

The Catholic Record

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LONDON, SATURDAY, AUGUST 29, 1925

SIR ADAM BECK IS DEAD

Death inevitable in its coming, has taken from amongst us him whom all had learned to respect, reverence and love. Not alone because of the great work which he achieved but also for the noble manliness, the incorruptible integrity and supreme kindness of the man did we honor him in life, and now in sorrow mourn his death.

He sprang from the common people, and for them unselfishly labored even to the end. His one ambition seemed to be to work that others might share more abundantly of nature's goodness, that others might appreciate better and enjoy more fully God's gifts to man.

A member of the Provincial Parliament for many years, he was no politician in the common acceptance of the term. Impatient of petty interference and indomitable in courage he pushed his great Hydro project to success, in spite of lukewarm support or positive opposition. He was a visionary if you wish, but a visionary with practical ability and unswerving perseverance, who made his dreams come true; and as a result Ontario today possesses a publicly-owned enterprise which stretches throughout its length and breadth, serving all, rural as well as urban centres, with electric power delivered at an incredulously low cost.

His love for his fellowman and his exalted idea of service made him found and support and protect an institution in London for victims of Tuberculosis which has proven a haven of refuge for thousands infected with this dread disease. His sense of sportsmanship evidenced so unmistakably on the turf showed itself in his treatment of those who worked under him, so that perhaps his most sincere mourners outside of his immediate family were those who knew him as their master. And above all, his love and devotion to his home, his wife and daughter stamp him as a man of the highest ideals and noblest qualities.

Frequently attacked by political opponents, often harassed by a biased and inconsiderate press, he bore himself always as one who, conscious of his own integrity and confident in the soundness of his policies, feared no exposure and shirked no responsibility for the things he had done. He has been called a human dynamo; in very truth he was; yet withal, his heart was kind and tender, his feelings sensitive and his affection for his kind, sincere and true.

The scenes that attended his final obsequies will long be remembered by those privileged to view them. London, his own City, who owed him so much, did herself proud in her desire to manifest her gratitude. All and sundry, the classes who respected him, the masses who loved him, turned out to do him honor. The Province in the person of her Prime Minister and Cabinet followed in the wake of his bier. The Country at large, in the person of representatives of the Federal Cabinet showed her appreciation. Church and State, the Press, the People, to repeat, the Masses and the Classes, all were present to show a final mark of honor to one who has been described not inaptly as "Canada's Greatest Man."

The hope that he himself once expressed that at the end of his public life he might still have the confidence of the people was more than amply fulfilled.

Sir Adam Beck is indeed gone. May he rest in peace. And may the memory of his unselfishness, his honesty, his courage and perseverance and other virtues serve to instill in the hearts of those whom he left behind him and particularly the youth of the country, the desire

to imitate at least in some measure the example of one who spent himself unostentatiously that others may be the happier for his labors.

Truly may the words of the great Longfellow be applied to him, "Lives of great men all remind us We can make our lives sublime And departing, leave behind us Footprints in the paths of time."

"Footprints that perhaps another Sailing o'er Life's solemn main A forlorn and shipwrecked brother, Seeing, shall take heart again."

AN ANSWER TO A QUERY

Occasionally we get letters, signed "Reader," "Catholic," "Subscriber," or other anonymous signature asking that we give through the columns of the RECORD information on this, that or another subject. Often such information could be had from any priest. It will be readily acknowledged that we are under no obligation whatsoever to answer such queries even if "Reader" is really a reader or "Subscriber" is a genuine subscriber. Anyone might use such pseudonyms; and a group of mischief loving persons might take it into their heads to have some "fun" by getting the CATHOLIC RECORD to answer all sorts of flippant questions. The genuine reader or subscriber who desires information on any subject will sign his or her own name. Whether or not such information will be given through the columns of the RECORD it is for us to decide.

