

FIVE-MINUTE SERMON.

Eighth Sunday After Pentecost.

JUDGMENT.

Give an account of the stewardship, for thou canst be steward no longer. Luke 12: 47.

The significant comparison of this day's gospel presents to our mind, very vividly, the severe judgment of God in death. The rich man is no other than God; the steward, however, to whom the Lord intrusted His goods, signifies man. The goods, whereof an account is demanded, are all the graces which God grants the soul for its salvation, and also the temporal benefits wherewith He blesses our earthly existence.

To be more explanatory, I shall illustrate by an anecdote. A Turkish sultan in Asia had only two sons, whom he tenderly loved. But the intrigues instigated a conspiracy against the life of the father, in order to become masters of the throne; the sultan, enraged, ordered both to be executed. A petition, how ever, was presented to him, that he should have a successor to his throne; he consented that only one should be put to death. But which of the two? Both were equally guilty.

Hereupon the sultan had two tables prepared in a room, on one he placed the emperor's crown, scepter and the imperial mantle; on the other chains and the executioner's sword. Both sons had to cast lots, and whoever won the throw should carry away the emperor's crown, but the one that lost, on him the penalty of death should be executed in the most cruel manner. Now, my dear Christians, this was, indeed, a fearful game, throwing dice for life and death, casting lots for the emperor's crown and the fearful torments of death. And yet it was a mere child's play compared to that which awaits each of us in the severe judgment of God at the hour of death: for there no blind dice will be thrown, but an infinitely holy and just God will, according to our life, pronounce a sentence which will decide without deliverance for an eternal Heaven or an everlasting hell; for an ocean of bliss and happiness, or an abyss of never ending torment and despair.

One of these two will certainly be our portion, and which of them will, ere long, be decided by the conditions in which the soul will be found at the hour of death. If you die in the grace and love of God, then happy you, O Christian, your soul is saved for all eternity. You may, indeed, have to remain in purgatory for a time to atone for lesser sins and unpaid penalties, but Heaven's eternal joys are secured for your safe possession.

But if you die, guilty of one mortal sin, without reconciliation to God, then woe and a thousand woes! To then the misfortune is yours which an eternity of tears cannot repair. For: "Who can dwell with devouring fire, who shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" asks the royal prophet Isaiah. Isaiah 33, 14. And the All-Holy will answer: It is you, for you did not wish it otherwise, you, who during life despised the call of grace, and who by your impetuosity deliberately chose eternal perdition. O sinner, can you reflect on this and still continue to be a despiser of your God, of that God who has the power, every moment, to cast you body and soul into hell? Ah! no, have compassion on yourself and despise no longer the voice of God's grace which calls to you in the words of Holy writ: "If you have sinned, delay not to be converted to the Lord, and defer it not from day to day, for His wrath shall come on a sudden, and in the time of vengeance he will destroy thee." Eccles. 5, 8 and 9. Yea, defer it not, but prepare yourself now, while there is yet time. The eternal Judge is always near, and suddenly, like a clear flash in the heavens, He can call you to an eternal account. Awake, therefore, by true penance and a worthy reception of the sacraments, from the death of your soul, so that should the Lord come at an unexpected time, He may find you awake and not sleeping.

In the court-house at Luebeck is a famous painting, called the dance of death. There you see all classes of ages, children, youth, virgins, men and women, the aged, all dancing, rejoicing and exulting in full pleasure of life, and they do not perceive how the angel of death, with the scythe, walks behind them, to mow down one after the other, to lead them to his realm. Here drops, as his victim, a child, there an aged man, here a youth, and nevertheless the dance continues in mad enjoyment. Thus it is in the life of man. Daily we see the angel of death walking softly in our midst, demanding his victims, and we know not how, when or where he will call us. All we do know is, that he will not forget us, and behind him is the divine Judge and the momentous eternity, and nevertheless we live in blindness and frivolity, as if our stay here on earth were everlasting. Oh, boundless folly! May we no longer be guilty of such forgetfulness of our salvation. Let us daily remember the last things in holy earnestness, and certainly we shall never sin; we shall never, by an unhappy death, lose our immortal soul. Let us always repeat anew, what the

devout Thomas a Kempis says: "Very quickly must thou be gone from hence; see thou, how matters stand with thee? A man is here to day, and to-morrow he is vanished. Blessed, therefore, is he that hath always the hour of death before his eyes, and every day disposes himself to die." Imit. 1, 23. Truly he will not die an unhappy death. Amen.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

THE LITTLE MESSENGERS.

A Story of St. Anthony of Padua.

BY SYLVIA HUNTING, IN AVE MARIA.

II.—CONTINUED.

"Well, that was a sad loss indeed, Miss Patty. But tell me, have you prayed to St. Anthony?"

Patty confessed that she had not done so.

