

FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS.

PREPARATION FOR ADVENT. "For as the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be." (St. Matt. xxiv. 27.)

Our holy Mother the Church, in the Gospel of this last Sunday of the year before Advent, fixes our attention upon the second Advent or coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in His majesty to judge the living and the dead. She does this to excite us to examine and judge ourselves, that by a true contrition we may be prepared to receive Him with joy when He comes as a little infant at Christmas, when He comes at the hour of death, and when we meet Him at the great judgment day.

Our Lord in this Gospel foretells at the same time the destruction of Jerusalem and the final destruction of the world.

Jerusalem may be taken as the figure of the soul, so that what befell Jerusalem represents to us in lively colors what shall befall souls which, dying unrepentant to God, shall fall under His judgments.

Now, our Lord says of Jerusalem that she shall suddenly be surrounded by her enemies, who shall dig a trench around her, and wall her in on every side so that no one can escape from her. That her inhabitants shall die victims of pestilence, of famine, and of the sword, until she shall be utterly destroyed. That the anguish and distress of that time shall be greater than anything which had happened before since the world began. He told the exact time when all this would take place: "Amen, I say to you, this generation shall not pass away until all these things be done."

All this literally came to pass within forty years after this prophecy was spoken, when the Romans besieged the city, slaughtered over a million of people, and led the remnant army captive, to be scattered over the face of the earth.

All this horror and desolation is a mere figure and shadow of what shall take place at the end of the world. The sufferings of that time are wicked in comparison of what the wicked are doing. The disobedient shall endure at the awful day of judgment.

Jerusalem, that city of God, so beautiful and glorious, was utterly destroyed because of her sins and obstinate rejection of God's mercy offered her by the Son of God, the Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ.

The soul, the greater and nobler work of the Creator, capable of unbounded happiness if she chooses sin and disobedience, if she refuses to repent and accept God's forgiveness, shall fall a prey to His justice, and for ever fall from her high estate by her own folly.

The hour of death shall shortly be upon us. Then the soul will be in great straits. The devil of hell shall surround us, and our own sinful passions shall rise against us. If we have lived to gratify them, it will be very difficult to resist them. We cannot, all of a sudden, love what we have hated, and hate what we have loved. All hope of escape will be cut off and we shall be an easy prey to our enemies.

The great judgment day for the whole world may be a long way off; but, after all, that is of little consequence to us, for each one of us must have his own particular judgment within a few years or months or weeks—when the time of his death comes.

Let us take our Lord's counsel then: leave Jerusalem before the enemy surrounds her; flee to the mountains; do not stop to take anything with us, but flee at once, do not hesitate a moment—that is, flee from our sins, flee from all sinful practices and indulgences. Examine ourselves, deplore our sins, judge ourselves, condemn ourselves; flee to the mountains of God's mercy; entreat and beg for forgiveness; resolve over and over again not to sin again, but for the rest of our lives to be faithful and true.

God will hear our prayer; He will wipe out all our sins, receive us into the heavenly Jerusalem, where we shall rest safe and secure from all our enemies for all eternity. Amen.

TALKS ON RELIGION.

THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

St. Jane Chantal when a child one day heard a Calvinist say he did not believe in the Real Presence. She looked up and said, "So you don't believe that Jesus is present in the Blessed Sacrament?" "No, child, I do not," he replied. "Christ has declared that He is and the Church teaches that He is. So you mean to say that our Lord is a liar? Well, if you said that to the King in my father's house, he, perhaps, would kill you, and will not God punish you for calling His Son a liar, and for not believing what He tells you?" The Calvinist was confounded, and to pacify the child, gave her some presents, but she threw them in the fire and said, "So will they burn in hell, who refuse to believe Jesus Christ and His Church."

At all times, whether in peace or in strife, whether under the dome of St. Peter, or in the poorest shed used for the celebration of Mass, the Holy Eucharist, the Blessed Sacrament, has been the treasure of the Church—a treasure which the world did not give, and which the world can not take away. Around the Blessed Sacrament has grown up the whole worship of the Christian Church. Her liturgy is to honor it. Her ceremonial is grouped around it. Her temples are so gorgeous, and her ceremonial so elaborate, it is simply to do honor to our Lord Jesus Christ. The Church is His house, the altar His mercy-seat. The vestments of the clergy are the external signs of His court, and the lights which burn on the altar are the sign of His presence. Strangers can hardly fail to be struck by the faith and piety of Catholics in their churches. They may ask, "Whence comes this special solemnity and reverence?" We answer, "From the faith and devotion of those who believe the Word of God." Many have been so impressed with the unseen presence of our Lord, that they have said with Jacob: "Indeed the Lord is

in this place, and I knew it not, and trembling he said: How terrible is this place, this is no other than the House of God, the Gate of Heaven."

