

The Catholic Record

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"THE RED VINEYARD"

The War was so all-absorbing in the tense interest it so long demanded that there followed a natural revulsion of feeling, which extended even to books, about great conflict. This and the fact that there has been a deluge of such books have left public interest cold. Many, though of artistic literary workmanship, were as shallow and as disheartening as the *au hors* materialistic conception of life.

It was therefore with but languid interest that we started to read "The Red Vineyard." Other duties calling, we had to lay it aside for a time. Meanwhile a friend read it and reported enthusiastically. Resuming the reading, ourselves, we were soon interested, charmed by the style, and finally eager and enthusiastic readers every spare moment till the last chapter was finished.

Father Murdoch takes us through the Great War from the recruiting of the lads in Canada until he said good-bye to the battalion on Christmas Day, 1918. He could so easily have been prolix, have loaded down his story with unimportant details, that, after reading and re-reading, and reading again parts noted as suitable for quotation, we marvel at our own definite and decided conclusion that not one short chapter could have been omitted without loss to the reader. "The Red Vineyard" though a simple narration of a Chaplain's experience in the World War is a story of intense human interest illumined always by the light of Faith. The horrors of war are, at times, felt rather than described. The atmosphere is what it had to be; but there is not a trace of over-embellishment.

The spiritual dominates the material even in the crash and boom of modern warfare. It is in the sense that Papi describes an edifying book. In his introduction to the "Life of Christ" he says: "This book is meant to be a book—the author knows how he will be jeered at—of education. Not in the meaning of mechanical bigotry, but in the human and manly meaning of the 'refashioning of souls.' To build, or as the old word expressed it, to edify a house, is a great and holy action; to make a shelter against winter and the night. But to build up or edify a soul, to construct it with stones of truth! When there is talk of edification you see in it only an abstract word worn out with use. To edify in the original meaning was to construct walls. Who of you has ever thought of all that goes into the making of a house, a house firm on the earth and honestly built, with well-plumbed walls, with a good sheltering roof? . . . But most people think that to make a book it is enough to have an idea and then to take so many words and put them together. Not so. A kiln of tiles, a pile of rocks, are not a house. To build up a house, to build up a book, to build up a soul, are undertakings that require all a man's power. The aim of this book is to build up Christian souls."

That was the chaplain's work in the War and "The Red Vineyard" is the edifying story of that work told with simple dignity and the charm of human interest. For instance down in one of the chalk caves near Arras "The City of the

Dead," Father Sheehan and Father Murdoch worked from morning till night at the ministry of reconciliation and distributing the Bread of Life.

"That evening, after the last man had left Father Sheehan came over to me. 'Father,' he said 'wasn't it a great day's work?'"

"I could scarcely speak for the great joy I felt. There had been such consolation throughout the whole day! Great things had been done for Our Divine Lord, who had waited all day long in the dimly lighted caves giving His deep, sweet peace to the souls of these lads of 'good will.' Centuries before He had come to another cave, when 'glad tidings' had been announced to the shepherds."

"Yes, Father," I said, "it was one of the happiest days of my life."

How these lads far from home and living amid dangers to soul and body appreciated the services of the priest! On the occasion just described a soldier came into the cave and called loudly, "R. C. Chaplain!" Father Murdoch responded was led to the medical aid post, where one of the Catholic boys who had been at Confession and Communion an hour previously lay bleeding from many wounds at the point of death. As he finished anointing the dying soldier a comrade came for a last word. "What will I tell your people at home?" asked the friend who was a Protestant. "Tell them—" he labored a little for breath—"tell them," he repeated, "I had the priest!"

At another time a draft of seventy men had come up, shortly before an action. Father Murdoch's room-mate, a middle aged lieutenant, that night was soliloquizing. On the chaplain's asking a question this dialogue ensued:

"No, no, Padre," he exclaimed. "I'm thinking of those fellows this evening. Did you see them when Canon Scott invited them out to the communion? Only about half a dozen went, out of all the crowd. Self-esteem self-esteem—that's it!"

"Well," I replied, "I didn't notice. I asked my men—I had only thirteen men in the draft—if they wished to go to the sacraments of their church, and immediately the thirteen followed me down to the trench."

He looked at me keenly and there was not the slightest rancor in his voice as he spoke again:

"That's it, Padre! That's it! Of course your men would go! That's to be expected." A kind of musing note came into his voice, as he continued: "What is the secret? What is the secret? They don't fear you. Indeed, they love you."