"Not prayed to St. Anthony, and yet you expect to recover that ring!"

The little one explained that she had thought of the ring only as irrevocably lost.

"And I say that if you will pray to St. Anthony with confidence he will surely return you the ring. Begin this very night. Make a novena. Your mother will tell you what prayers to say. Promise the good Saint something by way of gratitude, and see if he doesn't send that ring back to you!"

Here Patty timidly explained that, while she wished to recover the ring, she had no desire to have the thief punished; that, on the contrary, she had been kept awake nights by the fear that the policeman might arrest her and put her in the House of Refuge; and that she would rather never see the ring again than feel that through its recovery the thief should be imprisoned.

"Bless your kind little heart!" said her godfather. "But you must not worry about it in that way. The best thing that could happen to such a child would be to put her out of the way of temptation. Don't you know that, Patty?"

"Yes, Father," said the child, though reluctantly. "But papa has promised me another ring."

"Never mind about the other ring," persisted her godfather. "Just make a novena, and everything will turn out well."

Thus assured, Patty promised; and that night, before they retired all the family united in beginning a novena, consisting of the Litany of St. Anthony with a short prayer of intercession for the return of the lost article. The novena once begun, Patty had not the slightest doubt but that it would be answered. Day followed day and there were no tidings, but that did not trouble her in the least. So confident was she that her prayers would be heard that her mother, dreading the effect of a disappointment on her mind said to her one evening:

"Patty, you know God does not always answer our prayers according to our wishes. Sometimes He withholds what we ask only to grant us something better. Now, if your novena should not bring you what you desire, there will be something else sent to you in its stead."

"I know, mamma," was the reply; "but I feel sure that St. Anthony will send back my ring. Father G. is so good, and he told me to have confidence. I know it will come back. I don't worry a single bit; and the nine days are not over yet, you know."

The novena was finished. They said the prayers in the morning of the last day, because their father and mother were to be absent that evening, and all wished to finish the novena together.

After breakfast the children's mother told Maggie that she wanted her to go to the convent of the Good Shepherd to see about some sewing. When the little girls heard this, they begged to accompany her, and their mother's consent was given. Although the convent was situated about four miles from their home—quite at the other end of the city—they could go nearly all the way in the street-cars, and they joyfully made ready to set out. As they bade their mother good-bye Patty said, wistfully:

"Mamma, if the policeman brings the girl while we are gone—I'm almost sure he will,—don't let him take her to the jail, will you? Only make her promise not to take rings any more, or anything. Maybe she will be good."

The mother promised, with a kiss; and as she looked into the trustful, innocent eyes she, too, became impressed with the confidence that animated the heart of her child. She felt that dear St. Anthony had not heard those fervent prayers in vain.

About midday she was in the garden planting some flowers when she saw Maggie and the children coming. Patty was in advance, toiling eagerly up the steps, her little hand extended; and as she came nearer, the mother saw on the tiny first finger a ring, which had not been there when she left home that morning. The happy child gave her no time to ask a question.

"See, mamma!" she cried, throwing herself into her mother's arms in the very spot where she had wept upon her bosom a fortnight before. "O mamma, I have my ring—my own ring! St. Anthony found it for me, just as godfather said he would."

Half crying half laughing, the joyful children danced around their astonished mother, both speaking at once, till she playfully bade them be still for a moment and let her hear Maggie's account of what had occurred.

"We had just left the convent," said the girl, "and were walkin' in

the direction of the cars. You know there's two blocks to go, ma'am; and we were goin' very slow, for it was warm, when Patty catches me by the hand and says she, tremblin' all over: 'Maggie, there's the girl that stole my ring.'—'Where?' says I, lookin' all about me, up and down the sidewalk. 'There,' says Annie, in a whisper, pointin' to a ragged lookin' imp goin' down a basement steps. She had a dirty basket on her arm and a long shawl trailin' on the ground. She had an old woman's bonnet on her, so I couldn't see her face, or whether she was black or white. The two children clung to me. They were frightened, the creatures. 'Are ye sure?' says I,—'are ye sure that's she?' They told me they were sure. They hadn't seen her face, but they knew the clothes. 'Very well,' says I. 'Sit there on them steps, and I'll watch for her till she comes up. This well for ye,' says I, 'that she didn't have run away.'

"Well, the two children sat as quiet as mice in the shade of the big front steps. She couldn't see them, and she comin' up the basement ones; and she wouldn't know me, nor what I was waitin' for at the top of them. 'Twasn't long till she came trapenin' up, with some crusts in her dirty basket, and she just puttin' a clean white baby's lacecap on the basket. 'What's that?' says I; and she jumped. 'Where did ye get that little cap ye're stealin'?' Gave it to me this minute,' says I, 'ye thief!'

