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LONDON, SATURDAY, AUGUST 22, 1925

CANADA'S RAILWAY PROBLEM

If the question should be asked why THE CATHOLIC RECORD, whose special sphere is limited to matters of Catholic interest, should devote so much attention to the railway problem, we might answer that Catholics are nearly 40% of the Canadian population. This problem is one of vital concern to the nation at large and to each individual Canadian. It is the duty of all citizens of a free self-governing country to take an intelligent interest in the public welfare. This, we think, would be an entirely sufficient answer to the question.

Some people take little interest in such matters. In fact one often hears it said: "It doesn't make much difference to me in any case; I haven't much on which to pay taxes of any kind." Of course this is a fallacy. Everyone pays taxes on almost everything; and it is well known that the highest taxpayers have a way of recouping themselves by passing the burden on to the ultimate consumer.

It cannot, then, be too strongly insisted upon that every Canadian has a vital interest in the problem of Canada's National Railways.

During the last session of parliament the matter was given some consideration in the House of Commons and it was decided that the heads of the two railway systems should come together and agree to effect such saving as might be possible by cooperation. There is little likelihood that two railway systems such as the Canadian Pacific and the Canadian National, while remaining active rivals and competitors, will ever accomplish much along this line. The Senate Committee fully considered this matter of cooperation and rejected it, strongly recommending "the merging of the two railway systems for purposes of administration and operation."

About five years ago Lord Shaughnessy, perhaps the most competent man in Canada on railway matters, suggested the merging of the two systems as the one way of solving the problem. His plan differed from that now recommended by the Senate in that he suggested the operation of the whole national system be handed over to the Canadian Pacific. The Senate plan effectively safeguards the nation's interests. Lord Shaughnessy's plan received scant consideration at the time. Shortly after it was made public the present writer, on the way from Ottawa to Montreal, fell into conversation on the subject with a Canadian Pacific Railway official. By way of illustration he took up the matter of railway service between Ottawa and Montreal, a distance of about 120 miles. And he made it perfectly clear that the people of these two cities and intervening points could get a better service if the two roads were under one management for at least a third less than it costs now. It is only when we get down to the concrete facts of such a small portion of the huge railway mileage of Canada that we can get any adequate grasp of the senseless waste of unnecessary duplication of railway service. From Montreal to Ottawa, the C.P.R. runs nine passenger trains daily; the C.N.R. seven; an equal number of trains leave Ottawa for Montreal. The C.P.R. has in Ottawa a centrally located and expensive city office; the C.N.R. has an equally expensive city office entirely separate and distinct, each, of course, having its own staff. Even at the Union Station in Ottawa you buy a ticket from one set of officials if you want to travel by the National Railways, and from another set of officials if you choose to go by the Canadian Pacific; and to get from Ottawa to Montreal or from Montreal to Ottawa you can

choose a train on either system leaving within a few minutes of another train on the other system. It would be emphasizing the obvious to point out in further detail the great waste due to useless duplication of railway services.

What is true of the 120 miles between Ottawa and Montreal is true, in large measure, of the whole railway mileage from ocean to ocean. And be it remembered that it is not alone those who travel extensively pay through the nose for all this costly and useless duplication; the whole people of Canada are going into debt at the rate of over two million dollars a week for the luxury of owning and operating as a separate system the Canadian National Railways.

And this is not all. There is duplication within the National system itself. For the Canadian Northern was built largely as a rival and competitor of the Grand Trunk; and these two competing lines, together with the Intercolonial, now form the system known as the Canadian National Railways.

The Senate Committee's report contains this paragraph: "Various witnesses emphasized the waste of effort and money on competitive immigration practice, urging consolidation of effort in this connection. Three agencies are at work to secure immigration into the Dominion, viz: The Dominion Government, the Canadian National Railways and the Canadian Pacific. Each of them maintains independent organizations, and their competition entails heavy expense; an expense which could be materially reduced by a unified system which would, at lessened cost, secure better results."

Our mania for duplication must not be curbed; it must occasionally be allowed to run into triplication! Competitive advertising must run into millions.

When one gives intelligent consideration to this whole question one can hardly come to any other conclusion than that our duplication of railway services is a form of madness.

During the discussion of the C. N. R. annual report by the Railway and Shipping Committee of the House of Commons, Mr. W. D. Euler, M. P., put the following question to Sir Henry Thornton: "Would not the real solution of the problem be found if the two roads were entirely merged?"

