

FIVE-MINUTE SERMON.

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost.

WHY WE SHOULD LOVE GOD.

"Jesus said to him: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind.'" (St. Matt. xxii. 37)

What do people of the world appear to love the most? It is money. And why money more than anything else? Because with money they can procure what they desire, houses, lands, clothing, good fare, to journey around where they will, to amuse themselves, etc. Money represents to them all sorts of temporal goods and advantages.

But money cannot buy happiness; that is, true, real happiness. It cannot buy health, it cannot buy long life, it cannot buy peace and contentment of mind. The rich man must part with all temporal goods in a short time, as the apostle says: "We brought nothing in this world and certainly we can carry nothing out."

To love riches with his whole heart is a foolish thing. Blessed is the man who has not gone after gold, nor set his heart on money and treasures.

No! God is her only treasure. He is the infinite, boundless good. All that is good or beautiful or desirable flows from Him as from its source, and apart from Him there is nothing good, beautiful, or desirable. And He is the eternal good. This happiness which He offers us is not a puff of wind which passes away, but will last for ever. If death finds us in the state of grace and friendship with God, we will possess, without fear or loss, superabundant riches, joy and happiness for the countless ages of eternity.

This is what we are created for. If God had intended us for this world He would not have had an adequate motive for creating us at all.

From all this it follows that we must obey the commandment: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind." God is entitled to our love, for He is our Creator, "in whom we live and move and have our being, without Whom and His upholding hand we should vanish away into nothingness." He is entitled to our love because He is our last end and supreme good. God is the only worthy object of the love of a reasonable and immortal soul made to His own image and likeness. This is the dictate of our own good sense. If every one stops to question his own right reason he cannot fail to receive this answer.

How shall we fulfil this great commandment? This is the question of agnostics, which should be now before us as a demanding answer.

The love of God is not precisely the sensible affection such as we feel to our relations and friends here on earth. Our affections are not always under our control. We have never seen God, and only know what He is by what He has revealed. This affectionate love we can only have as far as He imparts it to us. It is His love that He demands of us. What is this love? St. John answers this question. "This is the love of God, that we keep His Commandments." The love of God consists in true heartfelt obedience. We must be disposed to keep His Commandments and all of them. If we are fully, earnestly disposed to do this then we fulfil the great commandment to love God. No matter how great may be our temptations or how great a sacrifice it may involve, we must be disposed to obey the commandments. Let us not rest satisfied a moment until we find ourselves solidly grounded in these dispositions; and if we find ourselves weak or wavering, let us pray, and never cease praying. God will help us, and we shall be able to say with St. Paul, "I can do all things in Christ Who strengthened me," and with St. Anthony who, sorely afflicted, exclaimed, "Let God arise, and all His enemies shall be scattered and they that hate Him shall flee before Him."

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S DAY.

Nothing perhaps is more common, and yet nothing can be more unjust, than to take advantage of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day, to inveigh against the Catholic community and the Catholic principles, as if the awful deed had proceeded from their influence. If we consult the authentic and contemporary documents collected and adduced by those persons who have made a deep and impartial study of the whole transaction—Caveirac, Lingard and Daniel—we shall find that religion had nothing to do with it, except to check its course as much as possible, and to weep over the devoted victims of the massacre; that the whole affair was merely the effect of a political resentment and of a sudden ebullition of anger; in fine, that a much smaller number of persons perished on the occasion than is commonly believed.

The series and close connection of the events immediately preceding the massacre are sufficient to show that it originated in the animosity of the French court against the Protestant party, and was dictated by a violent desire of revenge. The mind of the young king, Charles IX., had been frequently harassed and exasperated by the repeated attacks of the Huguenots against his authority, and by the report of the many cruelties which they had committed throughout the kingdom during the last civil wars.

Notwithstanding these causes or provocations, he would not have adopted the dreadful measure, had it not been for the positive assertion of his chief counsellors that he could no longer escape the plots of that party without putting to death, or in confinement, its chief leaders, and that, were he to wait till next morning, his most faithful officers, his family, perhaps himself, would be sacrificed to their vengeance. The king then gave his consent to the projected massacre; the time was appointed, and the execution took place during a considerable part of the following day, August 24, 1572.

