

The Catholic Record

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Editors: Rev. James T. Foley, B. A., Thomas Coffey, L.L.D. Associate Editors: Rev. J. O'Sullivan, Rev. P. Mackintosh, B. C.

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DESPATCHES FROM ROME

Somewhere about the middle of the nineteenth century, after travel and study had worn down the sharp edges of his new England prejudice, a scholarly American wrote a delightful book in which he embodied his observations and reflections during years of intelligent intercourse with the people of Europe. Face to face with actual conditions, prejudice finally gave place to sympathetic understanding. The author is unknown, and but a few highly prized copies of the book were extant. A fortunate possessor of one of these after a life time of reading and re-reading has given to a grateful public a new edition of the work under the title of "My Unknown Chum."

How little a half-century of progress has affected certain types may be seen from this extract:

"I once met a man in Italy, who could not order his breakfast correctly in Italian, who knew only one Italian, and he was the waiter who served him in a restaurant; and yet this man was a correspondent of a respectable paper in Boston, and had the effrontery to write column after column upon Italian social life, and to speak of political affairs as if he were Cardinal Antonelli's sole confidant."

During the progress of the War the legitimate successors of this impudent ignoramus have found quite as credulous a reading public when the Pope and the Vatican are in question. The publication of the Pope's Peace Note, of course, called for immediate comment and explanation on the part of the daily press. The omniscient editors felt that it was incumbent on them to accept or reject on the spur of the moment the carefully considered proposals which they had barely read. In passing we may here direct attention to a well-considered article by the editor of the American Review of Reviews on a subject now engaging the attention of the world. From the very nature of the magazine which he edits he is compelled to make a comprehensive survey of current literature, and whether we fully agree with him or not, we get a better understanding of the deep impression the Peace Note made on thinking minds than that afforded by the hasty, ill-considered editorials in the daily papers. Elsewhere in this issue we reproduce a considerable part of the Review of Reviews editorial.

But to return to the despatches from Rome. The dailies, having settled the whole matter of the Pope's intervention for their readers (and for the world) in a few hours, began gravely to tell us, (1) that the Pope was greatly cast down by the reception the press had given his proposals; (2) that he got up an hour earlier in the morning to read the papers; (3) that totally discouraged he had definitely decided to make no further attempt to bring about peace as he recognized the utter futility of his efforts; (4) that he was about to issue another appeal; (5) that he was quite hopeful of success; (6) the exact terms if not precise words of his next note. Then there came a lull, and believers in the infallibility of their favorite daily must have wondered why the responsible rulers of the nations took so long to consider their replies. This wonder could not have been lessened by the fact that the British Government in an official communication to the press announced that it had instructed the British envoy at the Vatican to inform the Papal Secretary of State

that Pope Benedict's proposals would receive "serious and benevolent consideration."

Then came President Wilson's reply, remarkable in many respects; but in none more remarkable than in going out of its way to repudiate emphatically and unequivocally the policy of economic warfare on the Central Powers when peace should be restored. Beyond this the whole burden of the President's reply was the refusal to treat with the present German Government, which was not the German people but the ruthless master of the German people. A consistent democrat, President Wilson has faith in the people, even the German people. Given a government responsible to the German people from pre-emptorily rejecting the Pope's proposals the President gave the clearest possible intimation that peace negotiations were not only possible but desirable. And it may be assumed that in making that condition precedent to negotiations President Wilson had good reason to believe that he was effectively helping to loosen the iron grip of militarist Prussia on the government of Germany and to further the movement for a government responsible to the representatives of the people. It is quite probable that the Pope understood the President. But another crop of silly despatches would indicate that the Holy Father went about the hotel lobbies and market places of Rome chattering inanities to the representatives of the press agencies. And otherwise intelligent men gravely discuss this "news" from Rome.

Now the replies of Germany and Austria furnish the occasion for further use of the cable which lies at the bottom of the Atlantic. Here for example:

"Erzberger and his adherents of the Centrist or Catholic party are expected to be realigned wholly with the Government, in view of the German Government's acquiescence in Pope Benedict's peace suggestions."

