

## The Catholic Record

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### CATHOLICS AND SOCIALISM

The following paragraph is from the Christian Guardian:

"The Roman Catholic Church stands opposed to much which goes by the name of Socialism; but in 1913 the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Liverpool, addressing the Plymouth National Catholic Congress, said: 'I have just been reading Philip Snowden's book on Socialism and Syndicalism.' Mr. Snowden advocates a new Socialism, and if that is going to prevail, then, instead of its being the enemy, we shall not be in a position to remain neutral; in fact, I think we might almost grasp hands with them. Reading the book, it seems to me that the Socialism which is going to prevail in England is a Socialism with which we can make friends. . . . English Socialism is now rightly clothed and in its right mind.' The truth is that there is a very marked divergence in Roman Catholic divines, and what one supports another may vigorously condemn."

Our Methodist contemporary seems to think it has here discovered something worth while, something, too, that is inconsistent with the claims of the Catholic Church.

It may surprise our Methodist friend to hear that it is a very commonplace, matter of course truth to Catholics that "what one Roman Catholic divine supports another may vigorously condemn." One may be a protectionist, another a free trader; one a Prohibitionist, another vigorously condemn Prohibition as a dangerous encroachment on individual liberty, and an even more dangerous concession to state-made standards of virtue and morality. And there are ten thousand other such questions on which the Catholic divine is free to form his own opinion. These opinions must necessarily be divergent, even at times conflicting. Knowledge of the subject, experience, mental endowments, education and other factors in forming a judgment vary in divines as in laymen and must lead to similar divergence of opinion in one case as in the other.

Protestants are amazingly ignorant, as a rule, of the vast field left to the private judgment of Catholics, even of Catholic divines. But there are truths of theology, of which we are truths of science, of which we are absolutely certain. There are principles which are incontrovertibly true. Catholics, lay or clerical, study all things in the light of these truths and principles. Hence there is substantial unity even where there is not unanimity.

Socialism is an elastic, comprehensive term. It may mean almost anything. Its meaning must be fixed before we can either accept or reject its claims. It is as protean in form as Protestantism. Refute the tenets of Calvin, Luther, Knox or other founders of Protestantism and you leave Protestantism untouched and unconcerned. The Westminster Confession, the Thirty-Nine Articles, the Standards of Methodism can be and are every day repudiated by those who nominally accept them as their profession of faith. So with Socialism, Karl Marx and Bebel have no authority over those who may claim to be their disciples or who assume the name of Socialists.

Socialists may advocate sound economic or social reform, just as Protestants may hold and preach sound Catholic doctrine. In either case, the "Roman Catholic divine" is not only free but glad to give his endorsement and support.

Philip Snowden may call himself a Socialist; but if he avoids and even condemns much of what the Church condemns under the name of Socialism, there is nothing strange in his

receiving the qualified approval of the Archbishop of Liverpool.

Many Socialists and many professedly Socialist publications propagate doctrines subversive of Christianity. These render suspect all who bear the name of Socialist. But a man may bear the name of Socialist and keep within the lines of Christian ideals of social amelioration.

The pioneer advocate of all the social legislation in Germany, which leads the world in this respect, was a Catholic bishop.

Von Kettler, of Mayence, sixty years ago showed his sympathy with those whose purpose was the betterment of social conditions; but he showed also the lines along which that betterment must be achieved:

"Oh yes, I believe in the truth of all those sublime ideas that are stirring the world to its depths today; in my opinion not one is too high for mankind; I believe it is the duty of man to realize them all, and I love the age in which we live for its mighty wrestling for them, however far it is from attaining them. But there is only one means of realizing these sublime ideals—return to Him who brought them into the world, to the Son of God, Jesus Christ. Christ proclaimed those very doctrines which men, who have turned their backs on Him and deride Him, are now passing off as their own inventions; but He not only preached them—he practised them in His life, and showed us the way to make them part and parcel of our own lives. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life; outside of Him is error, and lying, and death. Through Him mankind can do all things, even the highest, the most ideal; without Him it can do nothing. With Him, in the Truth which He taught, on the Way which He pointed out, we can make a paradise of earth, we can wipe away the tears from our poor suffering brother, we can establish the reign of love, of harmony and fraternity, of true humanity; we can—I say it from the deepest conviction of my soul—we can establish community of goods and everlasting peace, and at the same time live under the freest political institutions; without Him we shall perish disgracefully, miserably, the laughing-stock of succeeding generations."

