

Feast of the Assumption.

(By a Regular Contributor.)

"Lady-Day," from time immemorial it has been called in the Old Country; it is the mid-summer festival in honor of the every Blessed Mother of God. The 15th August, the feast of the Assumption, falls upon this day, and to-morrow it will be celebrated in all the churches. As it is one of the important feasts of the year the eve of it is observed in fast and abstinence. It is upon this day, that, after her death, the body of the Blessed Virgin was taken to heaven to their participate forever in the glory that the Son of God had reserved for His own Mother. The lessons of that grand event are many, but two will suffice for our brief study to-day.

We have been taught that the one who was to give birth and to nourish the Divine Son of God could not be in any way tainted with the sin and corruption that are inheritance of humanity. So we find that even in her conception she was immaculate immortal Leo XIII. had lovingly proclaimed, and the jubilee celebration of which the late immortal Leo XIII. had lovingly prepared. It was then but reasonable that being undefiled by any spiritual taint throughout her existence, her pure body, the tabernacle of flesh that held so long the Son of the Most High, should also be free from the corruption that follows death. Escape the agony of death she could not; for it has been written that every one must die. That terrible sentence passed on mankind when the first sin of disobedience awakened the just wrath of God, knows no exception. Our Lord, Himself, was not exempt. It was by His submission to that decree that He opened the gates of heaven for fallen humanity. It was, then, a necessity that the Blessed Virgin should pass through the portals of death to the immortality beyond. But it was equally proper that her body should never know the corruption of the tomb.

Tradition says that she died in the very hall in which the Last Supper was held; the same in which, at Pentecost, the Spirit of Truth descended, in the form of fiery tongues upon the Apostles—on which occasion she, also, was present. It will be remembered that when Our Lord appeared to His faithful followers, after His resurrection, St. Thomas was absent, and that he expressed his doubts as to the facts, when they were related to him. Our Lord then appeared again, and to confirm Thomas in his faith, He caused that Apostle to touch His wounds and to place his finger in the Divine side. As if it were to again test the faith of this great Apostle; when the Blessed Virgin died, all, with the exception of Thomas, attended the placing of her in the sepulchre. He was then on a mission towards the East. On his return they told him of what had occurred. Thomas had a deep love and veneration for the Mother of Christ, and he begged to be conducted to her tomb, that he might again set eyes on her beloved features before the work of the grave would efface their beauty. Consequently they all repaired to the tomb of the Blessed Virgin—when, to their surprise they found that she was not there. The King of Heaven had sent a contingent of the celestial army to conduct His Mother into the Kingdom of Glory; and the body of Mary had been taken up to Heaven, by angels, before the taint of earth's corruption could mar its perfection. It is that Assumption that we celebrate on this day, and that the Church will solemnize to-morrow.

Reflecting upon the glories of Mary it is necessary to take in the entire Rosary of her existence—the fifteen mysteries, sorrowful, joyous and glorious—that entwine her life as a garland. It is in the connecting of these mysteries that we come to form a feeble but just appreciation of our obligations towards her, of our power with her Divine Son, of our duty of love and veneration in her regard, and of her unmeasured and unnumberable prerogatives. When we join to gather the two great events of an Immaculate Conception, at the very beginning of her existence, and of a glorious Assumption at the close of her earthly career, we can easily follow, step by step, the other phases of perfection in that marvellous life. As her Assumption was the triumphant consummation of her mission, as far as her life of suffering and of sacrifice was concerned,

so was it the commencement of her mission as far as regards her unending existence in heaven. And this second mission is one of protection, of mercy, of love, of gratitude, and of motherly care for the children here below who have confidence in her, who have recourse to her help, and who live in accord with the precepts laid down by Her Son, taught by His Church, and approved of by herself.