Departing from our general rule we answer one such anonymous enquiry. A correspondent enclosed a clipping from a newspaper giving an account of a Catholic girl who was reported to sweat blood; and of her Catholic neighbors who regarded the occurrence as a miracle. We have seen no reference whatsoever to this alleged miracle in the N. C. W. C. News Service. However a correspondent did report through this Service that a wooden statue of the Madonna of the Sacred Heart in the Franciscan Church at Ragusa is credited in popular opinion as having been seen to move its lips and eyes. "Many," so runs the report, "say they have seen the statue of the Madonna opening and closing its eyes, now keeping them wide open and now completely closed. Some of the Greek Orthodox priests here assert they have seen the alleged miracle and others who say the same thing include visitors from other cities, Protestants, Mohammedans and Jews. A great many of the Franciscans of our convent say they have noticed the phenomenon."

But the correspondent adds that the authorities take the following position: "We are taking a neutral position. It will soon become evident whether or not this is really an optical illusion or something of that nature, a possibility that must not be overlooked in cases of this character."

The shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes, now famous throughout the world for cures so well authenticated that scientists, doctors, Catholic and non-Catholic, and even agnostics are convinced of their reality and miraculous nature. Even in this case the bishop and his priests were at first incredulous. So great was their prudence and reserve that it was only four years after the first apparition in 1858 that the bishop of the diocese declared the faithful "justified in believing the reality of the apparition." Now only those who refuse to examine the evidence doubt the miraculous nature of the thousands of cures that have since taken place.

The present writer remembers that some fifty years ago there was considerable excitement and much newspaper talk of an alleged apparition of Our Lady at Knock, Ireland. He remembers, too, of neighbors receiving some letters and souvenirs of the little church where the alleged apparition occurred. The scholarly old Irish priest who had charge of the parish at the time discontinued and discouraged, in no uncertain terms, any slightest belief in "Our Lady of Knock." Once, standing by a stone fence, the priest picking up a bit of the mortar, said to a parishioner: Now this is of as much use to you as anything coming from the Church at Knock. Wait until the Church authorities pronounce upon the matter before giving any credence to these stories.

The point we wish to drive home to our correspondent is this: The Church is always slow to accept as

true the report of any alleged miracle. It is only after long, careful, and searching investigation that she gives her decision. So the inquirer who asked for comment on the clipping that he sent us, may quietly await the decision of the ecclesiastical authorities before accepting any newspaper accounts of alleged miracles.

PROVIDENCE RULES THE WEATHER

"Providence rules the weather. Man cannot produce one ray of sunshine or one drop of rain—in spite of all the claims of the rainmakers."—Sir Frederic Stupart.

The Toronto Globe heads an interesting article by M. E. James on the weather by the foregoing quotation from Sir Frederic Stupart of the Meteorological Bureau. Sir Frederic is more worthy to be called a scientist than many whom the newspapers are wont to quote under that elastic term. Even "rainmakers" might feel above associating with some who are reverently quoted as "Scientists" by the newspapers. It is a bit refreshing to find a newspaper scientist with sufficient humility and good sense asserting: "Providence rules the weather—Man cannot produce one ray of sunshine or one drop of rain."

Mr. James says: "[The weather] is the thing which, outside of people themselves, interests people most. Why? Because so much depends upon its vagaries. It is the weather which, to a great extent, decides what humanity will wear, what it shall eat, whether it shall go, the extent to which it will work or play, and whether it will make money or lose it."

In fact he might have said that it is the weather that determines whether people shall eat or starve; live or die. Modestly Sir Frederic remarked: "We feel pretty sure that all seasons depend to a great extent on temperature and position of the great ocean currents." And he expresses the hope that with the accumulation of this and various other kinds of knowledge the forecasting of the weather will become more accurate.

From another member of the Meteorological Bureau Mr. James quotes the following striking statement:

"The result of this investigation," explained Mr. Patterson, physicist of the Meteorological Service of Canada, "is that it has completely changed the older views of the structure of the atmosphere, and from results obtained it is now possible to calculate the amount of energy available in the atmosphere for the production of storms and weather. For instance, with regard to storms, the results of this investigation prove that a storm may cover an area of fifty thousand square miles, and that the amount of energy required to keep such a storm in operation would be represented by an engine of three hundred million horsepower working for one year."

