

FLIRTING WITH HOLY SCRIPTURE

Some five or six years ago an American Catholic journal declared editorially that Dr. Ingram, the Anglican Bishop of London had acknowledged that "there was only one church in England that officially accepted the Scripture as the infallible word of God and that that church was the Church of Rome."

The reproduction, says Catholic Opinion, in the Jamaica press of this alleged utterance of the prelate occasioned its reputation later in a letter from the Bishop's Secretary in which "absolute lie" was the term applied to it. But neither then nor at any time after, it may be noted, did Dr. Ingram or any one else design to offset the slight evidence that the Church of England was officially committed to the infallibility of the word of God.

It might be a mistake, possibly, to attribute the recognition of the lamentable fact in question to his lordship but it was no mistake—no "absolute lie"—to say that the fact was precisely as stated and the call made at the time to produce an official acceptance to the contrary has ever since been studiously ignored. And, indeed, it could not well be otherwise in a church establishment wherein the putting aside of obnoxious facts has in general been lifted to the dignity of a fine art.

How little prospect, there is, too, of such an official acceptance ever becoming a fact is apparent from the recent practical refusal on the part of the convocation of Canterbury, to declare the inspiration of Scripture. Let A. Hilliard Atheridge tell us of this in his article, "Developments in the Church of England," published in America (August 25):

Convocation is an advisory body and can only take effective action on questions referred to it by the crown in what are known as "Letters of Business." Such letters of business were addressed a few years ago to the convocation of Canterbury, directing it to consider and report upon the revision of the book of common prayer. This report is now all but concluded, but practical effect cannot be given to it until an act of parliament is passed amending the prayer book, as suggested. The procedure adopted by convocation had been to refer each portion of the book to a committee whose report was then put first before the upper house of bishops and then the lower house of the clergy. A new and remarkable change was made in the sitting of July 4. The matter under discussion was the report of the revision committee on the ordination service, as already adopted by the upper house of bishops, and it was moved that instead of the subjunctive passage, consisting of a question asked by the bishop and the answer given by the candidate for orders:

"Do you unfeignedly believe all the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments?" Answer: "I do believe them," the following formula should be substituted: "Do you unfeignedly believe all the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, as conveying to us in many parts and in divers manners the revelation of God, which is consummated in Jesus Christ?" Answer: "I do so believe them."

Dr. Wace, the Dean of Canterbury, opposed the change. He pointed out that such a formula might be accepted even by one who believed neither in the inspiration of the Scriptures, nor in the authority of the Scriptures, and proposed instead as an amendment the formula: "Do you acknowledge that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by divine inspiration?" The proposal was rejected by 63 votes to 5. A proposal to insert after "conveying" the words, "by Divine authority," was rejected by 52 votes to 31. A suggestion that the last words should be "In our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God," was defeated by 52 votes to 21. A further attempt to amend the formula so that it would end with the words, "Fulfilled in the Incarnate Word, Our Lord Jesus Christ" was negated by 45 to 19. Finally after the words, "In Our Lord Jesus Christ," had been added, the original formula was accepted by 74 votes to 4. It would seem then that both the bishops and the representatives of the clergy have agreed to sweep away further barriers against unbelief and to remove one more obstacle to representatives of the higher criticism and the latest forms of modernism entering the ministry of the established church. There is much talk of the "comprehensiveness" of the Church of England. Here we have the representative assembly of the clergy practically refusing to assert the inspiration of Holy Scripture, and further rejecting the proposal to add a distinct assertion of the divinity of Christ. In the debate the reason chiefly put forward was that the formula should be so drafted as not to "trouble the conscience" of candidates for ordination. The established church declares in its articles that it accepts the early councils. These councils assuredly never dreamed of drafting

their decrees so as to have loopholes for the doubter and unbeliever. But that is what the Convocation of Canterbury has done. Surely thoughtful men in the Church of England must ask themselves if it is any longer a witness to the truth or a barrier against error. To a plain, straightforward man it would seem that a church which does not teach a church only in name.—Providence Visitor.

NEW YEAR

Each year cometh with all his days,
Some are shadowed and some are bright;
He beckons us on until he stays
Keeling with us 'neath Christmas night.