This heinous deed was not the result of a long pre-meditated and general plot, but the effect of a sudden fit of anger and revenge; it was, moreover, projected against the leaders only of the Huguenot party, and intended to have

taken place only in Paris. If the example of the capital was followed in the cities of Lyons, Rouen, Toulouse and Bordeaux this was owing chiefly to the violent excitement which the conduct and cruelties of the Calvinists, during the preceding insurrections, had produced in the minds of the Catholics.

Far from sending orders to the provinces against Protestants, Charles IX., on the contrary, both in writing and by word of mouth, frequently expressed his intention that the bloody scene should not be repeated, nor extended beyond the limits of Paris. And, indeed, the great difference of the epochs at which the massacres were committed in the cities above mentioned, also shows that they ought to be attributed rather to sudden ebullitions of popular vengeance than to any previously concerted and general plan. Every one may see the detailed proofs of these assertions in the Dissertations of St. Bartholomew by Caveirac and Lingard's writings.

Of the number of victims in all those towns, including Paris, it is impossible to speak with certainty. Among the Huguenot writers, some reckon seventy thousand; others, thirty or twenty or fifteen thousand; but all these amounts seem to be exaggerated. "The real number of martyrs adopted a measure of ascertaining the real number," says Lingard, "which may enable us to form a probable conjecture. He procured from the ministers in the different towns where the massacres had taken place lists of the names of the persons who had suffered, or were supposed to have suffered. He published the result in 1822; and the reader will be surprised to learn that in all France he could discover the names of no less than eight hundred persons. Perhaps, if we double that number, we shall not be far from the real amount."

Above all, it is certain that religion had nothing to do with the massacre, whether as a motive or an encouragement. In the contriving of the wretched scheme the passions of the French court—jealousy, animosity, revenge—were the real and only causes; and the pretence was a supposed conspiracy against the Protestant leaders against the king, his servants and his family. No clergyman was consulted about the adoption of the awful measure; and when they heard of it after its execution, far from obtaining their approbation, it rather excited in their bosoms feelings of horror for the deed, and of commiseration for its victims. The only share which Bishops, priests and monks took in it was to save as many as they could of the Protestants, who, in many towns—Lisieux, Toulouse, Lyons and Bordeaux—had taken refuge in their hospitable dwellings.

It is objected that Pope Gregory XIII. publicly returned thanks to God on that occasion; but what was the real object of this rejoicing? Charles IX., in order to palliate the shame of his edict against the Parisian Huguenots, wrote to every court in Europe that, having just detected their horrid plots against his person and authority, he had been fortunate enough to escape from the imminent danger by putting the conspirators to death without delay. The Pope then, under that impression, rejoiced, not for the death of the supposed traitors whose rigorous punishment he, on the contrary, deplored, but for the preservation of the French monarch and of his kingdom from utter ruin; exactly, as in a case of war, and of signal victory against invaders, public rejoicings would take place, and every sensible person would willingly share in them, not indeed at the bloodshed in battle, but at the advantages gained over an unjust enemy; and who could dare to find a fault in such conduct?—N. Y. Freeman's Journal.

THE PRICELESS PEARL OF FAITH.

How often we hear of persons paying a fabulous price for some precious stone—a ruby, a diamond, or some beautiful pearl—and we wonder at it when we consider how really of little value these things are in themselves. Their possessors are often of them after a while, and are willing to part with them for much less than they paid. They find them but useless and disappointing, or in their vacillation they turn to some other ornaments that appeal to their fancy.

What we say of these things we may say of all earthly things—they may please for a time, but after a little they prove unsatisfying.

The rich man finds disgust with his money the more he hugs his treasures to his breast; the kings and queens loath the power that is theirs, and the income offered them becomes ungrateful to their wearied souls; the votaries of pleasure sicken with their feasts and turn from one kind to another only to become more and more disgusted; and so it is with all things this world holds out; they prove empty and vain; there is nothing in them; the heart of man finds himself disappointed with them.

