

FIVE-MINUTE'S SERMON.

THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

"I am the bread of life; he that cometh to Me shall not hunger, and he that believeth in Me shall never thirst." (St. John vi, 51.)

My dear brethren: There are many profound thinkers interested in surveying the domain of consciousness, and in making explorations to discover the process by which ideas are formed and retained in the human mind. Within the brain, where the powers of thought reside, there is a sort of dark continent that has not yet been illuminated by the sunlight, or even by the electric light of modern science. It is more than probable that the masters of scholastic philosophy in the thirteenth century knew as much concerning the laws that govern the process of mental growth as the most pretentious modern scholars. In a mysterious way the sight, the hearing, and the other corporeal senses cooperate with the faculties of the mind to produce ideas. Without being able to analyze the process closely, we are nevertheless certain of the results produced. The material world enters into communication with our immaterial spirit, and does so through the agency of the senses. The most difficult problem of mental philosophy is to explain how these sensible impressions are transmitted into thought, and to show how we obtain assurance that the inner world of thought is a correct photograph, and exact representation, of the world around us.

During the time of our Lord's public life He performed many astounding miracles which proved His dominion over the forces of nature, which proved His power in the spirit world beyond the grave. He gave sight to the blind, health to the sick, life to the dead. He multiplied a few loaves of bread and some fishes so that the hunger of five thousand people was appeased. All these were miracles that fell under the senses. They are evidences of His power which come to our understanding through the ordinary channels of human thought and knowledge.

But in the great mystery we celebrate during this octave, my dear brethren, faith and not the senses tells us of the greatest of all His miracles: His presence in the Holy Eucharist. Our senses see nothing that would of itself convince us of His presence. Our senses cannot perceive that our Lord is truly present under the appearances of bread and wine. It is only by the aid of faith that we can penetrate the veil that hides Him from our view. We believe solely on the testimony of our Lord: we call to mind the words He spoke at the Last Supper, and remember that He has declared those blessed who have not seen and yet have believed. So when we receive Holy Communion, when we assist at Benediction, when we make a visit to the Blessed Sacrament, we make an act of faith in the Real Presence.

The mystery of the Eucharist is chosen in the Blessed Sacrament is the greatest of all miracles, and when considered attentively fills the mind with wonder and amazement. By a constant and perpetually recurring miracle He abides with His creatures. He still dwells among us, and finds delight in distributing gifts and blessings to the children of men. It was not sufficient for the accomplishment of His plan that He should assume our human nature, that He endeared Himself to the poorest and most destitute of the people among whom He lived. He laid plans and appointed ambassadors to secure the peaceful conquest of all nations; He entered into an agreement beforehand with all who should receive His doctrine: He promised to reward every one who would live righteously, in conformity with the law that He established.

He is still living with us. He is as really present on our altars as He is in the home of His eternal Father. He is with us because of His personal love for each one of us. His presence among us is a great and unceasing wonder, but it is a wonder that can only be explained by His love. Wherever the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is celebrated, there is He present not only in His Divinity, but in His ever adorable humanity as well. Thrones and temples have been built for Him in all nations, and from His presence the sorrowful find comfort, the weak find strength, the cowardly find courage, and all find the pledge of eternal life.

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OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

How a Boy of Spirit Became a Great Man.

An Irishman seldom admits his inability to do whatever is asked of him. "I have it myself," said the late Charles O'Connor, the famous New York lawyer, referring to this Irish trait. "I should never hesitate to undertake anything from doubt of my ability to do it. I might have a good deal of trouble about it, but I would manage to accomplish it some way."

A friend once said to him he had been fitted by nature for a lawyer, and that no other profession would have proved so congenial to him. "I do not think it would have made any difference what profession I had adopted," replied O'Connor. "I should have attained about the same relative success whether I had been bred a blacksmith, a doctor, a theologian, or a lawyer. I was just as fit and as unfit for one thing as for another. With hard work, for which I had capacity, I could have mastered almost anything after some fashion."

Lord John Russell's critics used to insist that his self-confidence was as audacious as an Irishman's. Lord John, they said, would undertake to form a government, command the Channel Fleet, make a speech, compile a biography, write an essay for the Edinburgh Review, or a "leader" for the London Times.

Irishmen in thinking they can turn their hand to anything may be pardoned for their audacity, when one recalls the fact that Sheridan was both dramatist and orator; that Goldsmith was poet, novelist, essayist, comedy writer and naturalist; and that Wellington could win battles, describe his campaigns, and govern a nation. It is not every nation who can back its self-confidence by such versatile deeds.

Mr. O'Connor's self-assertion is justified by his early life whose study we commend to those who excuse their own failure by accusing circumstances. His father, as we learn from an article in the Century, was an improvident gentleman, who sent his son to school for only two months, and then put him with a manufacturer of turpentine, pitch, tar and lampblack.