Knelling under the stars that gem
The holy sky, o'er the humble plain,
When the world's sweet Child of
Bethlehem.

Rested on Mary, full of grace,
Not only the Bethlehem in the East,
But altar Bethlehem everywhere,
When the Gloria of the first great
feast.

Rings forth its gladness on the air,
Each year seemeth loath to go,
And leave the joys of Christmas day;
In lands of sun and in lands of snow,
The year still lingers awhile to stay.

A little while, 'tis hard to part
From this Christ blessed here below,
Old year and in thy aged heart
I hear thee sing so sweet and low,

A song like this, but sweeter far,
And yet as if with a human tone,
Under the blessed Christmas star,
And thou descendest from thy throne.

"A few more days and I am gone,
The hours move swift and sure
along;
Yet still I fain would linger on
In hearing of the Christmas song.

"I bow to Him who rules all years;
Thrice blessed is His high behest;
Nor will He blame me if with tears,
I pass to my eternal rest.

"Ah, me! to altars every day
I brought the sun and the holy Mass;
The people came by my light to pray,
While countless priests did onward pass.

"The words of the Holy Thursday
night
To one another from east to west;
And the holy Host on the altar white
Would take its little half-hour's rest.

"And every minute of every hour
The Mass bell rang with its sound so
sweet.

While from shrine to shrine, with
tireless power,
And heaven's love, walked the nailed
feet.

"I brought the hours for *Angelus*
bells,
And from a thousand temple towers
They wound their sweet and blessed
spell.

Around the hearts of all the hours,
"Every day has a day of grace
For those who fain would make them
so;

I saw o'er the world in every place
The wings of cherubim angels glow.

"Men! could you hear the song I
sing—
But no, alas! it cannot be so!
My heir that comes would only bring
Blessings to bless you here below."

Seven days passed; the gray, old
year
Calls to his throne the coming heir:
Falls from his eyes the last sad tear,
And lo! there is gladness everywhere.

Singing, I hear the whole world
sing,
Afar, afar, aloud, aloud:
"What to us will the New Year
bring!"

Ah! would that each of us might
know!
Is it not truth? as old as true?
List ye, singers, the while ye sing!
Each ye singeth to each of you
What each of you will have him
bring.

The year that cometh is a king,
With better gifts than the old year
gave;
If you place on his fingers the holy
ring
Of prayer, the king becomes your
slave.

—REV. ABRAHAM J. RYAN

CHRISTMAS DAY, 1917

JOHN CARDINAL FARLEY

For the first time in more than half a century, Christmas Day dawns upon our country at war. We have not lived through these fifty years and more, as through an unbroken cycle of tranquility; yet, since the fateful Christmas of 1864, year by year have the Christian people of the nation gathered at the Crib of the Prince of Peace, at peace with all the world.

We may not attempt to search the Providence of God to inquire why this change has been thrust upon us. God's counsels are His own, beyond the scrutiny of created minds. But today we know that the words of Isaiah have come to pass in our land; upon the dark mountain the banner is lifted up, and there is a noise of a multitude, as it were of many people, the noise of the sound of kings, of nations gathered together, for the Lord of hosts hath given charge to the troops of war. For many, therefore, the birth day of the Prince of Peace will this year be a day on

which the tender recollection of those young men who bear our flag in foreign lands, or who, perhaps, have already given their lives in the glorious cause of our country, will bring the tears of longing into the eyes of those who knew and loved them; a day on which all of us, certain as we are of the rectitude of our cause and the might of our arms, will be minded to come to the Crib, not alone with the simple, but like joy of other years, but with a who implore the mighty protection of the Prince of Peace, who is likewise the King of Justice, the eternal Ruler, upon whose shoulder is the government of nations.