There is only one thing that can satisfy man, and that is God—for, as St. Augustine said, "The heart is made for thee, O God, and in Thee alone will it be satisfied." All else is vain, creatures, honors, pleasures, all that the world contains will not put the soul at rest. Solomon had everything the world had to give—lands without limit, knowledge without exhaust, power without measure, and yet he was dissatisfied and confessed their utter nothingness when he exclaimed, "Vanity of vanities all is vanity except to serve God and Him alone adore." It was to bring this truth home to man that God spoke by the mouth of Moses and the prophets in

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the old law, and by the divine lips of Christ in the new, and to the Church has been given the mission of recalling this truth to men in conformity to the command of our Lord Who bade her "go forth and teach all nations," saying, "he that would believe would be saved," and promising peace of heart and rest of soul to all who would heed His words and obey His commandments. To know and understand these things we need the priceless gift of faith—that gift which comes from God and which leads us to Him; that gift which is practiced through religious observance and which is found in fullness and perfection in the teaching and practice of the Catholic Church. Moses and the prophets established the faith for their day. It was all sufficient for the time and found its ceremonial in the offering up of sacrifices dictated by God. Those sacrifices were but shadows of the great sacrifice that was to come—the sacrifice of Christ, the Son of God—and had their value accordingly.

leave posterity. It is, as the apostle says, the victory that has overcome the world, our faith.—Bishop Colton in Catholic Union and Times.

THE MEANNESS OF BIGOTRY.

In a paper read before the Eucharistic Congress in Cologne, the Right Rev. Monsignor Brown, V. G., of London, reviewing the progress of events in England since the Congress held in London, last year, noted the wave of bigotry which has swept over England, Scotland and Wales within the past twelve months. It is indeed noticeable and no doubt is a symptom of that alarm which stamps the lower class of Protestants at any thought of what they choose to call "Papal Aggression." One feature of this wave of bigotry, though not mentioned by Monsignor Brown, is worthy of note as showing to what meanness anti-Catholic bigotry may descend. The Catholic Times declares that in many neighborhoods in Liverpool, wedding out the Catholics by intimidation still continues with unabated zeal. The system of identification has now reached a state of perfection. A new tenant takes a house in a "Protestant" street and lives in peace until the first Sunday after his arrival, when the pickets report if he and his family are seen going to Mass, and if that is so, the storm breaks loose and they invariably move again early on the Monday morning. In this way fully eleven hundred people, the Times asserts, have been turned out of one well-known parish in the North-end. This terrorizing is not confined to poor or "rowdy" districts; it is going on in streets of smug respectability; and a very significant feature is that terrorizing is most vigorous where there are no male members in the family. Even childless widows, charwomen, office-cleaners and book-binders who have been living quietly for years in isolated ways are forced to find shelter elsewhere as soon as it is discovered or remembered that they are Catholics. Suspicion is sufficient in many cases. A non-Catholic lady resident in Kirkdale who declined for some reason to accept the literature of a tract distributor who called at her door was immediately marked for expulsion. As no amount of explanation on her part could allay the fury raised against her, she had to go.

THE VICE OF GAMBLING.

"There are no vices strong enough for us to warn especially young men against the vice of gambling. There is no vice more insidious, nor that creeps into the soul more imperceptibly and grips it more disastrously with the clutch of death. It seems to combine characteristics from two vices that are diametrically the opposite of each other. The real gambler is a resultant from avarice and prodigality. The rash of these two vices into the soul must tear it from its moorings. Experience shows us daily the ruin this vice may cause. Honor stained, lives blighted, families wrecked, black despair completes the awful picture. It is the abuse that counts; but how quickly the abuse comes on. There are few sources of dishonesty comparable to the thirst for gambling. There is no depth, swayed as the unfortunate alternately is, by hope and despair, that the gambler will not seek, to gratify the mad passion which is devouring his soul. "In every community, there is a band of young men who give over much of their earnings to betting; in the larger cities these bands are often many times multiplied. The constant indulgence in petty gambling saps the

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