

Some Time.

Last night, my darling, as you slept, I thought I heard you sigh...

FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS

BY THE PAULIST FATHERS. Preached in their Church of St. Paul the Apostle, Fifty-ninth Street and Ninth Avenue, New York City.

New York Catholic Review. FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

Gospel, Luke vii, 11-16.

The Gospel to day places before us a very touching instance of a mother's affection for her son.

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A MISSIONARY'S TALKS.

A METHODIST MINISTER AND A SPIRITUALISTIC MEDIUM EXCHANGE COMPLIMENTS.

Out of many experiences I have had with Spiritualists I will relate a conversation I once had with a medium and a Methodist preacher.

Methodist Preacher.—"We have the Holy Bible. That is our Medium to know God and His saving truth."

Spiritualist.—"The Bible is a holy book, but it is nothing more than a book. It is abused by every preacher who boasts that he preaches the word of God."

Methodist Preacher.—"Our dear Saviour, our dear Lord is the Medium that you want."

Spiritualist.—"Our Lord was a Medium in His days. He proved it by miracles and prophecies; but he is now in Heaven, and preachers are not new Messiahs."

Methodist Preacher.—"You have no warrant from the Scriptures that spirits communicate with men. It is an illusion."

Spiritualist.—"I beg your pardon, Sir, the Bible is clearly on our side; but if you wish to argue from the Scriptures, let me ask you, can you show me in the Bible that Methodist preachers, that Baptist preachers, that Presbyterian and Congregationalist preachers, that any preachers, have a right from God to twist the Bible into a confirmation of their favorite theories and human creeds, and place themselves as Mediums between God and man?"

Methodist Preacher.—"It is an unfortunate thing that there are so many divisions and variations in the Christian world. That evil comes from a want of fervor. Let us pray to the Lord, and pray with fervor, and the Lord, in His mercy, will enlighten His elect. Holiness and piety, such are the signs and the marks of the Holy Spirit. Holiness and piety are the only Christians who pray to the only God who is true. If you think so, let me tell you that it is—I will not tell what. You have no right to condemn your neighbors who make use of the Bible, to the best of their abilities, as well as Wesleyan Methodists. Protestants are all right or they are all wrong. They are not all right, since they hold contradictory doctrines, one affirming what the other denies. They are, therefore, all wrong, and we must have new revelations to know the true religion. That new revelation has come at last through the ministering spirits who converse with us, to let us know the truth and the whole truth."

learning does not establish a privilege in their favor.

The more I reflect upon the matter, and upon the prejudices and divisions which disgrace Christianity, the more I feel the necessity of living mediums between God and man.

Priest.—"There is a deep fund of philosophy in your remarks. I agree with you that we need living mediums, which I call a living authority. You are right in throwing the whole set of Protestant preachers overboard. They are mere lecturers who create divisions and subdivisions among Christians, instead of propagating truth, and promoting unity. They are wolves in sheep's clothing, and false prophets who have not entered through the door."

Spiritualist.—"I judge from your words that you are not a Protestant minister. May I inquire if you are a Mormon missionary or a Universalist preacher?"

Priest.—"Nothing of the kind, thank be to God. I am a Catholic priest, and as such, I claim to be such a medium as you look for—a living medium between God and man."

Spiritualist.—"Are you indeed one of those men who claim to have the power of forgiving sins?"

Priest.—"As a man, we beg forgiveness for our own failings, but as ministers of God, lawfully ordained, we have received the power to forgive sins. Jesus Christ exercised that power, to the great scandal of the Jews, and He gave it to His Apostles and their successors. There is nothing plainer or more explicit than that in the whole Bible."

Spiritualist.—"I like to know upon what ground you claim to be the successor of the Apostles, and by what right you forgive sins. God alone has the power to forgive sins, and He alone can give that extraordinary power."

Priest.—"The Apostles have unquestionably received the power to forgive sins, without ceasing to be men. To answer your question, I have to prove that the Apostles had successors in office. If the ministers of the Catholic Church are the lawful successors of the Apostles, divinely sent to continue the work of the Apostles, as the Apostles were divinely sent to continue the work of Jesus Christ, all other Mediums besides those appointed by Jesus Christ, and then by the Apostles, and, in the course of time, by the lawful successors of the Apostles, are Mediums between the devil and man, instead of being mediums between God and man."

