

FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS.

Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost.

MATRIMONY.

The worthy and regular reception of the sacraments during life, brethren, is our surest guarantee of saving souls in the end. They are the special means of keeping us in close union with God; they satisfy every want of the soul, and, unless we put an obstacle in the way, they will infallibly work out for our sanctification.

DAN.

A Story For Boys.

By MARY D. BRINE.

CONTINUED.

Viola sat down on a big stone at the roadside and pulled the boy down beside her. "Now, Dan," she said, "I know all about that money. I was waiting at the post-office, and Jake came in. I thought his face looked brighter than I had seen it before—though, to be sure, I've only seen the boy two or three times, and have never spoken to him at all; but he always looks heavy and dull, I think; well, he came in quite cheerfully, and as he stood near me I spoke to him. He talked freely enough about himself, and finally told me that he was going to the Fair 'on a ticket Injun Dan had giv' him.' From what he said I concluded that you had made him willing to accept your money by pretending you couldn't go, or didn't want to, or some other well-meant but naughty story concocted to hide your real intention. Now, Dan, look at me!"

Dan lifted a very red face to her gaze. "You do want to go to that Fair, and you are a disappointed boy because you can't go; but you would rather let that poor boy have the good time than have it yourself. Dan, you are—"

She put two bright twenty-five cent pieces into the hand of the blushing, astonished little boy, and then gave him another hug, while he looked at her through two large shining tears which gratitude sent straight up from his heart, and said earnestly: "Miss Viola, I do believe you are really an angel, an' I don't see how the dear God can spare you out of the sky, I don't. But so long's you're here, I just do hope an' pray, He'll keep on sparin' you, so I do."

What a perfect day dawned for the opening of the Fair at last! How the sunbeams rioted and danced and beamed everywhere, and how the breezes freighted themselves with the sweetest of odors as they flew hither and thither over fields and through lanes, now frolicking high up amongst the tree-tops, and now rustling through the grasses at the roadside, and setting the low bushes to nodding! All the fragrance of the past summer seemed to have come back on purpose to grace and make perfect this one fall day, when the Fair grounds were thrown open to the crowds from every direction.

Dan, cleanly dressed, and kissing his busy mother good-bye, said: "I don't know how it is, mammy, but it sorter feels 's if somethin' good was a goin' to happen to us to-day. I kind of feel it in the air, an' somehow it seems 's if I'm dreadful happy to-day! I'd be happier, oh, a lot happier, if you'd be long too, dear mammy, an' I'd work real hard to make up the money for you. I wish you'd go 'stead of me; I've been coaxin' you to, so long, an' Miss Viola she'd jes' 's soon you had the money as for me to use it."

"Oh, nonsense, Dan!" replied his mother, holding his curly head upon her breast with gratitude in her heart for such a dear little son. "Nonsense, lad, you know I wouldn't give a fig to go; I've got better work on hand than that; off with you, now, and do take care of yourself, darlin'."

Well, everybody knows what a country fair is, and it would be only waste of time and space to attempt to tell of all the sights connected with this special exhibition. The usual display of huge vegetables greeted the eyes of the crowd, and the usual array of fruit, "not to be handled," made mouths water. All kinds of things of all kinds of styles were there for inspection, from the daintiest of needle-work to the fattest of white pigs. The "side shows," where fat women and thin men, short and long, broad and narrow, handsome and homely, straight and crooked, were congregated, had their usual share of patronage; but Dan was not found amongst them. The man who whitened the blackest of teeth and kept silent as to the horrible results which would follow later on was there, of course, holding forth to the gaping few who believed all he said. The candy and peanut stands were there; the "soda fountains," also the "refreshment tent," and, oh, all the accompaniments of every country fair ever held anywhere on the face of the globe were there in full force, and Dan grew bewildered with the sights and sounds. He had met Miss Viola at the entrance gate, and gone the rounds with her for a while, but some friends had finally taken her off with them, and Dan was now wandering about by himself. He had encountered Jake once or twice, but the crowd had pulled them apart, and at last Dan found himself where he most cared to be—amongst the horses, beautiful animals, from the little ponies up to the noble stallions who stood so far above the boy's head.

"Oh, my! wouldn't I like to be a man an' own a horse!" thought Dan. He envied the jockeys who were to ride in the race soon to come off. How he did wish that he could be a real jockey, and wear the jockey uniform and strut about as they did.

There was a sale of horses going on near him, and Dan drew nearer the gentleman who was examining a noble horse offered by the horse dealer for what seemed to Dan a whole mine full of money, but which the dealer declared to be "a mere song for such a fine specimen of horse-flesh." The gentleman who wanted to buy had a kind, pleasant face, and seemed inclined to make the purchase.

