

The Catholic Record

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THE ENTRANCE CLASS GRADUATE

The school year has drawn to a close. In company with their non-Catholic acquaintances our Catholic Entrance Class graduates have carried home their school bags. They have carefully deposited them and their contents in some out-of-the-way cranny, glad of their accomplishments as scholars, joyous of the fact that the halcyon days of budding manhood are fast approaching.

But the serious question arises: How many of those youths and unlettered striplings intend to remain permanent fixtures in the butcher shop; how many of them have the circumscribed ambition to remain as chore boys all their lives?

This is a serious question. The Catholic parent cannot in conscience refuse to confront it. To disregard it; to put it aside with his son's school books and pass it down as a dusty heirloom for the next generation to answer will be a lamentable error.

We have had more than sufficient of this procrastination, of this dilly-dallying on the part of parents. It has resulted in a lamentable state of affairs of which every Catholic should be ashamed. To think of it! In cities such as London and Hamilton, both of which offer such favorable advantages for secondary education, there are not more than 15% of our Entrance Class graduates seeking High School training.

And what has been the result of this criminal neglect on the part of Catholic parents? To detail two instances, it has been this: in Windsor it is the boast of the Catholics that they have produced one physician who was born and bred in the city; the entire county of Kent has not one resident Catholic doctor.

It is not intended to generalize; to hold up to scorn the entirety of Catholic Ontario. There are isolated districts which have done and which are doing as much as can be reasonably expected. But these few localities do not and will not suffice for the deficit of Catholic professional men and educated Catholic business men throughout the Province.

Now there is no decree or ordinance which foists upon Catholics this slavery. Nor is it that our Catholic youth lack the opportunity which their non-Catholic country-

men enjoy. For those parents who can afford it, there is the Catholic College where their son can secure an ideal education leading up to Matriculation. And it should be parenthetically remarked that our Catholic College High Schools are by no means intellectually inferior to the Public High Schools. On the other hand, the religious and moral education which they impart stamp them as vastly superior to the unnormal State School. But for those parents who are financially impotent to send their boys to college there is another opportunity left to them. It is the local High School.

There are excellent High Schools dotting our Province. Is it erroneous to advocate for a larger attendance of our Catholic youth at these Public High Schools? Some there are who will quickly respond in the affirmative without reasons to substantiate their reply. But it seems high time that Catholics should take advantage of the opportunities afforded them in these schools. Do not object to this statement thinking that the morals of our youth will suffer under these circumstances. The morals of a boy will not be harmed in a school room half so much as they would be if the parents allow their sons to mix with factory hands or to become ornaments on the street corner. If the Catholic parent is awake and active there need be no fear about safeguarding the Faith and Purity of his son.

Until the day when our Secondary education is better organized; until the day when it is the ambition of Catholic parents to have their sons, if not priests, at least educated laymen; until that day when we can count at least 80% of our Entrance graduates in attendance either at Colleges or at Local High Schools, we cannot have much hope for Catholic professional men. What we require is concentrated effort on the secondary education problem. So far it has been lacking. And the reason for its lack is the supineness of Catholic parents in being ruled by the whims of their thoughtless sons; by their unwise and unholly greed in snatching at the meagre pittance gained by "Our Johnny," the butcher boy.

It is true that a High School education costs money. But it is also true that the spirit of sacrifice must characterize the Christian household. Let us, then, discontinue repeating the history of our past carelessness in this matter of secondary education. If our Entrance graduates follow the footsteps of their fathers, the Catholics of Ontario, at least in many districts, will be forced to summon non-Catholic doctors to attend their sick. This statement is not meant to disparage the Protestant professional man. But to be necessitated to engage lawyers, engineers, physicians, and pharmacists who are not of our Faith; to have no option but read editorials, novels and magazines produced by educated Protestants—these are things which presage a sad future for the Catholic laity of our Province.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE "SOAP-BOX"

The modern term, "Soap-Box Orator" conveys anything but pleasant associations. It reeks and smokes of sinister, bourgeois, and unintellectual ideas. Its mere mention is sufficient to conjure up the vision of an unkempt, rudely-gesticulating agitator whose eyes are fired with an irrational passion for reform; whose tongue is the stinging lash which speeds on a deluge of ungrammatical words representative of unpatriotic and ungodly thought.

In our larger cities; in nearly every factory where a hundred or more men are employed there is to be found the "Soap-Boxer." He has a gospel which is neither circumscribed by the bounds of politics, morality or religion, nor is silenced by the thunderous maledictions which are sounded from scores of pulpits. Moreover, (and this is the matter to be stressed) he has an audience into whose unwashed ears he pours the scum of his immoral teachings—an audience which believes in his Socialism, in his Bolshevism, and in his Atheism.

