

FIVE-MINUTE SERMON.

Third Sunday after Epiphany.

MIRACLES.

As the Gospel of to-day relates one of the miracles our Lord performed, I am led to say a few words about miracles as used in evidence of the truth of the divine doctrine of Jesus Christ. Certainly our Lord appealed to miracles sometimes as proof that He had divine power, but that was by no means the rule. The miracle of changing water into wine was performed for no such purpose. On other occasions He bade those whom He healed to say nothing about it. And St. Matthew expressly said that the reason why He wrought not many miracles among those who knew Him best was because of their unbelief; the very reason we would think why we ought to have worked miracles before their eyes so as to convince them to believe in Him. And St. John also intimates that our Lord did not place much reliance upon belief that only depended upon miracles; for he says, "Many believed, seeing the signs that He did. But Jesus did not trust Himself to them, for He knew what was in man." If we read the Gospels attentively we shall see that it was true then, as it has been all through the history of Christianity, that the triumph of His divine truth has not been due to miracles, but rather in spite of them. If there was then, or has been since, anything which the world hates to learn of, and obstinately refuses to credit, it is a miracle.

The idea of God or any messenger from God pretending to do things a man cannot understand! Don't I know nature well enough to know that even if God made it He cannot change it? To believe in miracles I would have to acknowledge God knows what I cannot know. That is the way men think, if they do not speak out their thoughts quite so plainly. There have always been miracles, plenty of them, enough to convert the whole world to Christianity if that were the means intended by Almighty God to bring about conviction and conversion. A man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still; and miracles convince men against their will—the will of their proud, self-conscious, rebellious hearts. They see them plainly as you and I do, but they won't believe them. The triumph of our Lord's holy religion, therefore, has not been due to miracles of healing. Those are the things unbelievers hate, as they do every other sign of Christ that demands their submission. But what conquers the world is the fact that He loves and the sacrifices that it makes. They cannot stand out against the sight of our Lord's love, even unto death, nor gaze upon the love of those who through all generations have taken His place, and spoken, prayed, preached, suffered and died in His name, without being won to belief.

So, my brethren, if you are anxious to convert anybody to our holy faith, never mind about miracles: and do not be astonished if they push-pool arguments as strong as the reasoning of St. Thomas. Go and show them a little of the unselfish, charitable, self-denying, suffering love of Christ. Let them see how sweet spoken and kind you are to the poor, how patient you are in affliction, how nobly you conquer your passions for God's love, and resist temptations to drink and steal and gratify desires of the flesh. Did I say never mind about miracles? I made a mistake. For if you do what I have just told you, I am inclined to think some of you will be doing as great a miracle as there is on record. You that are stingy, give freely. You that dislike the poor, go and serve them. You that are complaining of God's providence, submit to your lot like a man and a Christian. You that are drunk and take the pledge and keep it. You that are living like a beast, get honorably married and live chaste. You that have hands getting hot for hell with ill-gotten money, make full restitution. These will be miracles—miracles of grace; and against such miracles unbelief never will have any argument or power to resist either conviction or conversion. And then you can say to the unbeliever: "If you will not believe in the Catholic religion for its truth sake, look at me and believe it for the work it can do. It can bring a sinner back to God, and that is a greater miracle than raising a dead man to life."

FROM THE RANKS OF FREE-THINKERS.

The writer of the following letter is a convert from "free-thought" and since conversion has been doing not a little to present the knowledge of the Catholic Church to the social group that for a long time counted him as a prominent member. The letter is of value among other reasons because it tends to broaden our estimate of our apostolate. The largest part of non-Catholics are no longer old-fashioned Protestants, and many of the stereotyped arguments of the well-known books of controversy are largely out of date. New phases of error are constantly manifesting themselves and the missionary to non-Catholics must be fully equipped to meet the active minded thinkers. The group of "free-thinkers" are particularly keen in their discussions and in their search for novelties, the last place they look to is the Church of the Ages. Yet many of them are strong minded enough to be convinced by the logic of the Catholic position once it is fairly presented to them.

To The Editor:

Rev. Dear Sir—I am in receipt of your kind letter stating that you have heard of the attempts we are making to place the truths of Catholicity to the extent they have dawned on us, before our free-thinking friends, and recent comrades. We thank you for your expression of sympathy and the problem will have to be met sooner or later. It cannot be identified with "How to talk to the Protestants?" Where are the men? Where the literature? What the policy? These are our queries. The

clergy whom we approach, persistently assert that they are not equipped for a propaganda to free-thinkers, that the question they propose require special consideration in order to deal with them. After a pretty thorough canvass of this diocese for eighteen months we have succeeded in getting less than half a dozen men to speak at our meetings, and these, when invited to come again, with one accord begin to make excuses. And yet we treat them with, for us, great consideration, and we have the countenance of the Archbishop.