While God is wonderful in all His works, He is most wonderful in the Blessed Sacrament. He uses His power to hide Himself under the forms and appearances of bread and wine. He has veiled His glory, that we might easily approach Him. We see now in a dark manner, but we shall see Him as we are seen when this mortal puts on immortality.

"No man can see God and live." Daniel fainted at seeing even an angel, and we read in Holy Scripture that the people could not behold the face of Moses, after he had come down from the mountain. St. John fell as one dead on the vision of the Son of Man. Our Lord conceals Himself in the Blessed Sacrament that we may have the merit of faith, and He assumes us in the words addressed to St. Thomas, "Blessed are they that have not seen and have believed."

There was the appearance of a dove, not a real dove, at the baptism of our Lord. There were no tongues of fire at Pentecost, but only the appearance of tongues of fire. So there is no bread and wine after the consecration, only the appearance of bread and wine. Transubstantiation signifies the change of one substance into another. After transubstantiation Jesus Christ is really and substantially present in the Blessed Sacrament, the substance of the bread and wine is no longer there, only the species. The whole substance of the bread and wine is changed by transubstantiation into the Body and Blood of Christ.

There are many things which we do not understand, and we sometimes are inclined to ask our Lord with the Blessed Virgin, "Why hast Thou done so to us?" His ways are not our ways, and the Scripture tells us, "For as the heavens are exalted above the earth, so are My ways exalted above your ways, and My thoughts above your thoughts." Why did our Lord institute the Blessed Sacrament? Because of His love for us. He said He would leave us orphans, "I have loved those with an everlasting love," are the words we read in Holy Scripture. This love prompted Him to become incarnate, and caused Him to give us His Flesh to eat. He had said, "I am the Vine, you are the branches; he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." (St. John xv. 4.)

How are we to abide with the Vine? Our Lord Himself tells us: "He that eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, abideth in Me, and I in him." (St. John vi. 57.) You can perceive how clearly the Christians of old comprehended the teachings concerning the Blessed Sacrament. St. Cyril, of Alexandria, says: "If a man take two pieces of wax, and melt them, and pour the one into the other, they necessarily mingle; so also, he that receiveth the Body and Blood of the Lord, doth so become joined with the Lord, that he is to be found in Christ, and Christ in him."

Some will ask how this can be done. "By the power of God," should be a sufficient answer. Was it not the Lord by His power that changed the rod of Moses into a serpent? And turned the waters of Egypt into blood? And the water at the marriage feast at Cana into wine? And did He not explicitly state that He would, as He did, change bread and wine at His last supper into His Body and Blood?

We may say to those who are not of good will, and who seek to avoid the direct teaching of our Lord on the Blessed Sacrament, that "there hath stood One in the midst of you whom you knew not, the latchet of whose shoe I am not worthy to loose." It is strange indeed that anyone who calls himself a Christian would not rejoice in the Catholic doctrine of the Holy Eucharist. We have in this Sacrament the pledge of Eternal Life, and those who partake of it shall live forever. He has said, "The bread that I will give you is My Flesh for the life of the world." It is the Blessed Sacrament that makes every Catholic Church the House of God and the Gate of Heaven.

MISSIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES.

Lake Mohonk, N. Y., Oct. 17.—The Roman Catholic Church should be given a free hand in the Philippines, and all other religious denominations should keep out, was the conclusion drawn by Andrew S. Draper in his address to the Lake Mohonk conference of Friends of the Indian and Other Dependent Peoples here to-day. Referring to the Catholic Church, he said: "Its mission work is so aggressive and so much better than any other that is there that it quickly receives the affection and engages the devotion of a people to whom its solemn ceremonies, its beliefs, and its administrative methods are especially adapted."

"Our Protestant denominations are assuming to contest the ground, but in comparison with the work of the Roman Catholic Church their doings are not a delight to us. It seems to be the fact that the Protestant denominations have agreed upon some division of territory so as to avoid conflicts with one another so far as may be, but there is no possibility of avoiding rivalry with the Church of Rome in any part of our insular territory. I cannot help wondering if it is worth while."

"I am in favor of Protestantism wherever it can be self-sustained, but I do not fear to express my misgivings about the wisdom of the policy which taxes weak churches in America to support weak churches in our islands, with no prospect of those churches becoming self-supporting, so long as one strong church is on the ground, is occupying it forcefully, and evidently is adapted to the situation."