And 50,000 square miles is a little less than 224 miles square! These figures, if they induce a feeling of man's helplessness, must also induce a wholesome sentiment of humility and trust in Divine Providence.

This suggests a passage in a remarkable book, which we warmly commend to our readers, "Rebuilding a Lost Faith," by an American Agnostic:

"Water is really the life-blood of our earth, yet we accept its rhythmic migration from sea to sky, and from the sky to sea again, as lightly as we do the circulation of the vital fluid through our veins. How wonderfully perfect is the process of evaporation, forever going on from all the lakes and oceans of our globe,—as from those mighty reservoirs the solar heat draws moisture upward in the form of vapor! For water, being many hundred times heavier than air, could in no other form be lifted several miles above the earth. Yet in this supply, prodigious though it be, floats lightly in the empyrean in the shape of clouds,—huge, sunlit galleons, filled with precious cargoes, waiting patiently to be unloaded. These vaporous ships are filled and emptied without human hands; and sail to their respective ports without a helmsman, chart or compass. Currents in air, like currents in the sea, convey them far into the hearts of continents, that they may there discharge their freights over the very

fields in which stand waiting husbandmen. The total quantity of water thus distributed in rain or snow is inconceivable. Sometimes a single cloud contains thousands of tons of liquid, which, if released at once, would sweep away both vegetation and the soil itself; yet, with what delicate precision is its distribution usually effected! True, cloudbursts do sometimes occur, as if to remind man what might always be the case, but for the care of Providence; yet, as a rule, nothing can be more gentle than the fall of moisture to the earth. The rain sifts through the atmosphere in billions of small drops, as if poured through a finely woven sieve, alighting from a dizzy height without the crushing of a leaf or flower; and, on its way, cleansing the air of its impurities, as later on, in the form of rivers, it will sweep them to the sea. Man can do nothing to determine the delivery of this essential element; but at the touch of some cool mountain peak or by the contact of a chilling wind the magic 'Open Sesame' is spoken, and the rain descends! Suppose we saw all this for the first time, instead of being accustomed to it from our childhood, and hence accepting it, like so many other blessings, as a matter of course: could we then fail to see in this impressive scheme the plan of an intelligent Creator?"

In spite of the cheap gibes of pseudo-scientists it remains eternally true that God "divided the waters that were under the firmament from those that were above the firmament." (Gen. 1, 7.) "Providence rules the weather. Man cannot produce one ray of sunshine or one drop of rain." "And 'ruling the weather' is only one of a thousand compelling evidences that there is an Intelligence of infinite wisdom and infinite power that rules the world created. Appropriate here is another paragraph from "Rebuilding a Lost Faith":

"To call the argument from design old and 'obsolete' is easy, but to answer it is difficult; for this reason men profess to be tired of it, and try to lessen its effectiveness by juggling with words. The argument of mankind have always recognized the evidences of design in nature; but it will never become obsolete, so long as telescopes and microscopes exist, and human minds perceive and reason on the marvels thus revealed. The argument is old, but so is the coming of the dawn; and as the one will always force itself upon the vision, so will the other force itself upon the mind, until the universe shall wax old like a garment, and 'all the hosts of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll.'" (Isa. xxx. iv. 4.)

ON LETTING THEM HAVE THEIR OWN WAY

By THE OBSERVER

The other day, a writer told us that the way to do with children was, to let them be naughty when they wanted to be naughty; to encourage their wilful impulses; to let them strengthen their will; and then, said he, after a few years, a miracle working within them will direct them aright. To start with, you see, here we have a self-working miracle. That is a very interesting thing. It is very interesting to hear that if you do nothing to restrain a child's self-will, presently a miracle will work itself without a miracle worker and that all will be well. We remark, as the old lady said when her little grandson told her that the big white rooster had laid an egg; it's very interesting, if true.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

