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The Catholic Record

-\$2.00 per annum. rope — \$2.50. Thomas Coffey, LL. D. of subscription - \$2.00 per d States and Europe - \$2.6 and Proprietor, Thomas Co Rev. James T. Foley, B.A. Thomas Coffey, ILL, D. Editor - H. F. Mackintosh

-Robert M. Burns

Postage upon replies. and marriage notice cept in the usual cor ion 50 cents.

a insertion 50 cents, poroved and recommended by Archbishops enio and Sharetti, late Apostolic Delegates enada, the Archbishops of Toronto, Kingston, wa, and St. Boniface, the Bishops of London, silton, Feterborough and Ogdenaburg, N. Y., the clergy throughout the Dominion.

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In Ottawa, Ont., single copies may be purcha rom J. W. O'Brien, 141 Nicholas St.

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LONDON, SATURDAY, SEPT. 11, 1920

HUNGER.STRIKES

The unfortunate case of the Lord Mayor of Cork, Terence McSweeney, who, at the time of writing, is gradually sinking as a result of his refusal to take food whilst confined in Brix. ton Prison, brings to the fore the they are innocent of crime and that question of the morality of hungerstrikes. The question is being raised on all sides, whether the abstension from food, which will result in death or danger of death by starvation. may ever be justified on moral grounds.

It may be stated from the outset that the question from a theological point of view farnishes matter for serious controversy. There are those who view hunger strikes as essentially immoral and criminal might easily be construed into a when they are attended by serious | tacit admission of guilt. Per se such danger to life. On the other hand, there are theologians who jastify them as an indirect taking of one's life, for which they profess to adduce not from any intrinsic wrong in their sufficient compensating causes.

Let us first review the mental attitude of the strikers themselves. A Is it, then, intrinsically wrong to prison chaplain whose duties have disobey the prison rule obliging one brought him into communication to eat prison food if obedience may with hundreds of strikers, writes of them as follows :

"Though I could never see any reason to doubt that the hunger. strike was suicide. I am bound to say that I had but a very limited success in inducing the strikers to adopt my views. Their resolution was, as a rule, invincible, being proof against argument and persuasion alike. Their strength of purpose was, in great part, derived from their conviction that they had in support of their action sufficient theological authority. The existence of real authority of these theologians, or even the tenor of their teaching, it was not possible to ascertain, as I am satisfied that opinions were often quoted at second hand and not infrequently misunderstood.

"Although all the strikers and their mplete moral innocency of starving themselves to death-some even prison food when no other food is wonderful religious fact in the world, years ago, to the proud twentieth. out being a noble by race has lofty treated such doubt as an evidence of principle ?" amongst them the greatest variety of hunger-strike, in order to secure his laries and organization, and com- ders of past ages. opinion that it was not suicide but feast is kept on December 16th, and allegiance. adopted another attitude. The the faith. In his case the circum- "When we witness the transparent as to what "uplift " means. strike, they declared, was like the stances of the heroic fast recorded in sincerity of so many of our separated The savages realized vagualy the awkward in his bearing and yet be patriot's glory."

of importance.

justified on a balance of good and only on the sixth day, when the evil, a man might well ask what act would be condemned; but at any rate, the good which is to outbalance such a head of evil must also be victorious. excelled in every point. The hungerstrike is immoral on every test that hunger-strikes will no longer be London, Ontario. can be applied to a human act, and necessary is a consummation de-

Writing in the same journal, the Rev. P. Cleary comes forward as the Irishmen will avail themselves of be restored in Christ." champion of the hunger-strikers. The arguments of his cleverly expressed presentation of the case may be briefly summarized as follows :