The boy received no pay except his board, but in one year he became so familiar with the details of the business that when he detailed his intention to leave his employer offered him a man's wages. The other workmen would not, however, submit to a boy of twelve years being paid as much as a journeyman, and Charles, therefore, retired.

His father then placed him with a lawyer who had little business and no law books. Charles managed, somehow, to get hold of a copy of "Blackstone's Commentaries," and read it through two or three times. He did not comprehend it, as his mind was too immature to grasp the principles of legal science. But his persistence is shown by his reading through, at least twice, a book he did not understand.

He left that desolate office for another, and in his eighteenth year he re-read Blackstone and comprehended it. In those days even the most eminent lawyers owned very few books. "A multitude of books distracts the mind," O'Connor was forced to adhere to the old school system of reading. Instead of rambling through many books, as is now the fashion, he mastered a few so thoroughly that he never forgot their contents. He knew not many things, but much. Mr. Tilden said that O'Connor had a more precise knowledge of the science of jurisprudence than any other person living of the English-speaking race.

After Mr. O'Connor was admitted to the Bar, he had \$25 in his pocket. He hired an office, bought a desk, three old chairs, a little stationary, and put up a small tin sign, but he did own a single law book.

One day he saw a notice of a law library of one hundred and fifty-six volumes for sale at \$2 a volume. Having no money or credit, he asked Mr. Pardow, a merchant, whom he knew slightly, to endorse his (O'Connor's) note. The merchant did so, as a favor, having faith in the success of his purpose in life, and the young lawyer purchased the coveted books. The library proved the means of his rapid rise to success; from that day O'Connor never knew what it was to lack from a want of means.

When Mr. O'Connor had become famous and rich, he found the great grand daughter of Mr. Pardow poor. He adopted her, and when he died left her a third of his large estate. So vivid was the recollection of the days of his own poverty that he gave to all who came to him with the plea, "I am poor and needy." He knew that he was often deceived by impostors, but he could not shut his ears to that plea, saying: "I am better for giving, even if the receiver is unworthy."

He was once stopped in Broadway by a stranger who asked him for the loan of \$5. He put his hand in his pocket, drew out the amount, and handed it to the man. The befriended person was penniless and in despair. He asked a man standing near if he knew the name of the gentleman.

"That was Charles O'Connor, the lawyer," said the man. Thirty years after, Mr. O'Connor received a letter, enclosing \$5 from a person living in Virginia. It recited the facts, and promised to send thirty years interest as soon as the writer was able.

Mr. O'Connor wrote to the poor man, saying he accepted the \$5, as that would make the lender feel that he had discharged a duty, but he must decline the promised interest.

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN.

Catholic Columbian.

To erect guide posts against false principles of life, is one of the objects of this department; hence this warning against

Cunning People.

The word cunning has various meanings accorded to it in the dictionaries, but is generally in our day used with the sense of crafty, as describing one who in underhand ways uses his knowledge or his skill. Its primary meaning relates simply to knowledge and by derivation to skill, so that the term cunning workman is used in a complimentary sense. A cunning politician, on the other hand, is understood to be one who is sly and unscrupulous. There is another derived meaning not much used except by fond mothers, who describe their children as cunning when they mean that they are bright and interesting. In general, however, the word cunning is used to describe people who misuse their knowledge in sly and more or less dishonest ways, and that is the kind of people here discussed. They have to be intelligent and quick witted to be cunning, and that makes their offence greater when they use their talents for base and ignominious purposes or in mean and underhand ways.

Cunning men of this kind are to be found in all walks of life, even among the learned. They seek to gain by in direction that which might be accorded to them if they would manfully declare their desires or intentions. They are without sense of honor or moral courage, and even when in the right speak through life instead of boldly declaring themselves.

Cunning men naturally flourish to a certain degree because they are intelligent or knowing, but they never achieve an honorable reputation. They are very often politicians of the baser kind; never statesmen. This country has known several who have attained distinction, but failed to win the goal of their ambition for the simple reason that while their abilities were recognized, they were known to be tricky and dishonorable. In business and professional life, though there is less need for the exhibition of cunning in such callings than in that of politics, the same general result follows. The cunning man of business may be successful to a certain degree, winning fortune or reputation for skill, but he does not win that which he covets most—the respect and regard of his fellows. To say that the cunning man never achieves the full measure of success is only another way of saying that such success cannot be achieved by any one who is not honorable. The successful hypocrite always fails in one thing: he cannot deceive himself. Upon the other hand, the possession of dishonorable cunning is a distinct drawback to any man's career. His fellow-men may not be able to put their hands up on any one dishonorable act he has committed, for his cunning prevents discovery, but they have an ill-defined sense that he is tricky and unreliable, and therefore they withhold from him full confidence and trust. Thus the cunning man is put at a disadvantage compared with one of less abilities who is straightforward and honest, and those who attain distinction are the exceptions, not the rule.