"That develops a very broad question," replied Sir Henry. "You will save more money that way than any other way. I can say that if, by any chance, such a thing could come about, such savings which would result could be characterized as enormous."

"Would you care to put a figure on it?" asked Sir Henry Drayton. "I think that it is quite within the bounds of reason to say that if such a thing would come about—and I express no opinion as to whether it will—we could substantially produce net earnings which would be sufficient to meet the fixed charges of both companies," responded Sir Henry Thornton.

Like the late Lord Shaughnessy Sir Henry Thornton may be considered most competent to form an accurate judgment on our railway problem; and these two eminent railway men are in substantial agreement as to the solution. The Senate Committee, also, after an exhaustive hearing of business men and railway experts, have come to the deliberate conclusion that the two systems should be merged for the purposes of administration and operation.

After giving the question the study and consideration it deserves we think that few level-headed Canadians will be inclined to disagree with Mr. Herbert Marler, M. P., who, in the course of his budget speech at Ottawa last session, put the whole matter in a nut shell in this striking sentence: "If Canada continues to lose money at the present rate on her 'white elephant' she will be railroad out of existence."

After having read thus far, some of our readers may be inclined to ask "But what can we do about it?" You can force every candidate, Liberal, Conservative, or Progressive, to answer the question: "What are you going to do about the Canadian National Railways? Are you for or against the Senate plan, Yes or No?" If, here, there, everywhere, candidates are confronted with this question the leaders of the various parties will be com-

pelled to formulate some definite policy in the premises. The people can and should make the solution of the railway problem the chief issue in the election campaign.

It is a thousand pities that the Senate Committee's report on the subject came only at the close of the session. Perhaps politicians, no matter what their party label may be, were only too glad to side-step this vitally important question. But, if the people so decide, the politicians may be compelled to take a clear and definite stand for or against the Senate plan.

One objection that is sometimes heard is that the merging of the two roads would create a railway monopoly. With the Railway Board exercising the powers that they now have over all railway matters, a monopoly, in any objectionable sense of the term, is impossible. If we have to choose between monopoly—in the strictly limited sense that a railway monopoly in Canada would be—and bankruptcy, we had better choose monopoly. This phase of the question, as well as all others apparently, was considered by the Senate Committee; and they make, in their report, the following practical and sensible suggestion: "On unification of the railways taking place your Committee recommend that the powers of the Board of Railway Commissioners be increased, if necessary, to secure the safeguarding of the interests of the public."

This should lay the ghost of the "monopoly" bogey.

We repeat, the people can and should make the solution of Canada's terrible railway problem the chief issue in the next general election.

When your house is burning the first thing to do is to put out the fire; not to quarrel over possible alterations in architectural details.

THE SUPERFICIAL VIEW OF POLITICS

By THE OBSERVER

One day after a general election we were talking with a fairly intelligent man, who had voted for the party which had carried the country. "Well," said he, "things will be better now, I guess." We replied that we hoped so. "But," said he, "of course they can't make any change for a few weeks; they'll have to meet."

Our democratic system is a great thing in many respects. It is a good thing to have in the people the power of changing their rulers. It is a good thing that, when a real crisis arrives in the affairs of a country, when there can be no doubt that the rulers ought to be displaced, the people should have the power to displace them and to replace them with others. But, in our opinion, it is very desirable that our educational system should include some elementary instruction in the meaning, the scope, and the method of governing a country. Just a little of such elementary instruction would have prevented our good friend, to whom we have just referred, from expecting immediate results from a change of government. Possibly a very small amount of such instruction might have caused him to doubt whether it was at that time necessary or even wise to vote for a change of government.

For, at the least, a little elementary instruction might well give the ordinary citizen a glimpse of the general possibilities of government, and enable him to give at least a shrewd guess as to whether a new government could probably do any more or any better than the old one. Political candidates for office and power are accustomed to promise freely alike, things that are possible and things that are impossible. They are accustomed to promise as certain things that are problematical and doubtful though not impossible.

Perhaps one need not have too much sympathy for politicians who find themselves tangled up in the webs of their own election promises; but one may have a little sympathy for them, or for some of them. There are always honest men in the running of every election who do honestly believe, or have persuaded themselves, that if placed in power all the problems of mankind will find a ready solution, though they may be common to all lands where white races live and are ruled by elected representatives. For such, there may be a little sympathy; because they are only doing what we all do at one time or another, that is, fooling themselves. But

we must reserve the bulk of our sympathy for the public who really expect the party they have favored for the moment to work miracles of statecraft, and to change the face of public conditions as our good friend expected with touching confidence, as soon as they can meet and talk things over.