And this: After stating that the Italian press thinks "there is something underlying" the Central replies the dispatch goes on:

"This 'something' is believed to be set forth in the following summary by the Vatican expert. "If the Central Empires' reply was a final, definite expression of their views on peace the blank refusal to mention any one of the points specified in the Pope's note as a possible basis of consultation would be an insult to the Pope, particularly in view of the fact that it has been stated officially here that one of the Pope's grounds for hoping to initiate a peace movement was private information, which the nuncios at Munich and Vienna alone could provide."

"It was obvious that the Papal Note was only a first attempt. His Holiness already is studying the form of terms for another appeal, which necessarily must be based upon Germany's expression of her willingness to give way at some point."

"It follows that the Central Empires' published reply is intended solely for German and Austrian consumption. Their real peace policy will be revealed to the Pope privately and disclosed to the world later either by a new papal communication or by important interior changes in the government of Germany portending democratization to meet President Wilson's unanswerable objections."

"You pay your money and you take your choice." Germany's acquiescence in the Pope's peace suggestions which realigns the German Catholics, or the blank refusal which if final would be an insult to the Pope.

"Vatican expert" is good! It is a distinct improvement on "A source close to the Vatican," "A Vatican official," or "It stated in official circles here," or any of the other unimpeachable authorities so often quoted. A Vatican expert, no, the Vatican expert might be mistaken, but it is hardly possible. We feel that we are very close to the centre of things. Who but the Vatican expert himself could ever have discovered after less than two months observation and diagnosis that "one of the Pope's grounds for hoping to initiate a peace movement was private information which the nuncios at Munich and Vienna alone could provide." If the Vatican expert is not overworked, in another month or so he may inform an astonished world that the Pope has still other sources of "private information"; that even the accredited representative of the British Government at the Vatican has been suspected (in official circles) of having had private interviews with His Holiness.

Of course there is nothing in the portentous information contained in

the above sample dispatch from Rome that any one, even if he could not order his breakfast in Italian, might not concoct from hotel gossip in Rome; or, indeed, without ever having crossed the Atlantic.

There may be some truth at times in the news cabled from Rome; but ineptitudes attributed to the Cardinal Secretary of State, and garrulous revelations of the Pope's intentions bear their own intrinsic evidence of absurdity—even though they bear the imprimatur of "the Vatican expert."

THE PROGRESS OF THE CONVENTION

The death of Major Willie Redmond made a bye-election necessary in Clare. De Valera, an uncompromising Sinn Fein, opposed the Nationalist nominee. "If De Valera is elected it will wreck the Convention" was one of the many pessimistic prophecies which foretold the failure of the greatest and sincerest effort of centuries to solve the Irish problem. De Valera was elected by the overwhelming majority of 8,000—and the Convention kept the even tenor of its way. Sinn Fein does not seem to be nearly so great a bugbear to Irishmen who know what it is as it does to outsiders who know little or nothing about it or about Ireland.

The deliberations of the hundred or more distinguished and thoroughly representative Irishmen in convention assembled are not given out to the press. And the official communications that are given out are such bald statements that they are never called to this side of the ocean. Yet the statements, bald as they are, are big with significance and hope. The Derry Journal, Sept. 7th, after giving names of the few absentees, and recording a vote of the heartiest thanks to the Lord Mayor, Harbor Commissioners, and the citizens of Belfast, moved by the Archbishop of Dublin and seconded by the Lord Mayor of Cork—in itself a matter of no little significance—contains the following pregnant paragraph:

"The Convention continued the consideration of those draft schemes, based upon the Dominion principle of Self-Government, which had formed the subject of discussion at the eight preceding sessions."

Think of it—Catholic bishops, Orange Grand Chaplain, Presbyterian Moderator, Nationalists and Unionists, Orange and Green assembled in Belfast, honored and feted by its citizens discussing "the Dominion principle of Self-Government" for Ireland "which had formed the subject of discussion" for the eight preceding sessions. And then let memory go back to the Dark Ages of Carson's campaign of shameful sedition, gun-running, German intrigue and the Ulster Solemn League and Covenant!

