

FOUR

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LONDON, SATURDAY, MAY 8, 1915

UNHAPPY POLAND

Russia, Prussia and Austria, the countries which divided the territory of Poland and for a century have endeavored to crush the spirit of Polish nationality, are now making of that unhappy land one immense battlefield where millions of armed men surging to and fro with the ebb and tide of victory spread havoc and devastation. The Belgians fight and suffer gloriously in defence of national liberty and in vindication of the eternal principles of right and justice. But the Poles must fight, brother against brother, in the armies of her despots. This is the very essence of national martyrdom. It may be per orem ad lucem; Poland may again find a place in the reconstituted map of Europe.

In the meantime, however, millions of men, women and children are suffering in every conceivable way. Paderewski, the famous Polish pianist, is now in America endeavoring to enlist the sympathy and awaken the humanity and charity of this continent in order to mitigate the horrors of famine and pestilence among his sorely stricken compatriots.

"I have not come here to go on a concert tour," Mr. Paderewski said, "and have not played since the war started. Remember all the years have read and heard about the sufferings of the Belgians after the destruction of their homes, and then consider that the area destroyed in Russian Poland is seven times as great and just as densely populated. Ten millions of men, women, and children are homeless, wandering about in the ruined cities and towns without food and dying daily by hundreds of actual starvation.

"Poland has been the battle ground for the Russian and the German armies since the beginning of the war, and both armies had lived on the country until every blade of grass had disappeared. Then they had destroyed everything that remained above ground by fire.

"During the war 200 towns, 7,000 villages, and 1,400 churches have been burned to the ground. All my property at Rzeszow, as well as the town itself, has been destroyed by fire. Russia has sent in some grain, but she is poor in pure at present, and transportation difficulties are very great."

Madame Sembrich, President of the American Polish Relief Committee, in her appeal to all America for aid for the starving and suffering people of her native land, says that the situation there grows daily worse:

"Day after day some of our money and some of our clothes and medicines are reaching my stricken fellow-countrymen, but 100,000 square miles of devastated land cannot be reached in a day or a week or a month, 16,000,000 sufferers cannot all be relieved at once.

"Meanwhile they are suffering the tortures of hunger and cold of deepest grief and fright. The Spring rains and floods are coming. Thousands of those who managed to live through the winter will succumb to the wet season; pneumonia and other Spring diseases due to exposure and damp will now join hands with starvation and sweep the land. Pestilence is already doing its deadly work."

Henryk Sienkiewicz, the famous Polish writer whose stories in translations are well known to English readers, as President of the General Relief Committee of Poland sent a telegram recently to the Holy Father asking for his blessing. Instead of the usual telegraphic reply, His Holiness, through his Secretary of State, sent a letter full of sympathy and compassion for his children in that war swept land, enclosing an offering of \$50,000, and concluding thus:

"And now His Holiness congratulates your Relief Committee on the truly charitable work which is relieving the miseries of his most beloved children of Catholic Poland, and in token of his fatherly affection he bestows with all his heart the apostolic blessing on all the Polish nation, on all who assist it, and especially on you and on the members of the Committee."

THE CHURCH AND DEMOCRACY

The Catholic University of Washington celebrated the other day the twenty-fifth anniversary of its establishment. That thorough-going American and thorough-going Churchman, Cardinal Gibbons, with the gentle dignity and quiet earnestness that characterizes all his public utterances thus indicated the special function of a great Catholic University in the great Republic:

"The experience of those twenty-five years emphasizes the needs which the university aims to supply: the need of divine truth to complete our human knowledge, of divine justice as the highest sanction of law, of the spirit of Christ in our ministrations of mercy and love. There is no real liberty without law, and there is no meaning or validity to law unless it be observed."

"The growth of democracy does not imply that each man shall become a law unto himself, but that he shall feel in himself the obligation to obey. If the smothering power has been transferred from the will of the ruler to the will of the people the binding, coercive power has been laid with greater stress of responsibility than ever before upon the individual conscience. Unless men be taught that obedience is right and honorable and necessary alike for private interest and public weal, legislation will avail but little, the law making power will become a mockery and the people themselves will complain that legislation has been carried to excess."

"But conscience has need of a higher sanction than any merely human sense of justice. To meet the requirements of our religious, social and political situation is a duty that we owe to the Church and to our country. To fulfill it we must combine our efforts, and I rejoice that in the Catholic University a centre of thought and action has been provided."

