

FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS.

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost.

BEHAVIOR IN CHURCH.

And He spoke a parable also to them that were invited, marking how they chose the first seats at the table.—Gospel of the day.

Our Blessed Saviour in this day's Gospel teaches us a lesson of good order and practical conduct which may be applied in many ways. I will make the application of it this morning to our conduct in church. We will consider the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass the great feast to which we are invited; the church the banquet hall, and the pews the places set apart for the guests.

There is nothing more conducive to the pleasure and purpose of an assemblage than the good order and proper arrangement of everything connected with it, and we often hear persons speak of some event in which they participated as being most enjoyable because everything was so well ordered and arranged. Now, all this applies with double force to the public services of religion. Catholics gratefully enjoy the public services of the Church when everything is well ordered and arranged, and there is nothing to distract them or jar upon them. For at every service there is the Divine Presence, and where perfect order reigns it soon makes itself felt: its calm peace steals in upon the soul, it commences sweetly, and worships "in spirit and in truth."

But in order to secure an external condition of things in our churches so essential to recollection and prayer, each one must know his place and occupy it without delay or confusion, and in our present system of church arrangement each worshipper is supposed to have his or her special place assigned, and the regular seat in church has become a requirement of devotion as well as a necessity of church finance.

Hence, to secure a permanent place in the church is a duty of devotion as well as something of an obligation; and we find that truly pious Catholics almost invariably try to secure seats in their parish churches, be they ever so humble. Indeed, Catholics who fail to do this are not apt to be very steady in the practice of their religion; and there can be no doubt as to the neglect of duty in the case. To contribute to the support of religion is as much a positive law of the Church as to attend Mass on Sundays, and the ordinary revenue for the support of religion comes from the pew rents. We insist, therefore, that every Catholic who can possibly afford it should have his seat in church; good order requires this as well as duty and devotion. It is poor business to be all the while occupying other people's pews, and sometimes, perhaps be required to vacate them. Pew-holders have their rights, and they must be protected in them. Nevertheless, to secure good order and harmony at the services of the church, pew holders must be willing at times to waive their rights and allow strangers and others to occupy the vacant seats in their pews. This is no more than politeness and common Christian charity demand. To refuse a vacant seat in church to a stranger is selfishness gone to seed, and they are few, I hope, who would be guilty of such vulgarity.

But while all who possibly can should have their regular places in church, there will, no doubt, always be a very considerable number who, through poverty or perverseness, will be pew-holders at large, and to them I would also address a few remarks. The Catholic Church is the Church of the poor! This is our glory and our pride. No one can be too poor to attend the Catholic Church. God is no respecter of persons, nor is His Church. The poor are always welcome in her grandest temples, and none should ever miss a single service of religion because they are too poor to hire a regular seat. In this Church, thank God, everything is free to them, and there are always vacant seats for them to occupy. We not only wish non-pew holders to occupy the vacant seats in our church, but we insist on their occupying them, for the good order and harmony of the services require that, as far as possible, all should be seated. The only condition we impose is the Gospel injunction: "Do not sit down in the first place" or in the place of another; and if you are told to move up higher, do not refuse. Crowding around the doors is more objectionable than anything else, for there is nothing else that interferes so much with the good order and arrangement of the services. Let me repeat then, in conclusion, the words of the parable: "Friend, go up higher," and don't crowd around the doors.

TALKS ON RELIGION.

CONTRITION.

The first condition of Contrition is that it be supernatural. That is, that our sorrow must spring from supernatural motives. If a person were sorrowful for the sin of drunkenness because by it he had lost a good situation, that motive would be merely natural. The proper sorrow for that sin would be because by it he had offended God, and endangered the salvation of his soul. It sometimes happens that temporal punishments are misfortunes that lead the wicked to see the evil of their ways, and they are thus the means to a true contrition and a proper repentance. We have an example of this in the parable of the Prodigal.

There are many motives for sorrow for sin which are very good in themselves. A person may grieve for his sins on account of a natural feeling that pain and sorrow are thereby brought on others; for the disgrace into which he has fallen, and for similar reasons.