But we have something more than inference to go on. Sir Horace Plunkett, that sterling Irishman, Protestant and quondam Unionist, said the other day at Cork:

Sir Horace painstakingly explained the objects of the secrecy surrounding the workings of the convention. "It has made possible," he said, "the utmost frankness and expression of opinion between the members, which if they knew it were to be made public would not be expressed."

"The convention," said Sir Horace, in continuing his address, "has made me hope, as I never hoped before, that I shall live to see a change of heart out of which a new Ireland will be born. I hope to hear all Irishmen say 'Thy country is my country,' and in the larger patriotism, 'Thy God is my God.'"

And this special cable dispatch to the GLOBE we must quote at length: Dublin, Sept. 27.—It is a remarkable thing, though perhaps few, even in Ireland, realize its historic significance, that, while humanity is writhing in the terrible agonies of a life and death struggle, in which Irishmen have taken and are taking their share, there should be in existence in Ireland to day a representative body of her sons, the most representative for three hundred years, endeavoring to carry out the dearest wishes of all friends of the Empire in a happy solution of the time worn question. And it is an indisputable fact that the Irish convention is Ireland's most valuable and most valued asset just now.

As Mr. Dillon said on Sunday in Baileborough, County Cavan, it is not its present value so much that makes the convention a cherished asset as the advantages it will bring in the future.

There is no doubt now that all goes well in and with the convention. I am not, I think, infringing on any "defense of the realm" regulations when I say that a prominent delegate told me a day or two ago that his opinion of regretted pessimism of three weeks ago had given place to one of most cheery optimism. At the advanced, important and encouraging stage which their deliberations have reached, these things naturally leak out, and every member

of the one hundred or so who compose the convention tells a friend or two how the land lies, with the result that the feelings of optimism and hope that fill the hearts of the delegates themselves find an abode and favor with a great majority of the people. This is also evidenced by the remarkable change in the tone of the Sinn Fein and by signs, too, of a partial reaction in favor of constitutional action and of a constitutional party.

But if English men and Ulster Protestants did not feel a wholesome shame for the "malignities and stupidities" of the recent past, if they harped on Sinn Fein and ignored their own full responsibility for bringing the movement into existence there would still be reason to doubt the successful issue of the work of the Convention.

This extract, however, from an article by S. K. Ratcliffe in the August Contemporary deepens our conviction that all the forces necessary for success will cordially cooperate:

"Intelligent people on both sides of the Atlantic are today rejoicing in the assurance that the past, with its mutual misunderstanding and exasperation is done with. England and America have at last come together. But no Englishman can travel through any considerable section of the United States without being made aware that old quarrels are not yet forgotten, and that there still persists throughout the country a disquieting amount of the traditional anti-British feeling. We make a mistake if we assume that it is all, or nearly all, due to the Germans and the irreconcilable Irish, important and powerful as these two influences are. German propaganda would, in any case, have employed every available means of damaging our cause; but have we sufficiently considered how it is that, while failing hopelessly to turn the judgment of America upon the great issues of the War, it has found it a comparatively easy task to exacerbate anti-British feeling? The plain truth is that the agents of Germany have been continuously helped by our own policy and behavior. It would, for example, be a serious mistake to imagine that the failure to reach an Irish settlement in 1914 and the methods followed in the suppression of the rebellion had an effect only upon the Irish in America. That is emphatically not so. Wherever he goes in the United States the Englishman hears, and as often as not from the most earnest friends of his own country, a lament over the lost opportunities of 1914 and the harshness of 1916. Americans, I know, are not well informed about the actual and persistent difficulty of Ireland. They habitually conceive the problem as a simple sum in federation, presenting fewer difficulties than the fathers of the Republic overcame in 1789, and they are mostly in the dark as to the forces which wrecked the Home Rule compromise. This ignorance is in part our fault; in part it is the political legacy of Irish America. But let us not deceive ourselves. England will never be within sight of a full understanding with America until she has either discovered or accepted a settlement of Ireland which shall conquer by its inherent justice and generosity. And in his heart and conscience every decent Englishman knows that so long as the great historic injustice is unredeemed his country will lie under the just condemnation of the larger portion of the English-speaking race."