It is a lamentable fact that our working classes are receiving a large part of their education from revolutionary Soap-Boxer. Little wonder that sabotage and destruction, anarchy and irreligion are being popularized among our citizens when no means—at least, no effective means—are being employed to counteract the modern Soap-Box agitator.

However, let us not discontinue shipping soap in boxes: that would be hard on the carpenters. Nor let us proceed to make kindling wood of the shipped boxes; that would be far from ingratiating ourselves with the coal dealers. Keep the boxes intact. They are good for orators. But they are good for more than Bolshevick orators. Nor let us attach blame to the innocent soap container, judging it to be the cause and lineal ancestor of the illiterate but persuasive street haranguer. The soap-box has not degraded oratory. Rather is it that the Bolshevist and the political agitator have combined to degrade the soap-box.

What course, then, is there to pursue? Perhaps an outline of the early history of the Soap Box would not be out of place before offering a suggestion. In brief, it is this: At least six or seven centuries before the coming of our Lord there were "Soap-Boxers" of an intellectual order. Athens had her public pulpit which was called the "Bema."

In Rome there existed many rostra called after the original which stood in the Forum. The Romans did not have soap-boxes, so they were forced to use the beak of a sailing vessel—the "Rostrum." Lysias, Demosthenes and Pericles graced the Bema of Athens with their eloquence. At one time they are found educating their fellow citizens in the mysteries of politics; at another they are heard bestirring the youth to take up arms against a foreign foe. The two Gracchi, Cicero, Marcus Antonius and a score of others did not disdain using the Roman Rostrum when there was occasion of teaching the citizens their political duties. And above all, Sts. Peter and Paul and James and the other Apostles made use of the public street corner to preach Christ crucified. Wherever Christianity conquered, it was not from the pulpit of a cathedral so much as from the pulpit of a street corner, or of a hill. It was St. Paul's principle to preach the Gospel "in season and out of season; opportunely and inopportunely."

So much for the known origin of the Soap-Box method of teaching politics and religion. But now for the suggestion: It is high time for Christians to get back to the Apostolic method of preaching and teaching. It is imperative that we utilize the soap-box pulpit which seems to have been slandered by reason of its association with the Bolshevist and agitator. If those latter, uneducated and unbaptized as they are, can attract an audience; if they can work them and mould them into soundrels and red-revolutionists, surely an educated Christian who loves both his God and his country; who is enthused with the Gospel of Justice and Charity in the same degree in which the Socialist is enamored of the clap trap of sin and satanism—surely such a Christian can take his place in the public, outdoor pulpit be it the factory door step or the very modern "Open Forum."

To continue the suggestion; here is a magnificent opportunity for the Knights of Columbus and for the Holy Name Society to adopt this method of combating our social evils. It is an open secret that the Socialists have mouthpieces in many factories. Let the Holy Name and the Knights of Columbus seize the opportunity of placing their mouthpieces in opposition. It is foolish to discount the good that can be thus accomplished. And it is more foolish to refuse to admit the paganism, anarchistic influence which the unchecked agitator has upon the non-Church going workman.

In this manner we can save the soap-box. And with it as our pulpit we can do much to stem the tide of strikes and the menace of national and religious decay.

FREE UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

In the May issue of the "University of Toronto Monthly" there are some rather radical views expressed by Professor Coleman, President of the Ontario Educational Association. In an article titled, "Impressions of the Ontario Educational Association Meeting," by Charles Barnes, B. A., the President is accredited with advocating Free University education. Just how Mr. Coleman intends this proposal to be interpreted is not certain. But if it is his mind that the instruction given in the Arts, in the Scientific, in the Medical, and in all other courses shall be free of charge; if he means, moreover, that the students shall have free use of the library, of the gymnasium and of

all other conveniences for which they now pay fees, it is most difficult to agree with him.

Such a policy of free Higher education would be prejudicial to the financial welfare of both the poorer and middle classes of our citizens. At first sight one would be apt to be disillusioned and see nothing but advantages and opportunities for the poor man's son. But how many young men of humble means could afford the five or six hundred dollars which is meagre enough for accumulative board, lodging, laundry and general expense of living? Very few! A negligible few of what we term "poor men" could take advantage of this wellintentioned proposition. As for the vast majority who actually would not dream of attending the University, it would be their duty to stand the burden of the increased taxation resulting from the "Free" education for which the better classes who could afford to pay would be enjoying.

