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FIVE-MINUTE'S SERMON.

FEAST OF THE PATRONAGE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

On November 8, dear brethren, the Church celebrates the Feast of the Patronage of the Blessed Virgin. Let us stop a moment and consider what is meant by this title, as given to our most immaculate and blessed Mother. You remember that there is a similar feast on the third Sunday after Easter, in honor of her glorious spouse, St. Joseph; and that he has lately been given the title of Patron of the Universal Church. Is it, then, in this sense that we are to understand the Patronage of the Blessed Virgin; is it that she is the patroness and protectress of the Church in general, in its continual conflict with the powers of darkness? Yes, we may certainly understand it in this way. She who with her foot has crushed the serpent's head is the great enemy and terror of heresy in particular, and the greater part of the heresies which have afflicted the Church, and especially those existing in our own day, have, it would seem, instinctively felt this. They have directed their assaults in one way or another against her, and against the position she holds in the work of our redemption. She may also be rightly considered as our bulwark against the attacks of the infidel, and has at various times come signally to the assistance of the Christian world when exposed to danger, particularly from the followers of the false prophet Mahomed.

But there is another sense in which to understand her patronage, and to avail ourselves of it, besides this one of her protection of the Church as a whole; and this other is practically more important for us to realize. It is that she is the special patron and protector of each one of us individually, in our own special needs and trials, and in the war which we have to wage on our own account with the enemies of our salvation.

You know that we are all encouraged to choose certain saints whose name we bear, or to whom we have a special devotion, as patrons, to obtain for us the blessings and helps we need, temporal as well as spiritual. And there can be no doubt that if we do thus select certain patrons they will perform for us the office which we desire, and though they may not always obtain for us those things which our imperfect judgment fixes on as most desirable, they will reward us with even greater blessings than we ask if we are faithful to them.

But it is quite plain that we should not omit, and certainly it is not the custom of Catholics to omit, the name of the Blessed Virgin from the list of patron saints, whatever others may be chosen with her. The Church, in establishing this festival, seems herself to officially constitute our Blessed Lady as the patron of each one of us, to whom we are to have recourse in all our difficulties, of whatever kind they may be, that we may find a safe way through them. We have the assurance of constant experience that if we follow the mind of the Church in this way we shall not be disappointed.

"Remember," says St. Bernard, in the beautiful prayer, "Memorare," which it is to be hoped we say often—"Remember, O most pious Virgin Mary, it is a thing unheard of that thou ever forsakest those who have recourse to thee." Let us, then, also remember this; and whatever special devotions, or helps to salvation, we may select never forget this, the most universal and indispensable of all, of recourse to the Blessed Mother of God.

And let us remember particularly that above all is the Blessed Virgin the advocate of sinners. If, then, we wish ourselves to escape from the power of some temptations or evil habits which are threatening our ruin, let us not forget to go to her. She who is sinless herself has more than the compassion of a mother for us; let us beg the powerful help of her intercession, and let us also ask her to rescue others who, it may be, are more tempted than ourselves.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

An Interrupted Lecture.

Our readers have heard of Father John Morris, the distinguished Jesuit Father, who died in England some few years ago. Father Morris was a very learned man, particularly in history, and his opinions were highly respected by Protestants as well as Catholic scholars. He has a brother who teaches history and languages in the University of Melbourne.

Professor Morris is not a Catholic—in fact, he is very much prejudiced, and never misses an opportunity to speak against the Church. As is so often the case in non-Catholic schools, many Catholic students are obliged to sit patiently in the class-room and hear insults flung at the Faith which they ought to love more than anything else in the world.

One day Professor Morris, in dealing with a certain point of history, spoke in so prejudiced a tone of the Church that a Catholic student, unable to restrain himself any longer, arose in his seat and said aloud before the whole of the class:

"Sir, allow me to state that what you have just said is utterly contrary to the truth."

The professor became pale and almost speechless with anger, but managed to blurt out:

"Sir, on whose authority do you dare to contradict my assertion?"

The student took a book from his pocket, opened it at a certain page, and said calmly:

"On the authority of your brother, the Jesuit."