WHAT ARE THE ITALIANS DOING?

How often that question has been asked, and in a tone that meant that the Italian effort had petered out. The recent successes on this front come to most people with a shock of agreeable surprise. As a matter of fact the Italian armies have gone steadily on with dauntless persistence in the face of incredible military difficulties. Only with a knowledge of the terrain over which the offensive had to be carried on and the apparently insurmountable obstacles to be overcome can the glorious achievements of the Italian armies be appreciated. Were it possible to supply the necessary guns, coal and munitions the War could be brought to a victorious conclusion by the gallant soldiers of General Cadorna.

A copyrighted article from the New York Times' staff correspondent at the Italian headquarters appeared to us so important and so illuminating that we believed our readers who take an intelligent interest in the War would be grateful for an opportunity of reading it. Accordingly we sought and obtained the permission to reprint it in the RECORD through the courtesy of the managing editor of the New York Times.

Daily companionship with great thoughts, habitual conscientiousness in feeling and action, and a constant endeavor to be generous and high-minded, will, little by little yet with infallible certainty, produce a transformation of the inner life.

FORT EDMONTON SIXTY YEARS AFTER

"You must see our House of Parliament and the University," said our friend to us. Edmontonians have certainly reason to be proud of these two institutions; but we have a suspicion that, in their eyes, their beauty and value is enhanced by the fact that Calgary was so anxious to have had them. One meets with instances of similar rivalry between eastern towns. We must confess that these rather prosaic evidences of modern progress do not interest us. We would much rather see the St. Albert trail or the old log fort on the north bank of the Saskatchewan that had extended its hospitality to so many celebrities in the years when Edmonton was the chief trading post of the Hudson Bay Company west of Fort Garry.

While it is not our purpose to describe modern cities, a word about this new home of so many of the Catholic sons and daughters of the East, especially of Ontario, may be of interest. As one walks down Jasper Avenue he could easily imagine himself in Toronto or Hamilton; for, with the exception of a few half-breeds and an occasional cowboy hat, the crowd has the stamp of the East upon it. The surroundings, too, unlike those of prairie cities, are suggestive of the wooded uplands of Ontario. Almost all the grains and vegetables known to us grow in abundance. The situation of Edmonton, which has now a population of 70,000, assures its being in the future the largest city of the West; for it is the gateway to the rich farm lands of the Peace River district and the fur and mineral wealth of the North.

In Eastern Canada we first build houses and generations afterwards—in some cases many generations afterwards—we put asphalt pavement on the streets. In the West they build miles of commodious thoroughfares of asphalt and concrete, and some day there may be houses on them. It is not a good thing to be too conservative, but it is foolish to get too far in advance of one's source of supplies. Between crazy speculation and civic graft, Edmonton, like many other cities of the West, has imposed a heavy burden upon its citizens. But they are not worrying; so why should we?

Let us get away from taxes and asphalt to the centre of the religious life of this community, to the old mission post of St. Albert some ten miles distant. It is not easy, or pleasant either, to get away from the asphalt; for it stretches itself out for six miles of that journey, a symbol of modern civilization threatening a fortified stronghold of the past. St. Albert, named after the patron saint of Père Lacombe, is one of the historic spots of the West. Here Bishop Tache, on the suggestion of Father Lacombe, established in the year 1861 a mission for the conversion of the Blackfeet. Subsequently it became the first suffragan see of St. Boniface. It is but a little hamlet on the banks of the Sturgeon River. On a hill close by stands the mission, consisting of a school and orphanage conducted by the Grey Nuns, the roofed-in basement of what was intended to be a pretentious cathedral in the rear of which is the old frame church, and lastly the Archbishop's residence.

