

The Catholic Record

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LONDON, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1917

LENTE REGULATIONS FOR 1917

FOLLOWING ARE THE LENTE REGULATIONS FOR DIOCESE OF LONDON

1st—All days in Lent, Sundays excepted, are days of fast and abstinence.

2nd—By special permission of the Holy See meat is allowed at the principal meal on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, except the Saturday of Ember Week and Holy Saturday.

3rd—The use of fish and flesh at the same meal is not permitted during Lent, Sundays included.

Persons under twenty-one years of age or over sixty years are not bound by the law of fasting, and all persons in ill health or engaged in hard labor or who have any other legitimate excuse may be dispensed both from the law of fast and of abstinence.

The precept of abstinence obliges all who have attained their seventh year, even those who have passed the age of sixty.

Soldiers either on active service or in training are exempted from both fast and abstinence.

A person dispensed from abstinence is not thereby dispensed from fasting, and vice versa, if he is allowed several meals a day, this does not mean that he need not keep the abstinence. In this, as in other cases, a dispensation obtained under false pretences is invalid.

In order, however, to safeguard conscience, the faithful should have the judgment of their pastor or confessor in all cases where they seek dispensation or feel exempted from the law of fast or abstinence.

Whatever may be the obligation in the matter of fast or abstinence, Lent is for everybody a season of mortification and of penance.

From this law no one can escape, and in it no one has the right of dispensation.

Pastors are earnestly requested to preach during the holy season of Lent the necessity of penance and the obligation of Christian mortification. They will also provide special means whereby their people may advance in devotion and piety.

As in the past, two appropriate week day services will be held in each church, and the necessary permission for Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament on these occasions is hereby accorded.

A special effort ought also to be made to have the sacred practice of family prayer in common, and especially the recitation of the Rosary, a duty of honor and religion during this penitential time.

MICHAEL FRANCIS FALLON, Bishop of London.

AN ASTOUNDING PROPOSITION

The following despatch appeared in the Canadian papers a couple of weeks ago:

London, Jan. 23.—One of the proposals of the newly-formed Empire Resources Committee, which, under the presidency of Sir Starr Jameson, proposes to develop the resources of the British dominions to assist in paying off the war debt, is to arrange for taking over 200,000,000 acres of land in the Canadian West.

A memorandum of the committee suggests an imperial development board be formed to arrange with the Dominion of Canada to purchase 200,000,000 acres of arable land in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and British Columbia for, say, 40,000,000 sterling to be paid by England at the rate of 10,000,000 yearly on the condition that the Dominion Government spends the whole capital in the immediate development of the lands.

It is believed the value of those lands in such an empire farm would speedily reach a twenty pounds per acre or altogether the Empire will receive in cash four thousand millions sterling, which is the value of its debt for war or pre-war.

This is Windermere's matter of fact account of the cool proposal that in a very important respect Canada should revert to the status of a crown colony. Another despatch gave the names of the

prominent Englishmen who compose the committee but does not give the interesting fact that Dr. Jameson of the Transvaal raid fame is president. Both despatches stated that negotiations were pending with our Government on the matter and that the object of the Empire Resources Committee was the "conservation and development of the resources of the Empire for the common good of the Empire."

Parliament was in session at Ottawa; a good many people expected that some light would be thrown on the matter; but the parties were too busily engaged threshing old straw to bother about the Empire Resources Committee's revolutionary proposal.

As we write another despatch is before us:

"London, Feb. 16.—The Colonial Secretary has appointed a committee to consider the settlement of ex-soldiers within the Empire. The committee includes the Australian High Commissioner and Agent-General Bruce Walker, of Winnipeg. The Times hopes the committee will not be allowed to prejudice the War Conference Committee, and will also have a guard against the accusation only too readily launched that schemes of aiding the emigration of soldiers are likely to denude Britain of the best of her population. What is wanted is a central body to supervise all land settlement."

Of course "the best of her population" must be retained at home.

"What is wanted is a central body to supervise all land settlement."

The assumption that Canada is ready to abdicate essential powers of self-government is taking a good deal for granted.

However there is abundant evidence that some people have been "thinking imperially" about these things. In the October number of the Nineteenth Century is an article by J. Ellis Baker in which he says:

"Hitherto the development of the Empire has been restricted by a small-minded, parochial policy of the component parts, by lack of imperial organization and cooperation. The great Imperial domain can be adequately protected and exploited only by the Empire as a whole, by a truly Imperial Government, by Empire wide cooperation. Immigration and emigration, transportation by land and water, the planful opening and settlement of the vast empty spaces of the Empire, and the question of inter-Imperial trade must be settled imperially, not parochially."