As Dan approached he was saying to the dealer, "I like the looks of this animal very much, and think I shall take him, but will be better satisfied after I have seen him ridden. I would ride him myself, but, unfortunately, I have been a victim of rheumatism recently, and do not feel like this kind of exercise just now."

"All right, sir," replied the man. "I'll find a boy about here to ride him for ye. It's my opinion this ere critter'll surprise ye some fine day. He ain't never been raced, but he kin go as well as the next horse, an' only needs a bit of trainin', sir, to make himself famous."

Dan had heard enough to make his eyes glisten and his hair to stand on end with excitement. Should he lose such a chance for one real, good ride on horseback, when he had longed for such a pleasure so many times; not he! In an instant he stepped before the men. "Oh, sir, please, mister, please let me ride for you! I can do it, oh, I can, if you'd only jus' give me a try, sir."

He turned from the gentleman to the dealer rapidly as he spoke, addressing them both, and fairly wriggling with anxiety lest he should be driven off.

The gentleman noted the eager eyes and honest little face, and smiled at Dan. The dealer glanced only carelessly at the boy, and said, "A pretty chap you are to ride this animal! A mite like you! Why, this ere hoss'd fling ye before ye could say Jack Robinson. Oh, I'll find a boy in a mimit, sir," turning to the would-be purchaser.

But Dan pressed forward and caught the bridle in his hand, saying eagerly again, "Only jus' let me have the try, sir, please. I can ride him. I've ridden before when I was littler'n I am now, an' I know how to stick on, 'deed I do, mister. Please try me jus' once."

"Hold on, Brown!" said the gentleman as the dealer took Dan's hand from the bridle. "There's a sort of pluck about the little chap, and I've a notion to try him. I only want to see the pace of the horse, anyhow, and I guess he can show that. At any rate, I'll give him the pleasure of a 'try.'"

Dan laughed happily, and sprang lightly to the horse's back, where he sat erect as a little prince, despite his shabby attire.

"Well, if he's thrown an' a kilt outright," said the dealer, shrugging his shoulders, "twon't be none of my fault, mind that, now."

"I ain't a goin' to be flung," cried Dan, gathering up the reins, and feeling so happy he didn't know whether to sing, laugh, or cry. "Now, then, sir," to the gentleman, "shall I trot him or walk him, or what? Won't you let me run him, sir?"

"Go ahead, boy, the race track is clear, and you'll have a good chance to see what you can do."

CONCLUDED NEXT WEEK.

DIDON'S NEW BOOK.

The popular preacher of Paris is Father Didon. His "Life of Christ" given to the public some three years ago produced a sensation. Catholic booksellers pronounced it the best life of Christ that has ever appeared on their shelves. The announcement that another volume from the same author was in the hands of the publishers created eager expectation. This volume has now appeared on both sides of the Atlantic. It contains eight discourses on the "Belief in the Divinity of Jesus Christ." These discourses were delivered at the Madeleine, and excited an interest somewhat similar to that of the famous "Conferences" of Lacordaire. A Protestant paper, the *Advances*, contains the following review:

"Didon is not the equal of Lacordaire. He falls short of the splendid eloquence which made Lacordaire the idol of the students of Paris. The argument, too, lacks the continuity and integrity so necessary in these days of destructive criticism. But the discourses are marked by a frankness and inspiration which make them both delightful and helpful. Now and then there is a flash of fine sarcasm, as for example when he says, 'I leave on one side those philosophers who cannot live outside the four walls of an institution.' But their principle feature is the overwhelming earnestness which pours itself out in a tide of abundant expression. The abounding skepticism of the French people has not stirred antagonism, but appeals to his compassion as one who would save them from their blindness and lead them to the liberty and security of the gospel. 'Formerly, when I was young,' he says, 'and when I felt my claws growing, I was taught to use them in order to get rid of indifference of opinion, and now I have to moderate the ardor of opinions and susceptibilities.'"

The following passage conveys a fine criticism on the policy of the Roman Church in pressing the claims of authority against those of liberty:

"It may be said that the surroundings most favorable to Christian belief, and consequently to the belief in the Divinity of Jesus Christ, are those in which it has, I do not say the protection of authority, but the fullness of liberty. In modern civilization the two countries where that liberty is largest, England and the United States,

are precisely those two countries where the belief in Jesus Christ declares its vitality by its most vigorous expansion. It is notorious that in England, a country of great individual autonomy and much public liberty, the Catholic faith, faith in Jesus Christ, is extending and developing. In the United States this phenomenon is still more manifest and astonishing. That classic land of individual independence where men are free as trees in the virgin forest is the land of exuberant expansion. So when I chance to meet with American Bishops and missionaries I seem to see a new world where faith is living, where barriers are removed, and I feel as it were intoxicated with a new independence."

Can it be that the shrewd old Pontiff has also recognized this fact, namely, that liberty is better than authority even for the expansion of the Catholic religion, and that for this reason he stands so staunchly with the French Republic?