As to literature, Hecker is of most utility to us. We thank you sincerely for the books of his you mailed us. We feel of so little account that we are absolutely ready to crawl to anybody who will throw us a kind look, but literature? Yes! Apropos of Father Hecker's pamphlets we are inclined to think that the man Hecker or rather "The Story of His Soul's Quest" is of infinitely more value than anything which he said in a set way, sermons, articles, etc. The first half of Elliot's Biography contains the gist of what our people at this stage can assimilate seeing that it contains the testimony of a man who tried Radicalism in all its phases, who was thrown back on his own personal needs. This with the attempts he made to meet them, together with the affirmation that he found what he sought in Catholicity, is what we must ring the changes on at this stage in the proceedings. If we could have the first half of Elliot's Biography of Hecker, it would certainly be of immense worth in the propaganda. Newman is of supreme value or of no value at all. Only the distinctive literary and naturally religious appreciate him. However his "Present Condition of Catholics in England" has its uses in correcting prejudice.

Now permit me to make another suggestion. I do believe, yet I know that there is literature which was never intended for propaganda, which does turn one's thought, sympathetically, towards the claims of the Church without one at first knowing it. This may be a fancy on my part. I refer to the fiction and poetry of Catholic-minded men. I will not further specify at present, but if you would like to know the literature to which I allude, say so and I will state what sort of literary stuff is calculated to draw shallow and susceptible people like ourselves into considering the claims of a Church which expresses the stock of religious truth in the most perfect ceremonial on earth.

Pardon, I pray you, the infelicities of a novice and do not withdraw from us your kindly and highly appreciated consideration.—The Missionary.

HER "FIRST PIECE."

Miss Margaret Anglin contributes to the Bohemian some notes with regard to the beginning of her career. She says: "When I was about five years of age my mother sustained a very severe accident, and it was thought advisable for the quiet of the house to dispose of me, so I was forthwith committed to the very good and watchful care of the Ladies of the Sacred Heart, whose convent almost overlooked our own garden. During the weeks I spent there, petted and made much of, I learned my first 'piece.' How easily, or with what great mental strain this feat was accomplished, I can't tell now. I think, however, that my application must have been very thorough, as the first lines of that little verse are the only ones which I have ever memorized and not as quickly forgotten. Not more than an odd sentence or two could I quote to-day from 'Mrs. Dane,' 'Roxane,' or any other of my old parts."

My first piece (the one I've never forgotten 'Little Pearl Honey Dew') was the beginning of the end—the awakening of what I was 'born to be. When I was formally entered as a 'boarder' in Loretto Abbey I marvelled that no one seemed to see that I could recite. If they couldn't see it, why could they not feel it? It was tingling in my blood. I stood it as long as I could and then 'broke loose' in the infirmary, where, by the way, I was being coddled for a slight cold. There was a concert to be given to the convent chaplain the next morning after Mass, and, lying quietly in my little cot, I realized that then or never was my chance.

"I found a book of poems on the infirmary table and chose without reason

or understanding 'The Exile of Erin,' by Campbell. I knew that Erin meant Ireland, the home of my forefathers—and to-morrow (and the reason for the concert) was St. Patrick's Day. For the rest, it was poetry—it was a 'piece.' I volunteered next morning at the concert, my services were more or less doubtfully accepted, and then with a confidence, which I would willingly purchase now at any sacrifice, or price, I walked upon the so-called classroom stage.

Several times before I left that school I was invited to appear again in other entertainments, much to my delight. These I might call my first public appearances, as on some occasions the attendance was very large, consisting of the parents, relatives and friends of the pupils."

ON FAIRY TALES ABOUT THE CHURCH.

To any of our non-Catholic readers who have been simple enough to take stock in the current fairy tales about the Church always opposing the progress of the Natural Sciences, we would recommend the study of the following few statistics taken from a recent "Little Catholic's Delights."

Gutenberg, inventor of the art of printing, after years spent in perfecting his art under the influence of the Church, died and was buried fifteen years before the apostate monk Luther was born.

The agnostic historian Humboldt, writing on the progress of science during the sixteenth century (Cosmos, Vol. II, page 634) admits that the "ground work of what we at the present time call Physical Geography is contained in the Jesuit Acosta's work, entitled 'Historia Natural de las Indias.'"

Early in the sixteenth century, the Catholic navigator, Sebastian de Elcano, lieutenant of Magellan, was the first to circumnavigate the earth. So well understood at the time was the importance of this, that he obtained for his armorial bearings a globe, with the glorious inscription: "Primum circumdedisti me."

