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LONDON, SATURDAY, APRIL 6, 1918

WILL MR. ROWELL HAVE THE MANLINESS TO RETRACT?

During the election campaign last December Mr. Rowell made a very serious charge against the members of the religious orders from France who found in Canada an asylum from the persecutions of an infidel government in their native land.

Discussing French-Canadian Nationalism Mr. Rowell said:

"The majority of the curés throughout the Province share Mr. Bourassa's Nationalist, clerical, and reactionary attitude."

Nationalism was a perfectly fair subject for discussion during a political campaign; it had thrust itself into politics in various ways; it had made and unmade governments; in 1911 it defeated the Government of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and in 1917 it sought to restore that Government to power. Whether or not Mr. Rowell's statement with regard to Nationalism and the curés of Quebec was true or an exaggerated and distorted half-truth did not in itself matter very much; it mattered much more to the reputation of Mr. Rowell as a public man, careful of the truth of his public utterances. But in the press and on the platform Quebec had champions quite competent to repel such attacks, and it may be admitted, some as reckless in assertion as Mr. Rowell himself. In any case, neither before nor since the War have the Quebec curés been as active politically as the Ontario Methodist ministers.

But Mr. Rowell made another charge. After stating that "the majority of the curés share Mr. Bourassa's Nationalist, clerical, and reactionary attitude" he added:

"In this attitude they were undoubtedly encouraged and abetted by members of the religious orders from France, who found an asylum in Canada, and used that asylum to undermine Canada's strength in the struggle."

This is an accusation so serious, of such grave import that nothing but the truth could justify it.

If true it imperatively called for prompt and effective action on the part of the Government of Canada; a Government so criminally remiss in its duty as supinely to allow men who sought asylum here to undermine Canada's strength in the War would become particeps criminis with those who so shamelessly abused our hospitality.

If false, if made out of whole cloth, its calculated and malignant ingenuity shames belief. We must think that, misled and misinformed, Mr. Rowell believed it to be true. It is bad enough that without investigation, he should have repeated publicly as an established fact a reckless, cruel and malicious slander.

But there was an honorable course still open to him as an honest man.

We peremptorily challenged Mr. Rowell to bring forward a shadow of proof for his assertion with regard to the members of the religious orders from France.

The Globe editorially repeated and endorsed as "an undoubted fact" Mr. Rowell's accusation.

We then and there challenged The Globe to give a single instance of anything which would substantiate its "undoubted fact."

And referring to facts well known at least throughout Quebec, where people came into contact with the religious in question, we added:

On the contrary those members of religious orders from France, of military age, who found asylum in Canada volunteered at the outbreak of war to return to fight and die for France. We use the word volunteered advisedly. We know of French priests in Montreal who

were told by the French consulate to wait until they were called up. We do not know—perhaps Mr. Rowell does—whether there was a single member, within the military age limits, of a French religious order who held back. We do know that several—five if we are not mistaken—gave up their lives on the battlefield for that France whence an infidel government had exiled them. If Mr. Rowell had unwittingly slandered these men as an honest man he will make the *amende honorable*.

The Catholic Register likewise called for proof or retraction.

Not a word from Mr. Rowell; not a line in The Globe.

So the matter rested until the opening of Parliament when the Hon. Charles Murphy took up Mr. Rowell's charges against the members of French religious orders. With an array of irrefutable facts, the result of painstaking investigation, Mr. Murphy threw the searchlight of truth on the malignant slander and laid bare before the representatives of all Canada its hideous and incredible meanness. We give in full that part of Mr. Murphy's speech as reported in Hansard. It was not reported in The Globe. Nor in the other papers which gave currency if not endorsement to the false witness borne by Mr. Rowell against men of whom the world is not worthy.

With party strife or controversy, past or present, we are not concerned, those interested in such matters must look elsewhere for the rest of the speech; but we commend Mr. Murphy's mastery and crushing refutation of a cowardly calumny to the earnest perusal of our readers. Let each one see to it, also, that non-Catholic friends or neighbors who were deceived by Mr. Rowell and The Globe have an opportunity of reading the truth about these men so cruelly and shamelessly maligned.

"It is a misfortune," said Mr. Rowell speaking of the French priests who found an asylum in Canada, "that they did not follow the example of the priests of the Catholic Church in France, who threw themselves into the struggle of their people to preserve their national existence, and by their courage and sacrifice won for themselves a new place in the hearts and affections of the French people."