These observations are made because there is a tendency among young men just entering business life to exaggerate the value of cunning. They do not draw the proper distinction between knowledge and skill guided by honor and similar knowledge and skill employed in petty and dishonorable ways or for mean purposes. The boy who does his duty conscientiously for his employer appears to the inexperienced to be altogether commonplace beside the brilliant genius who can evade his duty and find excuse and explanation for his dereliction. But they will find in the course of future years that honor counts for a great deal in determining which of two men shall be advanced or shall be called to other and broader fields of activity. It is true that all frank, honorable and faithful men do not attain higher places or greater emoluments than cunning schemers, but this is the general rule, not the exception; for success in this world cannot be won by the loss of one's self-respect.

No young man should aim to be cunning—in the bad sense of that word. His ambition should be to gain knowledge and skill while retaining his honor and manliness. Then, what ever may be his measure of success, he will be a king among men in his own dominion, whether it be large or small.

Ideal Manliness.

Mr. George Raynor gave a most eloquent address at the annual meeting of the Adelaide, Australia, association upon "Ideal Manliness."

By ideal manliness he did not mean anything imaginative or high falutin, but that which is not only possible, but the choicest and highest of its kind. What is ideal manliness, and what supports it as the pedestal does the statue?—"Courage," was his answer. "The highest possible manliness is marked by the highest possible courage. There are various kinds and degrees of courage. He upheld Socrates as an example of pagan courage, whose death was a spectacle for our golden moments. The present had been called an age of anaesthetics, and it was alleged, that the ancients displayed more fortitude in their love-making than we took to the dentist. He believed that there still exists courage of a very high order, and that Englishmen in the face of danger and

at the call of duty would do as they did at Balaklava.

"Theirs not to reason why, theirs but to do and die."

The highest courage is not exemplified in dying, even dying for a principle, but in living, and living for a principle. Charles I. could pose as a martyr on the death scaffold, but he could not live either as a true man or a gentleman. Courage is not always noise nor allied to distinction, nor did it always gain publicity. A man might be brave to a degree, and yet be neither a soldier, painter, thinker, nor genius. Not every one could emulate a Theodore Parker, who could face his opponents and denounce their iniquity to their faces, yet there is not a youth nor a maiden who could not live a life that would speak for truth, excellence, and all that is noble, right and good.

The second qualification of the ideal man is disinterestedness. Too many are the slaves of egotism. Number one looms large on their horizon. The master stroke of human policy is the prominence of personal eminence in some department or another. Those who wish to attain to ideal manhood must throw away ambition of a selfish character; greatness is never allied to selfishness, and the man who desires to give distinction to his epoch is not an egotist. If any would live the ideal life they must be nobly impersonal and disinterested, seeking in whatever sphere a good providence had put them to make life better, and to help the thousands by whom they were surrounded.

Again, the ideal manhood must have an ideal purpose. They must be careful, for while they could not take too lofty an aim, they might take too definite a purpose is essential, but it must be in the right direction. We must remember that our accomplishments can not rise above our characters. What we are we shall perform. He hoped that everyone had a grand purpose that tended to elevate himself and those around him. We can best influence others by perfecting ourselves. Whether as lawyers, politicians, tradesmen, or doorkeepers, if we are doing our best just where we are placed, then we are doing our quota in the handsomest way possible towards improving the system of which we are but an infinitesimal fraction. The world is eager for supreme performance, and tired of that which falls short. Let them have but brave purpose, stout hearts, and magnanimous spirits, and their approach towards the pinnacle of true ideal manhood will be assured.

A Protestant on the American Catholic University.