"Hunger . strike is abstension from food which will result in death or danger of death by starvation. That is one, an evil aspect of the act

or omission. Can the act have another, a good aspect ? Let us see. Prisoners who have been unjustly condemned are entitled to protest against their own condemnationthey are entitled to maintain that they should not be treated as criminals. Rafusal to take prison food might then be a refusal to acknowl. edge the right of the prison author. ities to confine them to such food : it might involve a direct protest against

an unjust condemnation, and, where the alleged crime is of a political nature, a vindication of some big national claim. Whereas, on the other hand, acceptance of food and general obedience to prison discipline prisoners are not bound to remain in prison or obey the prison rules ; if they are bound the obligation arises escape or disobedience, but from the

fact that greater evils might ensue. be construed into an admission of guilt and of the authorities' right to treat one as a criminal? Now if a

big national issue is at stake, which would be very materially benefited by a strong protest against injustice, and which, on the other hand, would be seriously compromised by even an apparent admission of guilt, it would seem that in these circumstances. disobedience might be not only a right, but even an obligation. It may be that incidentally the same act may result in the death of the striker : the principle is conserved not by the death but by the refusal to acknowledge the prison claims. If a Christian in the early days of the of animals killed by strangulation or if, at the present day, one is entitled

supporters were convinced of the should not one he actived to make by should not one be entitled to refuse

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but in morals it counts for nothing letter still preserved in the Archives tion, from January 18th, the Feast of out any disguise in a considerable "The true gentleman," he goes on, of Vercelli, the Saint tells what St. Peter's Chair, to January 25th, portion of the literature of the day; By way of conclusion the writer happened. The jailers showed their the Feast of the Conversion of St. and many people who are supposed cause a jar or a jolt in the minds says : "The evil consequences which homicidal mind, for it was only after Paul. Within two years the mem- to possess education, are so close to of those with whom he is cast. . result from hunger-strike, I find to some days, when divers people were bers of the Society were received the wigwam that they say it is not He has his eyes on all his company be the maximum from every point of crying out against them, that they corporately into the Church, the first only a man's, or a woman's, right to he is tender towards the bashtal. view. If an act of the kind could be allowed one friend to onter. It was fruits of their own intercession. live according to the impulses of the gentle towards the distant, and Saint's strength was failing, that they allowed him to come in again with food, and thus St. Eusebius came off

recent times is not at all such as England persists in spiriting away would allow us to associate it with Ireland's sons and allowing them to

> the efficient political weapon of hunger-striking, in their effort to shame the Government into granting Ireland her freedom.

THE QUESTION OF REUNION The appeal which the Lambeth the absurdity of a multitude of warring sects and now manifest a desire to renounce the principles of division and disintegration set in motion by

the so called Reformation. The spiritual longing for the re-

ings in matters of faith and moralsone fold under one Shepherd. No lower ideal than this can permanently solve the question; and no

support.

We Catholics, at least, are pre-

irreligion. specious unity by the substitutic a of God or His laws, always confuses the many cities of the United States

namely, the supposed frustration of spirit; and that by bodily indulgence Academy in officially adopting the if the reprisals go on its valiant to refuse food offered to idels, even Christ's ardent prayer for the unity his soul is uplifted.

Since then they have continued to flesh, but even a duty to do so. propagate their special devotion, which has been blessed and indulg-That the day may soon dawn when many dioceses, including that of advocate the license of the savage; in conversation and never weari-

UPLIFT BY THE OBSERVER

It is a great stroke in agitation and he may have the intention of going controversy, to get a few fine-sound- up; but he is not, at the time, doing ing words and phrases, and to run any climbing. They fail to realize them in everywhere, apropos of that when a man is as drunk as he Conference issued to all Christian something or of nothing. It they can be, he is on his way to getting people to reunite in one great body have no particular meaning, or half sober; yet that getting drunk is not shows that the English speaking a dozen meanings, so much the a means to sobriety. world is passing through a new better; in the one case nobody is at The world would be the better if phase of religious sentiment. Pro- the trouble of saying what they we could get through with the cultitestants are at last beginning to see mean, and in the other case everyone vated heathens who want us to take can interpret to suit himself. up wigwam religion.

"Reconstruction " had a great run. "Self-expression" and "uplift" were a good second and third. But the same difficulty attended all three:

namely, the lack of any definite or union of Christendom is indeed a authoritative explanation or undernoble idea, which indeed strikes a standing of what was meant by them. sympathetic cord in the heart of all Explained or unexplained, however, should say, his inventiveness) is doubt "notorious facts:" Catholics. But there is only one these expressions have been made to plan of reunion in which Catholics serve the turn of "the world, the lacks the element of novelty it is can participate and that involves flesh, and the devil," as most human easy, with his deft hands, to touch acceptance of all the Church's teach- thoughts and ideas are sure to be it up until it takes on the coloring riddles by human light alone.

