noblest saints. These are only the nets in which she catches the minnows. Religion, piety and devotion is not a military discipline, nor a thing to be regulated by the ringing of a bell. It is the state of the soul as before God. It is consonant only with simplicity, earnestness, and self-denial.

We are all, or nearly all, too much in danger of making our piety artificial, and not a living part of ourselves. The exterior is regulated like the motions of a pistol while the interior works at will, living a separate life from the outward appearance. We make our very souls into the unconscious prayer-mills of the Eastern fanatic, and flatter little petitions and practices unheeding through the day, like the fragments of paper turned round by the handle of his machine. We are satisfying our itching for outward activity, and at the same time

losing sight of ourselves and of Almighty God.

A venerable Irish priest, of holy life, who had a wide experience in the sacred ministry, once declared that "in his time," when sermons were always either clear explanations of the great truths of the Gospel or earnest exhortations to the practice of the Christian life, when books, though comparatively scarce, were of the order of the "Imitation" and the "Spiritual Combat," devotions few and simple, the number of apostates was small, and solid piety flourished everywhere. We can believe it. Oh for the noble simplicity of earlier ages, when the truths of the Gospel were brought home to every heart, and the energies of every life were directed mainly by the observance of the teaching of Christ's Sermon on the Mount!—Ave Maria.

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