The most eloquent discourse of the volume is that on the Seven Words on the Cross. The passage on the word *sito*, I thirst, is specially fine. "The thirst of Jesus," he says, "has a deep sense. He not only expressed the horrible sufferings of the crucified, but also the inner thirst of His soul, His ardent desires, His burning love, and this thirst was never more vehement, and more devouring still than the other. It is difficult to understand it in this languid age in which it seems the height of wisdom to extinguish all desire—in this time wherein skepticism has weakened so many minds and the vehemence of earthly appetites has extinguished higher aspirations. At the hour when Jesus pronounced this word nothing that He desired existed and all that existed was against him: the multitude angry and disappointed, His disciples terrified and scattered, the Jewish authorities triumphant, convinced that they had made an end to this dangerous man, this blasphemer and revolutionist; they were happy and satisfied, persuaded that the drama of Calvary would have no morrow, and that He who hung there would die of His thirst. Far from dying He has conquered, and we live by His thirst, for it has excited in us the holy power of progress and has given to us the power to dream, to desire and to be ambitious of all."

Of Christ's sorrow, he says: "Sorrow is a great teacher; we could do nothing without sorrow; without it a work always wants the final seal. The poet who has never suffered can never draw from his lyre the most moving, the most sublime strains. The philosopher who has not suffered, who has not constructed a system from his poor ideas, who talks of pessimism after having lived a tranquil and joyous life of idealism, after having lived, like other men, in the realities of sense, who talks of positivism after having gaily suppressed all higher forces: such beings, whoever they are, if sorrow has not touched them, remain ineffectual; they want the power of persuasion and ascendancy, they lack dignity and majesty."

Food for Thought.

There is, unfortunately, too much reason for the complaint of the editor of the *Catholic Union and Times* against the modern tendency which permits the piano to usurp the place of the book-shelf in the home. "Twenty five to fifty years ago," remarks Dr. Cronin, "the chief ornament of every comfortable home was a collection of books. The classics, the chief poems, the standard histories and the best essays were there, and the owner of them read them and loved them. He trained up his children to handle them with care and to prize them as he did. To-day the piano has taken the place of the library as the sign of the home refinement."

This pity, but 'tis true. It is deplorable that the idea of culture should be confounded with the idea of accomplishments. Culture comes of knowledge, not accomplishments; and it is not too "transcendental" to say that parents neglect one of the best means of forming good Catholics when they neglect to inspire their children with respect for culture and with a love for good books. He who teaches a child to make friends of books bestows a priceless treasure on him. If our boys had such a fondness for reading as would keep them off the streets and away from the saloon and pool-room, there would be burdens lifted from the shoulders of over-worked priests, and the anxieties that haunt and harass parents would be in a large measure dispelled. — Ave Maria.

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ORANGEMEN PRAY FOR THE POPE. WHAT NEXT?

The following remarkable scene took place within the past few months at a meeting of a Grand Orange Lodge in New South Wales. When Orangemen take to praying for the Pope, we may well ask—what next?

At the annual 12th of July celebration held by the Royal Orange Institution of New South Wales in the town hall, Sydney, on Sunday afternoon, Mr. J. C. Neild, R. W. G. M., the chairman, used the following words: "In our devotions this afternoon you will, I trust, bear in respectful recollection the distinguished head of one of the great divisions of the Christian Church, who is now, cable messages inform us, lying on a bed of sickness, and nearing the momentous change that awaits every member of the human family. Though there be wide divergences upon many questions between the Protestant and Roman Catholic Churches, we all worship the same God; we alike revere the same Saviour, and we unitedly hope for the same blessed hereafter, and actuated by a community of human feeling, we may join in lamenting the sufferings and expected death of a Pope who has evinced, perhaps, a greater liberality and a more ready willingness to accept and comply with the enlightenment of the age than any of his predecessors. And we may well unite with our brethren of the Roman Catholic Church in praying that it may please God that the physical sufferings of His Holiness may be few, and that his going hence may be brightened by the light of grace."

These remarks were received in silence. The Rev. Rainsford Bayn (Weslyan) later on said—God knows that he, as a servant of Christ, was not there to set man against man, or class against class, but he must say that some of the Orangemen in Sydney were more than half asleep. He was sorry he could not go altogether with their esteemed chairman in his opening words. "But I can say for the Pope that I hope God will give him a happy issue out of all his afflictions" (Loud applause.)

It is an open secret that many of the Orangemen present were enraged at Mr. Neild asking them to pray for the Pope. Had anyone risen in protest there would probably have been a "scene."

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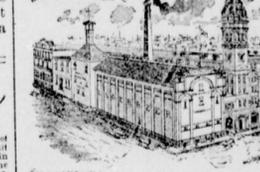
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