In each and every one of the matters here mentioned Canada has attained "autonomy—absolute, unfettered, complete." A more virile generation of Canadians were proud of each successive gain in the struggle for self-government. A new school of statesmanship would make us bluish for the "parochialism" of our fathers and teach us to think in terms of the Empire.

Mr. Baker continues:

"The War, as has been shown at the beginning of this article was a colossal burden and the British Empire should endeavor to pay off the debt with reasonable speed. The War was waged not merely for the benefit of the United Kingdom but for the British Empire as a whole. It seems therefore only fair that the British Dominions should assume their full share of the cost of the War, especially as the assumption of their part of the burden should prove highly beneficial to them. A large increase in taxation throughout the Dominions would most powerfully stimulate production. . . . The Dominions have developed so slowly, very largely because money was too cheap, taxes were too low, and life too easy. Men could make a good living by little work. If Great Britain should, by the unwillingness of the Dominions, be forced to take over an unduly large share of the war debt, it may be ruinous not only to the Mother Country but to the Empire as a whole, especially if the Dominions should practice at the same time an exclusive policy towards British manufactures. . . . (The cost of the War) might be thrown in part on the latent and undeveloped resources of the Empire which might be pooled for the purpose of repaying the war debt."

We are told that an "Imperial" committee is negotiating with our Government to take over 200,000,000 acres of Canadian land at one dollar an acre, which dollar will be paid to the Canadian Government in annual instalments of twenty-five cents provided said Government "spends the whole capital in the immediate development of the lands." When the value of these lands reaches a hundred dollars an acre the "Empire farm" will pay off \$20,000,

000,000 of the war debt. Well we tied up millions of acres before now for the benefit of railways. Nevertheless if Parliament had not been absorbed in solving the pressing problem of apportioning the blame for the Ross rifle we should probably have had a question asked about "the arrangements with the Government of the Dominion which they say are pending."

We are glad to see that the President of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association in downright Western fashion expresses himself in terms that cover all such schemes:

"Any attempt to govern the Empire from a central point would be fraught with the greatest danger, and might possibly be the initial step to its disintegration."

The Globe, too, is an uncompromising opponent of centralization; but it is to be regretted that it blindly persists in training its batteries on positions that the enemy has never occupied.

This is a sample of the Globe's misdirected heavy artillery and its consequent waste of good ammunition:

"Centralization of Imperial affairs, such as has been suggested by the Round Table leaders, must inevitably tend towards the centralization of power and influence in the hands of those at the centre of government."

The Round Table movement consists of groups of men devoted to the study of such questions as are involved in the theories, plans, schemes and views outlined in the foregoing extracts. And it is precisely because of this systematic study that we find that Round Table students lend no countenance to half-baked imperial schemes that involve the surrender of a jot or tittle of that self-government which Canada now enjoys. The danger—and there is danger—comes not from them but from the vacuous and uninformed imperialistic sentiment which finds a thousand forms of expression, and not less from the absence of that sturdy Canadianism which is based on a knowledge of Canadian history and a study of Canada's immediate problems.

Lord Durham's Report marks the first great step in the historic development of Canadian self-government. As the best means of maintaining the connection between the Colonies and Great Britain he recommended the concession of self-government but with important reservations:

"The matters, which so concern us, are very few. The constitution of the form of government—the regulation of foreign relations, and of trade with the mother country, the other British colonies, and foreign nations—and the disposal of public lands, are the only points on which the mother country requires a control."

And he assumes "a perfect subordination of the Colony on these points."

With the exception of the control of our foreign affairs every one of these matters has passed under the unquestioned and exclusive control of our own government; and even regulation of foreign relations in so far as they relate to trade and commerce have in recent years been assumed as the exclusive right of the Canadian government.

Securing absolute control of the vacant land was necessarily one of the first inevitable steps in the development of Canadian self government. If the suggestion of surrendering such control at this late day could receive a moment's serious consideration from any responsible Canadian then the jeremiads against the decadence of Canadian politics and politicians are amply justified. And we have just the sort of politics and politicians that we deserve.

In the "Problem of the Commonwealth," Mr. Curtis, in pointing out the impossible limits of self-government laid down by Lord Durham, finds "strangest of all" the notion that "settling the vacant land" could be excluded from Colonial control.

With regard to Tariffs the same author—in spite of the critics who have not read his book—states emphatically that the Dominion governments "must control their tariffs from first to last."