Men know little enough about the system of government under which they live; but they do, on the average, in this country, know more than women; not because men are naturally more intelligent than women, but because women have but lately been entrusted with the vote, and are on wholly unfamiliar ground. A fairly intelligent young woman who was just going to cast her first vote once asked us, "What is a government?" "It sounded very ignorant; but it might be well for teachers to ask their cleverest boy pupils some day, 'What is a government?'" and see how close they can go to giving an answer that will be exact and correct.

Long as we have elected governments under our free constitution, accurate knowledge about the scope and powers of representative government is comparatively scarce even amongst the graduates of our colleges. It is not enough that a college graduate should be able to describe the composition of legislatures, parliament or senate; if the theory of government, the general possibilities of practical legislation, the relations of a free people to their chosen rulers, the basic principles of our constitution, and the principles of public finance, are not to some extent apprehended.

Lacking such knowledge, the electors will often perform the perfectly useless feat of selecting a government on the simple device of calling heads or tails; at least they might as well toss a cent; for all the real idea they have of the results. Lacking such knowledge, the electors will keep on expecting governments to do miracles, for no other reason whatever than that they are dissatisfied, and ardently desire that a miracle be worked.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

It would be difficult to formulate a more significant reflection upon this generation than the simple citation of the fact that a notorious prize-fighter, or, in current parlance, a boxer, should be able to extract from the pockets of the public three million dollars for a single "performance." And we boast of our "high civilization!"

"THE OBSERVER" writes in the *Globe* of Sir Philip Gibbs "international mind," making on the strength of it a plea to Canadians to cultivate a larger vision and a more tolerant disposition "in regard to peoples most unlike ourselves and of whom our ideas have been distorted by ignorance or ancient ill-will." Of Sir Philip he opines that because of his international sympathies "no man writing today more richly deserves to inherit the blessing promised to the peacemakers." His latest production, "Little Novels of Nowadays" is cited as a conspicuous example.

ON THIS subject "Observer" concludes: "Perhaps, too, it is worth while for those of us who are Protestants and perhaps disposed to claim for ourselves superiority in open-mindedness, to remember that this man who seems to me to illustrate pre-eminently that noblest of old Roman sayings, 'I am a man and nothing human is alien to me,' who seems to me to have risen above his natural prejudices of race and creed more than any other writing man of today is a Roman Catholic." Perhaps if he looked a little farther he might find that Sir Philip is by no means a solitary example among Catholics of "this high and serene mood."

THERE is much discussion going on in the Scottish press in regard to the growing disregard of Sunday observance. We note the subject is up for discussion in the Canadian papers too. The old Calvinistic Scottish Sabbath was certainly a gloomy institution, but it had its good points, and in the lack of other restraining influences its disappearance cannot be viewed as a blessing without alloy. "It is possible," says one contributor to the discussion, "to go too far in the way of restriction and negative requirements, and the Puritans doubtless carried things to an extreme. But it is even easier to go too far in the

other direction, casting off all restraint, and mistakenly supposing that 'self-expression' is the sum of all good."

WE FEEL quite free to endorse the latter sentiment, and as Catholics to lament the increasing secularization of the Day of Rest. The automobile may be regarded as one root cause of this tendency, and among Protestants especially, "Radio" is another. Since broadcast church services and sermons can, after a fashion, be now participated in without leaving the home, why, it is already being asked, go to church at all? And in the present disintegrated state of religion it is not difficult to see the outcome.

TO WHAT extent are Catholics involved in this growing evil? Let attendance at the evening offices of the Church answer that question. That it is appreciated by those in authority we know, and many Bishops throughout the Catholic world, alive to this tendency of the times, have given voice to timely warning on the subject. Among them Cardinal Dubois, Archbishop of Paris, has given it as his opinion that most of the misfortunes which have overtaken modern France may be traced to the growing disregard of Sunday as a day of rest and of religious observance. A recent pastoral from this eminent prelate applies to conditions that extend far beyond the boundaries of his diocese or of France. They may be said to be world-wide.