I wonder what idea the human mind could conceive that human to the prejudice of Catholic interests scheme of reunion which deliberately weakness and vanity would not turn ---more often as a simple appeal to stops short of this can receive our to an application merely worldly or the sensational. material.

Many people who talk of "uplift' cluded by our principles, as well as cannot, seemingly, rise above the, the daily papers all over the by the express prohibition of the idea of the merely human. They do, continent a few days ago had the Holy See, from participation in a indeed, talk of "soule"; but the very latter characteristic. It was said 'round table conference," even terms they use show that they are with every show of assurance that Fein is able to issue a list of outrages though it be a world conference on talking about one thing and thinking "for the first time in history," a Castle daily publishes. The sacking faith and order, which is based on about another. They are talking Pope, in the person of his present of Lismore and Fermoy happened nothing more substantial than an about the soul, but thinking about Holiness, had posed for the moving two months ago. Since then Tuam, nichures. The statement is harmless Limerick, Tralee, Cork, Thurles, and

scheme of Creation, we find ourselves allowed pictures of himself to be ing an immediate but merely The savage who knows nothing of pictures were publicly exhibited in

lible creed, of reciprocal services for feels vaguely that there is something interest they created at the time, a divinely ordained worship, and of a in him which is superior to the body, it being the first opportunity the committee and chairman, for the and which will not die, he draws no general run of Catholics had of successor of St. Peter, are an uncon- clear distinction between the soul render of the whole position ; a weak of that confusion, he imagines that the flesh. Church was entitled to refuse meat acknowledgment of a calamity that the gratification of the low impulses has not yet, and can never happen, of the body are expressions of his

may be a great difference physically incurring this responsibility? In a tendom, dating it by happy inspira- one pleases, is put forward now with- to which allusion has been made. "carefully avoids whatever may merciful towards the absurd; he Besides these there are many who can recollect to whom he is speak. are far on the way back to the ing; he guards against unseasonable enced by the late and present Holy wigwam, but who are, as yet, merely allusions or topics which may Father. This octave is observed in en route. They do not preach or irritate; he is seldom prominent

but they cast a kindly glance in that some. He makes light of favors It is ardently to be hoped that the direction. They do not exactly while he does them, and seems to neither itsels nor its parentage in voutly to be wished. Still, whilst day will at length dawn when there justify wicked living, but they are be receiving when conferring. He shall be but one flock and one shep- full of kindly apologies and excuses never speaks of himself except when herd, when the breach made by for these who live wickedly; and tell compelled, never defends himself the time-honored cause of a nation." languish in prison on the merest Luther, Henry VIII., and the others us that, after all, they are only seek. by a mere retort : he has no ears suspicion, there is no doubt but that shall be healed and "all things shall ing to express themselves, and that for slander or gossip, is scrupulous it is only by such expression that in imputing motives to those who human beings can learn, and rise, interfere with him and interprets everything for the best." What is They fail to realize that when a this but a drawing out of the man is going downhill on a toboggan, Sermon on the Mount?

PRUSSIANS AT WORST OUT - PRUSSIANED.

GENERAL MACREADY PRETENDS TO DOUBT NOTORIOUS FACTS

The special correspondent of the Manchester Guardian gives the following account of the military out. twenty-three millions. Actually it rages in Ireland, which General Macready is constrained to admit reflect "the utmost discredit on the army" America is hearing a very different story from Belfast. And I should and "if committed on active service expect to have the approval of the THE VAGARIES of the "special would render the offenders liable to correspondent" are proverbial. With the death sentence." Yet with nausregard to Catholic affairs especially eating hypocrisy characteristic of the his resourcefulness, (or perhaps we whole Irish regime he pretends to

inexhaustible. If an atom of news Dublin, Aug. 17th .- Last night the North Tipperary town was "shot up." Soldiers and police broke loose, as it is put, and with bombs and petrol set when mankind tries to read its most pleasing to that portion of shops. Street firing went on for the public to which he ordinarily several hours. Shops were looted. Several creameries in the Templecaters. Sometimes this gift is used more district were burned during the night. This is a typical case of what is perhaps the most hopeless side of the whole terrible Irish situation. We have a new Act for the restoration of order, but the guardians of order are demoralized. The out.

