

The Catholic Record

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THE CHURCH IN MEXICO

The Rev. J. W. Reardon, S. J., spent two years in Mexico under conditions that gave him exceptional opportunities of informing himself of the religious conditions of that unhappy country. These he describes in a lengthy article contributed to the Catholic Northwest Progress. The better class of Mexicans are highly educated not only in the best schools of the country but often in American and English universities while many spend years in Germany or France.

Amongst the wealthier classes the women are, for the most part, sincere Catholics, pious and devoted to home life. Amongst the men the influence of French ideas, of German rationalism, of American indifference, is more strongly noted. However there is a large proportion of sincere and practical Catholics.

Of the common peons who form five-sixths of the population the religion is nominally Catholic but leaves a great deal to be desired.

The reason why an able and learned episcopate is comparatively powerless is found in the iniquitous laws that sequestered all Church property, suppressed religious orders and hampered with official red tape what semblance of liberty that was left. Colleges were seized and converted into government schools in which infidelity is openly taught. New parishes may not be opened without government permission. Building can not be undertaken without funds, and these will not be forthcoming when it is known that the government will take possession of the buildings when erected. For a priest or sister to appear on the street in a religious garb subjects them to a fine. Father Reardon tells of the burial of one of the Jesuit Fathers at which he assisted. "We had to consign the body to its last resting place with a hurried prayer and a few drops of holy water, and even this furtive act rendered us liable to fine or imprisonment."

The hampering laws of a hostile government leaves the Church in Mexico in a great measure helpless before the great work which confronts it; and an eloquent contradiction of the stupid and misleading charge so often made by ill-informed Protest-

ants that the Catholic Church is all-powerful in Mexico. The concluding paragraph of this Jesuit-Father's article would lead one to think that American intervention which would entail for many years American occupation might not be an unmixed evil for the Church in Mexico.

"Give Catholicity the freedom that it has in our own land; allow the bishops the freedom which our own enjoy, and we have no fear for the rebuilding of the Church in Mexico, which, in its sorrows and persecutions, richly deserves our sympathy and admiration. It is the only way for the regeneration of the nation; it is the only way for the uplifting of the masses; but it is the only way excluded by the infidel Government of Mexico."

AUTHORITY AND FREEDOM

The Christian Guardian extends its sympathy to Catholic editors in general and to "poor Father Phelan" in particular because he has been called to order by the Apostolic Delegate. The Delegate speaks of the Watchman's "reprehensible article on the Tango," and "its repeated attacks on the hierarchy."

"Protestants seem to consider him an oracle of the Church and quote his intemperate utterances as doctrines of the same." The Guardian knows how true this is; it gleefully quoted Father Phelan's "intemperate utterances" (sometimes making him a bishop or even an archbishop) when such utterances served its purpose. If ecclesiastical authority remains silent, its silence is interpreted as acquiescence; if it speak, ecclesiastical discipline is tyranny. Father Phelan knows that he has been treated with a great deal of forbearance and will doubtless recognize the justice of the reprimand that he has received. Even if the "foot-note" is abolished it is amusing to see the Methodist Guardian condoling with the champion of the Tango.

"How long," asks the Guardian, "can Roman officialdom stifle the voice of free men in the Roman Catholic Church?" G. K. Chesterton not long ago pointed out that Catholic dogma no more hampered the freedom of Catholics than the nebular hypothesis hampered the freedom of scientists. Neither does ecclesiastical authority hamper the freedom of members of the Church any more than civil authority hampers the freedom of citizens. Authority secures the freedom of the individual in either case. The absence of authority is not freedom, it is anarchy. The I. W. W., the suffragettes and others regard civil authority in much the same light as the Guardian regards the authority of the bishops who rule the Church of God.

ALCOHOL AS A BEVERAGE

At the recent Alcohol Congress held in Paris Dr. G. Bertillon gave some statistics that upset many theories and preconceived notions. The figures are based on the number of litres of pure alcohol consumed per capita of the population in each country.

Table with 2 columns: Country and Litres per capita. France: 18.18 litres; Italy: 12.12; Belgium: 12.08; Switzerland: 11.96; Denmark: 10.95; Spain: 10.50; Germany: 9.44; Great Britain: 7.77; Sweden: 5.81; Russia: 5.21.