Mr. Draper said the United States could not abandon the 10,000,000 Filipinos, neither would it make the mistake of enfranchising them. It would not give them independence until they are in a position to govern themselves. When that time comes, if they want independence, the United States should give it to them. Meantime the plain duty of the

United States in the Philippines, he said, was to establish security for life and property, and then educate the Filipinos.

A NOTED CONVERT AMONG THE LADIES OF THE SACRED HEART.

About twenty years ago there died in the Sacred Heart Convent at Marcellines an American nun, the remembrance of whose beautiful life is still an edification to all who knew her.

Madame Catherine Josephine Churchill was the daughter of a navy officer, and her family was connected with the Randolph and Fairfax families, and like all Virginians proud of the Episcopal Church, to which they belonged. Mrs. Churchill died while her daughter was very young, and Catherine received her education in the Anglican convents in Baltimore and New York.

Her father was called to receive his eternal reward just as Catherine had graduated, and a wealthy uncle was most happy to lavish every care on a niece to whom he was devoted. To his grief and surprise the young girl refused to leave the convent, saying she intended to consecrate her life to our Lord's work. Catherine's only brother tried in vain to persuade her to abandon a vocation which she considered quite unfit for her, but all their arguments were useless. For six or seven years Sister Josephine was very happy among the Anglican Sisters of St. Mary, and the peace she desired was found at last, so she thought. As time went on and she, a successful teacher, was obliged to explain the catechism, English history, and the breviary she daily used, doubt came that she was not a member of the Church founded by Jesus Christ.

During the summer vacation Sister Josephine and a lay Sister went some times to the hospital in charge of the same sisterhood and one day in going from the academy to the children's hospital, the anxious Sister called on a priest of the Society of Jesus and submitted her doubts to him. At his advice she left the home she had loved so well and came to the Sacred Heart Convent, where after two years of instruction and preparation, she was allowed to enter the novitiate. She had prepared most fervently for her conditional baptism and First Communion, and her uncle, seeing her joy, became reconciled to the separation which had cost him such suffering. After the usual time spent in preparation for the last vows Madame Churchill had the happiness of being called to the Mother House at Paris for her profession. Some after her arrival her health failed, however, never to return until the day of the requiem Mass. That night she grew rapidly worse and in a few days the summons came. Constantly she spoke of the Blessed Sacrament, of the great gift of faith, of the joy of being a religious of the Sacred Heart, of all our Blessed Lady and St. Joseph had done for her. Just before her death on St. Joseph's feast (in the house dedicated to him), Madame Churchill (once Sister Josephine) received the news that her dear brother had entered the Catholic Church and a few days before he was called to meet the Master Who was coming so soon for her.

A great sacrifice had been committed and the chaplain had asked the invalid to offer her sufferings for the sinner might do penance, and for days the fervent religious had begged our Lord for this unhappy soul. The day following Madame Churchill's death the unfortunate man made full reparation for his terrible sin.—The Missionary.

THE HOLY MASS.

Two lights on a lowly Altar, A Crucifix placed between— Two vases of dyed rose— And the priest in serene— The Celebrant, robed in his vestments, Proceeds with the Sacrifice clean.

He has read the Epistle and Gospel, He has offered the Bread and Wine; He has called on the faithful assembled In supplicatory prayer to combine; And their thanks in the jubilate Preface He has raised to the Divine.

The sound of a hallowed whisper Floats presently over the Bread— And trembles around the chalice, O'er the priest's bowed head— When lo! He is veiled on the Altar, Who on Calvary for us died!

The snow-white Host is uplifted 'Mid silver links of bell— And the golden chalice in stern gleams Aloft—'long heart! 'tis well— Still keep the Jesus His promise, With thee all day to dwell.

Al! words of the golden Thursday, Still holding crevice away— Ye have brought us the Friday's Victim And rest in his own sweet way— 'Neath veils with His glorified body— Himself still He offers this day.

His Redeemer and God love hidden To his lips the Anointed now leads— He consumes, that, the round, white species Death which a Divine Heart sends! An Absorbent next, the liquid red substance! 'Neath which Blood Divine intercedes!

Then the priest comes down to the raffle! Where brows are bowed in prayer, In chapel, hushed, and in choir— A Host lies pure and fair— And the risen Christ, and the Christian Soul risen— are One made there!

Oh! Love that is deep and deathless! Oh! faith that is strong and grand! Oh! Hope that will shine forever— O'er the wastes of a weary land— 'Neath veils is re-born and re-offered In each Mass as the priest's command— 'Giv'g, Son and Our Father's— This God man— We receive from the priest's pure hand!

FATHER RYAN.

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HENRY VIII'S LAST WORDS.