As a matter of fact, in Canada and elsewhere, the French priests, outraged in their personal and corporate liberty, despoiled of their property, exiled from their native land, shining down the bright record of the soldier priests of France, did throw themselves into the struggle, and by their courage and sacrifice won for themselves a new place in the hearts and affections of the French people; yes and in the hearts and affections of mankind. In the annals of the Great War whose pages are brightened by records of heroism and magnanimity that shame the heroes of romance, there are no pages brighter than those which record the names and deeds of the heroic and magnanimous members of the French religious orders who found an asylum in Canada. And Mr. Rowell knows it—now at all events. In spite of the newspaper conspiracy of silence through her representatives Canada knows it too. Will the honorable Mr. Rowell have the manliness to retract? For the sake of honor and truth and decency in Canadian public life let us hope so.

DEFINITE, CONVINCING AND CONCLUSIVE

During the course of his remarks after the Ordination Service in St. Peter's Cathedral, London, on Holy Saturday, His Lordship the Right Reverend M. F. Fallon, Bishop of London, gave a very definite and convincing answer to a widespread misstatement.

"I wish to draw your particular attention," said His Lordship to the clergy and laity present, "to the fact that of the four priests whom I have ordained this morning three are French Canadians. I have now ordained more French Canadian priests for the diocese of London than had been ordained in the whole fifty-four preceding years of its history. And today there are in my diocesan Seminary more theological students of French Canadian extraction than have ever at any one time before been adopted by this diocese."

"I place these facts before you in view of the false and malicious reports so industriously circulated that I am negligent or indifferent to the spiritual interests of the French Canadian Catholics of the diocese of London."

THE DAILY NEWS AND IRELAND

A couple of weeks ago we dealt with an editorial in the Toronto Daily News which was insulting in its tone and inaccurate in its facts. In its rejoinder The Daily News moderates very considerably its tone but side-steps the inaccuracies pointed out, and still maintains that the one place in the civilized world where democracy has no rights that may not be insulted and derided is Ireland.

The News asserts that "whatever may have been true in long past, Ireland for many years has been the spoiled child of the British Empire." The "ineptitudes and malignities" of the War Office since 1914 are not of the long past; the brutal military executions of Pearce and his associates and the few months imprisonment of De Wet are all too recent for the spoiled child of the British Empire to forget altogether; the Bowen Colthurst murders are not yet forgotten; the glorification of gun-running and rebellion in Ulster and the grossly insulting denunciation and savage repression of the same things in Dublin are still remembered and compared.

The reaction from all this, and from that ever-present spirit which makes such violent contrasts not only possible but quite a matter of course in Ireland is Sinn Fein. Sinn Feiners The News brackets with burglars and assassins. What of the Sinn Fein, the recklessly intolerant, sordidly selfish and violently undemocratic "Ourselves Alone" of Unionist Ulster? Why, the ascendancy spirit of this privileged oligarchy does not suggest Prussian junkerism to The News, but is evidence of "ardent attachment to British institutions."

THE CATHOLIC RECORD did not overlook the fact that "the British Treasury has spent hundreds of millions of pounds in buying out the great Irish landlords and in breaking up their estates for the use of the small Irish farmers." Oh, no. Our readers are aware that, with the object of promoting good will and allowing the dead past to bury its dead, we have more than once contrasted British Land Purchase with contemporary German land policy in German Poland. But The News overlooks the fact that Land Purchase came after the Land War during which Irish Members of Parliament who fought and won that war, and secured the land for the people were often herded with "burglars and assassins" in jail. In this as in many other things the Irish were the pioneers of British democracy and social betterment. Another important fact The News also overlooks, namely that the British Treasury is reimbursed by the Irish small farmer.

The News is inaccurate also with regard to the Irish Convention. The proposal came from the British Government and though its scope is by no means so sweeping as The News asserts, it was accepted by John Redmond. Its absolute unanimity as the condition of success is assumed by The News. Failure in this impossible condition is to absolve the British Government and people from all responsibility. The conscience of the world will not accept this cheap expedient, this easy excuse for failure of the British Government to make practice square with principle and profession.

Only the other day Mr. Asquith declared that the Irish question imperatively demands settlement not only for the sake of Ireland, but for the sake of England, for the sake of the Empire, for the sake of the Allied Cause and for the sake of the world.

A question of such mighty import calls, in our opinion, for tone in its discussion quite markedly different from that adopted by The News.

