

The Catholic Record

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THE INSANE FOLLY OF THE SINN FEINERS

The criminal folly of the abortive Sinn Fein rising has caused profound sorrow to all sane Irishmen and all true friends of Ireland everywhere.

It is important to grasp fully the fact that the Sinn Feiners are not Home Rulers who have got out of hand, but the bitter, unscrupulous and vituperative enemies of Redmond's constitutional Home Rule movement and policy.

It is well to recall however, that so insignificant were they numerically that not only had they no representation in Parliament but neither were they represented on any of the elective bodies in Ireland; for throughout the length and breadth of Ireland every single elected body passed resolutions congratulating Redmond on his attitude in Parliament on the War, and approving of his strenuous campaign for Irish enlistment.

In a recent by-election in North Louth, which had been represented by an O'Brienite, the Nationalist won easily. The Dublin correspondent of Ireland says: "Mr. Hamill had at his back the old Healyite forces. Whatever little handful of Sinn Feiners there might be in the constituency were bound to be on his side against the Irish party. Their number, however, is very small, though in the case of a close contest they might be of value. Against all these influences Mr. Whitty won by a handsome majority of 489."

Before the miserable fiasco of rebellion by the discredited remnant of Sinn Fein Irishmen an intelligent Irish-American, Judge Riley, wrote as follows in answer to the anti-British Irish remnant in the United States:

"None of us are sufficiently informed to warrant us in attempting to dictate the policies and conduct of Irishmen actually on the ground in Ireland. Upon careful study I find there a leader who has the unanimous support of the Irish party in Parliament. Surely, if that leadership was wrong some considerable portion of the Irish party and some portion of the substantial and loyal press would condemn it."

"I find a leader who has not only the support, but the confidence and love of the womanhood and childhood of Ireland. It is inconceivable that leadership with such support could be wrong. I find a leader who has the splendid moral and intelligent support of all but one of the Roman Catholic bishops of Ireland."

"I find a leader at whose clarion call more than a quarter of a million of the flower of Irish manhood has sprung forward to the blood-drenched trenches of Europe."

The opposition to this leadership is sporadic, inconsiderable, inconsiderate, or subsidized, and should not be allowed to weigh in the balance against the splendid standards to which this leadership has qualified and this is why I, the son of Irish immigrant parents, proud of the home of my ancestry, glorying in the rich, unswollen blood that has come down to me through the centuries, cry with all the fervor of my heart, "Thank God for John Redmond!"

It may be well to note in passing that if the Bishop of Limerick is anti-Nationalist he has no sympathy with Sinn Feinism.

While Sinn Feinism is the very antithesis of the constitutional Irish national movement, it is not less unscrupulously hostile to the religious sentiment of Catholic Ireland.

In his Lenten pastoral Dr. Healey, Archbishop of Tuam, successor to the great Archbishop McHale of undying memory, wrote thus:

"While I hope you will fill your fields, you will also be ready to fight for them against the Germans. We fill the land that bore us, and we mean to hold it at any cost; and Irishmen are able to fight. This has been proved at every battle-front in Europe and is now admitted by all. And we want more such genuine soldiers. It is not for England but for Ireland, we want them. We do not want our fertile acres seized by the brutal foe; and what is to save them and enable us to hold them but the strong arms and courageous hearts of you and your allies? I hope you will rally to the flag, not by compulsion or coercion, but from a sense of duty, as becomes free men. The man who strikes a blow against the Prussian strikes a blow for justice, freedom and right."

The Bishop of Cloyne writes to his people:

"We are not going to throw away the fruits of a long, arduous and successful constitutional struggle. The Irish people have made this clear. Ireland has shown by the voluntary presence in the armies of the allied nations of 150,000 dauntless soldiers from this sparsely populated little island, and by as many more of her scattered sons from abroad, that she is determined to protect herself against such a fate as has overtaken Belgium—that she is determined to defend her homes, her farms, her industries, her religious freedom, her educational institutions—in a word, her hard-won liberties. This is our citizen duty. We, who continue to live in peace at home, are indebted to our Irish heroes at the front. They offer their lives for our safety; we should not forget them, and least of all should we forget to remember in our prayers those who fall fighting bravely for our cause."

The Bishop of Derry is outspoken in his condemnation of German "Kultur."

