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FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS.

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost.

NEGLECT OF DIVINE WARNINGS.
The Gospel to-day tells us, my dear brethren, that Jesus wept as He approached Jerusalem—not for Himself, nor for all He was so soon to suffer there, but for the city itself and for His chosen people, to whom He had given it for their glory and joy. Yes, this beautiful city was their joy and their pride; long before they had been taken from it into captivity by their enemies for a time, and as the Psalmist says, speaking in their name, "By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept when we remembered Zion." And He goes on: "If I forget thee, Jerusalem, may I forget my right hand; may my tongue cleave to my mouth if I do not remember Thee, if I do not make Jerusalem the beginning of my joy."

And now this city of theirs was to be taken from them again by a more grievous and fatal disaster than it had ever yet suffered. They were to be scattered from it all over the world to do a long penance for their sins and their rejection of Him who had come to redeem them. And our Divine Lord's Heart yearned for them—for these His creatures, and at the same time His brethren and His countrymen. Fain would He have saved them, if they would but have been willing, for the terrible sufferings they were to undergo. Gladly, as He says Himself, would He have sheltered them, if they would even now have come to Him, from the tempest which was about to break upon them from the justice of God. He wept because they would not come and avail themselves of His love.

We should pray for them that the day may be hastened when they shall return and acknowledge their true Messias, their own Lord and Master, the only true King of the Jews. But they are not the only ones whom He has loaded with favors, and there are others besides the Jews who are others whom He has chosen for His people, but who have rejected Him and distressed His loving heart. Who are they? They are in general all sinners, but especially those for whom Jesus has done so much for their earliest years, in the midst of whom He had lived and wrought so many works of power and goodness; those whom He has enlightened with His truth, those whom He has warned against sin, those whom He has borne with so long and forgiven so often, those whom He has fed with His own Body and Blood. And yet, through evil habits, by frequent mortal sin, they live on, deaf to His warnings, despising His love, not knowing the time of their visitation, until evil days and a sad ending come upon them. Can we wonder that their enemies, the evil one and their bad habits, compass them round about, and straiten them on all sides, and beat them down and leave them wasted and desolate? Can we wonder that, since they would not bear the sweet and ennobling yoke of Christ, they will be forced to groan in the fetters of Satan and be exiled for ever from the true Jerusalem, the home of peace, which is the above? No, brethren; such is the fate of those who persistently abuse God's grace, who reject His mercy and His efforts to save them. God forbid that such a career, such a warning; let us be careful about temptations; let us not presume on our own strength, nor on God's goodness in the past; let us not make light of anything which is dangerous or forbidden. Let us endeavor not to grieve our Lord by any infidelity, great or small, in this day of our visitation, and to follow the things that are for our peace here and our happiness hereafter.

The value of a good name was well exemplified the other day, when a man asked one of our druggists for a bottle of Sarsaparilla. "Whose?" inquired the clerk. "Whose? why, Ayer's, of course. Ye don't suppose I'm going to run any risks with Hannah, do ye?"

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THE BOYS IN THE BLOCK.

By MAURICE F. EGAN, LL. D.

IV.—(CONTINUED.)

"I am afraid bad reading is injuring these boys," Father Raymond said to Tom Keefe, "I hope you have given it up."

"I don't care for story papers at all now," answered Tom. "Father reads that book you gave us, 'Fabiola,' every night, and we don't have time to read anything else. I say, Father, if somebody would read stories to us fellows sometimes, we would not care so much for story papers."

Father Raymond said in his heart that he wished parents would read good books to their children. It would save much sin and sorrow.

When Ned got home, he found John asleep over his arithmetic. He was sleep himself, and he asked John for the key of the bed-room.

John awoke with a start. "Oh, it's you, Ned," he said, "I thought it was Larry."

"Yes, I remember. Good night. I want to finish all these examples in interest, before I go to bed."

"Good-night, John."

Ned unlocked the door of the bed-room and entered.

"No answer."

Ned struck a match. It flared up, and he saw that the bed was empty. He looked under the bed, lighting another match. Larry was not there, hiding, as he had done before, in order to alarm his brothers.

In surprise, Ned lit the candle. No Larry. The window was wide open. "He has gone!" Ned said. "Oh, dear, what will John say?"

His eye caught sight of a bit of folded paper on the table. He opened it. It was a scrawl done by Larry, with a red lead pencil. It ran—

"BROTHERS,
"I rite to you in krimson ink which is the color of blind, it means biness, it means that I am on the war path, you have driven me fourth by your persecutions of a noble mind, that hungers to scour the vast perarie planes and cut the scalps from Injin murderers of our household gods Fairwell. Goodbye. I go with a band of trusty friends to make a career in the wild west. If the Murphys say I gave them that penknife with the three blades, you take it from them, I only lent it to them. Dont have any fooling just take it from them—fairwell till death do us part."

"L. SMYTHE,
"TRAPPER."

Ned ran out into the other room with this note. John read it and turning it over saw a few more lines—

"I go with T. Malone and H. Schwatz. We have trusty revolvers. Do not follow us. Persoot will be vane. Again adoo!"