It has ever been known that whoever sincerely fled to Mary for protection has always found it in the hour of need, and above all at the hour of death. Above all on such occasions as this is she prodigal of her benefactions, and it is, therefore, incumbent upon us all to take advantage of this grand feast of the Assumption to place before her our supplications, to let her know our wants, to register our resolutions regarding her service in the future, and to ask with confidence her assistance and the potent advocacy of her influence, in our behalf, with her Divine Son.

The Dignity of the Priest

We clip the following from the Michigan Catholic. It will be profitable reading for all Catholic men and women, who are inclined to speak words of criticism of our clergy:—

It is a noteworthy fact that one of the marks of a true Catholic is the esteem he invariably cherishes, and the reverence he manifests towards the minister of God. It is not a cringing servility, nor fulsome flattery, nor again is it that mere sentiment of courteous refinement that prompts the true gentleman to acts of respectful obsequiousness toward other. No. Its source and consciousness that God Himself is the ultimate object of whatever honor is shown his priest. And this is but fitting, for has not the priest abandoned everything, to minister exclusively to them? Is not his life, his time and his labor at their disposal? Is he not the vice-regent of God in their regard? It is this entire and unreserved dedication of his whole being, physically, morally and intellectually, to the cause of his Maker that elicits this universal loyalty to the priest, and that distinguishes it from the more or less human motives that beget deference and respect, in the hearts of non-Catholics toward their pastors.

As a contrast, now and again there is to be found a person possessed of such mental giddiness and levity, or malice, or both, as to scruple not to censure nor to expose to obliquity and contumely the most innocent actions of his sacerdotal superior. Such persons by the very fact of these baseness to which they stoop prove themselves to be neither more or less ignorant, unprincipled slander mongers, and, as such, unworthy the notice of honest men. Yet the harm they are capable of doing is often incalculable. By their malice, or at least their unpardonable want of even ordinary judgment, they create enmities, antipathies, aversion, and in general do all in their power to weaken that moral influence which the priest, in virtue of his sublime office, wields over his faithful children. Such inconsiderate creatures seem oblivious to the fact that their wanton recklessness makes them rigorously amenable to the justice of God for all the evil that follows from this signal breach of religious obedience. It might cause them astonishment to learn that sins of detraction in themselves venial, as a rule, become mortal when directed against an ecclesiastical person. And yet it is so.

Let them, therefore, remember that, though a priest may be honored and esteemed from personal motives, by reason of his special talents or accomplishments, or of the eminent position he occupies in the literary or scientific world, or from any other cause whatever, yet all this is merely accidental, nor is this esteem of the kind that is due him as a priest. No. The sublime dignity with which he is invested entitles him to a reverence far surpassing in degree and kind any recognition of his intellectual attainments or mental endowments. As a priest he is a guide, a physician, and a father, and as such no person, of whatever condition he may be, is ever justified in casting irrelevant reflection on his conduct, much less in slanderously forging calumnies to the disparagement of truth, and the scandal of the faithful. A word to the wise is sufficient.

ENTERPRISING BANKS.

In Germany workmen are visited at their homes on pay days by savings bank officials to collect their savings for banking.

Our Boys And Girls.

VALUE OF POLITENESS. — Our young readers should read the following little incident carefully and discuss its various points with their little friends, because it tells of the success of a few and the failure of hundreds of boys in making their first step in that great new world which opens up before them after they bid farewell to the happy scenes of the class-rooms. It is as follows: A gentleman once advertised for a boy to assist him in his office. Nearly 50 applied for the place. Out of the whole number, he in a short time chose one and sent the rest away.

"I should like to know," said a friend, "on what ground you chose that boy. He had not a single recommendation with him."

"You are mistaken," said the gentleman; "he had a great many."

"He wiped his feet when he came in, and closed the door after him, showing that he was orderly and tidy."

"He gave up his seat instantly to the lame old man who entered, showing that he was kind and thoughtful."

"He took off his hat when he came in, and answered my questions promptly and respectfully, showing that he was polite."