"They cannot divide that control with any Imperial Parliament, even if such parliament represented the Dominions as well as the British Isles. . . . The power of each national legislature to make what tariffs it pleases, and to negotiate its own commercial agreements with other governments is finally established, and no serious political thinker questions that it is established once for all."

In the matter of Immigration Mr. Curtis' study leads him to no less certain and definite conclusion. The final power to decide all matters re-

lating to immigration even from other parts of the British Empire must rest exclusively with the Government of the Dominion concerned. This sentence adequately sums up both the conclusion and the argument:

"The power to control the development of their own social structure meant nothing, unless they were free to control the selection of its material."

It will be seen, therefore, that in the troubled and we believe somewhat perilous times through which we are passing the danger comes not from Canadians who are seriously studying serious political problems; it comes rather from the formless, objectless imperialism, all too prevalent, unenlightened by serious study and unrestrained by a healthy sentiment of Canadian patriotism. Opposed to this is an equally unenlightened and therefore misdirected and ineffective assertion of the rights of Canadian self-government which, it is vaguely felt, are in some way menaced.

CONSOLING PLATITUDES

"Nothing will be the same after the war." This is one of the consoling platitudes with which people cover over voids of thought. They utter it with an air of round-eyed profundity. But to ask in reply, "Then how will things be different? In many cases to rouse great resentment. It is almost as rude as saying "Was that thought of yours really a thought?"—H. G. Wells in the London Daily News.

If all our public speakers and some of our public writers would make that little paragraph a subject of frequent meditation we might be spared a great deal from those—well let us say—prophets who don the lion's skin and feel it incumbent on them to live up to the assumed role, every time a long-suffering public gives them the opportunity.

What reason have we to look forward to a transfigured world and a glorified existence "after the War?" Why should the thousand natural ills that flesh is heir to, and the ten thousand artificial evils of a Christian civilization divorced from Christianity disappear with the War?

Preachers never tire telling us that "after the War" the great, unique opportunity will come to "the Church," which tide in the affairs of men if taken at the flood leads on to the millennium. Why?

Socialists think that the War will have brought measurably nearer the practical adoption of their theories. Undeniably the diseased social conditions which gave rise to Socialism will still exist and cry out more insistently than ever for a remedy. Will Socialism be tried? The industrial system which enables "a small number of very rich men to lay upon the teeming masses of the laboring poor a yoke little better than slavery itself" will remain in all its naked paganism. But there will be changed conditions to reckon with. The "teeming masses" in every country have been called on to die if need be for their country. Is it likely that those who come back from the hell of modern battlefields will hesitate to assert their right to live in the country for which they were compelled to fight and ready to die? Is it conceivable that the workman's demand for "wages sufficient to maintain himself, his wife, and his children in reasonable comfort" will not become more urgent than ever? In all this he will be asking only what Leo XIII, in his famous encyclical concedes as his right. Will the fearless soldier who is facing shot and shell revert to the timid servant who cowers before the policeman's baton? This is not prophecy. It is a reasonable deduction from undeniable facts, that the whole problem of Labor and Capital will assume a magnitude and menace never reached before. Staggering under the inconceivable load of war debt the solution will be more difficult than ever. But governments that could find thousands of millions for war will be forced to face the financial and industrial problems of peace.

Not a transfigured world, not a glorified existence is the post War prospect. Rather is it that all the pre-War problems will become intensified, acute and irresistibly insistent. And all this at a time when the difficulties of solution are multiplied a hundred fold by the woful legacy of the War.

Don't pay any attention to the little slights which are unavoidable in this busy world. Look about you for the agreeable things which happen to us every hour of the day.

THE WRITTEN TEST

In recent years there has been a movement to dispense with the written test in the Entrance and other examinations, or at least to reduce it to a matter of secondary importance. The reasons put forward, by those who favor this change, are that it involves an unnecessary physical strain upon the pupils, and that it is not a true criterion of a child's fitness for promotion. There are two cases in which we will admit the existence of an abnormal physical or mental strain. The first is that of children of a very nervous or excitable disposition. The second is the case of those who do not know the answers to the questions. We fail to see that it is not a true criterion of the pupil's knowledge, provided that the examination paper is a fair one and commensurate with what the child ought to know.