In our hurry for higher education let us be practical. There are too many will-o'-the-wisp suggestions afloat, and this "higher free education" seems to be one of them. For the time being let us concentrate upon secondary education. The Minister of Education assisted by the Ontario Educational Association have much to do in this field before venturing further.

COMMERCIALIZING RELIGION

That this is the age of the almighty dollar, which, by the way, is not intrinsically so mighty as it used to be, is evidenced by the fact that certain financial concerns, who employ unscrupulous agents, are enriching themselves while avowedly engaged in the praiseworthy undertaking of disseminating Catholic truth. An instance of this has been brought to the knowledge of the clergy through a letter addressed to me by Rev. P. J. O'Callaghan, C. S. P., the editor of The Missionary. We feel that our Catholic people should be informed of the facts of the case in question so as to be on their guard against those who would make financial capital out of their religious zeal.

How certain Catholic publications have become the property of financial agencies Father O'Callaghan does not inform us, but we presume that it came about this wise. The wily promoter puts forward this argument to the editors: You Fathers are able to produce an excellent Catholic magazine. No one is better qualified than you to write editorials, moral and dogmatic treatises and literary articles of Catholic interest; but you have not the facilities for putting your wares in the homes of the people. You are unable to cope with the business side of the proposition. Now, we will attend to that if you will give us, in the case of new subscribers, the amount of the subscription price that is over and above the cost of publishing and mailing, retaining for yourselves the full benefit of all renewals. The proposition seems good to the editor and the contract is entered into with what results the following clipping from a Catholic paper will indicate:

"The circle of pirates whom the conscienceless soliciting agencies have turned loose on the Catholic public is a pest. If the Church were in any way responsible for its existence the system of plunder which they are following would be her disgrace. Fortunately she is in no way involved in the scandal."

"But if the Church can be absolved from all complicity in the fraud, certain of her Catholic publications cannot. They stand for the abuse, and some of them have been known to defend it and help it to continue."

"When a periodical accepts one-third of the money contributed by the subscriber and surrenders two-thirds to the agency whose representatives pose as volunteers in the cause of religion, and press their proposition upon their victims as a religious duty, we submit that the publication is engaged in a questionable enterprise."

The effrontery of the agencies' solicitors is outrageous almost to the point of sacrilege. Some of them present themselves as consecrated to a noble cause, appeal to motives of religion, denounce woes upon those who refuse to deliver and invariably and with unblushing mendacity assert that the pastor of the parish is their confederate. Usually, thanks to the good sense and intelligence of the Catholic people, the outrageous pirate is recognized and told to go his way. Occasionally, however, possibly several times a day, he comes upon an innocent victim and he proceeds to push his plunder to the last limit.

"The pity is that such a traffic can go on from year to year, that men

can grow rich from the ill-gotten gain and that nobody in the vicinity where they live and thrive has public spirit enough to denounce them and deliver them up to the justice which should await their crime."

The financial agency referred to by Father O'Callaghan is John J. O'Keefe & Co. This concern is still agent for "The Lamp," "Truth," "The Christian Family" and the "Franciscan Herald," all excellent publications. It is no longer agent for The Missionary, but it owns, we are told, the greater part of the stock of The Truth Magazine Co. and has a lien upon the rest. The agents for Truth have recently been plying their trade in Ontario. The usual allurements in the way of the free gift of beads and medals, the promise of numerous Masses and the privilege of assisting the Catholic Truth Society are held out to prospective subscribers. The pastor's recommendation is sometimes obtained through false pretences, and when it is not obtained he is falsely quoted as having especially named certain of his parishioners as persons whose zeal would prompt them to aid in the good work. We have known also of cases where the agent for Truth refused to accept less than two year's subscription. The shadiness of this transaction is revealed in the light of the fact that in the case of The Missionary, as Father O'Callaghan informs us, the full amount of renewal subscriptions was to go to the benefit of The Mission House at Washington.

It is to be regretted that good people who always co-operate with their pastor in every parochial work and whose genuine Catholicity prompts them to assist as far as they can every apostolic undertaking should be thus deceived. But there is a class of Catholics for whom we have very little sympathy. They come under three heads:—the parent who will not pay fifty cents a year to support a parish library of select Catholic books but will pay five dollars to an oily-tongued agent for a bulky volume of alleged pious matter compiled from uncopyrighted sources; the man who says to his pastor, "I am sorry, Father, that I cannot give anything to the church building fund. I have sent all my spare cash to those saintly missionaries at —"; and the woman who replies when expostulated with for being absent from the Sunday pew, "I know, Father, that I often miss Mass, but I make up for that by sending money to — to have Masses said for myself."