It was a hot day in August when we called to pay our respects to Mgr. Legal. Some halfbreed men and women were waiting to see him. The walls of the large reception room into which we were ushered were hung with portraits chiefly of Oblate bishops and celebrated missionaries of that order in the West. The furniture and drapery were all so redolent of the past that one could scarcely imagine himself but a few miles from the modern city of Edmonton. In a short time we were invited into the private office of the Archbishop. He impresses one as a kindly, cultured gentleman, but a man who is far from being in robust health. There is a tinge of sadness about him. Perhaps it is due to the change that his new position entails. There is no doubt that his heart is in the missions, with which he has been so long and so intimately associated. He had hoped to see that Cathedral, within which reposes the remains of his saintly predecessor Bishop Grandin, arise as a monument to the glory of God and the memory of the heroic priests and bishops who had ministered to the material and spiritual wants of the Crees, the Blackfeet and the Metis. But that desire will not be fulfilled, and it may be some

years before, from the weed-covered excavation in the Garneau, the new Cathedral of Edmonton may rear its turrets to the skies.

While we were in the office a venerable old priest entered. It was evident that he was once a powerful man, though his step was still sprightly, the stamp of age was upon him. We were introduced to Father Ledue, Vicar-General of the archdiocese, and life-long friend of the late Père Lacombe. We expressed our pleasure at meeting one whose name was familiar far beyond the confines of Alberta. "Oh yes," he replied, "I have been a long time around here." Truly he had been there a long time, for those pock marks upon his wrinkled face were received at this very mission station while ministering to the Indians during the epidemic of 1870. We realized that in the persons of these two men we were in the presence of two notable representatives of that valiant band of Oblate priests, who, in far-off France, consecrated their lives to the Indian missions of the West. They have done their work well. But a new era dawns and a native priesthood must take up the burden that they have borne so long.

THE GLEANER

NOTES AND COMMENTS

A convention of Unitarians held in a Methodist church—that is the latest development of the Protestant idea of "Catholicity." The largest Methodist conventicle in Montreal was last week the scene of the annual convention of the American Unitarian Association. But, after all, these Unitarians, in their speculations as to the nature and person of Christ, could not go much beyond current teaching in many Methodist colleges.

DOCTRINAL INDEFINITENESS and doctrinal laxity are not confined to any one body of non-Catholics. According to a well-informed writer there are in England signs of immense changes in the Anglican Establishment. Dean Inge, who may be said to represent a very large section of Anglican churchmen, has recently declared that Christ never founded a church at all, and that the principal dogmas of the Catholic Church, "the oldest of Christian bodies," are but "based on the best of paganism." This, of course, includes the dogma of Christ's divinity; the immortality of the soul, and all that is most precious in Christian teaching, without the Church as well as within.

BUT THIS SPIRIT OF DISSOLUTION in the Church of England is not confined to dogma. There is a bill before Parliament providing for divorce after five years' separation which, it is generally believed, will go through. Many women in high society, according to the same authority, seem to be jibing at the idea of marriage at all, and the wife of a prominent official has been openly advocating the limitation of families. The new divorce law—if it becomes law—will tend to destroy all but Catholic families, for women who may be deserted and divorced in five years, and who have already broken with definite Christian teaching, will not have families. The consequence will tend to the break-up altogether of non-dogmatic Christianity and national relapse into barbarism.

THERE IS, HOWEVER, a brighter side to the picture. Really earnest Christians in the Church of England, and among the Nonconformist bodies—and there are many thousands of such according to their light—have, since the War began, had their thoughts turned back to the ages of faith, and to the unbroken front which the Catholic Church at home and abroad presents to the spirit of revolt and dissolution which essays to turn the world upside down. There has unquestionably been a deepening of religious fervor in England, as in France, born of the stress and horror of war, and British soldiers on the Continent have had what we may call the realities of Christianity brought home to them in a way that they have never experienced before. The evidences of a living faith presented to them by the Catholic soldiers of France and Belgium in the trenches, has, from every account that has reached us, made a deep and lasting impression. This cannot fail to have its effect on great masses of their countrymen when peace restores them to their ordinary vocations.

