

THE CATHOLIC RECORD.

FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS.

Septuaginta Sunday. Which ye, therefore, know ye not the day nor the hour. (Matt. xxv. 13.)

These words, my dear brethren, are taken from the parable of the ten virgins who went out to meet the bridegroom and the bride. Five of them, being wise and prudent, took oil in their lamps, and in answer to their cry, "Watch ye, therefore, say our Lord, in concluding this parable, "because your know not the day nor the hour."

But if we have not this oil, if the lamp of our soul is empty, if we are in the state of mortal sin, what dismay comes on us, what terrible fear and discomfiture of mind, when we suddenly find ourselves prepared for death! We have been saying all along, "Oh! there is not plenty of time, and now there is not plenty of time. God is coming to meet us, and to demand of us an account of our lives; we cannot hide from His face, and He will not wait. The hour fixed in the eternal councils of His wisdom has come, the hour on which everything depends, the hour for which the years of our life should have been one long preparation, those years so carelessly thrown away.

Friends may stand around us who have not wasted the oil in their lamps as we have ours. Their souls may be full of the grace of God, preserved and increased continually by prayer and good works, by the love of God and frequent confession and Communion. They may have enough and to spare; but they cannot lend to us. "No," they must say to us, "go rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. Go rather," that is, to the regular sources of that grace, the sacraments, which our Lord has placed in His Church, to give life to the dead. Send for the priest, and with His help fill the lamp of your soul, and prepare to meet our Lord.

But too often it is in the parable of the virgins. While the foolish Christian, who has put off his preparation for death, who has lived in the state of sin, expecting to die in the state of grace, goes to fill his lamp, his Lord comes, finds him, and judges him to be lost. The priest comes, but only to look on him lying dead. Or even if the oil of grace is brought to the sinner, he has not, perhaps, the price to pay for it; that is, he has not those dispositions of sincere penitence and amendment of life, without which all sacraments are vain and ineffectual. Brothers, it is a fearful point in the parable of the wise and foolish virgins that not one of the five who were so carelessly unprepared was able to have her lamp ready to meet the bridegroom in His coming. It should teach us to expect that, as a rule, a man must die as he has lived. No doubt there are exceptions: the mercy of God is over all, and wills not that the sinner should perish. But the only safe way, the only way, indeed, that is not the wild, empty folly, and even insanity, is to live as all good Christians do live, continually prepared for death; with the grace of God always in their souls, with no stain of mortal sin on them; with "their lamps lit, and lamps burning in their hands;" and "like to men who wait for their lord when he shall return from the wedding: that when He cometh and knocketh they may open to Him immediately."

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DEAR SISTERS.—I have used your Hagar's Yellow Oil for many years, and have found it unequalled for burns, scalds, cuts, etc. MARY A. COLLIER, Erin, Ont. O. Barthe, of Manchester, Ontario Co., N. Y., writes: "I obtained immediate relief from the use of Dr. Thomas' Eclectic Oil. I have had asthma for eleven years. Have been obliged to sit up all night for ten or twelve nights in succession. I can now sleep soundly all night on a feather bed, which I had not been able to do previously to using the oil. Resolved to a Science. The treatment of disease is now almost reduced to a science. A scientific product of medical skill for the cure of all blood diseases from a common people to the worst scrofulous sore which has held popular esteem for years and increases steadily in favor is Burdock Blood Bitters. It cures every sort of skin disease. Minard's Liniment cures La Grippe.

ST. ANDREW.

Very Rev. James McDonald Dawson, V.G., etc. The festival of Saint Andrew having been so joyously celebrated in our city as well as in so many other places, we are led to speak of the great Apostle. It is related that an arm of the Saint found its way to the spot where the ancient city of Saint Andrews now stands. From this happy, and, we may say, providential, circumstance came the idea of choosing St. Andrew as the patron saint of Scotland. Be this as it may, the Apostle extends the arm of his power over the Scottish kingdom and every other region of the wide world, where sons of Scotland are to be found. The chief remains of the saint were deposited in the cathedral at Amalfi, in Italy. They were enclosed in a coffin of chestnut wood, almost all covered with silver nails and inscription plates. This coffin was encased in a heavy marble sarcophagus. The grave is a vault in the high altar, where prayers and Masses are constantly said both day and night, and the resting-place of the saint carefully guarded against desecration. At the request of the late Most Rev. Dr. Strain, the first Archbishop of St. Andrews and Edinburgh, in the restored hierarchy, Scotland, the Church authorities of Amalfi allowed a portion of this precious relic to be transferred to Edinburgh, where it is carefully treasured at the high altar of St. Mary's Church, Broughton street. Rome, also, possesses an invaluable relic—the head or a portion of the head of the saint. The vast amount of writing concerning these relics proves to demonstration the respect and veneration in which the memory of St. Andrew was held. When the head now in St. Peter's was brought to Rome, people of all classes joined in showing their love and devotion. Miles from the city it was met by a delegation of Cardinals and other ecclesiastics. When within sight of the walls it was carefully placed in a church and closely guarded for three days. Meanwhile the Holy Father, Pius II. (1461) sent out invitations far and wide, and proclaimed a public holiday for the day on which the head was to be formally received. The route along which it was to pass was decked with altars, the houses were lined with tapestry, and the city looked as if it were preparing to celebrate some great triumph. At night the head was carried through the streets to St. Peter's attended by an escort of thirty thousand men, each of whom carried a torch. The vast concourse of people that lined the street knelt and prayed as it passed. The Vatican was illuminated for the occasion, and the Pope personally received the relic, addressed it in a long, eloquent and, at times, pathetic allocution, and then, with his own hands, carried it to the place where the head of St. Peter was to be placed and laid it there. Surely no greater homage could be paid to blessed Andrew, the saint and martyr, of whom the head was only a faint memorial, however bright and pious inspiring!