"In this fierce war that day by day grows fiercer, the conduct of Germany, inspired, no doubt, by Prussian militarism, is the very antithesis of what the Catholic Church tells us is required by the law of God. To most people it is a difficulty; they cannot well understand how a nation, professing Christianity, and claiming to have reached such a standard of culture and civilization that her example should serve as a model for the rest of Europe, could be guilty of excesses without parallel even in the pages of pagan history. But the secret of it all is to be found in the fact that Germany recognizes no authority superior to her own. The German mind and spirit and view of things is a law to itself. There is no objective standard of morality outside itself to which it feels bound to conform. No doubt the German War Lord and his officers talk of morality and right and justice, but the standard by which these are to be tested is not what the Divine Law or the natural law or even international law prescribes, but what the German mind is pleased to regard as such."

In the teeth of these and similar pastorals of the Irish bishops, in spite of strenuous advocacy of John Redmond and his followers, against the same and sober sentiment of Ireland which these undoubtedly represent, the handful of anti-national, unpatriotic and un-Catholic Sinn Feiners have plunged their misguided dupes into sinful and insane rebellion which, silly, ridiculous, and easily suppressed though it be, may be fraught with tragic consequences for Ireland.

Sinn Feinism is the outgrowth of narrow, unreasoning, sentimental nationalism which in Canada as in Ireland is a menace and hindrance to peaceful national development. There is, however, this hope for Ireland. Irish nationalism is unreservedly opposed and condemned by the political and religious leadership of the whole nation. The sane, patriotic and generous comments of our own Canadian press on the situation merit grateful recognition. Even that great Irishman, so bitterly opposed to Irish Home Rule,

Sir Edward Carson, had the grace to express the hope that none would use the unfortunate affair for political purposes.

All things considered we may hope that John Redmond is not unreasonably optimistic when he says:

"As to the final result: I do not believe this wicked and insane movement will achieve its ends. The German plot has failed. A majority of the people of Ireland retain their calmness, fortitude and unity. They abhor this attack on their interests, their rights and their principles. Home Rule has not been destroyed. It remains indestructible."

JOHN T. RYAN, PREMIER OF QUEENSLAND

In another column we publish a Canadian press despatch concerning J. T. Ryan, Premier and Attorney General of Queensland, Australia. Our readers will be interested to know that he is a Catholic and of Irish birth. The fact that he is bringing Godspeed from his Australian compatriots to John Redmond is proof that the Sinn Fein lunacy has no foothold amongst the Irish in the antipodes.

John Tighe Ryan was born at Miltown, Clonoulty, Ireland, in 1870 and was educated by the Christian Brothers. Since 1897 he has been editor of The Catholic Press, Sydney, and for some years he was Australian representative of the Westminster Gazette. Leo XIII. conferred on him the Cross Pro Ecclesia et Pontifici.

CONSOLIDATED RURAL SCHOOLS

At the Ontario Educational Association the consolidation of several rural schools into one large graded school was advocated. Amongst the advantages of such consolidation it was contended that it would enable the school to teach subjects of especial interest and utility to children of rural communities and thus tend to arrest the drift to the cities.

This, of course, is not a new or untried idea. Such schools are in operation in the United States; with what success they realize the rosy anticipations of their advocates we are unable to say. But we should like to see our educators make a greater success of graded schools in urban communities before extending the system to country districts.

It is a notorious fact that the one-roomed, ungraded country school is, in many respects, doing better work than the graded urban school. One reason is given by thoughtful observers of our educational system and methods. In the country school the teacher must, perforce, divide her time and attention amongst very many classes. The pupils, therefore, are thrown much more on their own resources than their fellows in the graded schools. Initiative, self-reliance, resourcefulness are some of the qualities thus developed. In other words there is too much "teaching" in the graded school; "spoon-feeding" it has been called. The pupils are actually deprived of the opportunities of developing those qualities of initiative, self-reliance and resourcefulness which the ungraded school permits, or even compels, and which are essential to the upbuilding of character. It may be that this defect of the graded schools is exaggerated by the critics; but there is not a doubt of its existence.

There is another consideration that should be taken into account. It is now very generally conceded that manual training is an important factor in education. Mental training alone falls far short of educating in any full sense of the word. The country children get this important part of their education not in school but on the farm. Will the consolidated rural school, necessarily at a greater distance from home, curtail the opportunities and advantages of the country pupil in this important department of his education?