Herein we have a true and vivid picture of the Catholic attitude toward the aims and ideals of Socialism.

### WILSON THE PROPHET

In the last week of October when the presidential campaign was in full swing, President Wilson at Cincinnati made some remarks which were the subject of peculiar comment on the part of several Canadian newspapers.

"This is the last war that invades the world that the United States can keep out of."

This sententious pronouncement of the President was taken almost as a confession that the United States had played an ignoble part in a great crisis of the world's history and that never again in similar circumstances would that great country stand aside as an idle spectator intent only on the profits that incidentally might flow into her coffers. And that even in this war "sooner or later" the United States should have to do their part.

At the very same time in thousands of newspapers and from tens of thousands of platforms this very same President Wilson was putting forth as his chief claim for reelection the myriad-voiced chorus "He kept us out of war." The interpretation our newspapers put on his words was, therefore, far-fetched and ludicrous.

Nevertheless they may be excused for not readily understanding the distinguished phrase-maker's pronouncement in this case, especially if they forgot that once the President has delivered himself of sonorous sentences which at the time seem to him so important he promptly abandons them; too proud, perhaps, to recognize their claims to presidential fatherhood.

The press despatch reporting the speech continues:

He gave as his reason his belief that "the business of neutrality is over," and that "war now has such a scale that the position of neutrals sooner or later becomes intolerable." He added that the nations of the world must get together and say, "Nobody can hereafter be neutral as regards the disturbance of the world's peace for an object which the world's opinion cannot sanction."

"Sooner or later," does, indeed, seem to mean that, if the War should even yet be a long one, the United States should have to abandon her intolerable position of neutrality and become an active participant.

But read in the light of his other public utterances and of the actual campaign then going on, the great President of a great people was not thinking of any duties or responsibilities so far as the present little disturbance is concerned. He was

speaking in his favorite role of oracle, seer and prophet. As the prophet of peace, democracy, humanity, President Wilson takes himself very seriously. And this serious and sonorous prophet, concerned with the duties of the "nations of the world" in the future, is impatient of prosaic, matter-of-fact insistence on the less world-wide and more particular duties and responsibilities of neutrals in the momentous events of the present on which the future so largely depends.

His object, apparently, was to outline the manner in which the peace of the world must be preserved when once restored after the great War.

"The nations of the world must get together" is a vague suggestion, a pious wish; not very original, indeed, better expressed long ago by the fancy of the poet when he hailed "the parliament of man, the federation of the world."

But when "the nations of the world" have said: "Nobody can hereafter disturb the world's peace for an object the world's opinion cannot sanction" how is this platitudinous program to be carried out?

In the present War amongst the mad people of Europe the President has confessed that he is not able to form his own opinion. The "world's opinion" would seem to be difficult to ascertain. Will "the world" vote on the *casus belli*? Or does the President mean that all nations must enter into a pact to make common cause against any nation which goes to war before submitting its grievance to an international court? It is, perhaps, much more probable that Mr. Wilson as president of the great democracy which he has kept out of war feels convinced that the platitudes he utters from that serene height contain the priceless wisdom of prophetic vision for a war-mad world. When the War is over it may be a salutary shock to President Wilson to find how very far "the world's opinion" is from coinciding with his own exalted notion of the importance his facile and futile phrasemaking has on the solution of the world's problems.

