

FIVE-MINUTE SERMON.  
Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost.

## FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTION.

"Blessed art thou, O daughter, by the Lord the most high God, above all women upon the earth. Because He hath so magnified thy name this day that thy praise shall not depart out of the mouth of men who shall be mindful of the power of the Lord for ever." (Judith xiii 23-25)

Of the many feasts which Holy Church celebrates in honor of the Mother of God there is none which brings more joy to the Christian soul than this, the Feast of the Assumption of her blessed and virginal body into Heaven. For although immaculately conceived, living from the beginning of her existence in the grace and beneath the shadow of the Holy Spirit, all this sanctification, great as it was, was but the beginning, the onward progressive step of a supernatural life which was crowned by the prodigious miracle of her assumption. Even though the Church has not defined the Assumption as a dogma of faith, nevertheless on account of its universal acknowledgment, its supereminent fitness, it would be nothing less than temerity for any one to deny that God bestowed his crowning reward upon His blessed Mother.

Consider for a moment what the Blessed Virgin was, the intimate relation between her and her divine Son, and our faith in her assumption will become more firm, but more enlightened, our love for her more quickened, our rejoicing greater. Immaculately conceived through the anticipated merits of Jesus Christ, she was not subject to original sin. Now, as original sin brought corruption to the body, and the penalty of death, Mary was freed from it. She died indeed, not the victim of sin, but in obedience; and as through the magnitude of God's justice and power when living she was elevated beyond the estate and condition of all flesh, so in passing from life she was lifted up, glorified in body and soul, into Heaven.

Moreover, if we consider her unique work as Mother of the God-man, the bestowing on him of our human nature, the intimate and sacred relations of her life to His, we shall the better see how fitting, how necessary was it that the union on earth should continue in Heaven. Hers were the arms that gently carried the divine Child, the breast that nourished Him, hers the heart that beat in unison with His. How, then, could this tabernacle of the Most High be dissolved? How could the Tower of David, built of imperishable cedar, moulder and crumble? or the House of God be tarnished? what part has death and corruption, and the darkness and exile of the tomb in her, who is all fair, without a spot or wrinkle? As she was the Mother of Jesus, God honored her with the dignity and the reward becoming such a mother. In childhood, in manhood, in His public life, in His death, at His ascension, Mary was ever present.

As she followed Jesus from His childhood to the last sigh upon the cross, so also, enveloped in the embrace of God's affection, body and soul she followed Him after a brief exile to Heaven. There she reigns in the majesty of her being; there, too, she pleads with outstretched arms before her Son, averting His anger and obtaining innumerable graces for us, if we but call upon Her with pure and loving hearts.

Let us, then, dear brethren, become worthy of such an intercessor. Let this the feast day of the Assumption of our blessed Mother bear new fruit into our souls. Let us rejoice in this exceeding grace with which she is crowned. Let us avail ourselves of her powerful aid. Let us too look for this reward which Jesus has merited for us, as for her, that in obedience, in purity of soul and body, in submission to trials, we may come at length to the reward of Heaven, to the sight and knowledge of Mary, its glorious Queen, to the possession and enjoyment of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

## THE ONLY REAL CATHOLIC COUNTRY.

## THE BEST-GOVERNED NATION IN THE WORLD.

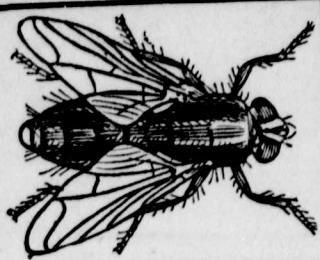
The fact that Belgium is the only country in Europe with a distinctly and professedly Catholic Government makes of the greatest interest to Catholics the study of social conditions in that country. It is manifestly unfair to judge the Church by other so-called "Catholic countries," since in every one of them the government is not only not Catholic, but blatantly hostile to the Church, and bent in every way on circumventing the will of its Catholic subjects.

In Belgium Catholics have had the administration of national affairs for more than twenty years. Nowhere else have the social teachings of Leo XIII. been so cordially welcomed or successfully applied.

Belgium is one of the most densely peopled countries in the world, with its six hundred and twenty-two inhabitants to the square mile. During seventy years, although the population had not quite doubled, the volume of trade had increased twenty-three fold. After the United States and Germany, Belgium is Great Britain's most serious competitor in the world's markets. It is said that her wonderful industrial development would have been impossible without her extensive coal fields, that give employment to more than 132,000 workmen.

Perhaps in no other country has the feature of our modern economic conditions been so notably exemplified as in Belgium. The country is covered with a network of railways, over which it is claimed nearly 1,000,000 trains, laden with passengers and merchandise passed in 1906. This was within an area of about one-third that of Ireland. The main systems and their connections are fed by no fewer than 145 lines of light railways as feeders, seven of which (or 75 miles) are worked by electricity. Nowhere is railway travelling so cheap as in Belgium. Nearly the whole of the ordinary or broad gauge system is the property of or worked by the State.