"I told him as clearly as I could the secret, and as he continued smoking quietly, I felt how truly he had spoken of our Catholic lads. How they loved the priest, how on battlefield or muddy trench their eyes lighted with love as the priest drew near. No wonder thirteen men followed me down to the trench: They knew what I could do for them. They knew in a few minutes they would be friends with Christ; that He would visit them, abide in their souls. They were so absorbed in the sublimity of what was to take place that no thought of what others might say flashed across their minds. There was no human respect there."

And how the priest of God realized to the very depths of his soul power of his ministry!

Speaking of experiences just back of the front lines our author writes:

"Often as I sat in the confessional in those little churches of France I thought of God's wonderful ways; of the ineffable graces that flowed so continuously to the souls of those lads. And many times, when the evening's work was done and the last soul shriven, I have left my confessional and walked up the aisle to the altar steps, and kneeling down, have thanked God with a full heart for having made me a priest."

The insensate and un-Christian hatred of "the Huns," so often met with amongst those who kept the Atlantic between them and the War is uniformly absent from the hearts of those who were in the thick of the fight. Naturally the Catholic priest was as eager to shrive a German, to nourish his immortal soul with the Bread of Life, to give the strengthening and consoling grace of the last anointing, as if he were a blood brother—as

indeed we are all of us brothers in Christ and sons of the Almighty and merciful father. These thoughts were inspired by the following account of the chaplain's work at the battle of Amiens, Aug. 8th:

"All day long I walked up and down among the wounded, hearing confessions, giving Holy Communion, anointing those mortally wounded, and taking messages for dear ones at home. Among the dying were many Germans, and a number of these were Catholics. I knew only one sentence in German; 'Sind sie Katholisch?' are you a Catholic? but it was sufficient, for I understood when the reply was 'Yes,' or 'No.' When a German would say he was a Catholic, I would put on my stole, open my little ciborium, hold up the Sacred Host, and then I would look at him. Always his two hands would fold, and I would wait kneeling by his side till he had finished his act of contrition; then I would give him absolution and Holy Communion. It was a beautiful sight to see the tears of gratitude come into the eyes of those dying Germans after they had received their Lord; and after I had anointed them, invariably they reached out and gripped my hand before passing out. Many lads were ushered up to the gates of heaven that day."

Again, after the Armistice, on the way through the Rhineland, our author writes:

"I never saw such excellent Catholics; every morning the village church would be crowded as if it were Sunday. Sometimes I gave Communion to German people who came reverently to the rails."

Though we may give some general idea of this edifying—in the Papinian sense—book, it is quite impossible to reproduce its charm and interest in extracts necessarily detached from the author's setting. These and other good things await our readers in "The Red Vineyard."

RELIGION AND THE SCHOOLS IN AUSTRALIA

In Australia as in the United States the State school system makes no provision for schools that Catholics may conscientiously use, but taxation for school purposes is imposed on all. Like their American co-religionists Australian Catholics have built up a voluntary system of Catholic schools, after paying their full quota for the support of the State system of "free, compulsory, and secular education."

The radical injustice of this plausible school system is thus pointed out by Brownson:

"Nothing can be more equal on its face or more unequal or unjust in its operation. It works no violence to the conscience of Protestants, for they have no conscience against recognizing the State as educator—so long as they can control the State—and they have really no concrete religion or morality which they hold to be the basis of all sound public or private education; but Catholics are conscientiously opposed to the State as educator. . . . They are conscientiously opposed to separating secular education from religious instruction and discipline. They have a concrete, specific and definite religion, opposed to the vague generalities and abstractions of the sects that recognize no religion in particular, and assert at best 'only a common Christianity,' which is equivalent to no Christianity at all. They are conscientiously opposed to the Public schools for their children. They cannot with a good conscience send their children to them, and yet they are taxed their quota, and their right proportion of the Public school funds to support them. Is not this unequal and unjust?"

Catholic schools in Australia have now an enrollment of 164,500 pupils. Naturally their support is a heavy drain on financial resources of the parishes. Yet the Catholics shoulder the double educational burden cheerfully for the sake of a principle; a principle whose truth, as we have often noted, is being more and more recognized here by non-Catholics, and apparently is gaining recognition in Australia also.

A recent report to the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, N. S. W., refers in terms grown familiar on our side of the world to the much-vaunted secular system of education where religion is relegated to the church and the Sunday school:

"There can be no doubt that among children attending school criminal acts, or acts indicating criminal tendencies and dispositions, are of far more frequent occurrence than is generally realized. Theft, untruthfulness, truancy, coarseness, and even immoral conduct, are offences which are surprisingly common."