These motives are useful because they lead the sinner to a true contrition, but they are not contrition, and will not suffice in its place. Real contrition comes from the Grace of God, and must be sorrow for having offended God and violating His commandments, and spring from a love of God, or fear of His punishments, or

from a consideration of the baseness of sin by which God has been offended. Not infrequently, the fear of God goes before the love of God. If we grieve for our sins because by them we have lost heaven and deserved hell, we are on the way to grieve for them for the love of God, who is infinitely good in Himself and infinitely good to us. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

Another quality which must belong to contrition, is that it be universal. This means that the sinner must be sorry for all the sins by which he has offended God. It sometimes happens that people have a feeling of great regret for some sins, and are at the same time quite indifferent to others. They may be very sensitive to the disgrace which belongs to certain crimes,—to some of the offences which the world views with special abhorrence. If a man is really sorry for his sins because they have offended God, it is clear he will be sorry for everything which has grievously offended his Creator. It is therefore necessary to include in our contrition everything which has deprived us of God's grace.

There is another quality which a true sorrow for sin must always possess. It must be the higher kind of sorrow. It must be of a higher character than any other sorrow. If we love God at all, we must love Him above all things, and with a sense that we prefer Him to all things. In the same way, if we regret or turn away from sin, it must be as the greatest of all evils, because it deprives us of the Supreme Good.

Contrition has two parts. It looks to the past with regret and it looks to the future with a firm purpose of amendment. A sorrow for sin which does not contain a firm purpose of amendment would be a mockery. There are many things we may bitterly regret, even though we know that under the same circumstances we would do them again. For instance we may grieve for giving pain to one of our friends, and yet we might feel justified in having done so said what we did at the time. But sin is a thing which no circumstances can ever make necessary or authorize, and we must intend without any reserve to avoid it in the future.—Catholic Universe.

A FRIEND'S REMINISCENCES OF MRS. H. H. CRAIGIE, THE NOVELIST.

ONE WHOSE WORK WAS DONE WITH A CONSCIENCE.

An evidently intimate friend of the lamented Mrs. Craigie, (John Oliver Hobbes,) writes of this eminent author and most devoted Catholic as follows, in the London Tablet of August 18: The sudden death of Mrs. Craigie at the age of thirty eight years has made an impression on London for which even her friends may have been unprepared. Her career has been cut short, but the notices of her performance prove that it was in one sense, complete. She had accomplished if not all she had valiantly set out to do, at least enough to make her mark upon the English literature and the English life of her time. In deed it might be said of her that at no time had she been remarked as one who gave promise merely. Her "Emotions and a Moral" was already a performance. If many dreams of a girl had gone to make it, they were fulfilled. The note of goodness and humour in a rare union was struck at once by a hand that, young as it was, was altogether in training for its task. That note was all her own, in her books, in her looks, in her daily round of duties industriously done and pleasures heartily enjoyed. As in life so in death. When her less body was found on Monday morning her Rosary was in her hand and her crucifix on her breast.

"I am opposed to nothing so much as to sham modernity," she wrote in a letter which lies before us. For herself she stood for the right and honorable modernity, and she loved it so well that she hated to see it corrupted by the novelties that were neither true nor really new. Her little book, "The Science of Life," the greatest of all her writings, and in some ways the wisest, puts us into possession of a good deal of her interior thinking. It is the witness of a disciple of St. Ignatius—among whose London sons she had a faithful helper and friend—and even it bears witness to that sweet quality of which we have spoken: for the loss of the Spanish gallant's love verses is lamented one who took into her blood his later moods and did not shrink from the sternness of the "Exercises." Her little sketch of modern girls—"they fall in love and out of it, they do not think enough about their souls," and all the rest of the passage, including the tender admissions of their gaily made self-sacrifices, must often have proved how persuasive an influence for good was hers with those to whom the set sermon has of late lost its power of appeal. Heart spoke to heart to her young friends. Because they could go so far together in pleasant paths they were the less likely to part when the way was thorny and steep.