"THE WEEKLY Sunday day of rest," he says, "ought to be looked upon as sacred. Its obligation is imposed by both the divine and the ecclesiastical law. It is guaranteed by the law of France, under conditions that are by no means quite satisfactory, but which represent at least some progress when compared with social conditions of the past. It would be an injustice—as well as imprudent—to try to interfere, either legally or practically, with rights that have now been conceded beyond all shadow of doubt. But neither public administrations nor private enterprises could, without arousing regrettable results, modify to the disadvantage of a certain number of civil servants or employees a situation which safeguards both the needs of their family life, and the exercise of their religious freedom. We feel it to be our duty, by reason of certain recent happenings, to lift up our voice in the name of the Christian conscience and on behalf of interests that are perfectly well understood by the country at large. And we ask all the people of the diocese, both individual and religious organizations, to use all the means in their power to secure the Sunday rest which is guaranteed by the law. On that point, in particular, the Catholics should, more than all other people, set a good example."

It is consoling to note improving conditions in Italy. A succession of atheistic governments did their utmost to drive God out of the country, but that evil force seems to have spent itself, and under Mussolini the reaction to have set in. It was decreed in December last that the Crucifix was to be restored to its rightful place in all the secondary schools, beside the national flag and a portrait of the sovereign. This was an official decree, and applies to the whole kingdom. We read farther of the appointment of a commission to study dispassionately, and make plans for a concrete reform in the ecclesiastical legislation of the nation, said commission being composed of Government officials and representative ecclesiastics. It is too soon to prognosticate the finding of this commission, but in view of conditions since 1870, every departure of this kind cannot but be regarded as distinctly hopeful of better days in Italy for both Church and State.

COMMENTING on this the *Corriere d'Italia*, a Roman daily conducted by Catholics, thus expresses itself: "It is superfluous to say anything on the importance of this initiative. It shows that the national Government, in its multifold reforms, does not neglect giving attention to the material side, so grave and so complex, of the ecclesiastical legislation. The Law of Guarantees deferred for later legislative provisions, the administration of ecclesiastical property and questions annexed to it (such as the royal

Esquilator for the filling of vacant bishoprics, the *Placet*, etc.) But down to today nothing was done in the matter. On the other hand there were, and there are, some grave problems that must be considered in the new spirit of the times which cannot certainly be viewed as they were when it was usual to see in the Clergy and the Catholics of Italy adversaries to national unity and enemies of the fatherland."

ANOTHER MEXICAN CHURCH SEIZED

PASTOR IS DRIVEN OUT AND PEREZ DESECRATES ALTAR BY SAYING MOCK MASS

(This is the second of a series of articles by Mr. Charles Phillips on religious conditions in Mexico. Mr. Phillips is in Mexico as the special representative of the N. C. W. C. News Service.)

By Charles Phillips
 Special Correspondent, N. C. W. C.

Mexico City, Aug. 6.—The movement officially to de-Catholicize Mexico is growing bolder. With the support of Government troops, another parish has been put to violent seizure, the pastor driven out, and the church handed over to the organized body of schismatics who operate under the mask of a "national church" and who are popularly known as the "Cismaticos." The latest acquisition of these schismatics is the Church of Coatepec, just outside the City of Mexico and in the environs of Mexico's national shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe. This is the third church to be seized by the schismatics within the space of as many months, and the second to be actually used by them for their sacrilegious ritual.

The seizure of the church of Coatepec was carried out as a complete surprise by the Cismaticos. The people of the parish had no warning of any such movement being contemplated. The pastor was taken entirely unawares, without a moment to defend himself or to appeal for help. Such an appeal, as former outrages of the kind have proven, would of course have been in vain, since the Cismaticos, headed by the ex-priest Perez, were supported and surrounded during the raid by government police. They appeared on the scene early Sunday morning, and as soon as the pastor was ejected, Perez, who now styles himself "Patriarch of the National Church," began the celebration of "Mass" at the desecrated altar. Another of the schismatics, Sanchez Rangel, who is not a priest, also went through the performance of a mock Mass.

RIOT FOLLOWS SEIZURE

The people of the parish gathered quickly as the alarm spread, and riotous scenes ensued, which grew to dangerous proportions when the crowd discovered that there were certain traitors among them, a small handful of local characters who sympathized with the raiders. These, however, along with the leaders of the gang, were well protected by the government troops.

The popular feeling, however, ran so high that, as soon as the mock ceremonies were completed, the schismatics withdrew, under guard, to safer quarters. Perez, their leader, has announced in the press, nevertheless, that the Cismaticos will continue to hold the church and to perform their ritual in it. In the face of the open support given him by the Government, the pastor of the church is helpless.

