

ROBERT W. SERVICE IN BRITANNY

To the Editor of the RECORD:

The erstwhile poet of the Yukon, R. W. Service, has been writing a series of sketches for the Toronto Daily Star, entitled "Zig-zags of a Vagabond." His latest effusion, which appeared in the issue of the 17th inst., is nothing more than a gross calumny upon the people of Brittany. We may well pass over the accusation that they are unclean in their habits, for cleanliness is a proverbial virtue among the French peasantry. His assertion that they are intemperate he himself refutes, for he tells us that nowhere else did he meet with so many great-great-grandfathers. Intemperance and longevity do not go hand in hand.

Superstition stifled forth! If a cross and a wayside chapel are indications of superstition, then Christianity is superstition. When a man sees nothing to admire, but only subject for ridicule, in the ancient sanctuary of St. Anne D'Aurey, in Beauport, he has no idea of the supernatural and no true poetry in his soul. No, Robert W. Service should never have gone to Brittany. It is no place for a literary scavenger. Pasture, the greatest scientist of our age, thus refers to those people that he labels: "I have the faith of a Breton peasant and I am convinced that if I pursued still more deeply my researches I would have the faith of a Breton peasant's wife."

The ridiculous or the seamy side of life appeals to the author of the "Songs of a Sourdough." The music halls of Paris afford a congenial theme for his Rabelaisian humour. He should keep to such subjects for the morbid delectation of his admirers. But let him restrain his sacrilegious pen from defaming a simple, God-fearing people, whom he does not understand, and with whom he has little in common.

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worthy aspirations. In this his work is akin to that of the confessor. What office could be higher or holier than that of moulding the heart, chastening the affections, and making the soul God-like? We praise the sculptor who makes the marble to breathe, and the painter whose canvases almost live; but what is the shaping of souls into the divine likeness and breathing into them a divine life? If teachers only knew the value of a soul, they would appreciate more highly than they do the great work and realize its awful importance and responsibilities.

"They are constantly at work on the most precious objects—souls created by God unto His own image—making them strong, righteous, and beautiful. It would seem that no more worthy motive, no higher aspiration could be had than to keep them to their task and make them not only to love it, but to be enthusiastic in its pursuit."

"The religious teaching institutes that make the Christian education of youth their sole aim and occupation, unlike people of the world, have no other business to divide their time and attention, and for this reason they should attain the very best results."

It was, no doubt, this view that prompted Archbishop Keane of Dubuque to declare: "I have repeatedly said and I now reiterate the assertion, that I am more solicitous for the multiplication and diffusion of the teaching orders of the Church, than even for the spread of the priesthood, for education is to-day the greatest work which the Church has in hand."

LETTER FROM A CONVERT

We are pleased to be able this week to publish another letter from Mr. Geo. Hammond, of Miniota, Man.

By making study of the claims of the Catholic Church this good soul, who had been a local preacher in the Methodist communion, is now happy in the household of the faith:

Miniota, Manitoba, Jan 18, 1914.

Dear Mr. Coffey—I feel sure that you will be pleased to know that the precious truths, as believed and taught by the Holy Catholic Church, are becoming very plain to me; in fact, with but few exceptions, such as the worshiping of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the veneration of images, pictures and holy relics, confession, and any doctrine which is absolutely strange to Protestantism, have been my belief before as a Protestant, owing chiefly to the literal interpretation of Holy Scripture where it is to be understood. And again have Protestants, both minister and layman, written and spoken to me of the mysterious dogmas and doctrine of the Holy Catholic Church, and yet, to my mind, and to one who has not been fortunate enough to procure a good education, it is all so plain and so simple. What a vast difference between the splendid unity which exists in the Catholic Church and the maze which intersects Protestantism.