When "The School for Saints" was published, the author sent a copy to Cardinal Vaughan, who—the story went—took it with him to his Retreat, having read no more than the title. When he found his mistake, he perhaps did not wholly lament it. The book that was the book of the season mingled orthodoxy with wit. It was a political novel addressed as Distract addressed "Cominbeby," to "The new Generation"—not, as so many modern novels are, to the new degeneration. "The two things that affect a career the most profoundly are religion or the lack of it," said this novelist and moralist—and marriage or not marrying—frankly these things penetrate to the soul and make what he called its perpetual atmosphere. The Catholic Faith, which ignores no simple possibility in human feeling and no process in those who hold it truly a friend of heart very hard to be understood by the dispassionate critic who weighs character by the newest laws of



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his favorite degenerate, but never by the principal acts of God. In that book are many words into which one felt that Mrs. Craigie had woven the very threads of her own life. "St. Augustine never pretended that earthly happiness was a delusion. He knew better. He said: 'Do not trust it, but seek the happiness which hath no end.'" Or take this as a bit of individual (certainly not general) experience as set forth in the diary of the convert hero: "But for its ploy, the 'imitation' is, I think, the most pessimistic book in the world. The Exercises of St. Ignatius (perhaps because he was a saint) produce quite an opposite effect upon me: they exhort us to action, hope, courage. They make one a citizen of both worlds." That, again, is her note; and, on a much lighter key, she, herself a convert, says: "Orange avoided rather than sought the small groups which attempted to make the Eternal Church a Select Committee of the Uncommonly Good."

One passage more has a personal touch that is poignant to-day: "Uninterrupted contentment was never yet found in any calling or state; the Saints were haggard with combats; sleep, the most reposeful state we know, has its preaching moments." Though Mrs. Craigie did not write all her books with the direct apostolate of the "Science of Life," she never wrote one which did not incidentally do good to somebody. Of all of them she has written, "They were executed with a conscience." And in talk she said often what one friend has put into these words: "I should have written a book for you of my hands with the feeling that it was likely to do anyone harm or in any way lower his standard of life. At the same time one must not be afraid to draw a bad or corrupt character, or run away from the philosophy he teaches. In fact you cannot write a story of life with a set of copybook maxims before you, for many copybook maxims are falsified in real life; and, if you attempt to preach a sermon, you will not be read at all." She used to speak in praise of the fairness of Sir Walter Scott, who though he himself knew only enough of Catholicism to dislike it, was able to draw the Catholic Quentin Durward with so sympathetic a hand.

Though her works had immediate success with the critics, Mrs. Craigie kept her head the head, by the way, that was very like Josephine's in the most beautiful of her portraits. She was humble enough to be encouraged by any real recognition of her aims, if in quarters which advanced her interest little enough in the technically literary world. Thus it was that, after reading a brief notice of one of her books in our own columns, she wrote to a friend: "The Tablet has made me very happy."

Other sayings contained in Mrs. Craigie's books seem appropriately to come back to the mind to-day. There was that little thrust at our opponents which she achieved when she wrote: "I know the case against Rome by heart; and from its accusers I have learnt its defence." Bridg, straight from her convent school, wears—may we say, without superstition, a martyr's aureole; they could be no danger of superstition in Mrs. Craigie or any approved creation of hers. It was a gold letter with a pink slip of paper on which the girl had written the Mother Superior's parting words: "be very silent. Trust greatly in the Sacred Heart, and not much in anything below it; least of all in friends. When the sun goes in they change color. But the Sacred Heart is the same yesterday, to-day, for ever." Again "St. Monica prayed for her son; she never lectured him."

Among his non-Catholic brethren. To attest the popularity of Cardinal Gibbons amongst his non-Catholic fellow-citizens the warm reception accorded him at a recent Mohonk conference and the flattering eulogies elicited by his masterful address there were not needed. Wherever he goes,