There is deep significance in the seizure of the little Coatepec church. An apparently unimportant minor curacy, dependent on the parochial administration of Our Lady of Guadalupe, one would think at first glance that it would hardly be worth while for the schismatics to go after it. But the manifest fact is, the seizure of the Coatepec church is meant by the Government as an opening wedge toward the eventual taking over of the greatest center of popular Catholic devotion in all Mexico, the national shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Guadalupe is the central pilgrimage place of Mexican Catholics. In normal times this suburb has a population of perhaps ten thousand; but during the times of pilgrimage, Government as an opening wedge toward the eventual taking over of the greatest center of popular Catholic devotion in all Mexico, the national shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

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caul Diaz, S. J., who has been refused permission to return to his home state unless he repudiate his priestly vows.

—A FATAL MISTAKE

In spite of the boldness of the Government's move in seizing the Coatepec church, and thus giving the Cismaticos a foothold on the ground of Guadalupe, no Catholic in Mexico believes that the dream of the schismatics of eventually securing control of the national shrine can ever be realized. In such an event, according to popular opinion, the natives would unquestionably rise in defense of their shrine, the church authorities might lose control over them, and an actual and bloody "holy war" might very easily result. No government has ever existed in Mexico that could afford such a crisis. In the opinion of many, the Coatepec outrage has been a fatal mistake on the part of the Cismaticos and their official backers. In desecrating even the environs of the national pilgrimage place of the Mexican masses, they have aroused popular resentment to such a degree as to perhaps put a real check on their efforts to establish themselves as a "national church" in other parts of the country. Coatepec has been a false step.

With the open aid of the military, the Cismaticos now control two small churches in the national capital, besides having been the cause of permanently closing the church of Soledad, one of the largest in Mexico City. The seizure of this church a few weeks ago was the first signal of the Government's intention to attack the Catholic Church from within, instead of merely confining its attacks to external persecution. But the Soledad seizure, as an aid in the establishment of the Cismaticos, was a total failure. So violent was the popular resentment when the pastor of that church was thrown bodily out of his house and the church occupied by gangsters protected by the police, that the Government was obliged to withdraw as gracefully as it could, locking up the church with the announcement that later it would be converted into a national museum. Whether it ever will be or not, the people of La Soledad parish will perhaps never again enjoy its possession, since, under the present Constitution, all church property belongs to the Government to do with it as it will.

SERVICE IN DESECRATED CHURCH

Following the Soledad farce, the small church of Corpus Christi, at the moment not in use, was given to the Cismaticos, and there "Patriarch" Perez is now installed with his "assistant priests," none but himself, however, having ever been ordained. This little church, with a seating capacity of 144, is now the center of the "national church" movement of Mexico, which to the outside world would represent that it speaks for some fifteen million souls! At a "service" which I attended in the desecrated Corpus Christi church, I counted 23 people, a dozen of them, like myself, obviously present, merely out of curiosity; the others, mostly soldiers and their women, quite plainly there in obedience to orders or to seek the favor of their superiors.

At the door of the church was a bulletin announcing "daily Mass" and the recitation of the Rosary in honor of Our Sweet Lady." At the altar a man of about forty, dressed in priest's vestments (stolen along with the church building) went through some of the motions of the Holy Mass, reading in Spanish from a small prayer book set up on the missal rack. A second "priest" stood at the entrance with a plate for contributions. There was no sign of the "Patriarch" about, except his signature as such to the bulletin. Perez is an old man, over seventy, who has been twice confined in insane asylums, and in spite of his activities as a government agitator, he is not physically able to take part in all the operations of his "schism."

Unquestionably the Cismatico movement in Mexico is at the moment growing bolder and its leader, conscious of the Government's support, is inclined to feel his oats. And yet, excepting in the national capital and in the southern State of Tabasco, where Governor Canabal is carrying on a violent anti-Catholic persecution, the attempt to establish a "national" church for the Mexicans has so far met with complete failure. Even in the State of Jalisco, where Governor Zuno is for the time being acting the chief role of Mexican Church persecutor, the Cismaticos have not been able to gain any ground. The same is true in the State of Michoacan, where the Cismaticos made a brief appearance a few days ago, but promptly withdrew. That the movement will ever succeed seems incredible. It is artificial in its origins, and makes no popular appeal. True, it is backed by the Government. But this very fact makes it wholly dependent on the Government, and the lives of governments in Mexico, as history proves, are generally short and turbulent. When one goes down, its special creations go down with it.

MERELY A POLITICAL SCHEME

The so-called schismatic movement in Mexico is not really a schism at all, but purely a political scheme introduced in the hope of winning of popular support for the Government by socialistic theories, a feat which, if it can be accomplished