It is no exaggeration to say that a definite percentage of our school children under our present system will inevitably enter upon a career of crime or immorality, others will join the ranks of loafers and incapables."

Sooner or later it must be recognized that the banishment from the school of the greatest influence in the formation of character and habits is the one unpardonable educational sin.

TEACH THEM MANNERS

By THE OBSERVER

The Quebec Telegraph quotes some opinions on the question of the manners of people at the present day. One gentleman thinks that possibly we are becoming more selfish, and less considerate for the welfare and comfort of others. Another says that the fine and considerate deportment of other days is passing away; that the rising generation are not up to the mark in that respect. Discussion follows as to whether this is due to our present mode of living, our feverish chase of the dollar, our disregard of the feelings of others, or what not. At all events there seems to be an abandonment of the niceties of conduct which mark the difference between a gentleman and a boor. It is remarked that we are more absorbed in our own comforts and affairs than we were even ten or fifteen years ago. One gentleman remarks that as we move about in crowded places where it ought to be made. We crowd others out of our way at ticket offices, in public conveyances, pay no heed to mothers with children, to the old, the tired or the weak, or the crippled, but push them aside ruthlessly in our habitual haste, as we scurry pell-mell in our pursuit of our comfort or convenience or the attainment of our selfish purposes.

Such are some of the reflections made by casual observers of what is going on all about us every day, and the truth and justice of their comments are only too evident. These defects in conduct are to be seen in the children of today. Go to the delivery window of a post office, and some little boy or girl will squeeze past you and take your turn. You can see the same ill-mannered conduct at any bank wicket. It is all a part of the selfishness of the times in which we live. All the little courtesies and amenities of social life are in their nature a repression of our natural selfishness; and it is in that fact—the fact that they are repressive of our natural selfishness, that their social value lies. Nothing can be worse for the smooth and happy relations which ought to exist between all people in a community, than that each individual should act selfishly and without regard for the comfort and convenience, to say nothing of the absolute rights, of others; and it must be said that even absolute rights are none too well respected in these days.

Even the formulas of good breeding are being rapidly abandoned. Hear the short, flippant forms of excuse, when an excuse is thought of at all. Formerly, a man who had the misfortune to inconvenience a lady in even the smallest way, begged her to pardon him. The smart youth of today just jerks out, in a toneless voice, and often without even turning his head, "Sorry," and seems to imagine that he has done his full duty. An introduction was formerly thought to be a matter of some slight consequence, as it ought to be. A lady was first asked for permission to present a stranger to her; the stranger was then brought forward, and was presented in suitable and respectful words: Now, we are fortunate if we do not have to listen to,—"Meet Miss So-and-So," or some such absurd formula.

It was once thought the mannerly thing to do, to see that the chaperons at a dance or other social affairs were waited on, and not neglected: Now, after they have gone through the wearisome task of welcoming a hundred people, they are lucky if there is enough old-

time gentleness in the room to ensure them a cup of tea.

When men treat the other sex, both young and old, in this ungentlemanly fashion, it is not strange that they are very little considerate of each other. Watch a crowd of men getting their coats and hats after a dinner and dance if you want to see the manners of the water front saloon under the camouflage of dress suits.

So far as the ladies are concerned, they are a good deal to blame. They are by way of imagining that rudeness is smart and gives one an air. Young girls no longer try to be polite to their elders, and they are disposed to laugh at customs which were made for their benefit and to ensure them against rudeness and inconvenience and annoyance. Indeed the fashion in ill-manners has gone this far—That we have heard objection made by young ladies to being called young ladies; the word "girls" being more acceptable to them because the term "ladies" seems to imply the duty of being up to a certain standard of manners; a thing they think they can no longer be bothered with.

The other night we had occasion to look in at a place where a great number of young people were gathered as the guests of a tennis club. We saw, and not for the first time, we are sorry to say, young men overflowing from the smoking room and smoking their cigarettes in the centre of the gathering amongst the ladies, to the further vitiation of an atmosphere already bad enough. That is coming and will be soon the regular thing. It is already the fashion in some theatres, and in many hotel dining rooms, to the discomfort of those who prefer to take their meals without gulping tobacco smoke at the same time. If you remark upon this, some will answer, "Well, girls and women smoke now, so what's the use of keeping up a mere pretence?" The use of every refinement is, that it helps to establish habits of self-restraint, and to make people act by rules of some sort and so prevent the inconvenience and annoyance that must certainly arise when each individual is free to do as he pleases.