The class listened with astonishment to this dialogue, and then Professor Morris had the manhood and honesty to say:

"A very good authority he is, too."

A student who was present at this scene says that the proudest and most admired boy in the University that day was he who so bravely defended the truth.

How "The Raven" was Written.

One day when I was a child of twelve or thirteen I stood tiptoeing in my uncle's office; my eyes were caught by an engraving hung high over a lamp-socket at one side of the chimney-place, writes Frances Aymar Mathews in the *Biographer's*.

The portrait of a man's face, with the proud, irresistible almost, dark, sad, and of his deep eyes and the suggestive curve of the weak though haughty mouth. Underneath the picture was written in a beautiful, firm, small, even hand: "To my friend, Cornelius Mathews, from his devoted friend, Edgar Allan Poe."

"Is that the man who wrote 'The Raven'?" I asked, breathless in my gaze at the weird, spiritual face, it seemed to me, flickering with suppressed life at that very moment, in the glare of the smoky little lamp below it.

My uncle nodded, laid down his pen and wheeled his chair nearer to the fire.

"Candidly," I answered, "from a long correspondence with Dickens, I take him to be a man so little inclined to the introspective, that his presentation of Barnaby's raven is likely to be the result of a deep cause." "I see," Poe responded; "that is precisely it. Some men sway trifles, foibles, or events to their own shaping; others—"

he shifted his gaze back to the space no doubt peopled by his fancies—"are swayed and swung hither and fro by whispers heard only by themselves."

"We talked much more, and on many themes about many people, issues, schemes, books, and friends, until the audience, rising in a mass, we knew that the last curtain had fallen for that night. I put out my hand to touch my companion's arm, and bid him, under the shelter of my umbrella (I observed that he had none and but a thin overcoat), come across the street and join me for a hot oyster supper."

But my hand met nothing, my friendly eyes and invitation were as useless—Poe, like a spirit, had dissolved seemingly in the murk of the night and left me standing alone. I started out and searched everywhere about for him, well understanding his rare delicacy of feeling, which, half anticipating my hospitality, thus sought to elude it. I could not find him, so I went over and took my supper by myself.

"Half an hour later I came out, jumped into the omnibus, and away it went rattling over the wet cobblestones—oh, yes, nothing smoother in those old days!—up through the mirk of Broadway. We had reached Bleeker street, when there, in the circle of a sickly yellow light, under the lamp post, I beheld Edgar Poe standing, writing on the margin of a paper, apparently oblivious of everything around him. I pulled the strap and dashed out, and yet, even then something made me pause as I saw him—a something that shone, like a glitter of stars in a hot summer sky, in the depths of his gray eyes—a something that exuded from his white brow, where the dark curls, gathered with the frozen raindrops, sparkled in the meager light of the almost deserted thoroughfare; but for an instant, when common sense came to my aid combined with common feeling for a man standing inquiring disease in such weather as this—"

"Poe!" I cried, touching him lightly on the shoulder, as I held the umbrella over his head.

With a curious urbanity, a gentleness which yet spoke to me another language and told me of his chagrin at being interrupted, he greeted me and thanked me, and said, answering my earnest queries as to why he had given me the slip and deprived me of the pleasure of his company at supper:

"I thank you very much; I could not have eaten, or drunk, or slept, or gone a step farther than this, or waited a moment longer than now." (Poe then lived in Amity street, only a few blocks distant.) "It is 'The Raven,' he went on, pushing his dark hair back from his forehead, and with his feet almost frozen in a puddle, with my umbrella beating now this way, now that, by the fierceness of the wind; with the rattle of a solitary cart empha- sizing the solitude; with the creaking of a board sign at the corner—Poe said in a hushed, strained voice, a voice where some pent-up, surging sorrow seemed slipping from his control:

"Let me read you a stanza or two here, now will you?"

"Go on," I answered quickly, as eager as he in my attitude. Truth to tell, the fantasy of his mood was communicated to me in force, and that freezing quarter of an hour in December, '44, I shall never forget.