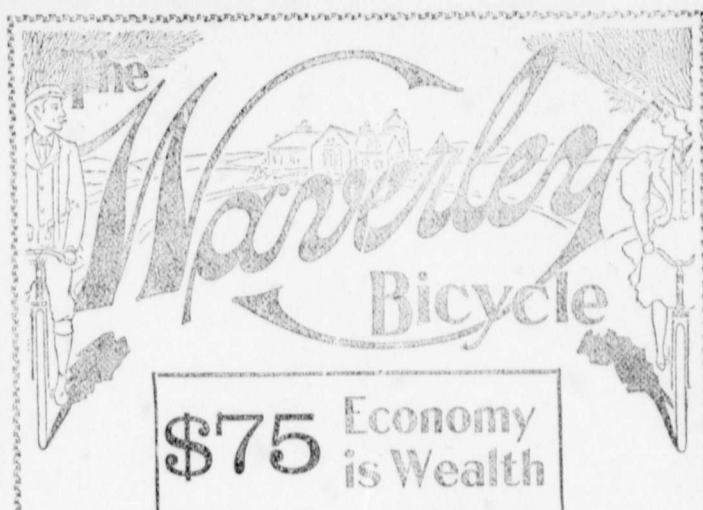
George P. Morris, of the editorial staff of the Congregationalist, has been in Washington and has visited the Catholic University. He says: "One who visits the Catholic University, meets its professors and studies the type of student there, comes away impressed with the high standard of its founders, their breadth of purpose, the virility and courtesy of the men one meets, and the culpability of Protestants who affect either to ignore or despise the life and purpose of such men or such an institution. To do so is both foolish and wicked. John Fiske is a foe whom few care to join with. Yet Professor Shanahan of this University has done it recently in a most vigorous, skilful fashion, as all may see who care to read the last number of the University Quarterly Bulletin. Professor Shanahan is a splendid specimen of the stalwart, refined Irish-American. To one who has known of and read Maurice F. Egan for many years, it is a pleasure to find him in his proper niche at last, interpreting English and American literature to men of diverse nationalities, and ever insisting that no man is so base as he who prostrates gifts of observation, expression or thought to produce immoral or unmanly literature."

The article by Dr. Shanahan referred to above, "John Fiske on the life of God," was issued in pamphlet form soon after its appearance in the Bulletin and has had an immense circulation. Dr. Shanahan is a priest of the Archdiocese of Boston, and a former parishioner of St. Thomas' Church, Jamaica Plain.—Boston Pilot.

Cod and Bad in it

If the Catholic Church is all that it claims to be, then there should be some signs of its divinity in the conduct of its followers. They should lead more pious lives, their remarkable virtue should be evident to everyone; they should be more honest, truthful, pure, temperate and industrious than their neighbors; their minds should dwell on the things above, and not be concerned in the small bickerings of trade, place, preferment, empty honor, the applause of men, should be spurred by them. But we see very little difference between them and those who worship at a different shrine. "By their fruits ye shall know them," but the fruit is rarely in evidence.

That is one of the stock arguments of those who are opposed to the Church, and that there is some force in it we cannot but admit. Like most arguments of its kind, it proves too much. Christ established His Church and instituted the sacraments for the aid of man. He saw that for all ages the weakness of human nature would assert itself, and He destined the Church to live for all ages, that it might assist man in his battle against his nature. He found a world of good and bad people, and He accepted the conditions as He found them. He invited all to follow Him. His mission was not alone



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Spiritual Forces.

The will to do the right as we see it is spiritual force; and spiritual energy is the best development of what is called "force of character." It is a thing of the mind, a matter of wishing and striving, strongly, deeply, continuously.

Passion is always playing across the purposes that our moral being puts forth. Men of good intention are thus veered from the straight course. "The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak"—which is the time-honored apology for want of spiritual force.

According to the old moralists the utterly reprobate are those who have not the will to turn from their besetting sins. They may, at times, repent, but they are never sincerely resolved to give up their pleasures. The intellect of conscience remains, but its will is dead.

"This is the best blood which has the most iron in it. To edify resolve with." That is the true spiritual life which makes for the right with forceful determination. It is so earnest in its ends that it calls to its aid every assistance. Altogether aside from any religious considerations, the influence of prayer, mortification and the avoidance of temptation must be recognized in the growth of spiritual force. From a purely psychological standpoint, fervent prayer is fervent wishing for the good resolved upon. It is an exercise and a formulation of spiritual force. The avoidance of temptation is the weakening of those passions which play across the moral purposes.

Retreat to night.

And that shall send a kind of eastness To the next abstinence; the next more easy. For you almost can change the stamp of nature.

And mortification and self-denial still further strengthen the spiritual will. Thus, when the will to do right is strong, there is also clearer moral vision. Make shifts, compromises, bribes of time and circumstance, are thrust aside and the man of spiritual force sees without hesitation that "It is right, to follow right." Were wisdom in the score of consequence." —Catholic Citizen.

Mary, Queen of May.

May is pre-eminently the month of flowers. In pagan days it was called Flora. Life and growth, youth and gaiety, and whatever there is of loveliness or that hath in itself a budding promise, are all associated with May, and at this season are regarded with an especial tenderness and affection. It is the season of growing grass and unfolding leaf and budding flower, of renewed vitality and vigor throughout the domain of nature, the season when earth and air teem with throbbing life, and the season when the icy hand of winter hath relaxed its grasp and nature thrills beneath the genial touch of Spring, and man's pulse beats in harmony with the newness of life that is abroad—this season of full blossom and rich promise is consecrated to Mary, whom the nations call Blessed.

Nature is decked in her newest and her brightest, and whatever is best in nature we lay at the feet of this spotless Virgin and Mother with reverent hand and loving heart; we decorate her shrine, and proclaim her Queen of May, blessed among women and fairest of God's creatures.

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