

GENERAL INTENTION FOR SEPTEMBER

RECOMMENDED AND BLESSED BY HIS HOLINESS POPE BENEDICT XV.

THE WELFARE OF FARMERS

The spirit of the League is vigilant; its sympathies are world-wide; nothing affecting the welfare of souls in any state of life or in any class of human society will find it indifferent.

One of the reasons why anxiety is felt for this class of men is because unhappily nowadays too many of them are failing to appreciate the role they are called upon to play in this world.

This tendency would seem to be accentuated since the War, when thousands of returned soldiers, bringing back with them from France, the lessened sense of responsibility, feel that they can no longer live "far from the madding crowd."

To the physical disadvantages of city life one should add the dangers to the soul. While it may be true that facilities are offered in cities to Catholics to attend to their religious duties and to practice virtues, the facilities for becoming vicious are also abundant.

Nay more, so strong and restless is the current which has set in towards towns and cities that it is affecting all classes of country folk. Notwithstanding the pleadings of pastors who scent moral dangers, and of social economists who predict failure and hardship, even the sons and daughters of farmers are quitting the homesteads on which they were born to be swallowed up in city life.

And yet cases may arise when necessity will oblige young birds to fly away from the old nest. The exigencies of modern life, even of commercial enterprise, may lure large numbers to the great centers, where opportunities are awaiting them.

Unfortunately a motive less noble and less praiseworthy is often at the bottom of these migrations; namely the opportunities afforded in large centers for squeezing as much artificial enjoyment as possible into this short life.

However, any suggestion, no matter how plausible, is useless unless founded on a loftier motive than mere selfishness. The supernatural must enter somewhere; for a reason not tinged with the Christian spirit has little influence on passion; only the Christian spirit can move men to do what cupidly and a bent for pleasure urge them not to do.

departmental stores. To their shriveled-up minds their grinding, slavish occupations are more attractive and more honorable than following a plow, or hoeing the corn-hills, or bringing the cows home from pasture.

Treason is a crime, and it has been asserted, not without a show of reason, that the abandonment of farms is treason to one's nation. It is a well-known economic truth that the greatest source of material wealth is not in factories or in shops, but in the soil.

But treason to their nation is a consideration which has little weight with the farmer's modern son and daughter. What appeals to them is the bait of pleasure and enjoyment which large centers hold out to them and which allures thousands of them from the farms.

Even inveterate opponents have found themselves compelled to own that among Irish people hopefulness of outlook—like to a massive deeply-rooted oak, the many branches of which represented as many varieties of native humour—has long flourished in this country as a prominent racial characteristic.

What remedy may we suggest to stem this current? Evidently if one wishes to retain young people on farms it will not suffice to praise the country, or the limpidity of its streams, its clear air, the agreeableness of its nooks and vistas, the greenness of its meadows, the songs of its birds, and so on.

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departed from. No, none. The legacy inherited from the Great War differs vastly from what was expected. In May of the present year there appeared an article in the Atlantic Monthly by Mr. Sislely Huddleston, which thus concludes: "Turn where will, one finds everywhere that the War has worsened mankind. Those who speak of the heroic virtues which are born of the battlefield, which are spring, like the Phoenix, out of the ashes of war, are uttering the most stupid claptrap. The dominion of darkness has spread over Europe, and a slimy progeny of cruelty, of bestiality, of egotism, of violence of materiality, has crawled into the light of day—a noisome brood, of which it will be long before we can dispossess ourselves."

Back to the farm would seem then to be the slogan in these strenuous months of dearth and high prices, if there is to be any happiness at all. Our Lord would seem to have had more tenderness for the man of the soil than for others. He often took comparisons from the life of the tiller of the soil, rarely from the life of the merchant or the capitalist of industry.

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E. J. DEVINE, S. J.

HARD DAYS FOR HOPEFULNESS

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WARNS OF ZIONIST PERIL

London, Aug. 2.—A significant speech by Cardinal Bourne, dealing with the religious and political situation in Palestine and the former German missions in British Colonies, was made at the opening of the first National Catholic Congress held since the outbreak of the War.

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letters to show the Zionists are fast acquiring economic and financial domination.

Another danger pointed out by the Cardinal was in the fact that many Protestant sects, particularly of American churches, have large funds at their disposal and through their schools are subverting Catholic children.

The Cardinal called for the constitution of the commission ordered by the League of Nations for settling the rights of ownership of the Holy Places, particularly established Catholic rights dating centuries back. He proposed that the British Government admit English-speaking ecclesiastics residing in Palestine to diplomatic access to the authorities for presenting Catholic views and finally suggested that the Government give all nations in Europe and America representation in the guardianship of the Holy Places, which do not belong to the Government of Palestine alone, nor to England alone, but which are the heritage of the entire Christian world.

Regarding the former German missions in British dominions the Cardinal said the authorities were doing their best to meet the situation, but that efforts made to stir up feeling in other countries makes improvement unnecessarily difficult. He asserted that the home Government could not control local Governments of dominions in respect to the admission of subjects of former enemy nations against their own judgment. He declared that the Holy See has never contested the right of States to safeguard their own lawful interests or demand legitimate guarantees of missionaries entering their territories.

Cardinal Bourne's speech, which has been widely published by the press, was the outstanding feature of the great congress which held its sessions in St. George Hall, Cardinal Gasequet, Archbishop Whitehead of Liverpool, the Catholic Lord Mayor of Manchester, Alderman Thomas Fox of the same city, and other prominent prelates and laymen attended the congress. A large crowd greeted Cardinal Bourne at the railway station, cheering him en route to the Cathedral.

JOYFUL AND BRIGHT

There is no religion so full of joyousness and brightness as the Catholic Church. Life is dark enough and hard enough as it is; the Catholic faith floods it with light and joy and hope. . . . It is the enemy of morbidity and scruple, which haunts the footsteps of so many who are striving to be good.

The grave sweetness of meditation rests upon the faces of those painted monks, as the odor of incense lingers in the church after censers are put out.

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We have listened to the mighty voices of wives and mothers; through their tears they have prayed God to sustain the courage and fidelity to honor of their husbands and sons, carried off by force to the enemy's factories. These gallant men have been heard at the hour of departure, rallying their energy to instill courage into their comrades, or, by a supreme effort, to chant the national hymn; we have seen some of them on their return, pale, haggard, human wrecks; as our tearful eyes sought their dim eyes we bowed reverently before them, for all unconsciously they were revealing to us a new and unexpected aspect of national heroism.—Cardinal Mercier.

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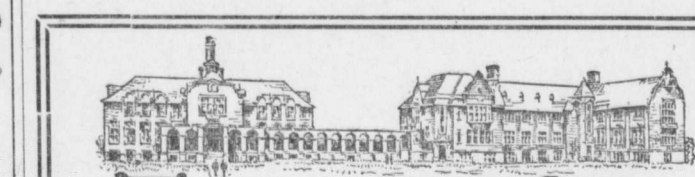
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