How my heart rejoices with great joy I learned of my coming out of the network of Protestantism into the glorious liberty of the Catholic Church. How God is indeed hearing the prayers of his children, as they are presented to Him by Mary, the mother of our Lord, for the conversion of England. What a glorious inspiration to pray, and how we are encouraged to go on. I must say also that I am in communication with a dear friend of mine, who I firmly believe will accept the Catholic faith and return home again to the fold of Christ. I have also sent a request to a good Catholic in England, regarding one of my sisters, who I sincerely pray and trust will finally be led back to the Holy Catholic Church. I am doing my best to refute the accusations brought against the Mother Church, and breaking down amongst my many Protestant friends the wall of suspicion and of prejudice which lurks in their hearts and minds. So it is by prayer, example, kindly entreaty and I trying to bring back the wandering sheep to the fold of Christ. I was a few Sundays ago down at the railway camp on the G. T. P., inside one of the shacks of the Galicians employed on the railway, and what did I find? Something indeed which cheered me on and gave me encouragement. There were some pictures of Christ and of the Blessed Virgin Mary, hanging and pasted on a rough wooden wall of a

shack. So I feel indeed that there is some work for me to do in Miniota, and I ask you for your prayers.

What a great and glorious work would be accomplished if every individual Catholic would try and bring one soul back to Mother Church again. How it would indeed cheer the heart of our Lord, and how the heavens would ring with the praises and singing of the saints and the angels. This I believe is not much to ask of anyone. We cannot always speak to them. We sometimes cannot even get in touch with some, and they are so prejudiced against us, but there is at least one thing we can do, and that is pray for them, and if we can do a good turn, let us do it.

Yours sincerely in Christ  
GEO. HAMMOND,  
Miniota, Man.

BAPTIST MINISTERS

URGENT PROTESTANTS TO ADOPT CATHOLIC PLAN OF TEACHING CHILDREN RELIGION

New York, Jan 20.—The Baptist Ministers' Association at a meeting yesterday appointed a committee of five to consult with other Protestant denominations regarding the proposal that the Protestant churches follow the lead of the Catholics in teaching Christian doctrine to Public school children who do not attend Sunday school.

The Rev. Mr. Bovill said the Catholics "had set a splendid example" in inducing 1,326 Catholic women teachers in the Public schools to give their time to the teaching of religion to Catholic children and that the Protestants should do likewise.

The Catholic plan, which was recommended by Cardinal Farley and approved by Superintendent of Schools Maxwell, is, as stated in last week's Catholic Telegraph, that teachers, outside of their time in the Public schools, ascertain what pupils do not attend Sunday schools or receive religious instruction regularly. These are to be taught in schools arranged in nearby parish houses.

ADDRESS AND PRESENTATION.—On the occasion of the transfer of Rev. Father Ryan from Stayner to Whitby his old parishioners gave evidence of the high esteem in which he was held. They presented a very flattering address and the sum of \$125 in gold. The Promoters of the Sacred Heart League gave a handsome club bag complete. The address was read by Mr. J. R. Gartlan and the purse presented by Mr. M. Madden. The address was signed by Messrs. E. Coyle, jr., P. Duggan, J. J. Dowling and J. R. Gartlan.

THE NURSING PROFESSION.—There are several vacancies for young ladies who wish to take up the profession of nursing. Apply to Supt. of Nurses, Sisters Charity, Good Samaritan Hospital, Suffern, New York.

How much of blessing comes to us through the commonplace of life, the daily succession of those small benefits so long ours that we have come to think of them as part and parcel of our own work,—almost as matters of our creation,—instead of gifts from without! Think upon these things as the day of giving thanks approaches.

MARRIAGE

HAMILTON - SCANLAN.—At St. Edward's church, Westport, by Rev. Father O'Rourke, on Monday, January 26, John D. Hamilton of Elgin to Margaret A., daughter of T. J. Scanlan of Westport.

He is happy whose circumstances suit his temper; but he is more excellent who can suit his temper to any circumstances.

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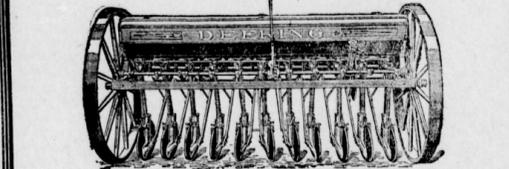
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