The inconvenience and annoyance are already making themselves quite plain; but wait awhile and see more. We shall have no distinction between a hotel smoking room and a hotel dining room; no clear difference between a crowded sidewalk and a crowded ball room. The habit of disregarding others will thrive in an atmosphere where manners are at a discount and where consideration for others is no longer considered a necessary part of the training of a gentleman.

It is a curious phenomenon—this falling back into coarseness and semi-barbarism of conduct, just in an age when we are trying to persuade ourselves that we are developing in civilization. One of the necessary tests of civilization is refinement; and no man or woman was ever refined who had not been trained to be considerate of others; and consideration for others does not grow in the atmosphere of do-as-you-darn-pleasiness which is the most marked feature of modern society.

We would urge all Catholic mothers and fathers to teach their children manners.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

WE GET a pleasing glimpse of Cardinal Newman in the recently published autobiography of the Dowager Countess of Jersey: "Fifty-one years of Victorian Life."

The Countess met the Cardinal at the reception tendered to His Eminence at Norfolk House, the London residence of the Duke of Norfolk, on the occasion of his (Dr. Newman's) elevation to the Sacred College. This was in the summer of 1850. "Somewhat to my surprise and certainly to my pleasure" writes the Countess, "I found myself seated next to the Cardinal [at the dinner which followed], and found him very attractive. I asked him whether the 'Gerontius' of the poem was a real person and he smiled and said 'No,' but I think he was pleased that I had read it."

"I NEVER met him again," the Countess adds, "but in October, 1852, was greatly surprised to receive a book with this charming letter written from Birmingham: 'Madam: I have but one reason for venturing, as I do, to ask your Ladyship's acceptance of a volume upon the Russian Church which I

am publishing, the work of a dear friend now no more. The reason is the desire I feel of expressing in some way my sense of your kindness to me two years ago at Norfolk House, and the little probability there is, at my age, of having any other opportunity of doing so. I trust you will accept this explanation, &c., &c."

JOHN H. CARDINAL NEWMAN."

THE BOOK in question was William Palmer's "Visit to the Russian Church," edited with a Preface by the Cardinal. Palmer, who was a collaborator of Newman's in the Oxford Movement, and who followed him into the Church, had named Cardinal Newman as his literary executor, and it was as such that the latter edited and published the book referred to. "I have never been able to understand," adds the Countess of Jersey, "what he considered my kindness, as I thought the Great Man so kind to me, a young female heretic." But those familiar with the life and character of the Cardinal will recognize in this but another evidence of his modesty and of his disposition always to make himself the obliged party.

THE COUNTESS passed through Canada in 1893, on her way home from Australia, where the Earl, her husband, had filled a term as Governor of New South Wales. She received pleasant impressions of Vancouver, Winnipeg and other Western cities, but as the party made its way to New York via St. Paul and Chicago does not appear to have visited any of the Eastern Provinces. Of Vancouver she says that it had a "curiously unfinished appearance," but, as she had since heard and could fully believe it had become a "very fine city."

THE GUBERNATORIAL party did however take in Niagara Falls on the way to the seaboard, and it may be worth while reproducing the Countess of Jersey's impressions. "I am free to confess," she says, "that we had seen so much grandeur and beauty, and particularly such picturesque waterfalls in Japan, that we did not approach any scene in the New World with the thrill of expectation which we might have nursed had we come fresh from more prosaic surroundings, but Niagara swept away any vestige of indifference or slight-weariness. It is not for me to describe it. I can only say that we were awe-struck by the unending waters rushing with their mighty volume between the rocks and beneath the sun. When we sometimes tried to select the sights which we had seen most worthy of inclusion in the Nine Wonders of the World, neither my husband or I ever hesitated to place Niagara among the foremost"—a verdict that no one with eyes to see and a soul open to impression will hesitate to endorse.

"FIFTY-ONE years of Victorian Life" while devoid of any remarkable instances is on the whole an agreeable and entertaining book, free of frivolity or indecorousness on the one hand and touched throughout with a kindly spirit. It covers a wide area and incidentally refutes the fallacy current in some quarters that life during the period was cramped and artificial. Lady Jersey was always in touch with the best social and political life and had more or less intimate acquaintance with most of the famous people of the day. This taken in conjunction with the refined and easy quality of her narrative, the interest of the volumes follows as a matter of course. Published by John Murray, it is put before the Canadian reader by Longmans, Green and Co.