"Well, this is nice! I told you what bad reading would lead to. We may be thankful if these miserable boys haven't stolen anything."

"But, John, what shall we do?"

"Let me think—I might have known that Larry could easily get out on the fire escape, and climb down; but I did not think he was bad enough to do it. Go over to the Schwatzes' and the Malones and find out where the boys are."

Ned ran off at once.

Ted Malone and Henry Schwatz were missing. Ted had written with a red lead-pencil a few words on the back of a letter—

"I go with the Red-handed Avengers. Accept my blessing or my curse, as you will."

Ted's father laughed at this. "I'll bless him," he said, "until he is black and blue."

And he went to the police station, to put the police on the track of the missing boys. Henry Schwatz's mother was in tears. Henry had gone; where, she did not know.

Ned was hurrying home, looking very pale and feeling very anxious when he met Beppo Testa running along with his violin. Beppo had had a good day and he was whistling; instead of running away from Ned, as he would have done some weeks ago, he stopped, smiling in a friendly way.

"I can pay you back soon," he said. "I have made two dollars playing for some young people to dance."

"Never mind," answered Ned. "Nina's talk about paying was all nonsense. I've lost Larry—that is, Larry has run away."

"Run away?" echoed the Italian boy.

"Yes, and we don't know where he has gone."

Beppo looked concerned. Ned felt that it was pleasant to have sympathy just at that moment, and he felt, too, how little he deserved it.

"Well," said Beppo, slowly, "I think I can help you. Wait."

He ran into his house and came out immediately with Guiseppa, having left his violin with Filippo and Nina. Nina had heard him say, hurriedly, that Larry had run away.

"The American boys are all crazy," was Nina's satirical comment. Nina had a sharp tongue. It was her great fault.

Guiseppa seemed eager to help Ned. "I saw your brother and Schwatz and Malone, going down-town with some big bundles, to-night. I told Beppo about it. They were in South Fifth Avenue."

While they were talking, they were joined by old Altieri, who came up out of his cellar. Beppo explained the trouble to the old man, who could not speak any English.

seen your brother at the New York side of the Jersey City Ferry."

"At what time?" asked Ned.

Beppo repeated the question to Altieri.

"At 9 o'clock," answered Altieri. "I must tell John, at once."

"Will you let us go with you?" asked Beppo, hesitatingly. "We would like to help you and the good John."

Guiseppa shook his head in consent. In the meantime, John had been asking questions. But nobody in the block had seen the boys. He began to be seriously alarmed. What if Larry, led away by his daily companionship with young—although imaginary—thieves and law-breakers, had followed their examples? What if he had fallen into the hands of the police. John, while he went from neighbor to neighbor, asking after the boys, prayed that it might not be.

He had returned to the house when Ned came in, followed by Guiseppa and Beppo.

Ned breathlessly told John that the boys had been seen. A few questions, answered by the boys, convinced John that Larry had been near the Courtland Street Ferry.

"We must go after them," he said. "Come, Ned—at once?"

Guiseppa ran home to tell his people that he was going with John. The delay seemed very long to John. At last they started. John could hardly restrain his impatience. They entered a horse car, and Beppo, who knew the driver, asked him to go quickly. The man laughed, for just then a stout woman with a basket insisted on getting in. She took her time, and she had hardly gotten into her seat, when a large party coming out of a house, stopped the car. They said good-bye to each other many times. Then several children had to be lifted in, and half a dozen bundles. John thought the car would never move. He felt like getting out and pushing it with his shoulder.

At last the car started again. But every now and then somebody signalled it to stop.

"Let's get out and walk," John said.

"No," said Beppo, "we can not walk as fast as the car goes, in spite of the stops."

After a time—many hours it seemed to John—the boys reached Courtland Street. They crossed the ferry to Jersey City. Everything that was usually rapid in motion, seemed slow to night. He thought that the ferry boat would never leave the slip. And when it did glide out into the river, it seemed almost stationary. It was going rapidly, but John's impatience outstripped it.

They reached Jersey City. It was dark; the Pennsylvania railroad station glowed with light; but the city, except for an occasional glimmer, seemed to be in gloom.

It was arranged that Ned and Beppo should go into the station, to ask whether the boys had been seen by any of the railroad officials, while John and Guiseppa went into the city.

John applied to a policeman.

No; he had seen no boys like the ones described. But then he had been on this beat only since half-past nine o'clock. Another policeman was asked, with no more effect. In a few minutes Ned and Beppo came back. They had heard nothing of the boys.

John began to believe that they were on the wrong track.

They stood opposite the station, near the hotel, in consultation. Beppo did not join in it. He was thinking.

He had noticed an Italian fruit-seller on the corner as he came in. He proposed that John should ask him.

John did. He had seen many boys—many, many boys—he stretched out his hands to show how many boys he had seen—but not three boys of the kind described.

John turned away. But Guiseppa was not so easily baffled. He spoke to the man in Italian.

"Altro!" exclaimed the man. "I did not know you were Italian. I wish I had seen the boys, for your sake. What do you want them for?"

"They have run away from home."

"It is too bad. Tell me how they looked?"

Beppo described them again, in Italian.

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