

Our Weekly Sermon

THE HOLY NAME OF JESUS.

ITS POWER AND EFFICIENCY.

Preaching at Farm-street, Rev. F. Gavin, S.J., based his discourse on those words from the Lesson of the Day—Acts IV., 8-12:—"This is the name which was rejected by you builders; which is become the head of the corner; neither is salvation in any other. For there is no other name under Heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved."

The reverend preacher said:—"His name was called Jesus." My dear brethren, we are caught by the magic of a name—the name of a general, or a statesman, of a painter, of a poet, of a physician, or even a millionaire. But those names only speak of a very limited audience. They convey no lesson. They are merely empty sounds to the poor and the uneducated, who are perhaps the best portion of the human race. In the soldier and the sailor, in the porter, in the apple-woman in the street, these names arouse no enthusiasm; they enforce no lesson. We want a name that will speak at once to a little child, and that will lighten the way of the old man in the shadow of death, a name that will arouse to repentance the poor sinner in the very depths of his degradation. And where are we to turn? Assuredly not to anything human, for every thing human is fallible. Even in the Saints there were defects—in all except Mary, Queen of Saints. Yet even in her there were defects of limitation.

For 1900 years titles and dignities have been cried out. The name alone that can satisfy us, the personality we want is Christ Jesus, Son of the Living God.

Every sermon should be practical. Every sermon ought to be a lesson to each person that comes to listen and to learn. We have to imitate the Apostles in their preaching. What did they do? They went everywhere preaching and teaching Jesus. There is a verse in a hymn for the Feast of the Holy Name which, while giving a practical lesson, inspires at the same time love of Jesus Christ: "Oh, Jesus, full of hope and compassion, how good to those that seek thee, and passing all belief to those that find thee. Oh, Jesus, hope of man."

Christian hope is very different from the sentiment spoken of by novelists, and essayists. Christian hope is Jesus Christ living, suffering, dying, rising again. How, you may ask, can a man hope who is tied down by sin? Look how Christ came to us. He came to the world from the womb of a lowly virgin, and He took to Himself the flesh of a sinner. No man can be terrified by His God on the Cross. I am amongst you, He said. "I am amongst you as one of you." In four different epistles St. Paul, a master of language, calls the Incarnation a mystery. And why? Because of the depth of the abasement that it involved which no intellectual conception of man or angel can fully fathom. That acceptance of human abasement by Jesus Christ tells us that no sin is too great for forgiveness. Only one sin seals the guilt of the sinner, and that is the sin like to that of the guilty man, who, rushing into the chamber with the accursed thirty pieces of silver, dashed them in frenzy on the floor—the sin of the betrayal of Christ's blood.

How we shrink from asking a favor, even from a friend, for fear of being refused. There is only one Being who is never weary of being asked and of granting, and that is Jesus Christ. He is, first and foremost, an indulgent father who delights in hearing His children's voices and wishes to know their petition. Sometimes what we ask is, in the wisdom of God, refused. Christ knows what is best for us. What you desire, ask, and He will give it to you if it be for your good; if not now, later on. Place your confidence in Him, and you will not be disappointed, because He is so full of compassion—"How good to those that seek Thee, and passing all belief to those that find Thee, O Lord." Man is so very different from God in this respect, especially if we take the highly situated ones of this world. It is hard to find them at home. They are always busy and pre-occupied. We have to make appointments to meet them, and the appointments are cancelled by telegram. They have no time to do anything in fact, except, perhaps, to amuse themselves. How very different is Jesus Christ in His dealings with His creatures. You know that picture of the gracious figure knocking timidly at the door of the heart—"Behold, I am at the gate knocking." He never enters unless the creature says, "Come in," and when that permission is granted Jesus Christ comes into the soul to fill the vacant chambers, and even in that changeable, incomprehensible, passion-loving vessel which we call the heart,

even there He finds His habitation. In two places we are always certain to find Him—in His Tabernacle and on His Cross.