When peace shall have come once more the war-worn and disillusioned millions of Europe will be much more disposed to discard the old shams and shibboleths with which they have been deluded than to accept new ones. Face to face with the naked realities of life, national and individual, which the War has revealed, they will, through God's providence, begin to realize that for Christian civilization Christianity is the only basis and safeguard, its only hope of perpetuation and permanence.

### THE IRISH PROBLEM

To an inquiring reader last week we indicated briefly and inadequately the historic background against which present conditions must be viewed if they are to be seen in their true perspective and their significance intelligently apprehended.

But from one of Irish origin and presumably Irish sympathy the query "Why are the Irish people so bitterly opposed to conscription?" seems much less natural than to inquire why in the name of justice and decency the Irish people should be asked to submit to conscription. Why should they be ruthlessly forced to fight the battles of freedom for others, when the conscriptionists are openly and avowedly opposed to extending that freedom to the Irish people themselves. An ardent advocate of the political organization of the British Commonwealth in the interests of human freedom writes:

"Responsibility for their own government meant that the governed themselves were brought into touch with the facts, and were made responsible for understanding them, for controlling them. That, in truth, is the essence of freedom, and the reason why self-government is a necessary condition of its realization."

Yet the advocates of Irish conscription are openly, insolently and bitterly opposed to Irish self-government, and it is coolly asked why the Irish should object.

There was no such reason in England where self-government obtains, yet for a long time Englishmen objected strenuously, and the Prime Minister publicly announced that practically unanimous consent should precede conscription. It was not until the great mass of the men of Great Britain had volunteered that conscription became practicable. When Ireland consents to conscription, conscription will not be necessary.

There were before the war 51,046 soldiers from Ireland with the colors or in the army reserve. According to statistics prepared by the Irish Registrar as given in a press cable last week 130,241 have joined the army since the outbreak of the war. Fifty thousand who enlisted were rejected as physically unfit for military service. Ten thousand are in the navy. Proportionately, therefore, Ireland's four millions have done very much better than Canada's eight millions, even giving Canada credit for the recent English, Irish and Scottish immigrants who flocked to the colors before native Canadians began to respond to the call in large numbers. Canada has done magnificently; Ireland has surpassed Canada; and were it not for the malignant stupidities that alienated Irish sympathy, outraged Irish sentiment, and engendered Irish distrust, there would be no need of conscription to get 161,239 men of Ireland who still remain available for military service.

These are figures that the native Canadian who makes slighting reference to Ireland should be asked to study.

It is well, also, to know that all English men are not of the shameless anti-Irish type who are responsible for Irish conditions and who advocate Irish conscription.

The great Liberal journal, The Daily Chronicle, commenting editorially on Redmond's speech, said:

"The present malady of Irish affairs is a danger to the whole Empire; and nothing could be worse than that it should simply be ignored on this side of St. George's Channel, or seen only through the spectacles of the 'ascendancy' mischief-makers, who wrecked Irish recruiting yesterday and are clamouring for Irish conscription today. Mr. Redmond's speech showed him still bravely battling to restore the happier Irish situation which prevailed earlier in the War, and which he worked so patriotically to create. It was the speech of one who has proved himself as resolute as General Botha himself to conciliate and combine the local claims of nationality and race with the wider claims of the Empire and of the great historic causes in which the allies are fighting. His is indeed an Imperial figure; and we pity the man who, however opposed to him in the past, cannot in this crisis regard him with respect and sympathy."

And Redmond resolutely opposes Irish conscription. The Manchester Guardian, the greatest organ of English opinion outside of London, gives these sane English views which may be wholesome reading for that most contemptible of snobs, the anti-Irish Canadian:

Looking about it for further opportunities of subjecting the British people to compulsion, the party of conscription hesitates. It may raise the age of obligatory service to forty-five, or it may fasten its system upon Ireland. The former alternative is not attractive as a military policy; the latter would be a crime. To some risk to its own popularity the Nationalist party has wrought marvels for voluntary recruiting in Ireland. It has raised some regiments, which have added lustre (no easy feat) to the military fame of the Irish.