SOME THINGS THAT WILL NOT SURVIVE THE WAR

Amid the stern realities of the War a good many shams are bound to be seen through. The anti-clerical conception of the priest in France gives place to genuine admiration for the priest comrade-in-arms. Brave as the bravest, fired with the patriotic ardor of the true sons of France, his soldierly virtues do not obscure but rather emphasize his priestly character and heroic devotion to the duties of his office; just as the gentleness and charity and self-annihilation of the priest purify and ennoble the qualities of the true soldier. In the hour of anti-clerical triumph and Catholic indifference France alone of all Christian nations passed a law doing away with the exemption of the clergy from military service. The rabid anti-Catholicism revealed in the thought of the curé, sac au dos, taking his place in the ranks. And it is precisely because of this malice begotten law that the French clergy have compelled the respect and admiration, say the affection and reverence of the manhood of France.

Only a generation ago did our fathers win Catholic emancipation in the British Islands. Religious prejudice is not yet dead; but it is dying. And the War will have hastened its passing. Readers of the *Sidelights on the War* will recall many incidents which point in this direction.

The Tablet tells of a Wesleyan minister who has been with the forces on the continent as army chaplain since the beginning of the War. Speaking at Derry of his experiences at the front the Rev. Richard Hall paid a high tribute to two Catholic chaplains with whom he was closely associated:

"Though it might surprise such an audience as he was addressing, he could not help mentioning the names of two men, chaplains of the Roman Catholic Church, whom he numbered among his best friends. During the first ten weeks of the war he was associated with Father Bradley, of the Society of Jesus. A finer, better Christian young man he had never met. They slept together on the battlefield, and when they could get a bed in a cottage or a hospital."

"I never met a more unselfish man than Father Bradley," continued Mr. Hall. "I remember one night we were sleeping by the side of a river, and I thought I felt a cold coming upon me. Father Bradley wanted me to take his blankets. Of course I would not consent to that but when I awakened the next morning I found Father Bradley had taken his own blankets and placed them on me. Another name I would like to mention is that of Father Strickland, who is also a member of the Society of Jesus. I saw a great deal of Father Strickland, and when he heard that I was coming to England he made a journey of five miles for the purpose of bidding me good-bye. These two men, when they met a member of the Wesleyan Church and thought he had need of the ministrations of a chaplain, went out of their way to let me know that these men needed the ministrations of their own minister."

Doubtless it did surprise such an audience to hear "Jesuits" thus spoken of; for some people have a long way to travel yet before the bare mention of the devoted followers of Loyola will cease to conjure up a whole host of childish fears and traditional mistrust. All honor, then, to the Wesleyan minister who had the moral courage to tell the simple truth about Jesuits as he found them. The experience of thousands of brave men, and the outspoken candor of such straightforward witnesses as the Rev. Mr. Hall will go far to restrict misrepresentation, whether ignorant or malicious, to very narrow limits when in God's good time the warring world is again at peace.

SPURIOUS SACRAMENTALS

The following circular in French has been received by several people in Eastern Ontario:

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus.

M.—I have heard you well spoken of, and for that reason I venture to send you 10 Agnus Dei which I earnestly beg of you to sell at 10 cents apiece together with the explanatory leaflet; the eleventh is for yourself. I trust that you will make the return of \$1.00, the price of these Agnus Dei, to me as soon as possible. In so doing you will aid us, and procure for yourself and your friends a precious object; no doubt the Holy Virgin whom we serve will bless you. Otherwise I earnestly request that you pass them on to some charitable person who may be willing to dispose of them, or else return them to me at once.

R. DE L. DUMAS,
 Disciple de Marie.
 St. Jean Chrysostome de Lévis,
 P. Q., Canada.

Agnus Dei, as our readers know, are discs of wax impressed with the figure of a lamb and blessed by the Pope. These little articles of Catholic devotion are not sold. The enterprising "disciple of Mary" who is sending out what purports to be Agnus Dei for sale does not take the trouble even to imitate the genuine article. We have examined them, and the little bags contain nothing but cotton wool and a bit of paper. Whether it is a scheme of some mercenary scoundrel who hopes to make some easy money, or the brilliant idea of some evangelist who thinks thus to bring Catholic practices into contempt it is not easy to determine, as our correspondent informs us that most of them have been sent to Protestants.

The proper thing to do is to bring the matter before the Postmaster-General. There is a law against using His Majesty's mails for perpetrating swindles of that sort.