A not inconsiderable service is rendered to the national commerce by the Belgian waterways. There are 1375 miles of canals and navigable rivers, with fine seaports at Antwerp, Ghent and Bruges.

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In Belgium are four universities, of which Ghent and Liege are State institutions, while Brussels and Louvain are entirely independent of Government control. In 1903-4 there existed throughout the country 280 institutions in which a strictly commercial, professional, or technical training was imparted to about 43,000 students, of whom 8,250 are girls. Housekeeping schools numbered 17, and special classes for cookery, domestic training, etc., 108, with a yearly attendance of nearly 10,000 girls and young women. This is exclusive in many other similar schools connected with convents and receiving no share of the public funds.

Agricultural instruction has been widely diffused and methods of culture are being constantly improved as well as by the cotton classes as by the holders of large farms.

In few countries is the national wealth more widely distributed. There exists neither the millionaire class of citizens nor the extreme poverty found in large cities in England and America. No acute agrarian problem awaits solution. A Government savings bank, established in 1865, holds deposits more than seven times larger than its original capital. In 1904 these deposits, totaling \$23,563,000, were distributed among 2,203,000 depositors. This means a post-office bank account for about every third person of the entire population; and 87 per cent of the pass-books indicate a credit of less than \$20.

The bank was empowered to advance loans at the rate of 1-2 per cent to associations formed for building or purchasing homes for workmen. On December 31, 1905, there were 100 societies scattered throughout the various provinces, engaged in this work, and the loans made for this purpose ranged close to \$1,600,000. The dwellings thus erected are models of the kind, and are either rented or sold on easy terms to working class families. Deeds and other formalities are free of charge. Sixteen years of operation of this scheme have placed over 100,000 workmen on the way to the ownership of their own homes, and it is expected to increase this number to fully 350,000.

In the past twenty years the condition of the working class has been greatly ameliorated, wages increased, their scale of living raised, their dwellings improved, and provision made against sickness and old age. The Government has a system of old age pensions.

Finally, it is claimed that employment is abundant, the cost of living comparatively low, rent and taxes as a rule extremely moderate, and wages, except for agricultural bureaus, double what they were fifty years ago.

## THE STORY OF A CONVERT.

Are Protestants suspicious? This question which I have put myself, I answer—at any rate as regards Protestants whose religion is largely of an emotional nature—in the affirmative. What it can be that unites them in the same category, as the cynical man of the world, I am at a loss to understand; but I have assured myself that the fact is indisputable. This suspiciousness is of various types.

It ranges from the dour disfavor with which the Presbyterian regards all who are not of the same religious clan to himself to the doubt which nearly every Methodist, and evangelical Anglican, has of every stranger who crosses his path; that he is not what he pretends to be, or not the man he should be.

It is a curious thing, this suspiciousness; and—in my opinion, a very evil thing—but there it is, you may meet it every day; and it is one of the distinguishing surface characteristics of the emotional Protestant.

It is an evil thing. Its outward manifestations are evil. They effect one's contacts with some unwholesome reptile of the cold, secret and sly order. Who does not know them? Who does not know the slit-eyed side-long covert glance of "uspicion"—watching when it is not watched itself—and not despise it? It is an evil thing. We judge life very much from our own inward experimental notions of it. What we know of human nature is chiefly what we know of our own human nature.

If we are inclined to distrust others, it is because we feel that we ourselves are not trust-worthy. If you readily suspect your fellows, no greater testimony could you give that you yourself are a fit target of suspicion. For it is the thief who first suspects a thief, and the man without honor who cannot believe in the honor of others. But the good believe all men good, because they are good themselves.

It is an evil thing, suspicion; for it brings people into close traffic with sin. And why should good people, who are scrupulous not to commit sin, delight in

the flavor of other people's sins? Why should they—through the exercise of a morbid curiosity—know as much about evil as those whose misfortune it has been to know it experimentally? There is something wrong here. That evil people should have evil thoughts is to be expected; for that is why they are evil. But that good peoples should think evil thoughts, here is something that perplexes honest itself.

To me such people are perfectly odious. They taint the very atmosphere one breathes. They infect the very sunlight with the vileness of their imaginings. May their number ever decrease! We need more people of that quietest habit of spirit which our Saviour admired in Nathaniel—who are such as that they can live in the midst of evil—like lilies in the mud—and be unaware of it and yet fail to recognize it.

Now, I do not accuse Protestants indiscriminately of all these loathly habits of mind indicated, but I put it to you as a question. I am assured that Protestants of the emotional type—and Methodists particularly are named—are suspicious. If it is not so, then I shall be glad to learn that it is not so. But if it is so, why is it so? What peculiarity of defect or excess is it in their creed that makes them so? Why, I ask, are Protestants suspicious?—H. K. GORRALL, M. A. (Cantab).—B. C. Orphan's Friend.