We cooled the ardor of the Irish by our inability to forget our own divisions on Home Rule. Because we can get volunteers no longer it is now proposed to take conscripts.

To a man who is as keen as his neighbors for the war, though he has his reasons, good or bad, for not enlisting, it is not tyrannical (though we think it inexpedient) to say: "You must take your share." To a man who cares nothing, or less than nothing, for our cause, it is an outrage to say: "You shall risk your life for an Empire which inspires in you no active and inward loyalty." That is the method by which Austria's armies have been recruited, and the result is writ in her disastrous military record. To do this thing would be, in a sense in which English conscription was not, an inhuman and immoral act.

It would, moreover, be the act of a political incendiary.

There is good reason to think that saner counsels than those of Ireland's inveterate enemies will prevail in the matter of dealing with Ireland. Already the odious Sir John Maxwell has been removed and his place filled by General Sir Byran Mahon, an Irishman and gallant soldier. Sir William Patrick Byrne, an Irishman born in England, a Catholic and Home Ruler, has been appointed Under Secretary. These appointments are an earnest of the fulfilment of T. P. O'Connor's prediction some weeks ago that the anti-Irish members of the Irish Government would be gradually superseded by men more in sympathy with Irish aspirations. It is the least that is demanded by good sense, good politics and a shame-

faced regard for principles loudly professed. Nevertheless it is a hopeful sign that as between the conflicting elements of the Coalition Government the reactionaries, confronted with the ignominious failure of their intolerant Irish policy, have felt compelled to make way for saner, wiser, and more liberal influences.

### THE PARISH LIBRARY

Last week we outlined one programme of study for our parish clubs. Books of reference of course, are necessary in order to prepare papers on the various subjects mentioned. This suggests a parish library. Unless our young people are readers they will not be writers. It does not follow, however, that mere reading will qualify them to write. The reading of second rate fiction, in order to pass the time, does not cultivate the intelligence or add to our store of knowledge. A pious story book serves the purpose of inculcating morality and of furnishing the reader with high ideals. In this department, however, there has been published in recent years a great deal of wishy-washy stuff, the buying of which were waste of money and the reading of which were waste of time. Before dealing with the works of reference above referred to it might be well, for the benefit of our library committees, to mention some works of fiction and other books that offer a good investment. We do not claim that the list by any means includes all that is worth while, but our recommendation is not based upon press notices which we have often found to be very misleading.

We will brave the contemptuous shrugs of some by placing at the head of the list the works of the late Mrs. James Sadlier. It is well to remember that all the patrons of our parish libraries are not familiar with Browning and Emerson. Mrs. Sadlier's diction may be commonplace but we have always felt that a special grace accompanied the reading of her books, for she was a holy woman who wrote not for pelf but to save immortal souls. Moreover, the lesson taught by "The Blakes and the Flanagan's" is needed in our day as much as it was half a century ago. Another writer whose novels are unreservedly worthy of commendation is Christian Reid. Her genuine Catholic instinct, her dignified and graceful style together with her mastery of dramatic situation make her works at once popular, educative and wholesome. Other novels that we would recommend are: "Marcella Grace" and "Wild Birds of Kilevery," by that charming writer Rosa Mulholland, who was the recipient of the highest praise from such a master of English prose as Gladstone; "Espiritu Sancto," by Harriet Skinner; "Warf and Wolf," and "Zoe's Daughter," by Mrs. Dorsey; "The Merchant of Antwerp," by Hendrick Conscience; "A Circus Rider's Daughter," by Brackett; "Passing Shadows," by Anthony Yorke; "Stephanie," by Louis Veulliot; "The Wonderful Flower of Woxigdon," by Rev. J. Spellman, S. J.; "Grace Church," by John Ayscough; "The Shepherd of the North," by Maher; "Glenannaar," and "Miriam Lucas," by Canon Sheehan—his clerical works though charming are scarcely suitable for a parish library. As tastes differ so much, especially in the matter of fiction, we will not add to this list. In connection with a Sunday school or sodality, "Jesus of Nazareth," by Mother Loyola, "The Son of Siro," by Father Copus, S. J.; "The Correct Thing for Catholics," by Lelia Harding Bugg, and "A Lady and Her Letters," by Catherine Conway make very suitable supplementary reading.