NOTES AND COMMENTS

THE INSERTION of All Souls' Day in the Anglican Church calendar, as recently decreed by vote of the English Lower House of Convocation, is described by a contemporary as "another step on the way back to Catholicism." We wish it could be regarded indubitably in that light, but such conclusion strikes us as oversanguine. The recrudescence among Protestants of prayers for the dead as one result of the War is certainly an incident not without hope. If viewed, however, in the light of other acts of the same body this latest move of Convocation must be regarded as proceeding less from profound conviction of the truth of the doctrine than from a basis that is purely sentimental. Else why not unequivocally repudiate the Thirty-Nine Articles and be done with it?

IF THE THIRTY-NINE Articles are clear on any point it is that Purgatory and Prayers for the Dead are "a fond thing vainly invented." The entire history of the Anglican Establishment has proceeded on this monstrous assumption. Then came the War, with the lesson of the trenches. In this contingency it was discovered that many men, honest in the main and good at heart, having passed through life with no profound sense of religion, hastily breathe an act of contrition and enter into eternity. What has Protestantism to say for such as these? Convocation saw the point and thereupon discovered something in the doctrine of Purgatory after all. Hence All Souls' Day is restored to the Calendar, and the Thirty-Nine Articles are all a mistake! Notwithstanding, as the basis of Anglican belief, Convocation or no convocation, they still stand. How then is it possible to take Convocation seriously, or to be sanguine over any of its Acts?

AMONG MEMORIALS to the fallen which every country concerned in the War will sooner or later undertake, that contemplated by the Cath-

olic youth of Italy will easily take first place. It is nothing less than the erection of a magnificent church to be dedicated to the memory of the fallen and to enshrine forever the heritage of filial patriotism which the fallen soldiers of Italy have bequeathed to their countrymen. This project is especially becoming to Italy, for, despite the complexion of its present Government, the Italian nation is profoundly Catholic and all its most glorious traditions are bound up with the Church.

IN THIS connection the words of Mazzini, uttered fifty years ago, may be recalled. Mazzini's name is identified with many things not in harmony with Catholic ideas, but there can be no mistaking the purport of these words:

"Remember the national tradition that with the name of God on their lips and with the teachings of the Faith in battle our brothers in Lombardy conquered the invaders. Remember the republicans of the Tuscan cities who held their parliament in the churches; the Florentine artisans who elected Christ as Head of the Republic; Savonarola preaching at one and the same time the name of God and that of the people; and the Genoese who in 1746 freed their city in the name of Mary."

MANY MONTHS have now gone by since the cessation of active hostilities but the world continues, and will long continue to garner memories of the War's heroes and heroines. Among them the story of a young lad who died in trying to save Paris in the trying summer of 1918, deserves to be especially remembered. It is related by Abbe Bacrat, Cure of Herson. The boy in question was a prisoner at Herson when the great German gun fired its first shot on the capital. He was a geometriician, and had fixed with infinite pains the emplacement of the gun, and made up his mind to escape in order to carry the precious information to the French General Staff. He was captured, however, and condemned to death.

THE STORY of his last hours, as related by the Cure, is worthy of a Christian martyr. Gustave (that was the boy's name) uttered no complaint over his fate. The priest heard his confession and after much persuasion obtained permission from the German commandant to take the Holy Communion to him. Gustave made his own preparations, placing a handkerchief on a small table, with his beads, and two small pictures, the Sacred Heart and Jeanne d'Arc. Having received Communion on the morning of his execution, he said: "I am strong now," and would not allow his eyes to be bandaged. Walking firmly to the place appointed he died, as the German officer admitted, like a hero. In the vast cataclysm of the greatest of Wars it was but a small incident but it will be cherished by the youth of France forever.

ONE OF those spiritual wisecracks of whom Robert E. Speer is an outstanding example, has written to the Globe controverting a statement made at the Presbyterian General Assembly to the effect that "through the Greek Church lies the redemption of the Russian people." The individual in question thinks the "Greek Church" superstitious and decadent, and avers that for Russia, as for the countries where Rome holds sway, the only hope lies in Canadian Protestantism. "Catholic peoples of Europe," he says, "both Roman and Greek, are uniting in a great Macedonian cry 'come over and help us.' Surely never did the Protestant churches of America face such an opportunity and responsibility."