The masses could not have been so very ignorant, after all, in old Catholic times, judging from facts handed down to us. Every intelligent person who has ever crossed the Atlantic knows how indispensable for ocean navigation is the variation compass. And yet, as Humboldt tells us, the first that was ever constructed was the work, not of some university professor, but of an ingenious apothecary of Seville in Spain, Felipe Guillen. This, says Humboldt, was before 1525.—Brief Catholic Comment.

"FIND THE CHURCH."

No well informed reader needs to be told that the non-Catholic Christian world is in a state of great unrest to-day. In what the chief cause of this unrest consists, and how this cause may be removed is most clearly and convincingly shown in a remarkable little work ("Find the Church") recently published by Herder, St. Louis, Mo. The author is Rev. William Poland, S. J., of St. Louis University, the eminent and popular writer on theological and ethical questions. We give a sample of Father Poland's way of approaching his subject:

"This aid is intended to meet a special need of many who profess Christianity. They have their own special difficulty which arises from a fact that is plain to the eyes of the world.

"They recognize the divinity of Christ.

"They recognize that Christ established a Religious Society which is called a Church.

"They recognize that Christ left certain truths or doctrines to that Society or Church.

"But here arises their difficulty. It comes from a broad fact which they cannot help seeing. They behold around them hundreds of distinct institutions, each one of which claims the right to be called the Church of Christ. They see, moreover, that each one of these distinct institutions holds a doctrine which it puts forward as the doctrine of Christ, but which disagrees

with the doctrine held by any other one of all the institutions.

"So that the difficulty which besets the inquirer is a two-fold difficulty. He asks himself:

"1. Where does the name 'Church of Christ' really belong?

"2. How are men to-day, to get the exact doctrine taught by Christ?"

The editor of Comment knows no more suitable book in these busy days, for earnest religious inquirers, than this precious little work of Father Poland's.—Penny Booklet.

STANDING REBUKE TO INTOLERANCE.

The bronze statue of the late Mgr. Doane of Newark, has been completed, and will shortly look down from its pedestal in one of the busiest parts of that city.

Born an Episcopalian, son of one Episcopalian Bishop and brother of another, he did not hesitate when his conscience bade him enter the Catholic Church.

"In the erection of this memorial to the deceased prelate," says The Monitor, "men of every form of religious belief and of no belief have vied in their generosity and effort. The day of the uprising will be the day of religious peace. Protestant minister, Jewish rabbi all standing on the same platform to do honor to a man who all alike loved and respected. This statue of Mgr. Doane will be a credit to the great city of Newark. It will be a perpetual antidote to bigotry. It will be a lasting evidence of the liberal spirit of its citizens. The cackled prelate will be the advocate of religious peace. The serious, kindly face of the old friend will be an inspiration to all that is pure and unselfish in life. Few cities will be able to boast of such a monument. The dead monsignor will live and love and labor more than when he walked the streets which his monument now guards and decorates."

PRAYS AT POE'S GRAVE.

One of the greatest admirers of the writings of Edgar Allan Poe is the poet priest, Rev. John B. Tabb, professor of English at St. Charles' College, Elkton City.

Every month, or, at least, every chance that Rev. Dr. Tabb gets to come to Baltimore he pays a pilgrimage to the grave of Poe in the little graveyard in old Westminster churchyard, at Fayette and Greene streets. There is no other person more interested in the movement to place a more elaborate stone over the grave in the little churchyard. The poems written by Poe, he says, have never been equaled by any poet.

So enthusiastic is Father Tabb over the writings of Poe that every day he recites to his pupils a complete, if not more, which was written by the great poet.

"Young men," he tells them, "Poe never had an equal. He was the poet of all poets—that's why I advise you all to read his works. Don't give them only cursory readings, but digest what he writes."

Father Tabb is a poet himself. Frequently he contributes to the magazines, and many of his contributions are eulogies on Poe. His monthly visits to the grave are done with great reverence. Despite the shortcomings of Poe—for Father Tabb does not believe that all genius is the work of the temperate. Father Tabb goes to the humble grave and, kneeling down, prays for the soul of the dead poet.

Father Tabb recalls the touching incidents in the sad life of Poe. He says one of the saddest was the devotion exhibited even up to his death by Mrs. Clemm, mother of his wife, whom he loved as his own mother. Winter after winter, when both he and his wife were ill, this noble woman, thin and old, her face wrinkled from care, went from editor to editor trying to sell a poem or story for him.

Golden Counsels and a Word of Warning.