"The Correct Thing for Catholics," contains some very useful and practical hints, while the last named book, though not professedly a religious work, offers instruction that might very fittingly be communicated on the occasion of a sodality meeting. In writing letters, ladies—and gentlemen too for that matter—often commit indiscretions that have a serious influence upon their lives.

In the juvenile department such writers as Fathers Finn and Spalding and Maurice Francis Egan need no commendation. The St. Nicholas series of biographies makes very instructive and edifying reading. "Cardinal Allen," by Dom Bede Camm, "The Story of Blessed Thomas More," by a nun of Tyburn; "Garcia Moreno," by Mrs. Maxwell-Scott and "Blessed Edmund Campion," by Louise Imogen Guiney, are four charming volumes. There are two biographies that should be in every parish library as they have a special bearing

ing by way of instruction and inspiration upon the apostolate of charity in which every Catholic young man and woman should be interested; these are "The Life of Frederic Ozanam," by Kathleen O'Meara, and "The Life of St. Elizabeth of Hungary," by Montelambert. As to historical novels worthy successors in our day to "Fabiola," "Callista," and "Dion and the Sibyls" are "By What Authority" and "The King's Achievement," by Mgr. Benson, and "San Celestino," by John Ayscough. Two others of lesser note might be mentioned because they deal with Canadian history; these are "A Daughter of New France" and "The Heroine of the Strait," by Mary C. Crowley.

The works of reference that we would suggest for the course of papers on Canadian history above referred to are: "The Makers of Canada," "Chronicles of Canada," "Parkman's Works," "Pioneers of the Cross in Canada" by Dean Harris, "Essays on the Church in Canada," by D. A. O'Sullivan, and "The Catholic Encyclopedia."

THE GLEANER.

### NOTES AND COMMENTS

HAVING REGARD to the extraordinary and always increasing demand for wood products throughout the world, and the steady depletion of the supply in North America and the Norse countries, the forests of Russia to which we alluded in passing last week become of universal interest. To that still largely unknown land the world must look for its future supply of timber, and one of the results of the present War is that this fact is becoming recognized. A few figures selected from a mass of material may help to a better understanding of the place Russia in this respect is destined to fill in international economics. Mere statistics are not usually interesting, but, bearing in mind the aforementioned fact, the extent of Russia's timber lands can hardly be a matter of indifference to anybody.

AS REGARDS this or other matters we must always differentiate between European and Asiatic Russia. The former, though much the smaller portion, is in itself so considerable a country as to make other European countries look small in comparison. It is, indeed, more than half the size of all the others combined. European Russia alone, then, possesses about 447,500,000 acres of forest. These vast tracts lie principally in the north, those of the Governments (as the various divisions of the country are termed) of Archangel and Vologda alone covering an area of 292,547,976 acres, equal to the entire area of Germany and Austria together. In the South the forests are found in the ten governments comprising the Vistula basin, Volhynia, Kiev, Tchernigov, Orel, Riazan, Tambov, Penza, and Orenburg. In the Caucasus 16% of the total, or about 19,354,000 acres, is under wood. The greater part of these southern forests extend along the Black Sea. The bulk of them, as with the greater part of the forests throughout European Russia, belong to the State, and many of those that are communally or privately owned are in their development State aided.