It will be seen that Russia, where the traffic is a government monopoly, and where we have been led to believe drunkenness is appalling, stands lowest on the list. We have been told over and over again that the Russian government is deliberately debauching the people for the sake of the enormous revenue it derives from alcohol. Yet the per capita consumption is nearly fifty per cent higher in Great Britain. Russia makes a somewhat better showing than Sweden where temperance has made enormous advances in recent years. That the wine-drinking countries consume a very large quantity of alcohol is quite evident. Nevertheless drunkenness is almost unknown where wine is the ordinary beverage of everybody. While this may be a matter for congratulation so far as it goes, the weight of medical opinion seems to indicate that alcohol even when always taken in moderation produces deleterious effects.

The figures given above are for the whole population. In many countries there is a large proportion of total-abstainers; so that the amount consumed by those who do use alcoholic beverages would be relatively much larger than shown in the table.

Everywhere throughout the world, varying with varying conditions, there is an anti-alcohol movement. A notable case is that of Finland, once the most intemperate country in Europe, now the most temperate; the Finnish per capita consumption of alcohol is now only a litre and a half. It would seem that where the evil effects of alcohol are most in evidence the reaction against it is most complete. Hence we find that the sober wine-drinking countries now lead Europe in the consumption of alcohol, and in these countries the anti-alcohol movement is slow to take on any effective shape.

MORGANATIC MARRIAGE

The shocking murder of Prince Franz Ferdinand and his wife at the hands of a fanatical young Serb illustrates the effects of racial and nationalistic passion and prejudice on unbalanced minds. The details of this awful tragedy have already reached our readers. We refer to it because in the daily press reference was made to the Prince's morganatic marriage as though it was something less than a real marriage. As the Prince was a Catholic there was no other than a real marriage indissoluble except by death possible for him. But by Austrian law he should have chosen his wife from the family of a reigning prince in order that his children should come into the line of succession to the throne of the dual monarchy. Marrying below this rank it was definitely agreed by all concerned that the children should be debarred from the succession. Hence the marriage is called a morganatic marriage. This is in the nature of a marriage settlement which according to our own laws may give binding legal force to certain financial arrangements sometimes entered into before marriage which debar the wife from what otherwise would be her legal rights in her husband's property. A morganatic marriage is, therefore, in every sense of the word a real marriage.

TWO WEIGHTS AND TWO MEASURES

"Clericalism! that is the enemy." Our Protestant friends have always been ready to subscribe to this as one of the first principles of civil liberty. That is of course when Catholic priests are concerned. The recent election campaign saw Protestant clergymen aggressively taking sides in party politics. Individually and collectively they threw all their influence on one side. True the Anglican clergy as a body maintained a dignified neutrality. It may also be true that many clergymen of other denominations abstained from active participation in the political campaign. But it remains true that a large proportion of the Protestant clergy were, throughout the campaign, aggressive partisans. They claimed, and doubtless many were honest in their contention, that what they considered as the chief issue dividing the parties was a moral question. Here they seemed to beg the whole question. They assumed that legislation such as was promised by the party would cause them to vigorously espoused would be effective in wiping out the evils of the liquor traffic. And because they decided they conceded no liberty, no right of private judgment to the elector or whom might honestly think otherwise.

The moral question was not at issue at all between the parties. Rather was it the political question as to the wisdom of superseding the present legislation for regulating and restricting or entirely abolishing the liquor traffic by a province wide measure that might possibly be fairly successful, or might easily disappoint the hopes and defeat the object of its advocates. There was certainly room for honest difference of opinion. The clerical politicians, however, were possessed of an intemperate zeal for their special brand of temperance legislation. They assumed an intolerant attitude. They monopolized the virtue of temperance; those who dared disagree with them were the allies of the liquor interests. The temperance voters of the province have emphatically resented this aspersion on their honesty and this infringement of their political liberty. They have shown that clerical dictation is a poor political weapon.

The inconsistency of the Protestant ministers did not escape advertisement. The Montreal Gazette during the course of the campaign said: "Some people in Toronto are objecting that Protestant ministers are

using their pulpits as places from which to address political arguments to their hearers. When Catholic priests in Quebec did a like sort of thing much ado was made over the matter, and there was talk of tyranny and undue influence, and protest, and even lawsuits. The principle behind the clerical action was the same in each case. The circumstances may not greatly affect it. The wise preacher will think long before he decides to mix political matters with his greater message.