"He began in a low monotone the well-known lines. A blast keener and more cutting than any that had come before nearly turned the umbrella inside out, and made his slight figure sway against the post, while the paper fluttered in his fingers. As rap as was I. The melody incomparable and the magic rhythm of 'The Raven' had seized upon my soul as tensely as it held his, and, reckless of the storm of the December night, I repeated, 'Go on, go on.'"

"His read on from the scrap of paper that he held as far as the words, 'Perched, and sat, and nothing more,' when lack of mere physical strength, I believe, made him stop and I came to a realizing sense of our surround- ings and position.

"It is cold," he said with a slight tremor, while he looked half inquiringly at me.

"The poem is superb, Mr. Poe," I cried, "but it is madness for us to stop out here in the street in the storm. We walked along together, and all the while his lips were framing snatches of the poem destined to win him immortality. More often the fatal refrain coming to my ears of

"Quote the Raven Nevermore."

"We reached the steps of his residence, and then he turned and thanked me with the peculiar grace and charm of manner which in my acquaintance with him always distinguished Edgar Allan Poe. 'Be sure to finish this Raven poem,' I said. 'With a melancholy sigh, the senseless, impalpable wraith of a restless and imprisoned spirit, he answered: 'I shall have to—it has not let me rest; it will not let me sleep until it is completed. Perhaps if I have once put it on paper the ill omened fowl will quit my ear and leave me in peace. 'Not many weeks after, my dear, I bought and read that very copy of 'The Raven' which I now give to you, and a little later it was the most admired and wondered over of the productions of the day.'"

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For cleanest, sweetest
and whitest clothes
Surprise is best
USE SURPRISE SOAP
Best for Every Day
For every use about the house
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See for yourself.

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN.

It is a man's duty to be happy. God must have made him to be happy. Yet there is a nobler end in life than to be happy. It is to be good and true. Indeed, the highest happiness consists in him who is not trying to be happy; but, forgetting all about himself, is trying to make others happy. He is in the loftiest place who is most concerned about the proper discharge of the obligations that devolve upon him. You cannot sit down and say, "Now I will begin to laugh." Such a laugh is the actor's stage laugh, and hollow as a man. We all detect its heartlessness at once. We laugh when something compels a laugh. We are happy by the state of our hearts, and the surroundings of our life.

An Advantage, Not a Disadvantage.

"Is not a young man placed at a disadvantage when he refuses wine at public dinners?"

"I am under the impression that a young man who refuses wine is always at a distinct advantage," says a writer in the *Ladies Home Journal*. "A strong adherence to any good principle is always a recommendation of a young man's character in the eyes of his elders."

"Can you, as one young fellow to another, honestly say to me that a total abstinence from liquors is not a barrier to a social success?"

"I can, and with all my heart. Changing the negative to the affirmative, I can honestly say that a young man's best and highest social success is assured just in proportion as he abstains from wine."

"An indulgence in intoxicants of any sort has never helped a man to any social position worth the having; on the contrary, it has kept many from attaining a position to which by birth and good breeding and all other qualifications they were entitled. No young man will ever find that the principle of abstinence from liquor is a barrier to any success, social, commercial or otherwise. On the other hand, it is the one principle in his life which will in the long run, help him more than any other."

Work for Young Men.

If boys will be boys, so also young men will be young men. Everywhere they are the same—inconstant, chattering, at restraint, anxious to enjoy life, careless of cultivating their nobler nature. East or West, they are made of the same clay.

The Providence Visitor has this to say of young men's societies, as it knows them in New England. "The problem of what should be done with our Catholic young men is full of difficulties. It seems easy till it is handled. Then the many sides of the question reveal themselves, and the bewildering obstacles in the way of success are such as to fill with dismay even the stoutest hearts."

It is all very well when a parade is to take place or a field-day to be held. The young men are interested in these things, especially if the cost is slight. "The show" is good. But it is no disparagement to the splendid work which is being conscientiously done by our societies to say that their essential work—that of cultivating and improving the tastes and the minds of the youth—only remotely interests those for whom they have been established. Exhortations, pleadings and inducements of various kinds fail to retain them long. They come in numbers at the beginning, but little by little they dwindle away, till at length only the few remain who need to be told to come and stay till they are told to go.