ACCORDING to a well-informed and comprehensive survey which recently appeared in a special Russian Supplement of the London Times, and which has been reproduced in part in the Weekly Bulletin of the Department of Trade and Commerce of Canada, most of the known commercial species of trees of Europe are found in European Russia. Amongst conifers are found the Scots pine, common spruce, common silver fir, and the larches. The broad-leaved species include birch, aspen, oak, beech, black alder, lime, ash, maple, plane, elm, willow, black poplar, box, and walnut. The chief species, both coniferous and broad-leaved, are found either as pure woods or as mixed woods, the latter being the commoner. The common spruce is the most widely spread, forming the chief tree of Northern Russia and Siberia, and growing to a fine size, with clean timber much valued in the world's markets. The Scots pine comes next, stretching further down into Central Russia than the spruce. This pine forms pure woods over considerable areas, but is also found in mixture with the birch, which is the most widely extended broad-leaved species in the country. The oak is more or less confined to the south, where it exists in large quantities. All the other varieties men-

tioned are well represented, so that European Russia alone seems well able to cater to the world's requirements for long years to come.

ASIATIC RUSSIA has, however, to be considered. We have given the figure for European Russia as 447,500,000 acres, but to this is to be added the forests of Finland which cover 63,000,000 acres, or a total for Europe of 510,500,000 acres. Siberia and Turkestan, however, are credited with a combined area of 853,000,000 or a grand total for all Russia, of no less than 1,363,500,000 acres—so gigantic a figure as to be almost beyond comprehension. The survival of this great belt to the present day is attributed to the poor quality of the soil, and to the climate, both being more adapted to the growth of trees than to any other purpose. Too poor to have an agricultural value, these forests from their situation and the species of trees they produce in perfection possess an importance that cannot be overestimated. They contain in themselves a source of wealth which will tend in time to make Russia the richest as well as the largest country in the world. Owing to the sparse population practically no impression had been made upon the bulk of these forests until within the past sixty years or so, and even the large output during that time has left the greater part of them untouched.

THE REASON for this immunity of the Russian forests from the axe of the lumberman as with the slow development of the Empire's agricultural resources, has been mainly due to the lack of railway facilities for the transportation of their products to the seaboard. We have already referred to the era of railway-building upon which Russia has now entered, and which, despite the War, perhaps partly on account of it, is being vigorously pushed forward. Russia realizes now, as never before, that the position of isolation which she has hitherto occupied has militated against her growth as a military as well as a commercial power, and she can never return to the *status quo ante*. Being so little known to other nations the Russian can hardly complain if he has hitherto been regarded as having only half-emerged from the state of barbarism. This may, indeed, be true of a certain portion of the population in the far-away Asiatic territories, just as similar classes may be found in almost all great nations.

BUT THOSE who know the Russian people smile significantly at any sweeping assertion of this kind. For the educated Russian, and the very large element of the population in direct contact with him, by no means suffer in comparison with the like classes in other countries. Intellectual life is not at a low ebb as is proved by the character of their literature, as yet practically unknown to the outside world. But this leads to another subject which will be dealt with later. For the present we content ourselves with this brief and perhaps superficial survey, as tending to set people thinking about the great and unconquerable nation which in the present colossal struggle against reaction and despotism is standing shoulder to shoulder with Great Britain, France, Italy and the lesser Powers, determined to suffer all and to endure all, that "liberty may not perish from the earth."

### ON THE BATTLE LINE

#### ROUMANIAN FRONT

THE Roumanian defence of the Valleys of the Jiu and the Alt Rivers, desperate though it is, fails to hold von Falkenhayn's columns in check. Petrograd announces the evacuation of the village of Tirgu-Jiu, about thirty miles south of the Vulcan Pass. Here the Germans have reached the railroad of a line that will, if followed south, enable them to outflank the Roumanians at Oresova and force the evacuation of about four thousand square miles of territory in the angle between the Vulcan Pass and Orsova. To the east of the River Alt the Germans have occupied the village of Liresci, or Liresht, five miles north of Kimpulung, which is the railroad for the line serving the mountainous region between the Valleys of the Alt and the Prahova. Maps showing the height of the ranges and the gradual descent to the foothills of the Transylvanian Alps indicate that von Falkenhayn's troops are going down hill now, and will be in the Wallachian Plain after further progress of less than ten miles.