Touched with poignant memories, then, this Christmas Day will be for many, and not without apprehension for all who with any adequate measure have gauged the magnitude of the task before us. We have been asked to undertake many heavy burdens; we have answered the appeal, whether for our possessions, our time, our services, our children, with an alacrity which promises much for the future. Under the leadership of the Chief Executive of the nation, the conduct of our people on all occasions has demonstrated the vigorous survival of the old American, Christian ideal of patriotism, love of country founded on love of God. From this fact we may draw assurance that the Providence of Almighty God which in days far darker than any which now seem to confront our people gave strength to the trembling hands of our fathers will continue its benign protection over our beloved country. Although the times were bitter, God was very near to us in that winter, when, in camp at Valley Forge, the Father of our Country be sought the favor of Heaven for his cause; so, too, in a later day when, as men thought, the Union under which our nation had grown great, was about to be broken forever. In the years of peace that followed, charity, education, all manner of benevolent works flourished, and in the calm and undisturbed surroundings of a reunited people, dwelling in concord and mutual esteem, the power of the Church, the mystical body of Christ, was made manifest in countless enterprises for the mental and spiritual quickening both of our Catholic people and of the nation at large. Surely, in the history of our country, and of the Church fulfilling her Divine mission under a just and benign government, we can easily discern the operation of God's loving Providence. His hand is not shortened; His designs over our country, as we may believe, are not yet perfected. Therefore, as we gather at the Crib of the Saviour of the world at a time when well-nigh the whole world is at war, with all confidence may we trust that, if we are faithful to Him, the dark clouds now hanging over us shall be speedily lifted, and in the glorious day which follows after, God's fostering Providence will grant us unexampled opportunities to approach more closely through faith and love, to the fruition of the peace of Christ, the unbroken peace, which the world cannot give or take away.

Before that longed for day gladdens our war-weary eyes, we may be asked to drink deep of the chalice of suffering. The lessons which will be taught us are preached with eloquence at the Crib of Jesus Christ. We see a little Child; in our faith, we adore Him as very God. One who has moved to love, God who has so loved us as to give His only begotten Son for our comforting and salvation. Wrapped in swaddling clothes, the Divine Child has divested Himself of all exterior manifestation of the Divinity; He who is adored in the palaces of heaven is laid in a manger. He is made poor to encourage us to bear with patience the sufferings of life, to teach us to alleviate the sufferings of the poor. His brethren, even as we would have ministered to the Holy Family, had that blessed privilege been granted us. Taking our nature, in compliance with the eternal decree of God, He begins His mission of salvation in want and suffering. The Child in the manger is the model and the inspiration of all who would look upon God forever, after their eyes have been closed to the feebling joys and sorrows of this world of time. Unless we strive to emulate the virtues of the Child of Bethlehem, we shall not bear as Christians should the trials of life, and, at the end of all, enter into the Kingdom of God. Therefore, now, more than before, is it necessary that we draw close to the Manger at Bethlehem.

When the world seemed lost, the glory of Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, appeared amongst us, a little Child in the arms of Mary, His Immaculate Mother. So shall it be with us, we pray, with our people and our nation. To those that love God, as St. Paul tells us, all things work together unto good. If He has care for the flower of the field, for the birds of the air, His merciful Heart will be opened to the prayers and to the intercessions which rest upon our men who have left all to serve their country. Some day, as we confidently trust, the spear shall be laid aside for the Cross of Christ; and God shall take His place, from which He has so long been excluded, in the government of His people, and in that day a little Child shall lead the nations, united in mutual charity and trust. But now, as always, our lots are in His hands, the loving hands of Him who because He loved us, became a Child, the broken hands of Christ our Saviour, pierced upon the Cross. In all trust, then, may we say as we gather at the Crib of Bethlehem, on Christmas Day, 1917. "I will give thanks to Thee, O Lord. Behold, God is my Saviour; I will

deal confidently, and will not fear, because the Lord is my strength,—America.

CHRISTMAS OPTIMISM

Once upon a time, in the course of a lecture which a professor of astronomy was giving to the yokels of a Scotch village, he solemnly announced: "In seven hundred million years, my friends, the sun will be a cold body like the moon. There will be no warmth on earth, no light, no life... nothing." Thereupon a chair was pushed back noisily at the back of the hall, a big farmer got up and asked in great agitation: "Excuse me, Mister, but hoo lang did he say it would be till that happened?" "Seven hundred million years, my friend. The farmer sank back into his chair with a great sigh of relief. "Thank Good!" he gasped, "Aw thoct ye said seven million!"