"He picked up the book, which I had purposely laid on the floor, and placed it on the table, while all the rest had stepped over it or shoved it aside, thus showing that he was careful."

"And he waited patiently for his turn, instead of pushing the others aside, showing that he was modest."

"When I talked with him, I noticed that his finger nails were clean instead of being tipped with jet, like the handsome little fellows in the blue jacket."

"Don't you call these things letters of recommendation? I do; and what I can tell about a boy by using my eyes ten minutes is worth more than all the fine letters he can bring me."

THE MONK CLAUDE. — Many years ago there dwelt in a cloister a young monk named Claude, who was remarkable for an earnest and devout frame of mind beyond his fellows, and was therefore intrusted with the key of the convent library. He was a careful guardian of its contents and, besides, a studious reader of its learned and sacred volumes. One day he read in the Epistles of St. Peter the words, "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day," and this saying seemed impossible in his eyes, so that he spent many an hour in musing over it. Then one morning it happened that the monk descended from the library into the cloister garden, and there he saw a little bird perched on the bough of a tree singing sweetly like a nightingale. The bird did not move as the monk approached her till he came quite close, and then she flew to another bough, and again another as the monk pursued her. Still singing the same sweet song the nightingale flew on and on, and the monk, entranced by the sound, followed her on out of the garden into the wide world.

At last he stopped and turned back to the cloister, but everything seemed changed to him. Everything had become larger, more beautiful and older—the buildings, the garden, and in the place of the low, humble cloister church a lofty minster with three towers reared its head to the sky. This seemed very strange to the monk, indeed marvelous; but he walked on to the cloister gate and timidly rang the bell. A porter entirely unknown to him answered his summons and drew back in astonishment when he saw the monk. The latter went in and wandered through the church, gazing with astonishment on memorial stones which he never remembered to have seen before. Presently the brethren of the cloister entered the church, but all retreated when they saw the strange figure of the monk. The abbot only (but not his abbot) stooped and, stretching his crucifix before him, exclaimed: "In the name of Christ, who art thou, spirit of mortal? And what dost thou seek here, coming from the dead among us, the living?"

The monk, trembling and tottering like an old man, cast his eyes to the ground and for the first time became aware that a long, silvery beard descended from his chin over his girdle, to which was still suspended the key of the library. To the monks around the stranger seemed more marvelous in appearance, and with a mixture of awe and admiration, they led him to the chair of

the abbot. There he gave to a young man the key of the library, who opened it and brought out a chronicle wherein it was written that three hundred years ago the Monk Claude had disappeared and no one knew whether he had gone.

"Ah, bird of the forest, was it then thy song?" said the Monk Claude with a sigh. "I followed thee for scarce three minutes listening to thy notes, and yet three hundred years have passed away! Thou hast sung to me the song of eternity, which I could never before learn. Now I know it, and, cast myself, I pray God kneeling in the dust."

With these words he sank to the ground and his spirit ascended to Heaven.—California Magazine.

WORK WELL DONE.—"A Chapter on Thoroughness" is the title which an exchange has used in telling the following little experiences of boys and girls who have got along in the world in many stations of life after they had left school. Patience, honesty, and attention to one's duties, will achieve much.

"Yes," I heard a woman say once of another worker, "she is a washwoman, and not a good one at that."

"Of course not," responded the listener, "if she had been good at work, she would not have remained a washwoman."

We wondered over this until its sense came to us. She meant if the woman had been thorough and painstaking she would have advanced until she either owned a laundry or controlled one.

A certain young boy working in the yards of a railway was an industrious worker, but since his position was obscure his work was not apt to attract attention if well done, but sure to bring a dismissal if ill done. "I'll never be anything else," he said to me. "It's just so much and nothing more, but I'm doing it all right."

Sometime after I met him and asked after his welfare. "I lost my place," he said laughing.

"What?" I cried. "I thought you were so careful?" "I lost it," he answered, "but the superintendent found me a fine position is the reason, and if I am thorough, I've got fair weather before me."