"For I knew she took it from the clothes horse where it was airin', and the girl gettin' her some cold victuals; I knew it as well as if I see it with my own eyes. 'Git out, ye Irish thing!' says she, strivin' to pass me. But I seen the ring on her little finger, and says I, clutchin' her hand like a vise was pullin' it off: 'And where did ye get this, ye thief of the world, but off a poor little baby's hand on Chestnut Hill?'

With that the children could sit still no longer; and when she see them jumpin' up she got away from me with a terrible wrench, leavin' the basket behind; and the last we saw of her she was holdin' on for dear life to a beer wagon that was tearin' down the street with a pile of empty barrels, and the driver whippin' at her to leave go. But Patty has her ring, and if it isn't a miracle I never heard tell of one. It ought to be written down, ma'am; and I'll hope you'll make no delay in writin' it, for the honor of God and His Blessed Mother and the great St. Anthony."

"And then Maggie took the little cap back," said Patty; "and the girl said she was glad. And then we came home."

The fame of St. Anthony's kindness spread far and wide among the friends and acquaintances of the family—the godfather not neglecting to tell it everywhere possible. I am sure that some of my older readers will recognize it anew, although this is the first time it has been "written down," according to Maggie's wish and behest. But in these days, when the devotion to the dear saint of Padua is increasing so rapidly and wonderfully, I think it but due him to give it to the public, thus adding my mite to his glory.

In fulfilment of her promise made during the novena, Patty took the name of Antonia in confirmation; and to this day the members of the family, when desirous of obtaining a favor of the saint, solicit Patty's prayers to her special favorite and benefactor.

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN.

Our lives are what we make them, and the man who has the possibility to become great and does not, is ignoble; while, on the other hand, he who acts up to his standard, who is honest, who is true to himself and true to his God, commands all praise and esteem.—Mae Clairmont in Leaflets from Loretto.

Lost! Lost!

Moments spent in idle gossip. Hours in aimless castle building. Days moaning, "It might have been!" Weeks in hopeless liting. Months in waiting for a better chance. Years in climbing without a ladder. Scores of good chances to improve self. Hundreds of opportunities to "lift up" others. Thousands of open doors passed by unentered. Power with men fortified because of separateness from God. Influence thrown overboard by reason of a thoughtless misstep. The past is gone. Bury it! The coming moments, hours, days, weeks, months, years! Redeem them!

Each Has His Work to do.

God puts materials into the hands of every human being for one great work, and that is the highest development of his own life. Each of us would like to do this, and make life illustrious in deeds that declare their importance to men, but the materials with which we have to do seem meagre and mean. A dull brain, inherited disease, vulgar surroundings, what, we think, could the longing soul do with these? It may be that the dull stone is given to us to paint, not the face of an archangel.

God will not blame us for the materials which He Himself has given. He will take account only of the way they are used. It was Our Lord Himself who declared that it was he who had been faithful over a few things who was made ruler over many things.

Why not Develop Ourselves?

Why do so few young men of early promise, whose hopes, purposes and resolves were as radiant as the colors of the rainbow, fall to distinguish themselves? The answer is obvious—they are not willing to devote themselves to that toilsome culture which is the price of great success. Whatever aptitude

for particular pursuits nature may donate to her favorite children, she conducts none but the laborious and studious to distinction. Great men have ever been men of thought as well as action, and their dominant influence dates its hours of study resolutely employed in efforts after self development. Unless, young men, you are determined to dig after knowledge as men search for concealed gold, you may defer your dreams of superiority. Every young man has within himself the principle of excellence, and he may develop it if he will try.

The most Essential Requisites of Success.

Oftentimes when we have marked out a career for ourselves, and even after we have launched out in efforts for its achievement, the most formidable obstacle we have to overcome is our own inability to concentrate our efforts. To keep faithfully turning at the grindstone until we triumph over the monotony of regular and constant practice is undoubtedly the greatest stumbling block on the road to success, and yet it is one of the essentials, if not the essential, without which success is never achieved.

If this fact were fully realized, no doubt there would be fewer failures in the world; but the weariness that comes to us all, even in a much loved pursuit, is generally taken—mistaken, one might say—for a lack of ability to reach the goal of our ambition, and so, becoming discouraged, we fall by the wayside and let the more persistent and less easily discouraged aspirants pass us in the race. This is why there is always "plenty of room at the top."

This lack of confidence which, at some other time, besets us all in our careers, once overcome, the ladder of fame becomes less difficult of ascent and half the struggle is over.

If we are convinced that we have it in us to succeed, and if we are willing to work and wait patiently for the crowning of our efforts, success is bound to come.

Some one describes genius as "an infinite capacity for taking pains;" this would seem to eliminate talent entirely from the requisites for success. Be that as it may, only those will attain the heights who persistently and untiringly laugh at discouragement, overcome all difficulties, and triumph over the snares that beset the novice.