breaks go back a long way, but they have become much more frequent in the last two months. Indeed Sinn almost as grave as that which Dublin half a dozen isolated villages have been treated to similar exhibitions of terrorism. Mr. Geo. Russell (".E."), in the current "Irish Homestead," 'Human devices," says a well right back in the wigwam so far as taken as he walked in the Vatican has given a painful account of the known Catholic writer, "for achiev- our religious ideas are concerned. Gardens, and, what is more, these systematic wrecking of the Irish creameries, on the vicious principle for every barracks a creamery.' working program' for an infal- soul with the body; and, while he and Canada. We remember the has long recognized that nothing feeds Sinn Fein more than this breakdown of all decency in the attempt to maintain order. Moral judgments have got a little twisted seeing their spiritual father in in Ireland, but there is, after all, scious, but not less mischievous sur- and the body ; and, as a consequence what is the nearest approach to a difference between the burning of a police barracks and the looting and burning of a street of shops. The Irish Dominion League has THE ACTION of the French

English term "gentleman," and attempt to rally "moderate" opinion

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tion of all ranks. Therefore I look to all officers to ensure that there will not be the least grounds for allegations of looting or retaliation, and though confident that these orders will be rigidly adhered to, I must point out that any derelictions would be met by the severest disciplinary measured

The above remarks of the Com-mander in Chief will be read to all units on parade and kept posted on the unit and order board.-The Manchester Guardian.

AN UNSAVORY LITTLE PAMPHLET

ENGLISH EX OFFICER REFUTES MISREPRESENTATION By Major Erskine Childers, D. S. O.

Belfast realizes from the report of their Chamber of Commerce, that Ireland pays annually an extortion-ate tribute to England. Faced with a Bill which defines and demande this tribute in terms of hard cash they flatly refuse to pay even a third part of the sum claimed They admit in so many words that England makes an enormous profit out of Ireland, the fact being that, if Ireland were to cut the connection tomorrow, England - or, rather Great Britain-would incur a net loss of income in taxes alone, accord ing to the latest figures, certified by her own Treasury officials, of nearly will soon be over thirty millions We are a paying proposition.

Chamber of Commerce in nailing to the counter a lie (no gentle word is possible) now emanating from their city and circulating extensively in America upon this very point. For it is a base thing to advertise in America that Ireland is the paid pensioner of England. It would be base if it were true, for bankrupts and workhouse paupars do not glory in their degradation; doubly base when it is untrue.

I have before me a demure little pamphlet, strongly resembling a tract, signed by six Belfast clergy-men and Mr. William Coote, M. P., and entitled "Facts from Ireland for Consideration of American the Citizens." The authors describe themselves as the accredited delegates of the Protestant Churches of Ireland, representing a million and a quarter people," and in that alleged capacity have toured America disseminating these "facts."