The Toronto News, however, makes a distinction in favor of clerical action in Ontario. "Law suits entered against Roman Catholic ecclesiastics in Quebec were not taken because they addressed political arguments to the people, but because they employed spiritual intimidation and coercion." In the next column under the heading of "Foolish Denunciation" the News says: "The length to which men will go when they lose their heads has been amply demonstrated in this campaign. Last Sunday Mr. Flavelle was told that he was spiritually lost if he did not vote for the Liberal candidate in South Victoria. The message was delivered from the pulpit." In Ontario this is "foolish denunciation;" in Quebec it would be "spiritual intimidation and coercion." It makes not the slightest difference whether the News was misinformed or not; it was commenting on what it assumed to be a fact.

The Canadian Courier, independent politically, failed like the Gazette to see the fine-spun distinction between clerical dictation and clerical dictation. It does not seem to care whose ox is gored.

"For many years the Protestant churches of Canada have been complaining of the interference of the Roman Catholic Church in general elections and the influence of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in political affairs at other times. Just now the Protestant churches are doing exactly what they have condemned in their Roman Catholic brethren."

The Globe says: "The drink traffic is a crime against humanity. It cannot survive education and persistent agitation."

But it can survive temperance legislation that outruns temperance education. Under present conditions all creeds and political parties may unite to further the cause of temperance and abolish the bar. Each municipality is free to set its own house in order but must concede like freedom to every other municipality. Education must prepare the way. Legislation can only hold the ground already won.

It is all over now and we venture to think that never again will the cause of temperance be linked up with the fortunes of a political party. Protestant ministers who are honest temperance advocates will find non-partisan temperance work, if less spectacular, much more effective.

ANOTHER CONVENT HIGH SCHOOL

Although we are without a Catholic High School system in Ontario, many of our convent schools, without sharing in the generous financial aid extended to secular High Schools, nevertheless do remarkably efficient High School work. Some of them are equal to the best College Institutes; they prove it at the departmental examinations.

We are pleased to learn that our energetic old friend the Rev. D. R. Macdonald, pastor of Glen Nevis, has secured for the historic county of Glengary a Convent School that begins its work with the complete High School course. In another column will be found an account of the dedication of the buildings by the Right Rev. Bishop Macdonnell of Alexandria. There are many Catholics who are in the immediate vicinity of a secular High School which they may attend from home. Many are not so favorably situated. When girls are sent away from home the Convent school is an inestimable advantage; and even when the secular High School is at hand all who can afford to place their daughters with the sisters feel amply repaid in the holy atmosphere of religion that there surrounds them, and in the wholesome and refining influences of convent life.

We understand that in addition to High School work of this nature special facilities are afforded at Glen Nevis for the preparation and training of teaching sisters who will later devote their lives to the great work of Catholic education. The work is one, therefore, that is of diocesan rather than local scope and importance.

PIRIST-RIDDEN

The popular Protestant concept of a Catholic country is of a people dominated over by an arrogant priesthood. Not only cannot a Catholic call his soul his own but the clerical arm reaches out to and directs the civil and temporal affairs of every individual subject of the Church of Rome.

Across the border the Guardians of Liberty, supported by the Menace and its brethren in the press, are on the war path against the intriguing power of Rome. They are out to defeat the designs of the Roman hierarchy upon the liberties of the American people. The other day they discovered that Major Butt, Taft's aide, who was drowned on the Titanic, was returning from Rome with instructions in his pocket directing American Catholics to vote against President Wilson. And at the same time they would have us believe that Wilson is in league with the Catholic Church.

An American Protestant magazine warns its readers about the well-olled lobby which the Pope maintains at Washington. On another page of the same issue of the same magazine we are informed that Henry King Carroll has been appointed Washington lobbyist for the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, a union of some of the leading Protestant sects.

Irish Protestants pretend to believe that a Home Rule Parliament will be dominated by the Irish priests. To lend color to the argument a correspondent of the Toronto News informs us that there are 19,000 priests in Ireland. It matters little that the last census gives the total of priests in that country as 3,051. These 3,051 priests attend to the spiritual interests of more than 3,000,000 Catholics, whereas it takes 2,881 parsons to look after the handful of Irish Protestants. Seeing that the number of parsons falls short of the total number of priests by only 170 it would seem that Ireland might more truthfully be described as parson-ridden rather than priest-ridden.