THE TERM "Greek Church" as applied to Russia is a misnomer, as this scribe might know if he knew anything. The Russian Church is "Russian" and "Orthodox," according to both its own claims and standards, and the testimony of existing facts. But whether Greek or Russian, it is at least not Protestant, and has some faith left. The evils of the Russian Church result firstly from its separation from the centre of Unity, Rome, and secondly from its subservience to the State. But it has faith in the great fundamentals of the Christian religion, and being now emancipated from its thralls may find its way back to its true allegiance. Protestantism, on the other hand, has faith in nothing, and in the four centuries of its existence has made no progress save in the direction of negation of all religion. The smug pharisaism

of the Globe correspondent is but symptomatic of that trend.

PARIS AND RUSSIA

In Paris nobody any longer thinks of dogmatizing about Russia. The word Bolshevism is still to some extent a shibboleth, but it is not so fashionable as it was a few weeks ago for people who disputed about everything else to take shelter under an amicable agreement to denounce the Bolshevist. The change is due to recognition and admission that Russia is completely out of hand and that if it called itself something else than Bolshevist it would still be outside the circle of influence within which the fate of Europe is being, as is thought, decided.

If those who come back from Russia have different stories to tell it is because they went there for different purposes. The military-minded come back in despair. Those whose philosophy of life rests upon the efficient working of a factory come back in anger. Those who are in a hurry about the conclusion of peace in Europe come back in alarm. But one must add that those who leave Paris oppressed with a sense of the cynical selfishness of the great Powers return from Russia with a feeling that there, somehow, there is working something which affords a gleam of hope for that mass of humanity whose interest is "above all governments."

Condemnation of what goes on in Russia is based on two main premises. The economic conceptions constitute a negative of all that is accepted as in settled communities; in the region of philosophy everything seems to be dominated by the spirit of the iconoclast. Yet it is precisely here that those who are perhaps the best observers differ from the generality. They recognize the evils which undoubtedly exists, they agree, too, that the conditions of ordinary life are demoralizing to governmental stability, but when they see that the demonstrably impossible regime persists they seek a reasonable explanation, and they find it in the manifestation of a spiritual exaltation. Call it by what name one will, they say, the Russia of today is in the grip of a passion comparable in its intensity to that which Mahomet communicated to the peoples of Islam, or to that which made the French revolution possible. It is not to be estimated solely as an essay in statecraft. It is an impulse of which the essence is religious. That is why it persists despite the existence of two enormous handicaps, the dreadful suffering of the people and the hard, illiberal direction, amounting almost to autocracy, given by its leaders.

It is useful to have this appreciation of first hand competent observers, for none of the other explanations sufficiently explain many things that have happened. A few months ago it was made to appear in Paris that the problem of Russia was relatively simple. I went one day with a group of journalists to the Russian Embassy to hear Mr. Lazouneff tell what should be done. He spoke with authority, for he was not the Czar's foreign minister when War was declared? He knew how dreadfully the people were suffering already. He looked forward to a failure to plant the seed for this summer's crops and to consequent starvation on a scale hitherto unheard of. He wanted a couple of hundred thousand soldiers sent in from the Black Sea, to occupy important transportation points in the Ukraine, to form a sort of curtain behind which order could be restored; then the curtain was to be moved forward. In a year, or eighteen months, the Bolsheviki would be eliminated, Russia would be federated, order would be restored, and all would be well. I remember that at the time, although impressed by the confident assurance with which Mr. Lazouneff spoke, I was conscious of a doubt of the capacity of the former confidant of the Czar, the former designer of Russian police, to interpret adequately the spirit of that Russia which had overthrown the old regime. How eloquent, how statesmanlike and yet in the event how hopelessly inadequate was Edmund Burke's appreciation of the French revolution, so like in many of its attributes to this. This doubt has been justified. It is the Russians who have advanced their curtain. The allied troops have gone home by way of the Black Sea. Gone home is, I believe, the correct expression. They preferred not to fight against the Russian armies, whom they chose to regard as their friends, and their departure was covered by official declarations in the French Chamber against the use of French troops in Russia.

In this last mentioned episode we get a strong hint of another phase of the strength of revolutionary Russia. The gentlemen who have been meeting in Paris have all gone upon the traditional policy of speaking as heads of governments. They have lost sight of the fact that humanity which pays the losses in wars and which has paid enormously in this one, is somewhat impatient of the ways of governments. "I'll be willing to have you write the Ten Commandments in your labor convention if you like," testily observed one of the statesmen engaged upon that instrument. "Not so fast," continued another, "consider the embarrassment of the great Powers in presence of the statement, 'Thou shalt not steal.'" I do not think it is at all an over statement to say that, when people ask each other