SHAKESPEARE'S THEOLOGY The tercentenary celebration of the death of the Bard of Avon has called forth an abundance of appreciative articles in our newspapers and magazines. The personal note is lacking in many of them, due no doubt to the fact that the scribes are only making copy for the occasion and not personally enthusiastic on the subject. It is significant that the most scholarly essays are from the pens of Catholics. George O'Neil, of the National University, Dublin, has contributed an interesting paper to America on "The Age and Stage of Shakespeare" that explains the reason for the coarseness and extravagance in language that seem so odd of keeping with the Christian

morality and refined sentiments of so many of the poet's creations. Dr. Walsh, in the Columbiad, has proved from documentary evidence gathered by himself in and around Stratford and London that Shakespeare lived and died a Catholic. One of the arguments that he adduces to prove his thesis is that Shakespeare lived while in London with a Huguenot family, who, on account of the trade they followed, were exempted from attending the Anglican church, and he argues that the poet would be thus free from the charge of recusancy. Another writer cites the same incident to prove that he was a Protestant. So there you are. It looks as if the religion of Shakespeare, like the birthplace of St. Patrick, would remain a perennial source of controversy.

William may or may not have made his Easter duty, but one thing is certain, his writings, notwithstanding a deal of coarseness, that may be attributed to the customs of the time and perhaps to his own dissolute habits, are not only Christian in tone but distinctively Catholic. He not only makes "goodness bold and virtue never fearful" but gives clear expression to his belief in the eternal truths that sanction virtue, and to the exclusively Catholic means of grace. To illustrate this point we will cite some quotations that we have gleaned from time to time, while engaged in a desultory reading of some of the author's principal works.

A distinguished litterateur once excused himself for the frequent use of the word "devil," on the plea that he wished to emphasize his belief in the existence of an individual that the world is prone to consider a myth. Shakespeare would seem to be equally insistent upon this point, judging from his frequent references to him who "can cite scripture for his purpose" and to those truths that are associated with the fall of Lucifer, viz., Original Sin, Judgment, Hell and Purgatory. In the following passage from "Measure for Measure" the poet makes clear profession of his belief in Original Sin:

All the souls that were, were forfeit once, And he that might the vantage best have taken, Found out the remedy.

Again in Hamlet the strictness of God's judgments is emphasized.

In the corrupted currents of this world Offence's golden hand may shove by Justice Not so above; there there's no shuffling.

In Macbeth we are warned of "the primrose path that leads to the everlasting bonfire." It is this belief in Hell, this "air drawn dagger of the mind" that makes the murderer of Duncan "infam of purpose" and loath to jump the life to come. And when the bloody deed is done he says:

"I've put rancours in the vessel of my peace My eternal Jewel (this immortal soul) given to the common enemy of man."

How well these words express the consequences of sin!

To die—to sleep— To sleep! perchance to dream; aye there's the rub; For in that sleep of death what dreams may come When we have shuffled off this mortal coil.

Thus mused Hamlet. It was this "dread of something after death" that made him "rather bear those ills he had than fly to others that he knew not of" by giving himself the quietus with "the bare bodkin."

Whatever may be the case as regards belief in Hell, no one will deny that the existence of Purgatory is, or at least has been, a distinctively Catholic doctrine. The ghost in Hamlet unmistakably refers to Purgatory in these well known lines:

I am thy father's spirit, Doomed for a certain time to walk the night, And for the day, confined to fast in fires 'Till the foul crimes done in the days of nature Are burnt and purged away.

Those who deny this doctrine may use the same argument here that they have used in the case of the Scripture, viz., that the name Purgatory is not mentioned. But in "Romeo and Juliet" we find the name itself and a clear distinction drawn between Hell and Purgatory. Romeo says to Friar Lawrence:

There is no world without Verona's walls But Purgatory, torture, Hell itself.

We now pass to the means of grace. To cite the passages in which

the poet refers to the Mass would require a column of space. Confession, too, is frequently mentioned and the plot, in at least one of his plays, hinges about the confessional. The qualities of simplicity, humility and integrity required for a good confession are set forth in Friar Lawrence's rebuke to Romeo, who like other men in love is very eloquent and beautifully vague:

Be plain, my son, and homely in thy drift; Riddling confession finds but riddling shrift.

Every Catholic knows, that when a priest attends a dying person, he usually administers three sacraments, viz., Penance, Holy Viaticum, and Extreme Unction. Such we see was the rule in Shakespeare's day, for the ghost in Hamlet laments that he was

Cut off even in the blossom of my sins, Unhousel'd, unappointed, unarm'd No reckoning made, but sent to my account, With all my imperfections on my head.

A note on this passage, in the Windsor edition of the poet's works, offers the illuminating information that those "last offices," referred to here, were thought to mitigate the pains of Purgatory. As a matter of fact, these three words mean in modern English "without confession, without Holy Viaticum—that is without provision or appointment for the journey—and without Extreme Unction."