THE LITERARY Digest International Book Review is authority for the statement that of Papini's "Life of Christ" in the original Italian no less than 100,000 copies have been printed and sold. It has also been translated into nearly every European language. Reviewing the German translation in Die Literatur of Stuttgart, Max Schwarz, a well-known literary authority, says that since Strauss and Renan no life of Christ has so impressed the popular mind or become a literary fashion to such an extent as this "bold, fiery and youthful work" of the Florentine, Giovanni Papini. Those who are old enough to remember the furor created by the publications of both Strauss and Renan will appreciate the significance of this dictum of the German critic. But Strauss and Renan were destructive—even impious, in their dialectics, whereas Papini's work makes for conservation of Christian faith, and for reverence—qualities sorely needed in these iconoclastic days.

THE LIBRARY of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, bequeathed to the nation by his deceased widow, is to be on display on occasion of the opening of the new wing of the Dominion Archives. The library consists of some 2,000 volumes, and is said to be very rich in early Canadiana. The world knows much about Sir Wilfrid's political career, but very little of other phases of his character, and the fault we have to find with Prof. Skelton's "Life" is that

while it deals fully with the great Chief's achievements as a statesman, it scarcely gives a glimpse of those other phases of his life known only to intimates.

GILBERT CHESTERTON can always be read with pleasure, and quoted with profit. He has the faculty of putting into a sentence what others take pages to express. He affirmed lately that true democracy has decayed. "It ceased to exist since the time of true monarchy: the citizens of those days would be at a loss to understand Prohibition, they would be amazed at the system of forced attendance at schools, and be scandalized by vaccination." It does not necessarily follow that "G. K." is in opposition to these things himself, but they illustrate the extent to which espionage of the individual may go under the system to which the world has now largely committed itself.

OF THE so-called "Dark Ages," Mr. Chesterton affirms that they were not necessarily dark. "Call them simple ages. They were in the manner of a sleep—not negation, but refreshment. The Catholic Church is a thing of the Dark Ages, only a part of the Dark Ages which were not dark. We survived the Dark Ages, and are capable of facing dark ages if they return; all other philosophies, institutions and theories will break down in the face of the barbarians. The Church only will remain." Some may think this pessimism, but who can say what the future has in store. With the breakdown of legitimate authority, and the invasion of private life which increases at so great a pace, anything is possible. "The individual becomes less and less, and the State more and more." Mr. Chesterton laments that he is the only democrat left, and that he feels very lonely.

ONE OF the finest of the spiral nebulae in the heavens is that known as the Great Nebula in Andromeda, which on moonless nights is plainly visible to the naked eye, and quite a fine object in a good pair of binoculars. Many attempts have been made to determine its distance, and a recent measurement is thus described in "Popular Astronomy." It conveys to the lay mind some idea of the immensity of space.

ACCORDING to this, the nebula is probably at least 950,000 light years from the earth—that is, the light from it takes that enormous period to traverse the gulf separating us, and light moves at 300,000 kilometers a second. A light year—the distance light moves in one year—is 5,880,348,500,000 miles, so that the distance of the Andromeda Nebula is 5,580,000,000,000,000 miles (approximately five and a half million.) Some years ago a new star appeared in the Andromeda Nebula, which, when brightest, was about the seventh magnitude, too faint to be seen with the naked eye. It remained at the seventh magnitude only a few days, and then slowly faded away, being of the sixteenth magnitude, barely visible in the biggest telescope, six months later. But not even the Andromeda Nebula marks, it is believed, the boundary of the universe, if there is a boundary, for by similar refined methods a distance of 1,000,000 light years has been calculated for another nebula, which would place it 30,000 billion miles more distant than that in Andromeda.