A man returns to the home of His childhood to find old spots and old figures passed away. Disappointment, sickness, sorrow, and death are only the titles of the chapters of this world's change. But wherever He wanders He can enter a Church. Within the King dwells, not on a throne, but in a tomb more narrow than the tomb that may soon be his (the wanderer's) bed. God is there, living and having His being, attending and ministering to us.

For 1900 years men, women, and children have been walking up the Mount of Calvary in moments when the world is heavy upon them, and whispering the burden of their hearts into the ear of that crucified Master looking at that Divine figure in its incomprehensible desolation, viewing the hands and feet pierced with nails, and the heart able to excuse and forgive, unable to condemn. They have gone down from Calvary, not with their burden taken away, but with their hearts full of consolation.

"Passing all belief to those that find Him." Assuredly this is a magnificent description of Christ's mercy.

What a weak and human cry is that uttered by Hamlet when he says: "How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable seem to me all the uses of this world." This is the lament of a soured, disappointed man. Put this side by side with the declaration of Solomon:—"Whatsoever my eyes desired I possessed, and I gave my heart to human pleasure. Vanity of vanities, all is vanity; shadow of shadows, all is shadow," except to know and to serve Him alone.

We have found Christ in His Tabernacle; we have found Him on His cross. Is there no other place where we can worship Him? Yes, in Heaven, in that kingdom whose gates are always open to mark the security that reigns in the City of the Saints. All that makes life and home sweet will be intensified there a thousandfold. Jesus and Mary there shall be Mother and Son. Peter and Andrew, and James and John shall be brothers, and Martha and Mary sisters there. And in that eternal home there will our knowledge grow greater and greater of Him who was born 1900 years ago of a virgin and a saint, to die on a cross. That is your home, that is my home, our eternal inheritance, that we can gain by our own efforts. The means are familiar to you. Pray fervently and frequently, frequent the Sacraments, be scrupulous in your daily examination of conscience, be compassionate to the poor; and on this Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus, linked with that Society which has the honor to bear His name, and which has the high honor of sharing, to some small extent, His shame, His sorrow, and His travail, remember the Fathers fighting for the name of Jesus; pray for them that they may put their hope in Jesus, for He is the source of all hope; "In Thee, O Lord, I shall have hope, and I shall not be confounded for ever."

HON. LOUIS PHILIPPE BRODEUR.

Biographical Sketch of the New Speaker of the House.

In tracing the career of able Canadian statesmen, who, by their talents, industry, and integrity, uphold the honor of the Dominion, it adds to the interest of the recital when we have to do with a man who is under forty years of age, a period of life at which many men of good parts scarcely get their name before the public or are known outside their own immediate circle. The future Speaker of the Commons had, however, the advantage of coming early into professional and political life, and doubly so by the good impression he made as soon as he came upon the scene. Men of less individuality and force of character would have had to linger by the way and win popularity and preferment by slow degrees, but young Mr. Brodeur was enabled to take the "short cut" to the practical road of professional progress. When he was admitted to the bar in 1881 he was scarcely beyond the boyhood stage in years and appearance, but his splendid scholastic and legal training enabled him to enter the courts and to handle cases with as much ability and confidence as lawyers who had been practising at the bar for years before. And it was by the exercise of legal powers, early developed, that he pushed so rapidly to the front and made his mark as a bright and able young leader, who from the very start thoroughly appreciated his responsibilities and spared no pains to safeguard the interests of his clients. By his business-like methods he attracted the favorable notice of the Court and of his seniors at the bar, and at the same time increased his practice.