When we come to that sacrament in which, in the words of Friar Lawrence, "Holy Church incorporates two in one" we find the poet not only orthodox but almost prophetic in his condemnation of the lax notions and irreverent practices that were beginning to be associated with the celebration of marriage. In the third act of "As You Like It" we are told that Touchstone and Audrey wished to get married. The former went to the village vicar, Sir Oliver Martext, who promised to couple them at a meeting place in the forest. Touchstone is eager that the ceremony proceed when Jaques, the philosopher, says to him, "Will you, being a man of your breeding, be married under a bush, like a beggar? Get you to church, and have a good priest that can tell you what marriage is: this fellow will but join you together as they join wainscot; then one of you will prove a shrunken panel, and like green timber warp, warp." On hearing this Touchstone soliloquizes: "I am not in the mind but I were better to be married of him than of another; for he is not like to marry me well; and not being well married, it will be a good excuse for me hereafter to leave my wife."

On the advice of Jaques, however, they leave to find a priest, and the vicar goes off in high dudgeon declaring "that ne'er a fantastical knave of them all shall flout me out of my calling." This incident needs little comment. Touchstone's soliloquy and the marriage under a bush are very suggestive of what is in vogue in our day. The very name the poet gives the vicar indicates his disgust with the new religion and recalls a sentiment he elsewhere expresses: "In religion what damned error but some sober brow will bless it and approve it with a text."

In conclusion we will cite a few passages in which Shakespeare shows a knowledge of the spiritual life that few laymen of our day possess: Words without thoughts never to heaven go. —Hamlet. When devils will the blackest sins put on They do suggest at first with heavenly shows. —Othello. He is no man on whom perfections wait Who knowing sin within will touch the gate. —Pericles. The gods are just and of our pleasant vices Make instruments to plague us. —King Lear. There is no vice so simple but assumes Some mark of virtue on its outward parts. —Merchant of Venice. He who the sword of Heaven will bear Should be as holy as severe. —Measure for Measure. He that of greatest works is finisher Oft does them by the weakest minister. —All's Well that Ends Well. O cunning enemy of men that do catch a saint With saints doth bait the hook. —Measure for Measure.

But enough. Many more similar passages could be cited, but the reader will agree that sufficient evidence has been adduced to prove, if proof were necessary, that, since Shakespeare mirrored the life of the

common people of his day, the religion of that people was the same in all respects as is professed and practiced by the Catholic people of the Empire of to-day.

THE GLEANER.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

THE STEADY progress of the Russian Armies in Mesopotamia, their attitude of calm watchfulness on the Poland border, and the advent of Russian troops in France have all tended to focus the world's attention upon the great Muscovite Empire to a degree not overshadowed even by the stupendous events taking place before Verdun. Russia, as a consequence, is rapidly casting aside the spirit of exclusiveness which hitherto she has at least seemed to bear to the rest of Europe, and is becoming a familiar study to the world at large. The Russian has ceased to be a "barbarian," and has become a highly-prized and venerated brother-in-arms.

THE PART that Russia is destined to play in subjugating the "Huns" and bringing the War to a close, would be difficult to over-estimate. It used to be said that she was lethargic, and could not awake from her stupor until the enemy had achieved all that he had set out to achieve. How in her initial movements she was bound to be, as huge bulk must always be, but that when fully under way she would startle the world by her celerity, was a prediction made by the knowing ones, which has already been amply demonstrated by events of the past two months in the Caucasus. And that we are as yet only in the beginning of the developments which are working themselves out in that great nation, the arrival of a Russian army on the Western front may be taken as sufficient evidence.

THE PROCESS of "falling back" may now be considered to have terminated so far as Russia is concerned. She has got her back to the wall, as the Teutonic hordes have already found to their cost. But even suppose the retreat of last Autumn had continued, what significance would it hold for the invader? Without question there was a point somewhere where the force of the German advance would be stayed, just as the German advance was stayed before Paris, or that of Charles XII. of Sweden, when he made his mad rush to Poltava, or that of Napoleon by the destruction of Moscow. And it was perhaps fortunate for the invader in the present War, that the Russian armies did not give way further before him. For to have done so would simply have meant a situation of very grave peril to the entire German armies.

THERE WAS NOT the slightest fear of the Russian armies being destroyed and swept out of existence, leaving an indefinite section of their territories to be overrun and occupied. Continued retreat would have meant merely that the self-styled conqueror would plod on after the Russians, and get more and more deeply involved in their country, or whether they would sit down and wait until the Bear had gathered her strength and come back at him. And this, as matter of fact, is just what has happened. Meanwhile, the world stands in an attitude of expectancy awaiting the inevitable outcome. The invader with his greatly depleted forces—for it must not be forgotten that, as before Verdun, he has paid the price for every inch of ground occupied—has the uncanny prospect before him of a thousand miles of frontier with an ever-increasing and heroic host behind it, ready at any moment to strike with the full force of a nation of close upon two hundred millions of people, hardy and determined, and able to wait.