The comfort that grateful Scot derived from the news that the earth would last 693,000,000 years longer than he had at first feared should be shared by some of those who are agitating rapidly just now owing to the worry and anxiety they feel regarding the outcome of the present War and a thousand other unsolved problems that distress them. But vain fears should not be allowed to rob the Christmas season of its spirit of hope and optimism. The War, of course, will not last forever but will come to an end no doubt much sooner than we now expect. The fervent prayers offered through Our Lady's hands during the novena made by so many holy souls just prior to the Feast of the Immaculate Conception were by no means said in vain, but will all help to hasten the return of peace. According to the law of averages, most American mothers, it should be remembered, will welcome home their soldier boys again, safe and sound. Our Government, too, will learn by experience how to solve the many intricate problems of conservation and expenditures that this world-war has created, and the boundless resources of the country will be so well administered that the needs of the poor will be fully relieved and the prodigality of the rich wisely restrained. Just as the nations of Europe have been brought nearer to God by the scourge of war, in like manner the American people who were in danger of yielding to the soul-weakening influences of a soft materialism, will now in all probability be so chastened and spiritualized by the privations they must bear, that God will find our hearts well disposed for receiving joyfully His Christmas message of good-will and peace. Without question his religion makes every Catholic an incurable optimist, for he knows that God always governs the world with a loving Father's hand, that absolutely nothing happens without God's permission, that He is wont to draw from passing evil permanent good, that He works from end to end, and sweetly and strongly and that everything will come out right at last, America.

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A child in the midst of a crowd is conscious of nothing but its immediate surroundings. Crushed and stifled, it can see and feel only the objects actually touching it. But let the father take it up in his arms and hold it aloft; what a difference the elevation will make. So we too are in a crowd, in the dark, finding often no meaning in what is stirring around us; but should God deign to raise us to His point of view, what a change would come over us!—Mother Loyola.

MARRIAGE
MORIKIN - BREEN.—At St. Michael's Church, London, Ont., on Thursday, Dec. 27th, by Rev. Jas. A. Hanlon, Mr. John Morikin of Claresholm, Alta., to Miss Cecilia Breen of London.

DIED
O'DONNELL.—In Arthur Township, County of Wellington, Ont., on Thursday, December 6th, 1917, Thomas O'Donnell, aged eighty years. May his soul rest in peace.

RAHAL.—At Northfield Station, Ont., on Friday, Oct. 12, Mr. Philip Rahal, aged eighty-four years. May his soul rest in peace.

COLLINS.—At Moose Jaw, Sask., on December 15th, 1917, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. W. J. Renix, Daniel Collins, formerly of Hastings, Ont., and Vancouver, B. C. May his soul rest in peace.

DORAN.—At Guelph, Ont., on Monday, December 17, Mr. Matthew J. Doran, aged sixty-four years. May his soul rest in peace.

MACDOWELL.—At 85 Spadina Ave., Ottawa, on December 24, 1917, Mr. John P. Macdowell. May his soul rest in peace.

TEACHERS WANTED
TEACHER WANTED FOR SEPARATE School No. 4, Appleton, holding second class professional certificate. Duties to commence after Christmas holidays. Apply stating salary and experience to David Garvey, Sec.-Treas., R. No. 3, Indian River, Ont. 3044-3

TEACHER WANTED, HOLDING A SECOND class certificate, able to teach both English and French, for R. C. Separate School, Section No. 17, Township of Rochester, County of Essex. Salary not to exceed \$500 per annum. Term to commence after the Christmas holidays. Apply to Michael L. Byrne, Sec., Belle River, Ont. R. R. 2. 3044-3

TEACHER WANTED, HOLDING FIRST OR second class Ontario certificate, for Catholic school, Fort William, Ont. Salary \$600 per year. Duties to commence Jan. 2nd, 1918. Apply G. F. Smith, Secretary, 1125 Simpson St., Fort William, Ont. 3046-1f

WANTED, TEACHER WITH SECOND CLASS certificate for Separate School, Brockville, Ontario, for Sept. 1st, 1918. Apply G. F. Smith, Secretary, 1125 Simpson St., Fort William, Ont. 3046-1f

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