Spiritualist.—"I have read the Scriptures throughout, and I do not recollect to have found anywhere that the Apostles were to have successors. Where do you find that strange doctrine?"

we need and what we look for.

All ministers have failed, and we look for light, in the revelation of spirits, who communicate with us, through the mercy of God."

Priest.—"You forget that Jesus Christ promised to be with His Apostles 'all days even unto the consummation of the world.' (St. Matt. xxviii 20). Should your spirits manifest themselves, in a visible manner, as bright as the sun, I would say they are wicked spirits and demons and nothing else. The Church of Christ is to last forever. He who does not bear the Church above thereby that he is under the influence of bad spirits."

Spiritualist.—"I thought Catholics favored our religious views. I like your Communion of Saints, and the principle that the true Church is guided by the Holy Ghost; but it seems to me you make your Pope and Bishops superior to the Holy Ghost, that you account for their infallibility by virtue of their office in the Church. God alone is infallible, and to know His will I prefer to rely on the guidance of spirits rather than on the definitions of men who have never crossed the threshold of His will."

Priest.—"I hope you will study the Catholic doctrine; you perhaps misunderstand and certainly misrepresent the origin of infallibility. Our Pope and Bishops derive their infallibility from the perpetual assistance of the Holy Ghost, according to the promises of Jesus Christ. 'He that heareth you heareth Me, said our Lord, He that despiseth you despiseth Me, that despiseth Me despiseth Him Who sent Me.' (St. Luke x, 10). The more you investigate the sublime prerogatives of the Church the more apparent it will become that your Circles and Fraternities are not the work of God, and that your Spiritualism, instead of leading to God, leads to the extinction of good morals and downright infidelity."

The Spiritualist had arrived at the end of her journey. On leaving the car she had the kindness to wish me a pleasant journey and comfortable quarters in the land of spirits. Being now alone, I reflected on the strange form of error introduced by modern Spiritualism. I wondered at the deeds of the spirit of error who at times seeks to persuade worldly people that death is the end of man as of brute; and other times transforms himself into an angel of light to lead men to revelation and liberation by his superstitious communication with him, through fantastical spirits.

As in ancient times deluded Pagans were deceived by false oracles so in our days misguided people, who reject the authority of the Church of God, are duped by new *Ygals* under the name of Mediums. Materialism is too absurd, too irrational, too repugnant to the nature of man to satisfy the human heart and intellect. What is matter—cold, senseless, motionless, lifeless matter—without spirit? The beautiful body of Adam was but lifeless earth until God breathed life into it and animated it with a soul created in His own image and likeness. Our soul is a spirit, and that spirit, to enjoy happiness, must be in communion with God, the Spirit of holiness and truth. But also there are created spirits who have rebelled against God, their Creator, and who are not of God. "Dearly beloved," wrote St. John, "I love not every spirit; I try the spirits if they be of God. * * * He that is not of God, heareth us not. (1st John, iv, 1-6). This is the criterion of Catholic doctrine—*to hear the Church*. When the Holy Ghost came down upon the Apostles, under the form of cloven tongues as it were of fire, He charged those men who could not pray, who could not understand the words of Christ, into saints, doctors and martyrs. The same Holy Spirit vivified the Church. Without the Paraclete the Church would be a lifeless body as the body of a man without a soul, but through the vivifying light and grace of the Holy Ghost the Church is One and Holy. He who hears the Church is in communion with God, with holy angels, with the saints of Heaven, with all the holy spirits who are of God; but "He that is not of God heareth us not," says St. John. "By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error." (1st John, iv, 6.)

May that Holy Spirit of holiness and truth enlighten our understanding and strengthen our will, and as early Christians, by their prayers and holiness, silenced the oracles of Pagans, the holiness and prayers of true believers will in our days silence and conquer "our adversary, the Devil, who goeth about seeking whom he may devour." (1st Pet. v, 8.)

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