CATHOLIC ARTIST'S NOTABLE WORKS

LONDON, Eng.—A great tribute has been paid to the fine Catholic artist and craftsman, Eric Gill, by the national acquisition of his designs for the Stations of the Cross in Westminster Cathedral.

The designs for these Stations, which are perhaps one of the most notable works of sculpture in modern England, have been bought out of a national fund, and now placed in the sacred art section in the South Kensington Museum, where they will be at the disposal of students of sculpture.

Eric Gill's work has often provoked acrimonious controversy. Foremost is recognized as one of the foremost artists in England at the present day.

WARNS EDUCATORS

OF ATTEMPTS TO MAKE STATE ABSOLUTE IN EDUCATION

Bishop Joseph Schrembs, who preached the sermon at the Mass which opened the twentieth annual convention of the Catholic Educational Association, Cleveland, sounded a clear warning to the delegates against the tendency of the times to make the State absolute in all matters of education. The head of the Cleveland diocese showed much feeling in those portions of his sermon in which he expressed his appreciation of the work of the sisterhoods, the brotherhoods and the devoted priests who have kept high the standards of Catholic education.

BISHOP SCHREMS' SERMON

"Naturally a Bishop of the Church would welcome you with open arms to his see, city and diocese, for after all he holds in you representatives of that great army of noble and consecrated men and women who are giving their lives for the great principle of Catholic education."

"There is much in what I say, and I would have you weigh it well as representatives of men and women who have staked their lives for Catholic education. When a man or woman is willing to give up life, eye, more, when a man or woman actually does that truly there must be much at stake. The country at large looks with a spirit of reverence every year upon the thinning line of men who went out to the accompaniment of drum and life for the preservation of the liberty of the land. They went, bore the brunt of battle and many never came back those that did come back were ready to repeat the sacrifice if necessary."

"Rightly does the country honor them and see in them the incarnation of patriotism. My soul is filled not only with admiration but reverence and gladly do I pay tribute to you who are here and to all that you represent, because you have staked your lives on the glorious work of Christian education."

I welcome you as the Bishop of Cleveland and I know when I say that word that I speak for the entire clergy and for the entire body of the Catholics of the diocese who join in the words of heartiest and warmest welcome."

But let me speak to you of that wonderful work in which you are engaged and for the deeper study for which you have gathered here. It was Archbishop Spalding some twenty-five years ago, who said that the greatest single religious fact in the history of the United States is the Catholic school system. It is maintained and supported without any State aid, solely and alone by the sacrifice of those who love it."

My dear Sisters and Brothers—to realize fully the extent of these pregnant words I will lay before you the component parts of that school system so that it may take hold of your imagination. This Catholic school system of the United States is composed today of some fifteen universities, 959 colleges and academies for young men and young women and 6,406 parochial schools with a total enrollment under the banner of Catholic education of practically 2,000,000 pupils.

SOME IMPRESSIVE FACTS

"That, in the concrete is the meaning of that religious fact and it stands out as nothing else in the religious story of our country. But I am not finished with the presentation of the concrete elements of this religious fact. We have been dealing with figures that represent souls. Let me present other figures that represent sacrifices and these sacrifices may be estimated at their true value when we realize that the Catholic people of this country are doing their fullest duty to the State and its system of education. They pay their taxes for building these schools and pay their taxes for maintaining them and then above that, for their conscience sake, they build their own schools and maintain them. It is estimated that the money in a group of these institutions mentioned represents at the very lowest valuation not less than from \$300,000,000 to \$400,000,000. This sum is for buildings alone, and the maintenance of this tremendous school system of education for these 2,000,000 pupils, presents an annual taxation outlay of conservatively speaking something like \$160,000,000. That is our contribution year after year to our fellow citizens because we believe in the necessity of giving our children a Catholic education. For if these same children were placed in the Public schools the State would be put to the necessity of putting up buildings to house them and, furthermore the necessity of providing teaching personnel."

Year after year this religious fact is made possible solely by the sacrifice of our Catholic people and the spending of themselves and of the Brothers and Sisters. Yes, the very soul of this wonderful system is the noble band of some 100,000 Sisters and Brothers engaged in the work of teaching in our schools. These have yielded themselves to the call of the Master, and by renouncing all desire for earthly