FLEETS of aeroplanes locked in a death grapple invisible to those on the earth beneath, diving at a height of ten miles in the sky—that is what the future inevitably holds in store, says the Westminster Gazette. The problem of an aeroplane retaining its flying speed in the rarefied atmosphere of high altitudes has been solved. Miles high, where no birds are ever encountered, and where vegetation would not live, it is now possible for aircraft to go. For months aeronautical scientists in this country, in common with those of others, have been seeking to solve the problem of flying at high altitudes. At last they have succeeded. In this country, as in America and France, efforts have been directed towards adapting the supercharged engine system, which has been so successful on motor cars, to aeroplane engines. There is every reason to believe that the British experiments have reached a much further stage of

successful development than have those of other countries. It is not yet possible to reveal how it is done, but I am able to state authoritatively that the pilot could retain full consciousness in the rarefied air. A plane could now climb to a height of seven or eight miles without any loss of flying speed. There is still the human factor to be dealt with, for flying at heights almost twice as great as that of Mount Everest imposes not only a considerable strain, but actual hardship on a pilot. Means are therefore being sought to enable a pilot to fly in comfort when travelling through the sky eight or ten miles up.

ANENT the brand of "Presbyterian" tobacco to which a paragraph was devoted a few weeks ago, the mail brings further particulars. Premier Baldwin's reference in his Dundee speech was as follows: "I have always found that smokers—and may I add pipe smokers?—have a wisdom, a calmness of outlook and a breadth of vision denied on the one hand to those who do not smoke at all, and on the other hand to those who only smoke cigarettes, and in the third place, to those bloated profiteers who spend half a crown every smoke they have. I think it may be partly because of my well-known love of a pipe and partly because of my Scotch ancestry that my friend, Lord Haldane, always keeps me supplied with a tin of tobacco which bears the name of 'Glasgow Presbyterian Mixture.' It is a most admirable tobacco, seasoned with a blend which shall be nameless whom you should copy it, and which imparts a peculiar pungency. It is made by a divine in the Church of Scotland and smoked, I am told, by divines of the Church of Scotland."

ST. CANISIUS' RELICS
 By Rev. Dr. Wilhelm Baron von Capitaine
 (Colonial Correspondent, N. C. W. G.)
 Aix-la-Chapelle is the first city to honor St. Peter Canisius with a special exhibition of the relics of his life and works. Many pilgrimages helped to make this exhibition a great success, and there is talk of repeating it in other cities in Germany, Holland and Switzerland. An interesting feature of the exhibition at Aix-la-Chapelle was a large map on which was traced the course of the apostolic journeyings of the Saint. Visitors were astonished to note that during the fifty years of his labors, St. Peter Canisius travelled 100,000 kilometers on horseback preaching the Gospel of Christ and combating Lutheranism and Calvinism. This record is considered all the more remarkable when it is recalled that St. Peter Canisius was a prolific writer as well as a preacher. At this exhibition were shown manuscripts of more than forty of his more important works and about two thousand of his sermons. His Catechism, the work through which he is most widely known, was represented at the exhibition by manuscripts and first editions. The Catechism has gone through more than a hundred editions in Germany and has been translated into twenty-five languages. Among the personal relics of the Saint shown at Aix-la-Chapelle were: the Saint's hat and his walking stick, shoes, two rosaries, breviary, a crucifix which he always kept before him while writing, two green chasubles presented to him by Duke Wilhelm V. of Bavaria, and the soutane in which the Saint was laid to rest in his first tomb in the church of St. Nicholas of Fribourg. This soutane was removed when the body was transferred twenty-eight years later to the Church of St. Michael in the same city.

REQUEST OF MALTA'S PARLIAMENT REFUSED

London, Eng.—The King has refrained from granting the request of the Maltese Parliament, which petitioned for official recognition of the Catholic religion as that of the island.

A message from Malta says the speaker of the legislative assembly read at the last sitting, and ordered to be laid on the table, a dispatch from the Governor conveying the reply to the address which was passed some months ago by both Houses of Parliament, praying the King to amend clause 56 of the Letters Patent of 1921, in the sense that the Roman Catholic Apostolic religion be declared the religion of the island of Malta and its dependencies.

The petition was not granted as it was considered that the insertion of such a declaration in Letters Patent would be not only undesirable, but also superfluous, in view of the fact that the Malta Legislature have already declared, by a local act, that the Roman Catholic religion is the religion of Malta and its dependencies.

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