That tone The News might learn from an Ulster Protestant whose "ardent attachment to British institutions" commands the respect and sympathy and entire accord of the CATHOLIC RECORD. Speaking of the elements that enter into composite modern Irish race, George Russell (A. E.) wrote in a recent number of the Irish Times an article suffused by a spirit the very antithesis of that which pervades the Irish views of The Daily News. During the course of this article he says:

"The modern Irish are a race built up from many races who have to prove themselves for the future. . . They are a new people with only superficial, cultural and political differences, but with the same fundamental characteristics. It is hopeless, the dream held by some, that the ancient Celtic character could absorb the new elements, become dominant once more, and be itself

unchanged. It is equally hopeless to dream the Celtic element could be eliminated. We are a new people, and not the past, but the future, is to justify this new nationality. . .

"I believe that new character, far more than the spirit of the ancient race, was the ferment in the blood of those who brought about the astonishing enterprise of Easter Week. Pearce himself, for all his Gaelic culture, was sired by one of the race he fought against. He might stand in that respect as a symbol of the new race which is springing up. We are slowly realizing the vigor of the modern Irish character just becoming conscious of itself. . . I had met many men who were in the enterprise of Easter Week and listened to their speech, but they had to prove their spirit to myself and others by more than words. . .

"I believe that capacity for sacrifice, that devotion to ideals, equally exists among the opponents of these men. It would have been proved in Ireland, in Ulster, if the need had arisen. It has been proved on many a battle field of Europe. Whatever views we may hold about the relative value of national or imperial ideals, we may recognize that there is moral equality where the sacrifice is equal. No one has more to give than life, and when that is given, neither Nationalist nor Imperialist in Ireland can claim moral superiority for the dead champions of their causes."

"If they come to know each other, and will realize their kinship, and will set their faces to the future together, to build up a civilization which will justify their nationality."

"I myself an Anglo-Irish, with the blood of both races in me, and when the rising of Easter week took place all that was Irish in me was profoundly stirred, and out of that mood I write commemorating the dead. And then later there rose in memory the faces of others I knew who loved their country, but had died in other battles. They fought in those because they believed they would serve Ireland, and I felt these were no less my people. I could hold them also in my heart and pay tribute to them."

That is the spirit that will kill Sinn Fein whether Unionist or Nationalist. The spirit which we deplore in The News is that by which Sinn Fein lives and moves and has its being.

WHAT A DIFFERENCE IT MAKES

Houston, Texas, March 26.—Rev. George E. Mayer, director of religious work at the Camp Logan, Y. M. C. A., since last December, was arrested today as a German spy and thrown into the stocks. Mayer was formerly head of the Daily Vacation bible school, in Brooklyn.

We see no special significance in the above despatch which we clip from an American paper. We have not seen it in any Canadian paper. It just struck us that if the Rev. George E. Mayer had been a Catholic priest, connected with the K. of C. war work no matter in what part of the wide world the incident occurred, the despatch would have found obtrusive space in every last one of our papers great and small. Curious isn't it?

BUTLER REVISED

Under the caption "Catechisms Old and New" we penned some years ago these words: "It has always appeared to us that there is the same difference between it (Butler's) and the up-to-date, simplified and improved Catechisms that there is between a masterpiece and a modern painting. The more you examine the former the more its beauty grows upon you. The latter delights at first sight, but its charm decreases under scrutiny." We must confess that the latest attempt to simplify Butler, excellent as the results have been in some regards, has not caused us to alter our opinion. The supplementary chapters and the list of questions and answers, together with explanatory paragraphs, appended to the original chapters of Butler, will prove valuable alike to teacher and pupil. That the author has changed little of the original text is a tribute to his own good judgment and to the excellency of that old standard text book.

What we do not like, however, is the analytical form in which the answers are presented. The purpose, no doubt, is that the child may more readily understand their significance; but the new form does not lend itself to the very necessary work of memorizing the text, and detracts not a little from the rhetorical beauty of the rounded periods of the original. For example, to the question? How is the Church holy? Butler answers "In its founder Jesus Christ; in its doctrine and sacraments; and in the number of its children who have been eminent for holiness in all ages." The revised edition answers: "The Church is holy because:

- (1) Its Founder is Jesus Christ.
- (2) Its teachings are holy.
- (3) Its sacraments make us holy.
- (4) In all ages numbers of its children have led the most holy lives.

Personally we feel that the author, here as in other instances, has, in his desire to accommodate his answers to the capacity of his readers, unnecessarily sacrificed dignity and charm of expression. We are forcibly reminded of Father Dan's advice to his new curate: "Our people like fine, sonorous language from the altar; and they comprehend it. Try them next Sunday, and see if they do not understand you." The same is true of little children. They understand the language of Butler better than we wot of; and moreover they take a keen satisfaction in having learned by heart the well modulated sentences that will re-echo in their memory in after years.