Incidentally who "accredited " the Rev. Louis Crooks, Rector of Knockbreda Episcopal Church, Belfast, to speak, as he claims to speak, behalf of the Episcopal Church of Ireland, with its 600,000 members? My information is that he, like the other delegates, was nominated in the first instance by the Ulster Unionist Council, a bitterly partisan political committee, and, after the event, received a letter of approval from his diocesan bishop. To represent to Americans that he was specifically empowared by the Church of Ireland to speak on its behalf was a false pretence. A majority of its laymen and clergy are, no doubt. Unionists, but, if I know them rightly, they would atterly disclaim responsi bility for this unsavoury little pamphlet, and, like many Presbyter ians and Methodists, would repudiate with disgust the meanest passage in it (with the exception, perhaps, of an hypocritical eulogy of John Redmond, which makes one fairly shudder where a story is told, without names, of course, or any clue to identifica-tion, for the purpose of explaining the lack of initiative and progress in Southern and Western Ireland." The suggestion is that Protestant tradesmen are, on account of their religion, boycotted and persecuted throughout the South and West, that people will eat only "Catholic loaves," and so on. What a world we live in! A Sinn Feiner gets two years with hard labour for singing a song in praise of Ireland and her national herces. Protestants many of them. No penalty at all for defamation of Ireland and the mass of her population by Unionist divines! But the "fact" to which the pamphlateers give the place of honour is the abject financial dependence of Ireland upon England. indebtedness so great that ' out adrift from Great Britain would be to her (Ireland) a day of disaster and financial ruip." You would have thought they would be ashamed of being a burden on their noble benefactress. Not at all. They are proud of it. On the first page I find it stated, definitely and with unction, that "Ireland indirectly receives back much more than she contributed for imperial purposes. Now, false statements like this are sometimes made in sheer ignorance and I know, from experience, that they are often believed in America by people who have no means of testing them. But this statement was not made in ignorance. The anthors had before them the Treasury Financial Return for the year 1918-19, and quote correctly from it the respective revenues and expenditures, and the respective ' contribu tions to Imperial expenditure" of England, Scotland and Ireland in that year. Ireland's contribution is given as fifteen millions odd. It was probably a good deal more, but we will accept it as correct. This official fact had to be converted by the authors into a "fact for the consideration of American citizens.' They first proceed to explain that

A DESPATCH which appeared in the urgency of showing some sort of When we forget God, or have only enough, but it is not accurate. united front against the forces of a vague knowledge of His Divine Some fifteen years ago Pope Pius X.

and uplift themselves.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

gram.

act but by an omission. It is all a guilty of his death. question of intention. The differ.

showed indignation that there should offered and when its acceptance is staring us in the face." be any doubt on the point, and would imply the sacrifice of a big It is obvious that reunion bears a list. But let us not be too greatly does noble acts, is noteworthy.

has always been considered a Bishops of Italy, had been imprisoned their austerities, and the singular that was through their bodies. by Patrophilus and his followers, who purity of their lives; we cannot Thus, lust and drunkenness be vidual element of "family," are

Canon Waters, writing in the Irish had separated him from his own fail to discern the finger of God at came, to the heathens and pagans, indeed possessions not to be lightly Ecclesiastical Record, considers the priests and deacons. He insisted work. No doubt God pours out His an expression of the spirit; "self. estimated, but in the final reckoning action of hunger-strikers as suicide that these be allowed to approach uncovenanted mercies; no doubt He expression;" "uplift;" though pos- character and conduct have the first by the unjustifiable omission of him and bring him food, deeming it has, at all times, drawn to Himself sibly they did not use these terms. place. taking food. In a learned article he wrong to receive food from the hands chosen souls even among the Well, how do cur twentieth cenreviews the teaching of the Church of his herstical jailers, and appar- heathen; but this movement is on tury heathens talk? Some of them on suicide, pointing out that it is ently fearing that this might be such a scale, and is associated with talk of "the soul" and of "self. Newman's well-known definition of always a mortal sin in itself and interpreted as holding communion such a marked Romeward tendency, expression," and of "uplift," frankly a gentleman as "one who never hence cannot be sustained as a with them. Unless his priests be that the conviction grows upon us and unashamedly in terms of sensual inflicts pain." No one had a higher means of furthering a political pro- allowed to approach him and bring that Mary is about to recover her expression; and the numbers of idea of the qualities of refinement

Catholicism, the biggest and most from the wigwam of three hundred cation, as meaning "a man who withcentury professor, author or journal- sentiments, elegant manners, and had to wait till today, for the first

meaning for Catholics totally dif- surprised when we find the very While, as the Globe points out, the mental perversion-still they were The hunger strikers are by no ferent from that which it bears for same errors in the one place as in word "gentleman," in its original not at all agreed concerning the means without weighty precedent for the active promoters of the move- the other. Man has long ago made signification, was synonymous with when he speaks of notorious facts as proper defense to adopt or even con- their stand, for we find no less a ment. For them it means a closer all the blunders he can make con- rank or "family," it has now taken inferences, leave much to de desired. corning the nature of the strike personage than a Saint, who is a and looser federation of independent cerning religion; and the blunderers on a wider and higher significance. itself. In fact there prevailed Father of the Church, engaged in a sects, each retaining its own formu- of today are only repeating the blun- It might go further, and say that even "manners" or deportment, as