## INDEPENDENT MORALITY.

One of the city ministers, when addressing his congregation recently, laid great stress on "Independent Morality." There is and can be no such thing as independent morality. It is a dangerous and catchy phrase, one of the vagaries of the present day. It means morality without any reference to God, and is the necessary consequence of infidelity. The advocates of this sham say to us: "Teach the child what is right and what is wrong, but say nothing about God."

Now, without God, what foundation is there for morality—for right and wrong? How can a young boy or girl gifted with the faculty of reason, be taught the word of the teacher that such a thing is right and such a thing is wrong. Naturally the pupil will ask, Why? It will not do to reply that reason tells us so. Reason alone cannot, for the dictates of reason are variable and have changed in the course of ages. The ancient pagans founded their morality on reason; modern ones endeavor to do the same. Reason alone produces very hazy notions of right and wrong, and, when blinded by passion, easily calls wrong right and forbidden things lawful. The anarchists and radical socialists of our country build their morality on reason as known to them, and unless there be something superior to reason or a higher criterion, how can they be condemned?

The infidels of our country, and those who follow the day rate France, and votaries of reason, because "free love" can easily be made to accord with it. Twelve thousand American divorcees within a twelve-month is a dictate of morality founded on reason alone.

This is a kind of morality—or immorality—which the infidels of our country are teaching in our colleges, churches and universities. "Teach the child what is right and what is wrong, but say nothing about God, if there be a God." This language is addressed to the parents, constituting them the arbiters of morals, when the fact is the parents themselves, in many instances, do not know right from wrong. Infidels, anarchists and socialists—incipient ones, if you please—but infidels, anarchists and socialists, nevertheless, are the inevitable consequence of law and authority. Respect for authority certainly is not a distinctive feature of modern education. Policy, not God, is becoming our rule of action. Sin consists in being caught.

Again we are told by these teachers: "All religions are good, but none is necessary. If a man is just toward his fellow-man, does him no injury, but, on the contrary, assists him when necessary; if a man pays his debts and injures no one, that is all the religion required." God is left out of the account entirely, shoved aside as if He were not. The Creator can exercise no sovereignty over His creature. This is the morality of man in his savage state.

Man owes duties to God as well as to his fellow-man. He ought to be a practical believer in true religion—in revelation. He must be bound again to God with the bond which God has given him for the purpose. Nothing else will suffice. The neglect of God, the ignoring of His existence, is anarchy. It is much more serious than crimes against the state.

There can be no morality without God; neither can there be safety from

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anarchy and from "free-love" without a law founded in God and not in reason alone. Independent morality is only another name for barbarism, for no morality at all. If our denominational preachers continue in the path of free thought and independent morality, which many of them are now traveling, it will not be long till the sheriff takes possession of their churches.—Intermountain Catholic.

## THE CHURCH AND THE SALOON KEEPER.

Here is what the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore said about the liquor traffic:

In view of the many and grave dangers and occasions of sin that beset the trade of intoxicating liquors, we solemnly admonish such of the faithful as may be engaged in this business, although not illicit in itself, to choose, if they can, some more becoming way of making a living; otherwise let them at least not sell liquor on Sunday, nor to minors, nor to such as they see will abuse it.

Catholics in the saloon business are engaged in a traffic which the Church in this country views with disfavor. The Church does not make the mistake of condemning the business as being intrinsically evil; but "in view of the many and grave dangers and occasions of sin that beset the trade" it solemnly admonishes Catholics engaged therein to seek some more becoming way of making a living. It is very difficult of course to give up a trade so lucrative as that of dispensing liquor. Yet the question of Jesus Christ our Saviour is applicable here as in so many other cases where earthly gain is set over against eternal loss. "What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul?"

Not only would the saloon-keeper himself be the gainer by forsaking the traffic, but great good would accrue to the Catholic Church as a whole in this country if it could be said that no child of hers was engaged in a business so beset with evil, so bound up with iniquity, so identified in the minds of the people at large with everything abhorrent to our political and social life. When will the day come when Catholics in the saloon business will hearken to the solemn admonition of the Church in this country, and, departing from a business so dangerous to themselves, so ruinous to their neighbor, so detrimental to the welfare of the social and political condition of the nation, seek "some more becoming way of making a living?"—Sacred Heart Review.

## Science Led to Belief.

Professor Becquerel, the noted French scientist, who died recently, was one of the world's most distinguished physicists, a grandson of another celebrated physicist, Antoine Caesar Becquerel, and the son of still another, Alexandre Edmond Becquerel. Several years back he discovered the form of radio-activity, now known as the Becquerel rays. It has been said that a modern scientific biography would be very largely composed of studies bearing his name; they would include monographs of all kinds on radio-active substances. During the latter portion of his life Becquerel was a devout practical Catholic, faithful in his attendance at Mass and at daily family prayers. Like the great Pasteur, Becquerel was too great a scientist to accept the theories of Huxley and Haeckel as to revealed religion.

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## VACATION—TIME—

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