An intelligent Catholic mother recently remarked to us that there seemed to be a tendency of late to change everything; and that many of these changes were not, in her opinion, for the better. Experienced educators hold this view in regard to the text books used in our schools. The choice selections from the English classics, that delighted the children of a past generation and that gave them a taste for good literature, have given way to very common-place articles by modern writers. It must be a cause of regret to a mother, when assisting her child with his studies, not to meet with the old familiar lessons. This is especially true in regard to the religious text book. On the mother primarily devolves the duty of teaching her child his Catechism. How much more efficiently could she perform this task if the lessons were familiar to her; and what a benefit it would be to herself to recall the well-known answers associated with her own childhood days! In this connection we might cite, with due qualification, the injunction of St. Paul to Timothy: "Hold the form of sound words which thou hast heard from me in faith and the love which is in Christ Jesus."

In an interesting article in the March number of the Ecclesiastical Review, Rev. Father MacEachern, who, we presume, is the author of a very excellent graded Catechism, deals with the present Holy Father's purpose to bring to fruition the plan discussed at the Vatican Council of preparing a uniform text book of catechetical instruction for the universal Church. The avowed purpose is "to establish order and method in religious teaching, to make the Church truly a graded and well-regulated school." The author thus points out the advantages that will accrue from this work when it is completed: "A universal text of Christian doctrine for the world will be an imposing fact. It will place in the hands of our separated brethren the official Creed of the Catholic Church. It will make a deep and constant impression upon the faithful. Even the children will realize more fully the meaning of Catholic unity. More clearly than ever they will understand that the same holy doctrines are taught in all parts of the world, and that the very words in which they are couched pass unchanged from the Sovereign Pontiff even to the least and simplest child."

The preparation of this work will cover a period of four or five years. Three theologians have been appointed to make separate drafts of the general text. A commission will choose one of these or compile a new text from the three, as the foundation of the new Little Catechism to be submitted to the Bishops of the world in order to obtain suggestions from them. In the compilation of the new text, reference will be made to all the Catechisms now extant. The task undertaken by our Holy Father is not any easy one, but he hopes that the result may prove a valuable instrument to bring to the minds of men the knowledge of the Truth which alone can make them free, and thus lay a solid foundation for the reconstruction of society after the War.

THE GLEANER

NOTES AND COMMENTS

THE WRITER whose contributions to current-thought over the initials "M. C. L." are a feature of many of our overseas contemporaries, has been indulging in some sage reflections on the vagaries of organized bigotry in general, and its extremely dissolvent character in the presence of any national or international crisis such, for example, as war. His remarks

were occasioned by the recent declaration of the Minister of Defence of New Zealand in answer to an imputation against the loyalty of Catholics in that outlying portion of the British Empire, to the effect that the Catholics there have done more and the bigots less than their share in the great conflict.

IT IS THE SAME EVERYWHERE. History, it has been truly said, repeats itself, and it has been demonstrated in this no less convincingly than in former generations that bigots are much more valorous in attacking the Catholic Church with tongue and pen than in shouldering a rifle and facing an armed foe. It is the nature of the animal to skulk in the dark and discharge his noxious vapors upon inoffensive people, hence instances where he comes into the open and fights manfully are few and far between. That he is no stranger in Canada platform and press have alike testified during the past four years.

WHILE THE War has been the occasion of many such outbreaks of bigotry and fanaticism in Canada, as in other parts of the world, the lesson of the past is that war has a dissolving effect upon them. In the United States the Know-Nothing movement, which resorted even to acts of violence against Catholic churches, convents and schools, melted away during the Civil War. The war against Spain in 1898, which was initiated in Congress in a frenzy of bigoted utterance, had the same effect upon the "A. P. A." With the emanations of the "Guardians of Liberty" the present generation is familiar, but since the entry of the United States into the War for human freedom the "Guardians" have become significantly silent. How could it be otherwise in face of the fact that no section of the American people has responded more enthusiastically to the call to arms than that which acknowledges spiritual allegiance to the Catholic Church. In time of war, as "M. C. L." well says, bigotry is stripped of its insincerity, and revealed as a dishonest and disruptive force within the nation. Canada has yet, perhaps, to learn that lesson.

THE WAY in which the various Catholic organizations in the United States are mobilizing both spiritual and material resources for the prosecution of the War is, indeed, amazing. No section of the nation has outdone or even equalled them in this respect. In Chicago for example the Archbishop and his priests effected organization for the purpose of promoting the last Liberty Loan, and are now completing arrangements to deal similarly with the forthcoming Loan. The Archbishop himself was a large subscriber. This is but typical of Catholic earnestness and activity in every State of the Union. The undertaking of the Knights of Columbus to raise millions of dollars as a Fund to care for the welfare, spiritual and physical, of soldiers in training camps or overseas is well known. Similarly Catholic organizations everywhere have girded themselves for the fray. Pro-Germanism has not found any safe lodging place among American Catholics.