JAPAN'S DEMANDS

In answer to an inquiry The Montreal Star thus summarizes Japan's demands in China:

In view of the interesting not to say menacing situation in the Far East it is worth while to reproduce this succinct summary of Japan's incredible demands:

"Japan has demanded: That the Chinese Government must consult Japan first if China decides to employ advisers or instructors for political, financial and military purposes; that China shall purchase over 50 per cent. of the munitions of war she requires from Japan, or Japan shall furnish a jointly worked arsenal in China; Japanese material must be purchased and Japanese technical experts employed; the police in certain places in China shall be jointly administered by Japanese and Chinese, or China shall employ in such places numerous Japanese for the purpose of organizing and improving the Chinese police service; Japanese shall have the right of ownership of land in the interior of China for the building of Japanese hospitals, churches and schools; Japan shall have the right to build railways, work mines and farm lands, construct harbor works, and in case foreign capital is required, Japanese subjects shall have the right to propagate Buddhism in China; transfer of the management and control of numerous specified Chinese railways to Japan; engagement by China not to alienate or lease any ports or bays on, or any island near, the coast of China; and China is asked to assent to Japan taking over in due time, all the rights and privileges possessed by Germany in the province of Shantung."

What is left of China's sovereignty? And what becomes of the equal rights guaranteed by the policy of the "Open Door"? Or of the magnanimous promise to restore the German possessions to China? Europe's difficulty is Asia's opportunity; and Japan is evidently not going to let slip the opportunity.

But this may be a case of vaulting ambition overleaping itself.

On the other hand there is something difficult to answer in Dr. Ivenage's plea for a place in the sun for Japan: "Manchuria with Eastern Mongolia affords a suitable field for colonization. America says to Japan, 'We do not want your people,' Canada, Australia, New Zealand say to Japan, 'We do not want your people.' Where, then, shall the Japanese, who, in obedience to the Rooseveltian philosophy, are increasing yearly by 800,000—where shall they go?"

Then there is the "Incarnatus est" of that first Christmas night. And the grey old world was young again in the re-birth of grace and blessedness. No wonder the midnight skies were bright with a wondrous brilliancy. No wonder the angel chorus awoke the echoes of the Judean hills. Truly they bore tidings of great joy to all the people.

THE POPE PRAISES KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

On the occasion of the silver jubilee of the Catholic University of Washington our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XV., in a letter to the Cardinals, Archbishops and Bishops of the United States makes special mention of the generosity of the Knights of Columbus in endowing scholarships at the University.

"In this connection we will not withhold our praise from the Knights of Columbus who, as you lately informed us, by their splendid contribution have carried out their wise conceived design of extending to young men less favored by fortune the advantages of a solid and at the same time a Christian education. This noble example of beneficence, which all good men approve, we hold up for imitation and generous emulation to all who are blessed with means."

THE POLES AND THE JEWS

Speaking of the unhappy plight of the Jews in Poland The Globe recently said:

"Of all the inhabitants of Poland the Jews have suffered the most, because they have always been harshly treated by the Poles, and now the Jews have no place or way of escape."

As a matter of fact this is the very reverse of the truth. George Brandes, the famous Danish writer, in his "Poland, a Study of Land, People and Literature," though himself not a Catholic nor particularly sympathetic to the Catholic Poles, is just and well-informed on a subject which he has studied deeply. Concerning the treatment of the Jews by the Catholics of Poland he writes:

"As to the Jews, who are numerous in Poland, because the Kingdom of Poland offered them an asylum during their long persecution, that form of hatred of the Jews, which has been decorated with the affected name of *Antisemitism*, and which certain sections of Danish society with their inclinations to cultivate German reaction and German rudeness have imported, has not struck root at all in Russian Poland."

And again:

"Common misfortune has united the Polish Jew and Polish Catholic fellow countrymen."

Nor is this feeling of brotherhood between Polish Jew and Polish Catholic of recent date:

"The fraternizing of the people with the Jews in Warsaw in 1860 solved the question of the equality of the latter and when in February 1861, in the square before the castle, and in another larger square, shots were fired upon the kneeling crowd, who with the mouths of the Russian cannon before their eyes, gave utterance to the national hymn, and besought God to send to the Poles freedom and a fatherland, the Jews felt impelled to manifest their national disposition by an unmistakable demonstration. In great numbers they accompanied their Rabbis into the Catholic churches, just as the Christians in great numbers went into the synagogues to sing the same hymn."

"But the feeling of unity was already strong in Poland's greatest poet, Mickiewicz; his work, *Pan Tadeusz* (of 1834) which has become the Polish national epic, ends with the playing of Poland's celebrated national song for Dombrowski and his soldiers, by a Jew. 'The great Master' as the poem calls him."