It is well understood, of course, that a professional man's success in later life depends largely upon the sort of preparatory training he has had, as well as upon his personal aptitudes

and his strong determination of purpose. The future honorable Speaker of the Canadian Commons showed from the first that he had the essentials for a successful career. He was born of a good parentage, his father being a "patriot" of '37, and on his mother's side he came of good stock. His infantile years were passed under a pure and virtuous Christian atmosphere, wherein he learned his first lessons and his young mind was bent in the direction of what was good and honorable in life, and his home instructions were enlarged and developed in the clean and wholesome atmosphere that prevails in the Catholic college and university. Setting out with such a favorable equipment, it is hardly to be wondered at that his rise to political and legal prominence has been progressive and unusually rapid. Owing to his recent elevation to the Speakership it were well, perhaps, to give some minute details of his career. Hon. Louis Philippe Brodeur, K.C., M.P., Speaker of the Dominion House of Commons, and the subject of this all-too-short sketch, is the son of Toussaint Brodeur, a "patriot" of '37, by Justine Lamber, his wife, whose father was killed at St. Charles; was born at Balocil, P.Q., August 21st, 1862. He made his regular course of studies at the College of St. Hyacinthe, Que., and, having decided to adopt the profession of the law, he entered the Laval University to pursue and complete the higher branches of his chosen calling, and in due course he graduated L.L.B., from that famous seat of learning, and was called to the bar in 1884.

In his preparatory as well as in his higher studies he displayed an enthusiastic love of learning and a determined purpose to master whatever branches he took in hand, thus indicating the thoroughness of his character, and giving evidence in advance that he had the qualities which enable men to move quickly to the front rank when their God-given abilities are exercised for worthy ends and backed up by a lawful ambition to make the best use of their intellectual faculties.

He practised for some years in partnership with the late Mr. E. Lareau, the well-known writer, but more recently has been a partner of Hon. R. Dandurand, K.C. He has written largely for the press, and in 1896 became one of the editors of Le Soir, Montreal. Previously, however, his fine abilities had been recognized beyond the courts, and his work in the editorial chair, and in 1891 at the general elections, he was returned to the House of Commons for Rouville. It was in that wider field of political life that opportunity was given him to prove the practical knowledge, clear judgment, and ripe abilities which he possessed; nor did he disappoint his friends, for almost on his entrance into Parliament he took a prominent part in the debates in the Chamber in favor of his party, and was always listened to with a degree of respect not usually accorded to young members; but he had the power to make his speeches worth listening to, for he discussed public questions with good taste and judgment as well as with keen insight into their bearing upon the future welfare of the Dominion.

He was re-elected at the general elections of 1896, and was, on the assembling of the new Parliament, elected to the office of Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees. At the general elections, held on the 7th of November last, he was re-elected to the House of Commons, and on the meeting of the House the other day he was elected to the office of Speaker.

While serving as Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees he did his work fairly and efficiently, and won golden opinions on both sides of the House.

In the higher position to which he has just been called he will no doubt show an equally good record. His ten years' service in Parliament and five in the Deputy Speakers' chair have made him thoroughly conversant with the rules of constitutional and parliamentary procedure, and his quick intelligence has enabled him to store all he has gathered in the past for reference and use, now and in the future. Besides, he has the instincts of truth and justice within himself, and this important factor combined with his acquired knowledge and experience will constitute him a fair arbiter in disputed points of a critical nature.

His commanding intellect, too, will help him to reach correct conclusions quickly.

In speaking of his personal aptitudes we may add that the House has made a wise choice of an able, clean-cut, and scholarly gentleman of strong character and executive force, who will always be found maintaining the dignity of Parliamentary debate and the decorum of the House.

Statesmen and politicians in Canada will be glad of the prudent choice made by the Government, and the feeling of satisfaction will be increased in Quebec Province, and will grow still warmer among the honorable Speaker's race and kindred.

As bearing upon the subject in hand,

we may be permitted to quote the lines below:—

"Wisdom," quoth the sage,  
"Comes only with old age."  
Then quacked the goose;  
"What's the use?"