The President and the Secretary of State delivered addresses at the dedication of a Methodist University in Washington recently. We are still waiting to hear the Guardians of Liberty protest against this union of Church and State. Suppose the President had delivered an address at the Catholic University in Washington some poor fool would be looking for the Pope in the national capital.

The part played by the parsons in the recent Ontario elections is still fresh in the public memory. Priest-ridden indeed. The priests cannot hold a candle to the parsons when it comes to having a finger in the political pie. As a rule the priests are too busy attending to the work of their divine Master to have any time for the kind of activity beloved of the spiritual guides of the sects.

THE PROOF OF THE PUDDING

Whilst it would be utterly impossible for us to notice in our columns every individual college magazine that is sent us for review, yet we were so pleased with "Echoes From The Pines," that we must perforce pay it the compliment of a reference. The "Echoes" is edited by the students in residence at the Ursuline College, Chatham, and bears witness more eloquently than lengthy lists of honors and distinctions to the excellence of the educational work of that institution. We have always felt that a certain amount of "cramming" had more or less influence on the composition of the honors' list, but we have little faith in the permanent value of the information so imbibed. The only real system of education is that which trains the child to think and to express its thoughts, and it is for the evidences of this that they afford that we value the various college publications.

"Echoes From The Pines" comes well through the above ordeal. Being entirely the product of the student body it would be unfair to institute a comparison between it and, say, "St. Joseph Lilies," which gives space to contributions from the alumnae and literary friends of St. Joseph's. But the "Echoes" need fear no comparison with publications of its own class. Whilst the youthful writers may lack some of the graces of more experienced artists their work has none of the crudeness that is associated with literary beginners. The style of the various articles is free and original;

several short stories show considerable imaginative power, and the poetical numbers are full of promise. We are entirely pleased with "Echoes From The Pines."

COLUMBA.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

A HUNGARIAN Bishop, Mgr. de Zichy, has instructed the priests of his diocese to preach a special sermon every year in behalf of the Catholic Press. This is a practical apostolate.

A SPEAKER of prominence in Galt is reported to have alluded to one of the popular leaders in the late election as having "stood at the foot of the cross when the temperance cause was being crucified by the government." We are not told how the allusion was received by the audience, but if, as it appears, it passed without rebuke, one must needs despair of the survival of Christian feeling among our non-Catholic fellow-countrymen. Politicians are not usually conspicuous for moderation nor is reverence one of their outstanding qualities, but Christian audiences have at least a right to expect that sacred persons or events shall not be made the subject of profane insinuations or dragged through the mire of party animosity.

THE EDINBURGH Scotsman, the most influential newspaper published north of the Tweed, is not the source to which we should ordinarily look for sympathetic treatment of Catholic questions. Yet in several instances of late, it has shown a commendable independence of judgment and a breadth of outlook which must have caused its Presbyterian readers to rub their eyes and wonder if said orbs had not for once deceived them. The latest instance of this kind upon an address delivered by Lord Skerrington (the first Catholic judge in Scotland since the "Reformation") before the Catholic Young Men's Society of Edinburgh. His Lordship, on that occasion, made a vigorous and well-reasoned protest against the injustice done to both Catholics and Episcopalians by the mode of administering the Scottish Education Department. Under the system in vogue they are not only deprived of any voice in the management of the Public or Board Schools of the country but their children are precluded from participating in the educational advantages which might otherwise accrue to them, through the peculiar construction placed upon the legal provisions for religious instruction in these schools.

WE HAVE not space to go fully into the matter here, nor, perhaps, is it interest for the generality of our readers sufficient to warrant us in doing so. We content ourselves therefore with reproducing an extract from Lord Skerrington's address as illustrating the injustice to which Scots Catholics are subjected in regard to the education of their children, and, further, an extract or two from the Scotsman's comment thereon as evidencing the broadening sympathies of its editorial management. Lord Skerrington said:

"Such being the Scottish system of education, the Catholic grievance is simple and easy to state. We pay the same school rates and the same imperial taxes as other people, but we are treated exceptionally and differently from the rest of the population as regards education. The majority of parents have their children instructed in their own Presbyterian faith and also in secular, knowledge—absolutely gratuitously and at the public expense, partly by means of Government grants, partly by means of a school rate. This seems to us Catholics right and just, and we have no objection whatsoever to paying rates and taxes for that purpose. On the other hand we desire the same advantages for ourselves. In return, however, for the school rates which Catholics pay they are offered by the School Boards a scheme of education in which they would no doubt have the benefit of a "conscience clause," but in which the doctrines and practices of their religion would be studiously ignored, a system which was rejected by the Presbyterians of Scotland when it was offered to them. Accordingly no course was or is open to the Catholics of the country except to provide and equip at their own expense separate schools in which their children may receive proper teaching, both secular and religious. These schools they have to maintain without any assistance from the rates and with the help only of certain Government grants which are obviously inadequate to pay the annual cost of maintenance. In other words, we are compelled to tax ourselves in order to defray first the capital expense of providing these schools, and second the deficit on the yearly cost of maintenance. In some cases this deficit on

revenue account cannot be fully met and debt is incurred, which goes to increase the volume of debt already incurred on capital account. We naturally ask why it is that we are placed at this cruel disadvantage in comparison with our Presbyterian brethren? How would they like to find themselves deprived of the whole advantages of the national system of education for which they pay school rates?"

THIS GAVE occasion to the Scotsman to comment as follows:

"Voluntaryism in Scotland as has been repeatedly pointed out in our columns, draws an impossible distinction between the public endowment of denominational religious teaching in the churches, and the equally public endowment of sectarian religious teaching in the schools. The strongest supporters of the Liberalist doctrine in Scotland appear to find no difficulty in combining the most emphatic opposition to a State Church with warm approval of State subvention for the inculcation of their own particular form of religion in the schools. Only the fact that the non-Presbyterian minority in Scotland is relatively small compared with the Presbyterian majority has enabled this self-deception—for presumably it is self-deception—to be maintained so long. In the presence of a large Roman Catholic or Episcopalian element in the population it must have gone the way long ago of all delusions upon which the light of day is admitted. But the Roman Catholic and Episcopalian minority in Scotland are largely unnumbered, and hitherto they have been comparatively silent under the invidious distinction made against their religion with the approval of the Liberalist supporters of absolute religious equality for all sects and denominations."

IT HAVING been urged in extenuation that the Catholic and Episcopal minority are a mere handful, the Scotsman asks if the minority is so small as is generally supposed, and proceeds to answer this futile objection after this fashion:

"In 1913 the number of Roman Catholic schools qualifying for the Government grants was 224, and the average number of scholars in attendance over 87,000. Between 11 and 12 per cent of all the children attending schools under Government inspection in Scotland were in Roman Catholic schools. The minority is not, therefore, so very small, and to the 87,000 Roman Catholics must be added the 8,000 in Episcopal schools, making a total of 95,000 children, or 12.6 per cent of the elementary school population, excluded from the Public schools by a religious barrier. And to that the number for which no estimate can be given, of Roman Catholic or Episcopalian children who attend Public schools, because they have no other to go to, and consequently receive no school instruction in religion at all, and the full effect upon the national life of the sectarianism of the religious instruction will begin to be realised."

LORD SKERRINGTON had spoken of the crushing burden which this state of things imposed upon Scottish Catholics, and with one more extract illustrating the emancipated outlook of the chief organ of public opinion in Scotland in their regard the subject is for the present dismissed:

"It is a burden that is not measured only by monetary contributions since it exacts and obtains in personal service, either unremunerated or inadequately remunerated, self-sacrificing labours which Presbyterian teachers are never called upon to make for their religion. But, as the figures are interesting, it may be mentioned that last year 124 5d per scholar, or for £54,000, was raised locally for the support of the Roman Catholic schools, and 16s 0d per scholar, or over £6000, for the Episcopal schools. These sums were for annual maintenance only, being exclusive of capital for building, and represent the annual burden falling upon Roman Catholics and Episcopalians for the education of their children apart from taxation, in the Imperial grants from which they share, and from rates to which they contribute but in the distribution of which they do not participate."

From all of which it may be seen that the battle for the Faith and for the safeguarding of the welfare of Catholic children is being waged as unremittingly in the stronghold of Presbyterianism as in the wider field and less tradition burdened atmosphere of this continent.

WHATEVER may be thought of President Wilson's attitude in regard to Mexico or towards the many internal problems with which he has had to deal since assuming office, it must be generally admitted that he has infused a new and a loftier spirit into the conduct of public affairs in the United States than has ordinarily obtained in the past. A striving after high ideals and the exercise of independent judgment and vigorous common sense are thus far the outstanding characteristics of his administration. This (to cite an instance still fresh in the public mind) was seen in his undeviating