Possibly the divergent sympathies which may be noted in the one parish large men belonging to the speedy decline in interest which almost invariably attend upon the first success of a young men's society. Most of these societies are organized for the purpose of giving young men something to think about and something to do during those hours of freedom which are so often the hours of license. They are designed, therefore, to offer harmless amusements, and to set in the way of the young men wholesome and no intellectual aspirations they propose innocent games and the exercises of a gymnasium. For those, on the other hand, who wish to profit by their leisure, books and pamphlets and things of the kind are made accessible.

But whatever the reason, those who have had experience in these matters are the first to admit that almost from the beginning it is only with the utmost care the total disruption of the society is avoided, and that care and anxiety only multiply when one strives to keep the young men together after a certain time.

On the other hand, Protestants have been very successful in their work with young men. The Young Men's Christian Association, although it disclaims the name, is practically a Protestant society. It stands for efficient and good work. It is said to have interested young men, and to need simply to

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make itself known to make its rooms and its work attractive to young men of very different classes. But it is different from our Catholic societies both in the wideness of the field from which it draws its members and also in the character of its organization and the means at its disposal.

Our works of various kinds are organized on parish lines, and our various societies are units, having no connection but the slightest, one with another. They do not, therefore, lend themselves so readily to a unified system. Moreover, they have not the money behind them which this wide-reaching Christian association has, and in works of this kind money tells, for money will secure the variety which must necessarily be missing from our poor societies.

But the work, however difficult, is a good and uplifting work, and we should be poorly off, indeed, if even the little that can now be done were suffered to remain undone.

Character the Chief Thing.

No matter how well or how wisely a young man plans his life, or how laboriously, perseveringly and consistently he carries out his design, or what apparent success he may achieve, he will never exert a proper influence on those about him, or give meaning and completeness to his life, if he be destitute of dignity and force of character.

Character has been the prime factor in all the great revolutions of the world, whether social, political or religious, because it is the only true and adequate expression, whether in word or deed of man's convictions, sympathies and aspirations of truth. If his sympathies be with the innocent and oppressed, if his aspirations rise to what is honorable and noble, then will his life possess a latent force and a gracious charm which will attract and subdue those within the range of its influence and command the respect and extort the approval of all men.

A man of sterling integrity of character will be impressed with a vivid consciousness of what is due to himself. He will be self-respecting; he never doing an act in the dark that he would blush to do before the world; never squandering his love and lavishing his attentions on strangers, reserving only the poverty of his heart and the vulgar side of his nature for those who should be nearest and dearest to him on earth; never afraid to avow his religious principles, when the occasion requires it, openly and before all men; demonstrating loyalty to truth and obedience to God the highest services and the noblest and most ennobling privilege of man.

We hear it sometimes said that it will not do for a Catholic to openly avow his convictions; that his religion will close against him the avenues of honorable ambition. It cannot be denied that there exists a prejudice against Catholics; that it is active without being apparent; that it pervades our literature, our laws and our social and political life; that it hangs like a noxious exhalation in the atmosphere and poisons the air we breathe; but we may be doubted if it is as potent for evil in this instance as is frequently asserted. The world admires the man who has the courage of his convictions, and

Masonic Abominations.

Masonic maps, ornaments and symbols constituted a very curious and interesting exhibition, open at Trent during the sitting of the Congress. Among the exhibits was a crucifix, adapted as a sheath for a poniard, which was shown at one of the general meetings. The nadir of infamy was reached in the so-called "Palladium Formulary," with a series of emblematical designs stamped on thick yellow paper. Some of these do not admit of description, and all are horribly blasphemous. The cross reversibly is opposed to the triangle as symbols respectively of darkness and light, as declared by the motto, "Post tenebras lux." A host transfixed by a dagger, beside a chalice overturned and spilling its sacred contents, are among the other designs, which testify to the spirit which inspires the doings of the sect, when its guiding principles are pushed to their ultimate conclusions.

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