The purpose of this paper, however, is not to discuss this matter but to emphasize the importance of the written examination in Catechism not only as the final test of a child's proficiency, but as the most efficient means of assisting the child to acquire proficiency. A pupil knows only what he remembers; or to be more exact, he knows only what he can put down in black and white. The same applies to adults who profess to be educated. Vague, lazy, indefinite knowledge of a fact, or of a principle, or of a truth is of very little value in any department of life. Teachers realize this; for written examinations are held in the classes many times throughout the year. Writing maketh an exact man; and if ever there was a time when he is needed it is in this age of loose thinking and half-digested information.

Why is it then that the most important of all the subjects in the Separate school curriculum is often excluded from this test? Is it because the child is not obliged to pass a written examination in Catechism to enter the High school? It may be that the teacher does not take as much interest in this subject as in the others. The very raison d'etre of our Catholic schools is to create a religious atmosphere, and to supply the child with an intelligent knowledge of his faith. Why then should not the written test, which has proved its worth as regards other subjects, be applied, and applied frequently to Catechism? It often happens that a glib-tongued little miss is at the head of this class; while others, who take a good standing in grammar and arithmetic, are not even ambitious of a high position in Catechism. If they were given a written examination on a set of questions, embracing the chapters that they have studied, but expressed in different words from the questions in the text book, perhaps the star performer would have some of the conceit taken out of her, and the less ready-tongued pupils who use their brains, might come into their own! Furthermore an interest would be aroused in the subject, and the lethargy, that too often characterizes the Catechism hour, would be dispelled.

In the teaching of other branches more advantage might be taken to increase the pupil's knowledge of the events and personages of the New Testament and incidentally make them more familiar with the Word of God—something surely very desirable. When a subject is given for Composition, for example, why not select, instead of Napoleon or the Battle of Waterloo, St. John the Evangelist or the Last Supper? It seems very absurd that a class of intelligent pupils, who can describe to you the character of the Earl of Warwick and recount the principal incidents in the Wars of the Roses, are unable to give little definite information about St. Peter, the first head of the Church. Once, in questioning a class on the life of St. Peter, we gleaned this information: "he was the Apostle whom Jesus loved"; "he baptized Our Lord in the Jordan"; "he was crucified with two other thieves." These answers are an evidence of vague knowledge—very vague indeed. Yet this is a fair sample of the kind of information that many of our adult population possess in regard to religious matters.

If more of our Catholic men had exact knowledge of the doctrine and the practice of the Church, the refutation of the calumnies and misstatements, which appear so often in our daily press, would not be solely to the clergy. It is the duty of the layman to refute these false statements, and he can do so much more effectually than the priest, for he is less apt to be accused of self-

pleading. The reason why he does not do so is because he is not sure of himself, because he is not possessed of definite information.

THE GLEANER.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

A PUBLISHING Company advertising an Irish almanac gives as among its contents, "Retrospective glances looking forward to better days for Ireland." This surely deserves to be bracketed with the celebrated apostrophe of a speaker who assured his hearers that "Looking back over the untrodden paths of the future we see the foot-prints of an unknown hand."

IN CONNECTION with the commemoration of the eighth centenary of the birth of St. Thomas of Canterbury the romantic story concerning the marriage of his parents has once more been revived. This story, which so long found currency in popular histories, has it that Gilbert a Becket, the father, had been a prisoner in Palestine, whence he had gone as a pilgrim or a crusader, and that he had been assisted to escape by the daughter of his captor, who loved him, and who, following him to England, had cried his name (the only English word she knew) in the streets of London until she found him.

THIS STORY, which one historian characterizes as a "pretty legend," cannot indeed be said to have any basis in fact at all. According to Mrs. Hope, who has written one of the fullest and best-known Lives of the Saints, the incident is not mentioned by the personal friends of St. Thomas, several of whom wrote his life. On the contrary they all affirm that both his parents were natives of Normandy, who had settled in London, and that his mother was from her earliest years a devout Christian. Mgr. Benson, to whom we owe the latest book on the subject, and who bases his narrative largely upon the "Materials for the History of Thomas Becket," in the Rolls Series (and this is drawn entirely from manuscripts in the National Archives) says simply that Thomas was the son of Gilbert and Matilda Becket. Lingard makes no mention of anything remarkable in regard either to the birth of the Saint or to his parentage.

WHILE THE Saracen story then is both "pretty" and romantic, it must be classed we fear with that body of fanciful legends which are apt to have grown about celebrated personages, and which have not stood the test of minute examination. Of romance with genuine historical foundation there is enough and to spare in the life of the great Saint of Canterbury. No name in the English calendar has been the target for so much abuse and detraction on the part of the Church's enemies, as he, and no name has come through the ordeal clothed in greater lustre. St. Thomas stands out as one of the noblest figures in English history, in whose person was vindicated for all time the liberties of the Church and her right to carry on her divinely-appointed mission as the teacher of the nations. When King Henry VIII, in his blind fury had the Saint's sacred remains torn from their resting place in Canterbury Cathedral, burnt, and the ashes scattered to the four winds of heaven, he but spread the wider his fame and his hold upon humanity.