views. The unsophisticated were point. The Saint in question is St. bined only for limited objects. For Moreover, there is no aristocracy ordinarily understood, are not necesquite ready to admit that the hunger Eusebius of Vercelli, one of the most us, reunion means only one thing- of ignorance. Nothing so quickly sarily the mark of a true gentleman. strike was suicide, but they added conspicuous champions of Catholic the recantation of the heresies of the and decisively reduces all men to a For a man may have both polish and that suicide, in the circumstances, orthodoxy, during the storm and Reformation and the return of all common level as ignorance. There is dignity, and even a certain degree was quite lawful. Others were of stress of the Arian persecution. His our separated brethren to Papal no occasion for astonishment when of urbanity and yet be at heart very

we find a twentieth century professor far removed from the Christian murder rather-murder by the Gov. he is honored as a martyr though he Speaking of the reunion move- or author thinking the thoughts of a sense of the term. On the other ernment. The more enlightened did not actually shed his blood for ment, an English writer says: red Indian of the seventeenth century hand, a man may be rough in his exterior, uncouth in his speech, and

attitude of a soldier on the field of his graphic letter to the Bishops of brethren; the deep spirituality of existence of something within them in character and conduct every inch battle ; certain deeds may cost him Italy, with the enclosed protest their lives ; their intense devotion to which was more and higher than a gentleman. We have known such his life, yet it may be the part of a addressed to the Arian Patrophilus the Blessed Sacrament and to the human; yet, in their ignorance of men, and when everything is said brave man to run such risks for his and the other jailers show how very Mother of God: their fidelity to what the soul really was, they tried and done, than in him the term country's sake, and conduct of this near he went to the gates of death. meditation and vocal prayer; their to give it expression by the only may be said to find no higher kind instead of needing an apology St. Eusebius, as he tells the frequent use of the confessional, means of expression they knew; and exemplification. Bearing and de portment, and even the less indi-

THIS REFERENCE recalls Cardinal him food, he plainly declarss that he dowry, and St. Peter his patrimony." those who thus frankly take their or "manners" than John Henry The Canon points out that one will neither eat nor drink whilst in In 1906, the Society of the Atone- passions as an expression of their Newman, who in himself was their may commit suicide not only by an prison, and that his jailers will be ment, a religious community of soul is increasing, and increasing perfect exemplification, yet, in his Anglicans of Graymoor, New York, rapidly. The sensual appeal for judgment, as he was always careful What was the effect of this threat ? organized the Church Unity Octave greater liberty "to live one's own to make plain, they are secondary ence of positive act and omission Did the Arian jailers shrink from of prayer for the reunion of Chris- life;" meaning to sin as freely as to chalities of the inward man

reflection on the standards of the Irish Administration that we have official expression of reprobation At last the "severest disciplinary measures" are promised, but the terms of Sir Nevil Macready's order

GENERAL MACREADY'S ORDER

The text of the order, which was issued as a general routine order from G. H. Q. today, is as follows :-

Statements appear from time to time in the press and in correspondence to the effect that, especially when search of houses and persons has been carried out. articles are found to be missing, the inference being that they have been taken by the troops. I know that such statements are to a great extent put abroad particularly for purposes of propa ganda against the Government, but recognize that instances may occur with young troops not yet fully imbued with the spirit of discipline that is so essential not only for the credit and good name of the army in general and their own regiment in particular, but also to enable the army to succeed in the diff. cult task which it is called upon to perform in Ireland.

It has further been inferred that soldiers indulge in acts of retaliation on the civil population as a whole for acts committed against them, as distinct from defending themselves when threatened or attacked. Such action would reflect the utmost discredit on the army, and would indicate a lapse from discipline which, if committed on active service, renders the offenders liable to a death sentence. To uphold the discipline of the

army and prevent discredit fall. ing on the good name of the regiment must be a determina-