The lot of the Jew like that of all Poles at present is one of awful, almost inconceivable distress and misery; it is worse than that of his Catholic fellow-countrymen in this one particular: the Jew is restricted by Russian law to certain districts so that he is not so free in seeking the precarious relief that may fall to the wandering "refugees."

BETHOLD THY MOTHER

From out the years, down the storied avenues of the past, are ringing clear and strong, words of hope and consolation that can never lose their charm for the ears of men. And first, there is the Virgin's whispered "Fiat." No orator has ever so thrilled the world with the burning tide of his eloquence as has that single word from the silence of Joachim's lowly dwelling. The painter's brush, the poet's pen, have all striven to interpret its meaning. And all have striven in vain, for no mere human intellect

can ever hope to fathom the wonder of it.

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And that night in the upper room where Jesus sat with the Twelve at the Paschal Feast, and pronounced, for the first time, the awful words that made a God our food. "Hoc est corpus meum." What a revelation of the immensity of the love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus? That He should condescend to be our very meat and drink?

And then, upon the Cross of Calvary, the same sacred lips pronounce the uttermost of self immolation. "Consummatus est." He had died for us, and "greater love than this no man hath for his friend."

One would have thought that this would have been deemed enough. But the Heart of Jesus was still not satisfied. One thing still remained. One last gift was His to give, and give it He must. And so the startled ears of John catch the dying whisper, "Ecce mater tua." O Love that is truly divine! O Love that is limitless as eternity!

If there is one thing we are jealous of it is the love of our mother. We are ready to share everything else, but we want to keep our mother's heart for ourselves. Could we wonder if Jesus, having given us everything else, should keep His mother for his very own? Throughout all those years of seclusion at Nazareth her love had been His; when even His own chosen disciples ran away and left Him. His mother stood by Him. There was one heart that felt for Him; one place where He could lay His weary Head, His mother's breast. The ingratitude and callousness of men made Him cling all the more to this one haven of refuge. It was hard to give up His mother, and so He kept this sweetest gift until the very last. But at last He gave us even her. Ah! well indeed might St. Paul say "He emptied Himself for us."

And how have men regarded this dear gift of the dying Saviour? Oh, the sickening horror of it! To think that we should have made this most personal gift of His, His last keepsake, but an additional means of insulting and wounding the generous Heart of Jesus? To have thrown back in His Face His dying legacy? The love of Jesus could do no more. The ingratitude of man could reach no lower depths.

But it is not too late to make amends. During this month of May we will make reparation to the heart of Mary and the Heart of Mary's Son.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

THE LETTER of His Holiness, Pope Benedict XV., to the Cardinal Archbishops of Baltimore, New York, Boston and Quebec with regard to the foundation and encouragement of the Work known as the Holy Infancy, may be taken as an indication of revived interest in Foreign Missions among Catholics on this continent. The establishment at Maryknoll, a year or two ago of a seminary for the training of missionaries was the first tangible evidence that American Catholics were beginning to realize their responsibilities and opportunities in this direction, and the magnificent response made in some sections to the appeal of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith—notably in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, where, in the year 1914, over \$50,000 was contributed for this noble purpose—was confirmatory of this much needed and most gratifying development.

Now, as the Holy Father points out, the disturbed state of Europe having to a great extent dried up that well spring of subscriptions, which heretofore especially distinguished France and Belgium, the opportunity for this continent has come, and it is with the desire of arousing his faithful children to a realization of this fact that the Pope has addressed his letter on the Holy Infancy to the four North American members of the Sacred College. "This great work," he says "more than ever feels the need of that charitable zeal in behalf of every good cause which has ever characterized American and Canadian Catholics

when it has been properly put before them, and he prays that he may be inspired in this crisis to hearken to the cry of so many millions of pagan children who are by the force of circumstances being made the victims of the cruel and rapacious war now ravaging the continent of Europe and disturbing the entire world."

MGR. DE TAIL, Director General of the Association of the Holy Infancy, who recently visited America in the interests of the work, and, to that end, conferred with many of the Bishops of the United States and Canada, has reported to the Holy Father that he everywhere found the field white for the harvest, and the strongest disposition displayed on all sides to aid and encourage him. The Sovereign Pontiff therefore urges the establishment of the Association in all schools and colleges, as the most effective means of instilling into the hearts of the rising generation a living interest in foreign missions and zeal for spreading among the children of pagan lands knowledge of our Blessed Lady, and of her Divine Son. The Holy Infancy has had a large share in this work in the past and is solicitous now that there should be no interruption in its activities. It is to American and Canadian Catholics he looks to uphold his hands. Shall it be said that he has looked in vain?