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North, South, East, or West, the welcome extended to his eminence by non-Catholics is hardly less cordial than that which he receives from those who belong to the household of the faith. In the city where he is best known—his native city of Baltimore—he is, of course, more popular than elsewhere with non-Catholics. That remarkably keen and very intelligent observer, the Abbe Klein, noted this when he paid a visit to the cardinal's archiepiscopal city some time ago. In the interesting volume in which he gives us the impressions of his recent visit to United States—"Au Pays de la Vie Intense." "In the Land of the Strangers' Life"—he speaks of his astonishment at the cardinal's popularity in non-Catholic circles in the city of Baltimore. On one occasion, while his eminence and the French abbe were walking along North Charles street they passed a sectarian church from which the congregation were emerging after assisting at a religious service. Most of them recognized the genial face of the American primate of the Church, smiled and defied their hate. While passing another church a little further on, half a dozen carriages some containing ladies and others gentlemen, drove up to the cardinal and asked him if he would like to be driven home. "The people here are very fond of you," said the Abbe Klein. "None of the people you have just seen are Catholics," remarked his eminence as they walked on. "The church which we first passed is a Unitarian one; and the people who offered to drive me home are Presbyterians and Methodists." An idea of Cardinal Gibbons' liberality in religious matters may be gained from the fact that he had in his employ as doorman of his house for twenty-five years an old Methodist negro, who died a few months ago. The darky attended his Methodist church every Sunday; but no inducement could tempt him to leave the cardinal's service.—The Missionary.

"QUESTIONS OF THE HOUR." BISHOP CONATY ON TOPICS OF VITAL INTEREST TO THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY. The Right Rev. Thomas J. Conaty, D. D., Bishop of Los Angeles, delivered a stirring address to an overflowing audience recently at the Tent city, San Diego, on "Questions of the Hour," in which he dealt graphically with some of the salient evils and needs of our time and country. Under the four-fold head of "The Meaning of Life," "Spiritual Living," "Education" and "Civic Duties," the Bishop covered a broad and vital field of human interest and activity.

The following are a few of the gems, most of them, we are told, exactly as they fell from the Bishop's lips: "Life? What is it but living. What is living worth if it is not right living? We cannot exult ourselves with the answer, Dum, vivimus, vivamus (while we live, let us live), for the true meaning of life, is more serious than that."

"Life is making ourselves worthy of the place we occupy. It is the building of character. It is doing right as well as thinking right. Around us and about us there is an Infinite Mind expressing itself in all we grasp and see—the sand, the drops of water, the blood in our veins. All these are the result of a supreme, uncreated mind. "In the study of life, we come face to face with the greatest fact in all creation—God. Religion gives me the key to understand myself and to apprehend life."

"Forms of religion are almost as infinite as the stars of the heavens and as varied in their power. Fad and fancy, freak and charlatan, there is no one business in the world that has so many freaks as religion. Yet all this is an expression of this poor old nature of ours for something to guide it. We see men of apparent intelligence running madly after these freaks of the world. They think they have found teachers with authority. But teaching must be without contradiction. "We have the Holy Rollers and the Holy Jumpers and the exponents of the 'limited life.' The trouble is, we want the unlimited life. We know that the gift of tongues was given of old, but we have serious doubt about the Holy Spirit teaching any man pigeon English."

"Tent after tent is raised and there are always people to fill the tents. What does it mean? It means that this poor human nature is looking for things spiritual—for life. "When the Catholic Church teaches of miracles performed by the saints, the incredulous eyebrow is raised; but let some one with a long beard and a turban head declare he has obtained the gift of hands and all classes will follow the will-of-the-wisp. "True religion is different. It stands on the eternal rock of truth. It is founded on Christ Jesus, who taught us the limitless life. "Never in the history of mankind have men been more generally schooled. Our State laws require education, and there are many who independently seek it. "The school is worthy of the child only when it tends to make the child better. You can make a child better only by teaching him about God. "Seneca and Marcus Aurelius and Socrates were worthy old pagans who wrote about right living; yet they were not good examples of what they preached. They had not in themselves the power to control their base appetites. "We all have opinions on education. This is a free country, yet we are not free to accept error. Let us be honest with one another and give each other credit for honesty of purpose. "The church of which I am a child is not a foe to knowledge. The pedagogical work of the Catholic Church has been omitted from many works on the history of education.

Whether you eat or drink or whatsoever else you do, do all to the glory of God.—(1 Cor. X-31.)

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