In Hon. Mr. Brodeur's career we have a living and striking refutation of the dogmatic influence conveyed in the above lines. Mr. Brodeur has hardly reached the prime of his young manhood, and yet he has attained to high place and responsibility, which only wisdom and sound judgment could entitle him to.

In the space at our disposal we are debarred from speaking much of Hon. Mr. Brodeur's private or domestic life, but we are warranted in saying that it is as pure and honorable as has been his political and public career. He is happily married, having had the good fortune to select a life-partner, who is in every respect worthy of him, in the person of Emma, daughter of Mr. I. R. Britton, M.P., of St. Beloit.

That the worthy couple may fully enjoy the marks of distinction conveyed in Mr. Brodeur's new appointment will be the cordial and sincere wish of all who have watched his upward career and the fine example it sets to the rising generation of young men, who may be fired with the determination to make their lives useful to their native country.

WILLIAM ELLISON.

CONFUCIANISM.

WU TING-FANG'S EXPOSITION OF THE CHINESE RELIGION.

Minister Wu Ting-Fang, Chinese Ambassador at Washington, recently delivered a lecture before the New York Ethical Society on the doctrines of Confucianism, which is the national religion of the Chinese. Minister Wu is a man of high culture and scholarly attainments, and gave a perfectly clear and lucid explanation of the religious beliefs by which so many millions of his fellow-countrymen live, but do not die, because, as Mr. Wu was careful to explain, Confucianism promises nothing after death.

It is doubtful if the average man, who has ever so slight a claim to Christian belief, will feel his respect for the Chinese or their religion by reading the lecture. Mr. Wu makes very little effort to conceal his contempt for Christianity and its ideals. Confucianism pronounces nothing after death; hence the idea of having these priests—Tavisto, Buddhaist, etc.—join in the funeral rites, so as to make sure that if one religion will not bring everlasting happiness to the dead soul, the other must do so.—"I must confess that the immortality of the soul is a pleasing thing to contemplate. I wish it were true; but all the subtle reasonings of Plato cannot make it amount to anything more than a strong probability." We have here explained the radical difference which exists between the ideals of Confucianism and Christianity. Christianity points to a life beyond the grave; to a place where the inequalities of this life will be rectified, where the poor will be exalted and the rich cast down; where those who suffer in this world will receive compensation. Confucianism goes not beyond this world; it says, "Do good because it is good," and "The good man is happy." Christianity has high ideals and it must be admitted very few live up to those ideals. The Sermon on the Mount says, "Do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who despitefully use you." "Whoever smites thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also." Christians do not live up to their ideals, but is it not better to have ideals that are everlasting—even though it be only in thought—than to have one's ideals bounded by this world, and circumscribed by the pride, avarice, and selfishness which seems inherent in Man. Let us examine for a moment, the practical working out of the ideals of Confucianism, and those which animate the Christian. What has Christianity done for mankind? It has placed a hope in the hearts of the downtrodden, and is a beacon light to suffering humanity. As individuals, we may not live up to our ideals, but as communities we do try—it may be afar off, and in a halting manner—but we do try to follow the example of the Founder of Christianity. As communities, we feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick, and care for our distressed neighbor. What meant the martyrs of the Coliseum? What power tamed and subdued the barbarians of the North, who had overturned the Empire of Rome, and made of them upholders and defenders of Christianity? Men and women are to-day turning away from seemingly brilliant prospects, to take the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. What causes them to do so? Not all who take up the religious life have the same high motives, but we know of our own knowledge that many religious bright careers to become poor and unknown to the world, and take up the highest form of service to God, the service of one's fellow-men.

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of Christ, and cannot point to one hospital, to one institution for the relief of the insane, the blind, or the deaf and dumb, as the result of its teaching must not vaunt itself in the presence of Christianity. The country in which children are exposed in order to get rid of them—as we know by the records that 4,000 in one year were gathered up in baskets by the Sisters of Charity in the City of Canton alone—is not even living up to the low ideal of "doing good because it is good."

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