THE IMPREGNABILITY of the Russian Empire has been likened to an enormous cloak, the fringe of which may become very ragged, and the cloak itself have huge pieces cut out of it, before and behind, but from its vast dimensions will still remain for all purposes of warmth and security a perfectly serviceable garment. Pieces cut from it are hardly noticeable—pieces which if cut from a smaller garment would leave nothing but a collar and a pair of sleeves. That is why, as a writer of authority has stated, the duration of the War, which is so dangerous to smaller States, affects Russia so little. Short wars are her danger; long wars only prove her strength.

AT THIS moment, after nineteen months of war, Russia has just begun to show her strength, and to be mistress of her resources in men and munitions. The hardy soldiers of her Far Eastern provinces, are only now, after long months of training and preparation, getting into the fray. Her hundred and seventy millions of population have not yet begun to make their presence felt in Poland, but every account agrees that they are there, on the border line, ready to swarm over the invaded territory and to exact retribution from the quondam invader. The giant limbs have stirred and gotten into motion, and Germany, despite her attitude of proud boastfulness, stands awe-stricken in presence of the awful menace.

THERE IS NO need, therefore, to worry about Russian prospects; the "other fellow" may be permitted to do all the worrying. There is a big task yet before the Allies, but leaving out of reckoning for the time being, British Naval Power, French heroism and fortitude as so amply vindicated before Verdun, or the combined strength and devotion of the Western Allies, the awful Russian menace remains, and we may expect ere many months have flown to see it in full action. No power that the Teutons can now assemble will be capable of resisting it. It has been confidently stated that throughout the Russian Empire there are at the present time close on thirty millions of men under arms or in process of training. The thought may well cause anxious nights and days to the Kaiser at Potsdam, or to the inner circle of his War Lords. That fact alone spells the doom of Prussian militarism and world-domination, and is at the same time the harbinger of lasting peace to the World.

ON THE BATTLE LINE

THE ARRIVAL of a third Russian contingent at Marseilles so soon after the two former bodies makes it reasonably certain that the men are not being brought from the Far East. The Canadian ice-breakers sent to Archangel must have done excellent work if the Russians have come from the White Sea. And if from Archangel why are they landed at Marseilles? To confuse the Germans, no doubt, even as the landing there confuses and perplexes all the rest of the world. The German Admiralty has probably despatched submarines en masse to intercept the troopships sailing the Russians at the mouth of the Suez Canal or the northern coast of Norway before they swing out into the Atlantic. Perhaps the Straits of Gibraltar also are under observation, although that is a very dangerous bit of water for the enemy's undersea boats. The Russian reinforcements for the French front are manifestly not sent merely as a matter of sentiment. The Allies mean business in the west.

The big guns are still doing most of the fighting at Verdun. The Germans violently bombarded the French lines yesterday between Pepper Hill and Donaumont, on the east side of the Meuse. The French continued their aerial night operations behind the German lines. On the remainder of the front there were no important developments. The Verdun operations are gradually returning to normal trench warfare, and the chief energies of the Germans are probably already being directed elsewhere.

The sinking of the battleship Russell by coming in contact with a mine somewhere in the Mediterranean is believed to have caused the death of 124 officers and men. The Russell was a comparatively modern pre Dreadnought, commissioned in 1903. Her main battery consisted of four 12-inch guns, and she mounted as a secondary battery 12 6-inch quickfiring. While every ship counts, the 124 men who went down with the Russell were a more serious loss than that of the vessel. The Allies are so overwhelmingly strong in naval resources that there is no danger of supremacy being wrested from them. Britain has lost ten battleships since the war began. One of them, the Audacious, the sinking of which was never officially acknowledged, was a dreadnought. The others in the order of their age were the Majestic, Ocean, Goliath, Formidable, Irresistible, Bulwark, Russell, Triumph and King Edward VII. Despite these losses the strength of the battle fleet is very much greater than it was when the war began.

The Kut-el-Amara Garrison is evidently in a desperate situation. There is evidence that the British public are being prepared for the possible capitulation of General Townshend's army. It was officially announced in London last night that a relief ship sent up the Tigris with supplies for the beleaguered garrison grounded four miles from Kut-el-Amara, and was presumably captured by the Turks. This news is distinctly ominous. The ship would not have been sent on so hazardous a mission had the need not been great. The attempt will make the Turks more vigilant in guarding the river, and as the floods that prevent a general attack on their positions will last for several weeks