Some time ago we came across a card of suggestions for the counseling of our lives. They were admirable and striking, but the card bore no name to reveal the authorship. They ran as follows:

1. Say nothing you would not like God to hear.
2. Do nothing you would not like God to see.



The EDISON PHONOGRAPH

THERE is a new model of the Edison Phonograph containing the many improvements of Mr. Edison's latest inventions. The Edison Phonograph is the most perfect form of talking machine, reproducing sound perfectly for the amusement of you and your guests. Hear the new model at the nearest dealer's.

WE DESIRE GOOD, LIVE DEALERS to sell Edison Phonographs in every town where we are not now well represented. Dealers should write at once to NATIONAL PHONOGRAPH CO., 100 Lakeside Ave., Orange, N. J., U. S. A.

The Endowment Policy

is the best form of insurance for anyone desirous of making provision for his own future, and who in the meantime requires some protection for those dependent upon him.

Such a policy with the North American Life affords the surest means of accumulating funds for the future, while at the same time guaranteeing the immediate payment of the amount in event of death.

Further information furnished on request, or consult one of our agents located almost everywhere.

NORTH AMERICAN LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY.

HOME OFFICE: TORONTO, ONT.

L. GOLDMAN, A.I.A., F.C.A. Managing Director.

JOHN L. BLATKIE, President.

W. B. TAYLOR, B.A., LL.B., Secretary.

3. Write nothing you would not like God to read.
4. Go to no place where you would not like God to find you.
5. Read no book, of which you would not like God to say: "Show it to me."
6. Never spend your time in a way that you would not like God to ask: "What are you doing now?"

If to these golden counsels we add a word of warning: Never associate with dangerous company; never share their immoral or profane language—we feel we should have offered counsel, which if followed, would realize true happiness.—Irish Messenger.

Unto how many, many souls has not the name of Mary and the thought of Mary been a comfort! How many many souls has she not led to the feet of Jesus, her Son and her Creator.



FAVORABLY KNOWN SINCE 1826. BELLS. G. MENEELY & CO. WATERVILLE, N.Y. BELLS, CHIMES, ETC. CATALOGUE AND PRICES FREE.



THE London Mutual Fire INSURANCE CO. OF CANADA.

ESTABLISHED 1859. Assets £847,469 88. Liabilities £314,000 28. Reserve £308,038 16. Surplus £433,469 02. Security for Policy holders £322,000 00. Incorporated and licensed by the Dominion Government, Operates from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Conservative, reliable and prosperous. HEAD OFFICE, 82 and 84 King Street, TORONTO. HON. JOHN DRYDEN, President. D. WHELMLEY, Sec. & Manag. Director.

How Christ Said the First Mass..

or, The Lord's Last Supper.

The Rites and Ceremonies, the Ritual and Liturgy, the forms of Divine worship Christ observed when he changed the Passover into the Mass.

By REV. JAMES L. MEAGHER.

Price \$1.25, post-paid. THE CATHOLIC RECORD LONDON, CANADA

30th Thousand

The Catholic Confessional and the Sacrament of Penance.

By Rev. Albert McKeon, S. T. L. 15 cents post-paid

The Kyriale Or Ordinary of the Mass

ACCORDING TO THE VATICAN EDITION. Transcribed into Modern Musical Notation with Rhythmic Signs by the Monks of Solesmes.

Price, 25c. post-paid

Kyriale Seu Ordinarium Missae

Cum Cantu Gregoriano ad exemplar editionis Vaticanae Concinnatum.

Price 25c. post-paid

Catholic Record LONDON, CANADA

Rolled Gold Spectacles GIVEN AWAY.

DON'T SEND ME ONE PENNY. Just write me your name and address and I will mail you at once my Perfect Home Eye Tester and Rolled Gold Spectacle Offer, absolutely free of charge.

You see, I want to prove to every spectacle-wearer on earth that the Dr. Haux famous Perfect Vision Spectacles are really and truly ever so much better than any you have ever worn before—and I am going to give away at least one hundred-thousand pairs of the Dr. Haux famous Perfect Vision Rolled Gold Spectacles in the next few weeks, in order to introduce my wonderful glasses to the largest number of spectacle wearers in the shortest possible time.

Write today for my Free Home Eye Tester and Rolled Gold Spectacle Offer. Address:—**DR. HAUX SPECTACLE CO., Block 193 St. Louis, Mo.**

I ALSO WANT A FEW AGENTS

And any person not earning at least \$50 weekly should ask for my Special Agents Terms at once.

NOTE.—The Above is the Largest Mail Order Spectacle House in the World, and is Perfectly Reliable.