IN REGARD to the Bible-circulating mania which breaks out in a new place among our Protestant friends now and again, and which in its latest phase, has been directed against the heroic and long-suffering Catholic people of Belgium, we are reminded of an incident which took place in one of the General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland (Presbyterian) something like a century ago. It will be remembered that a few years ago the "Centenary of Christian Missions" was celebrated with great éclat by the Protestant denominations of Great Britain and America, during which no mention was made at all of the work which the Catholic Church has done in spreading the Gospel of Christ among the heathen during the same period. The self-evident assumption was that mission work among the heathen was peculiarly and solely the achievement of Protestantism. At the same time it was a manifest admission that up to a century ago Protestantism had no idea of any sense of stewardship to the heathen, but that it was purely

a modern development. The fact that the Catholic Church had been carrying the Gospel to the heathen for two thousand years, had brought many and whole nations into the fold, and had it not been for the sixteenth century rents in Christ's seamless garment might ere this have brought the whole world to Christ, was outside their purview. It was convenient to ignore it, that was all.

THE INCIDENT in the General Assembly of the Established Church of Scotland just referred to brings into marked relief the essentially modern character of Protestant missionary enthusiasm and its preponderating characteristic, the circulation of the Bible beyond seas. An overture was presented at this Assembly calling for a favorable consideration of a scheme for foreign missions. This was strongly opposed by some of the most prominent members, among them the President of St. Andrew's University, and a Mr. Hamilton who later was elected Moderator. The latter's speech was memorable, as may be seen by this extract:

"To spread abroad the Gospel among barbarians and heathen nations, seems to me highly preposterous, in as far as it anticipates, nay, as it even reverses the order of nature. Men must be polished and refined in their manners, before they can be properly enlightened in religious truths. Philosophy and learning must in the nature of things take the precedence. Indeed, it should seem hardly less absurd to make revelation precede civilization in the order of time, than to pretend to unfold to a child the Principia of Newton, ere he is made at all acquainted with the letters of the alphabet. These ideas seem to me alike founded in error, and therefore I must consider them both as equally romantic and visionary."

THE ACCEPTED Presbyterian idea at that time regarding missions, as indicated unmistakably by these words, is exceedingly instructive. The utterance shows how the grim Calvinism under which Scotland had lain for three hundred years—a system which confined salvation to the elect few and consigned the rest of mankind to predestinated eternal perdition—had cribbed and confined men's minds and narrowed their souls to the consideration of self alone. It was therefore but a legitimate deduction from the sentiment thus expressed that the speaker should have concluded with the bald affirmation that "not only are there many millions of men who have no opportunities of embracing the Gospel, but there are many millions who ought to have none."

THERE WERE earnest voices raised in opposition to the idea thus expressed, but they had not their sufficient weight to move the Presbyterian conscience from its old moorings, for in spite of such protests the assembly voted against "preaching the Gospel to the heathen." The sect has travelled far since that day, and in our time is lavish in its expenditure upon the cause then discontinued. But while Presbyterians of to-day have thus rebuked their brethren of a hundred years ago on the one count, they seem to have acted throughout in harmony with them on the other, namely that "philosophy and learning must in the nature of things take precedence of religion," and that "men must be polished and refined in their manners before they can be properly enlightened in religious truths." The axiom may not be admitted in theory but who can deny that it is largely realized in practice? This in spite of the senseless and indiscriminate circulation of the Bible upon which all Protestant missionary enterprise hinges.

STILL LARGER WAR TOLL OF CHAPLAINS

London, Jan. 18, 1917.—Another chaplain has been killed at the front in the person of Father Henri Mathieu, who came from the Franciscan convent at Taunton, and still another, Father Peter Groebel, has died after a brief illness, at the base hospital at Boulogne. Father Groebel had been for several years with the navy and the army, and was instrumental in bringing several pilgrimages of Catholic bluejackets to Rome. No less than thirteen chaplains are mentioned with honor in Sir Douglas Haig's latest despatch and two, Father Devas, S. J., of Preston and Father Thornton of Dublin, have received the D. S. O. for conspicuous bravery. It is noteworthy that the English province of the Jesuits has supplied some fifty of the Catholic chaplains now serving with the British army.