WE PUBLISH at the head of Father Fraser's Mission Fund this week a letter just received from this indefatigable soldier of Christ in which he gives expression once more to his debt of gratitude to the many readers of the CATHOLIC RECORD who by their alms or their prayers have aided him in the arduous task to which he has consecrated his life. The church to which he refers in this letter is the eighteenth which he has been instrumental in erecting in the district under his charge. Many of these are but unpretentious chapels but even the least of them has been a centre about which has gathered a band of native Chinese Christians whose zeal and attachment to their new found faith are the missionaries' consolation and crown. Father Fraser is emphatic in his assurance that the results achieved would not have been possible without the means placed at his disposal by his friends in Canada, and this to them should be at once their ample reward and a stimulus to further effort in his behalf.

OUR CANADIAN BOYS

Since we last went to press the world has rung with the praises of our gallant Canadian soldiers who by their resourcefulness and undiminished courage checked the crushing German soldiers who all but succeeded in effectively breaking through the line of the Allies. It is no empty boast, but the deliberate judgment of General French, that the Canadians saved the situation.

President Falconer voiced the feeling of every Canadian heart when he said: "It means something more to be a Canadian to-day than it ever meant before." But the price is appalling. Up to date 222 officers out of 800 are reported in the Canadian lists as dead, wounded or missing. One estimate of total loss places it between 8,000 and 10,000.

THE DARDANELLES

Our kinsmen from Australia and New Zealand have joined the allied forces which are co-operating on land with the naval attack on the Dardanelles forts. The *Globe*, May 1, after describing the landing of other forces says:

While these operations were in progress on both sides of the entrance the Australians and New Zealanders had been making history on their own account. They landed on Sunday afternoon at Cape Tepe, a promontory on the Aegean, almost due west of the Narrows, and some six miles distant from them. To the northeast of the beach there is a hill, Sari Bair, which forms the southerly spur of the most important range on the peninsula. Toward this they pushed on, the official report states, "with the utmost boldness." The Turks evidently regarded the Australian advance as dangerous, for on Sunday and Monday they strongly and repeatedly attacked. The men from the Antipodes were not to be denied, and when night fell on Monday they held the slopes of the hill. On Tuesday the Turks again attacked in force, coming on boldly time after time. The Australians drove them back and resumed the offensive, taking as prisoners 500 Turks who had been cut off by the guns of the fleet. The losses of the Australians and New Zealanders were heavy, but they have established themselves in a position of great strength despite the most strenuous opposition.

With land and sea forces co-operating greater progress has been made in a week than in the whole three months of naval attack alone on the Dardanelles forts.

SUBMARINES

Whatever the means employed the German submarine activity seems to be pretty effectively checked. Only

posthumous matter which his executors have given to the world since his lamented death. The novel "Odeish," a story of the times of Charles II, perhaps the most notable of these, was, it is true, written ten years ago, but was revised by the author in the last months of his life. Another completed but (by the author) unnamed novel, is now to appear under the title of "Loneliness." Then there is "Vexilla Regis," a prayer book for war time. "The Upper Room," a drama of Christ's Passion, the revision of the proof sheets of both of which was almost the last work of Mr. Benson. And now we have from the press of Longmans Green & Co. (New York) a volume of "Spiritual Letters to one of his Converts," which comes like the last message of this industrious apostle from across the grave.

THESE LETTERS comprise both the Anglican and Catholic careers of the author. For some years before his conversion Father Benson was on a gradually ascending scale in the spiritual life, and while deprived for so long of the true Sacraments, his penetrating mind and undoubted spirituality pierced one by one the clouds which enveloped him and brought him to the gradual realization as to where the Truth lay. His struggles in this direction he has told with great feeling in his "Confessions of a Convert," and, in another form, they are described for us in this volume. The Anglican letters, while characteristically clear and stimulating, and warm with the love of God, display the defects of the author's position, and of this he seemed himself not unconscious. Writing as a Catholic of his first visit to Rome at an earlier period he says: "When I was there, eight years ago, I was a stranger. Now, thank God! a child at home." That is the keynote of his Catholic experiences and of these Spiritual Letters so far as they apply to himself. Taken as a whole they make a book which no admirer of Father Benson's can afford to pass over, and which to straggling souls outside the Church will solve many difficulties for them and help them to realize that within her bosom alone they can find perfect rest. We shall return to the subject again.

ON THE BATTLE LINE

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