Don't Overwork Heart and Lungs.

The time of year has arrived when wheelmen who delight in taking long rides and rolling up big records are out early and late, appearing to forget everything except the velocity of their machines. May and June are exceptionally fine months for cycling, and in order to be able to recount with satisfaction the centuries and double centuries of the year, champions and would-be champions are now making the most of their opportunities to ride. Every new mile indicated by the cyclometer will help to increase the aggregate mileage on the 31st of next December, when riders will compare notes to determine who has made the best record for 1898.

In the contest for the first place there are wheelmen so healthy and able bodied as one could wish to see anywhere; their legs appear to be solid chunks of muscle, and in their faces all signs of physical incapacity are wanting. But, on the other hand, it is safe to assume that many of the young men desirous of astonishing their friends with the year's totals are poorly suited to withstand the strain that the task will impose, and to such a word or two of caution may be acceptable.

Experienced wheelmen have learned that long rides should not be undertaken with too much confidence. The fact that one man is able to cover 15,000 or 20,000 miles in a year does not indicate what another man can do. Last year one rider asserted that he had wheeled more than 34,000 miles during 340 days of the year preceding or an average of over 100 miles a day for that period. He declared that he hadn't met with a single bodily ailment, hadn't experienced a day's sickness, and was ten pounds heavier when the ride ended than when it began. Perhaps not one rider in a thousand, as wheelmen go, is able to duplicate that achievement with the results stated above, and few would care to make the attempt. For most persons the effects of such a performance would be anything but good.

Physicians who strongly recommend the bicycle as a promoter of health—and probably nine-tenths of those in America do so recommend it—declare that the exercise of wheeling should be taken in moderation, and that no one should try to exceed his natural power of endurance. Five thousand miles in twelve months, if a rider completes them with his physique unimpaired, make a better record than many times that number traveled at the expense of wrecking the constitution.

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A MORNING BLESSING.

Soft as the dewy shine, Holy and sweet, Love, in its mystic sign, Pardon complete, Gently it falleth On tear laden eyes; Daily it calleth, "Mortal, arise!" Ever thy future shines White as the day; Ever my grace refines Sin-dross away. Heav'n, it discloses, Doors glory bright! Wake like the roses! Wake to the light!

LUTHER AND THE BIBLE.

New York Freeman's Journal. The Paulists have in their library in New York a copy of the ninth edition of a German Bible, profusely illustrated and printed in Nuremberg in 1483—the very year that Luther was born. The first edition was issued in 1477—six years before Luther's birth. The fact that there were nine editions in six years proves that the Bible in German was extensively circulated. Perhaps it was a copy of this ninth edition that Luther found chained to a desk in a monastery, for convenience of those who might desire to consult it—just as hotels chain the City Directory to the clerk's counter for convenience of reference.

How many good, ignorant souls believe that the Bible was never in the language of the people until Luther published his German Bible in 1530, that is, fifty-three years after it had been translated by Catholic hands. The fact is, there were more than seventy editions of the Bible printed in the different languages of Europe before Luther published his translation.

MEN AND THINGS.

By Henry Austin Adams, M. A., in Donohue's for July.

Some zealous churchmen are wondering if, after all, Gladstone did not die a Catholic and the fact kept secret for State reasons. Fudge! Beyond a certain breadth of feeling and sense of justice compelling him to espouse the cause of Catholic liberties, the Grand Old Man, as far as I know, never gave the slightest sign of dissatisfaction with Anglicanism. He was a devout High-Churchman, and as such his life and beliefs closely approximated to the true standards; but it would be hard to reconcile some of his published opinions with any desire on his part to submit to the authority of the Holy See. He told me once (in an interview which chance procured for me), that he was a life-long admirer and disciple of Dr. von Dollinger. He had a magnificent portrait of the great German apostate, and while showing it to me he launched out into affectionate praise of the man, and, inferentially, into condemnation of Papal infallibility and the policy of the Roman Curia, which had forced so noble a mind as von Dollinger's into revolt. Had this wretched man remained a Catholic, who knows but Gladstone might have had the gift of faith sooner or later? As it was, his noble life was a boon to a faithless age. His simple, unaffected piety, his child-like dependence upon God, even in little things, his great, pure, duty doing character, his stern devotion to justice and chivalrous enthusiasm for humanity, all make him a great man. Such God will reward. Requiescat in pace!

Dr. Chase Cures Catarrh After Operations Fail. Toronto, March 16th, 1897. My boy, aged fourteen, has been a sufferer from Catarrh, and lately we submitted him to an operation at the General Hospital. Since then we have resorted to Dr. Chase's Catarrh Cure, and one box of this medicine has made a prompt and complete cure. H. G. FORD, Foreman, Cowan Ave. Fire Hall.

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