The reign of Henry VIII. extended to thirty seven years, nine months and fifteen days. Of the closing scenes of his life little is known, but that he was confined to his bed for several weeks at the old palace of Westminster where he died on the 31st of January 1547. The day before his death the King held a long conversation with Lord Herford, Sir William Paget and Master Denny. There is no official record of what took place, for if such documents had been penned they were destroyed by Paget, Edward Denny, Dr. White and some domestic closely connected with the King affirm that his Highness expressed the most ardent anxiety about the altered condition of religion; he wished the new heresy to be crushed out of the State; that the fact of both receiving Holy Communion he closely questioned the members of his council as to their attachment to the Catholic Church; "that they all swore on bended knees that they would never desert the faith of their fathers." Yet Dean Hook assures his readers that all the religious orders which took place in Edward's reign were privately arranged and agreed upon during the lifetime of Henry. Herford and Paget attended Mass in the dying monarch's room the morning before his death. "Their presence that morning with the King," gave him some comfort as to their sincerity in those terrible intervals of remorse with which he was visited that last day of his existence. Cranmer, however, was absent on that day. Was his absence caused by scruples as to making fresh oaths and new protestations, as to the maintenance of the old faith in England? Or did he shrink from the scene in which Lord Herford performed so characteristically the primal part in deception and falsehood? Never was human being so deceived as Henry Tudor at this closing point of his existence. Let the reader ponder on the words of Dean Hook, and then contemplate the conduct of Lord Herford—the pre-determined maker of the Reformation—on his knees at the couch of his dying brother-in-law, swearing eternal fealty to the principles of the Catholic Church, with the said Henry Tudor as his pontiff. The last day of Henry Tudor has now passed and the night of dying agonies commenced. It was a condition of fearful bodily suffering to the King, broken by intervals of remorse and prayer. Had human pride vanished? Had mercy returned to the royal breast? Was the King at peace with all the world? No; another act of vengeance was to be consummated. For a year or so before Henry's death the warrants for execution were signed by Cranmer in consequence of the King's health. But in this case the moribund tyrant expressed his determination and pleasure to sign Norfolk's death warrant with his own hand. Dean Hook justly remarks that nothing more terrible than this scene can be imagined. "At ten of the clock, when the cold sweat of death covered his face, the prostrated monarch was making a faint effort to sign the fatal document."

The action manifested the mastery of a ruthless spirit and evinced the domination of a final impenitence. In the very arms of death he would destroy the living; on the threshold of the grave he would turn from the presence of his God to make one more sacrifice to the enemy of mankind. Yet even that thirst for the blood of an illustrious subject whose age he had left nearly childless might not have been the worst, if it had not been the last of the crimes of this unforgiving prince. A few hours more elapsed, and the shadow of death was casting a deep and solemn gloom upon the royal chamber. The end now came! The final contest was brief; and in a pulse's throbbing spirit of the dreaded King Henry was wafted to the presence of that Omnipotent Tribunal where so many of his iniquitous judgments deserved to be reversed. A deathbed had been described as the altar of forgiveness whose charity and tears commingle as the spirit of prayer communes. These attributes were absent from the dying couch of Henry Tudor, whose last despairing words, chronicled by Anthony Denny, "perdidimus omnia," "all is lost," express an awful consciousness of the retribution due to a wicked and treacherous career.

The foregoing narrative is taken from "Historical Portraits of the Tudor Dynasty and the reformation period," by S. Hubert Burke, author of "The Men and Women of the Reformation." In a letter to Mr. Burke the late Mr. Gladstone wrote: "I have read every page of the work with great interest, and I subscribe without hesitation to the eulogy passed upon it by the Daily Chronicle. It is making, as far as I know a distinct and valuable addition to our knowledge of a remarkable period."

As the fitful shadows play upon the peaceful waters of a woodland lake coming and going with the changing cloud, so does thought come and go. The man with the trained mind is never lonely, he need never be depressed; his horizon is broad, his vision bright, his experience wide, his pleasure profound.—Kremer J. Hoke.

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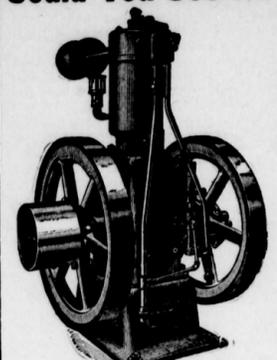
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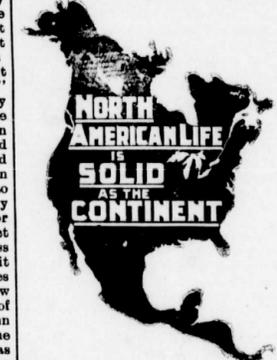
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