IT HAS BEEN CONJECTURED that the inroads made upon the Catholic

priesthood in England by the exigencies of war may be destined to overcome in an unexpected way. The large body of the Anglican clergy pledged to the Catholic idea, and whose thoughts have with ever-increasing concentration been turning of late years to the See of Peter, are likely by reason of the dogmatic and moral break-up alluded to, to find themselves at the parting of the ways, and it can scarcely be doubted which way many of them will turn. The further spreading of Dean Inge's ideas and the passing of the divorce bill will be the crisis in the life of many, and may lead even sooner than any of us anticipate to the realization of Cardinal Newman's vision of the two streams, one leading to the negation of all religion and the other back to the Harbor of Refuge, the City seated on the Hill.

THE "SOUTH SHORE BREEZE" is a little periodical just issued by the South Shore Board of Trade, in the interests of the South Shore of the St. Lawrence, opposite Montreal, and its Four Towns, St. Lambert, Longueuil, Montreal South and Greenfield Park. Wonderful developments have been going on in late years in this hitherto little-considered offshoot of Canada's metropolitan city. A glance at the map published by the "Breeze" shows to what extent another and, in the future possibly greater Montreal has taken form and shape on the other side of St. Helen's Island.

THE "BREEZE," as its name indicates, is full of fresh things, and of exhortations to "locate" and "invest." The "Four Towns" combined is quite the most promising section of the earth's surface—at least the loquacious editor tells us so. We are not concerned to quarrel with him on that score, nor need we pause to tell of all the good things he promises to the manufacturer, the merchant, and the ordinary every day ratepayer. We do thank him, however, for placing in our way the following little incident which has a point all its own.

IT SEEMS (at least the "Breeze" says so) that Canada's big corporation, the Canadian Pacific Railway, has issued a notice to sundry hotel, restaurant, and store-keepers, protesting against the unauthorized use of their initials, C. P. R. One such letter was addressed to one, Timothy O'Brien, who was the proud proprietor of the "C. P. R. Barber Shop." Tim's reply is entitled to a niche in the Temple of Fame, and as it speaks for itself we reproduce it without further comment:

Dear Sir:—I got yure notiss, i dont want no law suit with yure big company, or i dont want to paint a new sign on my shop. Times is bad and i have a large wife and family to sport, i no yure company owns most everything — railroads, steamers, most of the best land and the time, but i dont know as you own the hole alfabet. The letters on my shopp dont stand for yure ralerod, but for somethink better. I left a matter in cold Ireland. She is dadd and goun, but her memories dere to me. Har maden name was Christina Patricia Reardon, and what i want to no is what you are going to do about it. I suppose you wont argu that the balans of my sine what refers to cut rates has got anything to do with yure ralerod. There aint been no cut rates around these parts that I nos of. (signed) TIMOTHY O'BRIEN.

It is said that the officials of the big railroad have acknowledged themselves answered.

GOVERNORS TRIBUTE TO THE CHURCH

Governor A. O. Stanley, of Kentucky, has written the following beautiful letter to a Catholic friend of his:

"I have lived a good part of my life in the most pleasant and intimate association with Christians professing the Catholic faith, and I have been impressed by their steadfast loyalty and ardent patriotism. "Such a thing as concerted opposition, either to the Constitution or to the laws of the land on the part of Catholics as such is to my mind absurd and preposterous to every fair-minded man who has any accurate knowledge of the character of the Catholics of America."

"The Sisters have proven the sincerity of their faith and their sacrificial devotion to Him whose name they profess and whose good work they perpetuate in every time of peril and disaster. Those who have seen these silent evangels of love and charity in the midst of pestilence and disaster cannot question the sincerity of their purpose or the beautiful self-abnegation of their lives. I have little patience with a man so lost to every sense of decency as to question the character of a Sister. Many of my most valued friends are to be found among the