IT MAY seem to many a remarkable thing that Gilbert Chesterton, the great master of paradox in this generation, should have written a "History of England." Yet, so it is, and while he has achieved it in the same paradoxical way that has made his other writings famous, he has succeeded as no other historian in uncovering the sores that lie at the root of England's difficulties today. The extent to which German culture and German ideas had up to the very threshold of the present War, permeated England, has never been so tellingly revealed as by this modern Fleet Street oracle.

CHESTERTON avers that the only way to write a popular history would be to write it backwards. "It would," he says, "be to take common objects of our own street, and tell the tale of how each of them came to be in the street at all." This he illustrates by an allusion to the origin of two of the most familiar objects of the present day, the "top" or "plug" hat, and a pair of trousers.

"These two fantastic objects, which now strike the eye as unconscious freaks, were originally conscious freaks," and he tells the story how, as typical of the most important thing that happened in the Victorian era—"for the most important thing

was that nothing happened." This is Chesterton's way of saying that the "most important thing"—the invasion of German ideas, was no mere accident but a thing deliberately planned.

"WE TALK," writes Chesterton, "of the French Revolution as something that changed the world; but its most important relation to England is that it did not change England. A student of our history is concerned rather with the effect it did not have than the effect it did. If it be a splendid fate to have survived the Flood, the English oligarchy has that added splendor. But even for the countries in which the Revolution was a convulsion, it was the last convulsion—until that which shakes the world today. It gave their character to all the commonwealths, which all talked about progress, and were occupied in marking time. Frenchmen under all superficial reactions, remained republican in spirit as they had been when they first wore top hats. Englishmen under all superficial reforms, remained oligarchical in spirit, as they had been when they first wore trousers"—a dictum which perhaps affords the true solution of English misrule in Ireland within the same period.

WE HAVE not space to follow Chesterton's analysis of the German invasion, a thing that is now patent to all. This German idolatry gave place gradually, if unconsciously, to the idea that England "was a little branch on a large Teutonic tree, that an unfathomable spiritual sympathy, encircling like the sea, had always made us the national Allies of the great folk by the flowing Rhine; that all light came from Luther and Lutheran Germany, whose science was still purging Christianity of its Greek and Roman accretions; that Germany was a forest fated to grow; that France was a dung-heap fated to decay—a dung-heap with a crowing cock on it. What would the ladder of education have led to, except a platform on which a posturing professor proved that a cousin German was the same as a German cousin! What would the guttersnipe have learnt as a graduate, except to embrace a Saxon, because he was the other half of an Anglo-Saxon? The day came, and the ignorant fellow found he had other things to learn. And he was quicker than his educated countrymen, for he had nothing to unlearn."

THE WAR, then, in a very particular manner is a war of emancipation. Will it, if brought to a successful conclusion—when brought to a successful conclusion, forever dispel the great menace and give man, whether in England or in Germany, a chance to redeem his birthright?

ON THE BATTLE LINE

THE past week has been the most startlingly sensational of the War since 1914. The Germans broke through the British line and pushed our armies back for thirty-seven miles; the breach in the line was immediately filled by the French who have extended their line with the advance and kept in touch with the British. In one sense, therefore, there has been no break through of the Allied line of defence. The situation is still critical.

LONDON, March 29.—Editorials in the morning papers to-day comment in grave but confident tones on what the majority characterize as a fresh crisis in the battle. The Daily Mail alluding to the new enemy thrust at the French, says:

"The question is whether the French can beat back this new and terrific attack. Southeast of Mont Didier they recovered nearly two miles of ground by a dashing counter-stroke, but Mont Didier still remains in the hands of the Germans."

"The new German advance not only threatens the southern flank of the Amiens position, but menaces Paris also and endangers the stability of the whole line. The task of the allied armies will be to try to hold the Germans to the utmost."

THE APPOINTMENT of General Foch to the supreme command of the Allied armies on the West front is the most important war news of the day. The British and American armies, as well as the French, have been placed under his direction. That unity of purpose and of command which could not be secured at the Versailles Conference has been brought about by the German offensive. Sir Douglas Haig's co-operation with the new Allied Chief will be whole-souled, for Foch is a great soldier, who has proved himself not only as a gallant leader in the field but as a planner of campaigns—the point wherein the Germans regard themselves as supremely efficient.