Another young fellow eager for work applied for the position made vacant by the promotion of the other boy. At first he was eager and worked hard, but presently the insignificance of the position palled upon him, and he grew less careful. Little details that did not injure anything as he thought, were left undone. The discrepancies grew more frequent until, small as his position was, he received a reprimand.

This angered him. "If I work like a dog they never see it," he said. He nursed his ill and forgot the work until one day he forgot some little duty that sent an inbound flyer crashing into another train in the yards; lives were lost and the company was liable for an immense sum of money. He will never be anything but a "jobber." He is not thorough; he cannot be trusted.

The girl who made and cooked her biscuits according to a well defined plan and drew her tea after a time-honored colonial recipe favored by George Washington, is to-day the owner of a line of restaurants in a southern city, each a marvel of exactness and cleanliness. The waiters are remarkable for their care, for their "boss" keeps no waiter who neglects his duties in the least.

Some of the best drug stores in an Ohio city are owned by a woman who as a young girl learned pharmacy with a patience and exactness that gained her fortune and wide renown.

A girl of thirteen once made a pitcher of lemonade, put a linen cloth, napkin and glasses on a table under a shade tree in the street and offered her product for a cent a glass. She was trying to earn money for a little necessity.

The linen was perfect, the glasses polished and inverted in a bowl of crushed ice.

The first customer was a boy in baseball costume; his brawny throat was panting with thirst and heat. "Come fellows," he cried as the car stopped, "here's your ice cold lemonade!"

They drank ten glasses and asked the price.

"Ten cents," modestly replied the little girl.

"Ten nothings!" ejaculated the first. "You'll just be here all the time, won't you? You're it!" and he laid down a dollar, refusing any change.

To-day at the age of eighteen that girl owns an establishment where women can get cool drinks and rest in soft chairs in beautifully shaded rooms, while electric fans persuade rest. She is not afraid to do her

work or to wait on a customer; nor is she any the less a lady.

Whatever may be your station in life, Little People, don't be afraid to do the work at hand, and do it with all the attention there is in you. Be thorough and you will win respect and reward.

CONFESSION.—We sincerely hope all the young readers of this column have not failed to go to confession regularly during the holidays. We know of one little boy whose daily practise during the school term of visiting his parish Church and reciting a short prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, was not kept up during vacation, who made a serious blunder that has cast cloud of doubt around him which will not be easily driven away. Had he made his daily visit to the Church regularly he would not have been guilty of a wrong act, and have to bear the sorrow which the loss of confidence of his dearest friends has caused. Let our young readers always remember that it is easier to be good, kind, honest and obedient than to be weak, unkind, dishonest and stubborn.

ANTI-TREATING.

In the current issue of the Irish Ecclesiastical Record Dr. Hallinan, Newcastle West, has an article in the course of which he says 11,000 people have taken the anti-treating pledge in West Limerick, and he believes that the bulk of them have kept it. He says that if the Anti-Treating League be taken up earnestly and worked effectively through the country for five or six years it will, as far as one can forecast, do as much if not more, toward ending intemperance than any movement hitherto started in Ireland.

FIRE IN ORPHAN ASYLUM.

The lives of 130 children inmates of St. John Catholic Orphan Asylum, Utica, N.Y., were in imminent peril from a fire which started in the institution early Sunday morning, July 19, while the little ones were asleep. The asylum is in charge of the Sisters of Charity, and through their calmness loss of life and heavy property damage were averted.

At 2 o'clock in the morning one of the Sisters was awakened by a volume of smoke sweeping through the dormitory. Quietly awakening half a dozen other Sisters she slipped into her clothing and ran to the nearest engine house and gave the alarm. In the meantime the 130 sleeping orphans were aroused and on signal executed the fire drill and marched quickly from the threatened structure. Not a child was injured, and the firemen confined the flames to a small area.

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