Not only at Amalfi, Rome and Edinburgh is the memory of Saint Andrew highly honored. It is the same all the world over. Festivals are held in more places than can well be enumerated. In Canada and the United States of America, this last year, there were hundreds of joyous celebrations. In the Cape of Good Hope and South Africa there were ten; in India thirty; in New Zealand a like number; and what is perhaps still more notable, at Alexandria, Asten, Jerusalem, Canton, Yokohama, and on the banks of the Congo river, in the very heart of "the dark land," while in many other places high honor was done to the patron saint of Scotland. But in no country more than in Scotland is the festival of the saint solemnly observed. Among the Catholics there it is a full holiday, and Masses are celebrated. Semibarbarous Russia, even, claims St. Andrew as its patron and offers Masses in his honor.

Among the religious communities of old Saint Andrew appears to have had more honor than any of the other apostles, although he was distinguished only by the readiness with which he was the first to obey the call of our Lord. There must, however, have been in his qualifications for the apostleship something peculiarly great, as he was chosen to evangelize the most cultivated people of antiquity. That he succeeded, Saint Paul bears witness, declaring that so great was the faith of the Achaians (the Greeks) that he needed not to preach to them. His success is also shown by the determination of the people whom he had taught, to rescue him from the hands of the cruel tyrant who doomed him to the cross.

Of all countries Scotland is the one in which the memory of Saint Andrew is least honored. This neglect, no doubt, must be ascribed to the rigid Calvinism which is still so prevalent, and which forbids all honoring of the saints. The Scotsman when removed from his native home shakes from him such intellectual trammels and his devotion appears to revive as he treads the soil of a distant country. This pleasing circumstance is well shown by the great number of benevolent societies in the name and under the patronage of Saint Andrew that have arisen in this continent. The members of these societies, not unmindful of the innumerable blessings that are heaped upon those who are constinate as regards the needy and the poor, whilst they cherish the memories of their native land, are careful to make ample provision for their fellow-countrymen in distress. Such liberality is very notable as concerns the St. Andrew's Society which was constituted in this city (Ottawa) some

forty years ago. The celebration of St. Andrew's Day by these societies is partly religious and partly secular. They meet in their hall and walk thence in procession to the Kirk, where their chaplain or some other friendly minister delivers a sermon suited to the occasion. In the evening there is generally a concert. This last year, at Ottawa, the evening's entertainment was St. Walter Scott's "Rob Roy" dramatized. The audience was numerous and much amused by the performance.

The sermon was, on the whole, in good taste and appropriate. The preacher's remarks on our new home, Canada, are particularly noteworthy: "This Canada of ours is a goodly land to live in; and we are only now as a people beginning to awake to the full consciousness of our magnificent inheritance. There are signs of progress which have never rung to the ears of our mines and mineral wealth yet wholly undiscovered; there are thousands of acres of fertile soil through which the ploughshares have not yet been driven; and though we are a young people and for the most part engaged in what we call practical matters, we have every reason to be proud of the intellectual status of our country, of the schools and colleges, and general system of education and of the laudable efforts which some amongst us are making to win for themselves an honorable name in science, or art, or literature, and in this way to erect a worthy memorial to the land that gave them birth. . . . We are Canadians, and as Canadians we believe that we have a destiny. We desire to carry forward unswerving the banner of our national birthright and win for ourselves an honorable place among the nations of the earth. . . . If Canadians are fully alive to the magnificent grandeur of the task which is imposed upon them, I think they will conclude that we are not intended to be a mere appendix to some other state, but that we are intended to be a nation in our own right. We must bind ourselves together from coast to coast in a united brotherhood, our hearts filled with a divine enthusiasm and our laws framed to achieve the supreme ideal of national prosperity and the happiness of that people whose God is the Lord."

With such celebrations in Canada which is, as yet, in the eyes of mankind, a mere colony, what an encouragement to old Scotland to awaken, renew its devotion and walk in the footsteps of some of its noblest sons! One of these, a nobleman of high rank and large fortune, has done honor to our country, and his name is linked to the ocean in a united brotherhood, our hearts filled with a divine enthusiasm and our laws framed to achieve the supreme ideal of national prosperity and the happiness of that people whose God is the Lord."

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