

New Orleans, the famous ex-President is quoted as saying: "The finest human being that walks the earth is a loyal Roman Catholic priest." In this country the priests proved the truth of Roosevelt's saying by showing on every occasion that each and every one of them was an undaunted, unhyphenated, one hundred per cent American. They showed this by their work as chaplains at the front, by their moral work in every field of service and sacrifice traced out for them by their Church and State superiors at home. They even used their pulpits to preach the Government sermons of patriotism, civil and economic.

"Four Bishops practically gave up their Dioceses to give themselves exclusively to war work. There is not one of the hundred American Bishops whose voice was not heard and whose example was not an inspiration in all the varied phases of war activity. Some said that Cardinal Gibbons' presence alone was worth one hundred thousand dollars at every meeting he attended, and although over eighty-five years old he was every where an active worker on every national committee. The late Archbishop of St. Paul did more to bring the hesitating Middle West (falsely accused of pro-Germanism) into line than any man in America."

"The clergy were not alone in their patriotic efforts. The Catholic laity astonished the world by giving forty per cent of the total strength of the fighting force of the Army and Navy, while the entire Church in the States only numbered one-fifth or one-sixth of the American population. How was it possible? The secret of the number and the fitness of the Catholic man power was discovered and exposed, and the much maligned and badly understood confessional was honored and justified as an unmatchable war measure. No wonder the answer of an American officer, when asked if he could hold a dangerous outpost 'Somewhere in France.' 'Yes,' he replied, 'an American officer could hold anything with the help of God and a few Marines.' He knew that 60 per cent of the Marines were Catholics."

"The clergy did its part, the rank and file of the Catholic Church exceeded all expectations, but the Catholic Croix de Guerre is due to the greatness of all Catholic agencies—to the right arm of the Church—to the Knights of Columbus. That young American Order, whose membership calls for and exacts only two conditions, one hundred per cent, unhyphenated Americanism and practical Catholicity, came to the front, and remained in the limelight all during the War. It commenced by sending fifty thousand of its members as volunteers when the first appeal was made to rally round the flag. It then offered all its funds and its old men to help the soldier and sailor boys in the camps everywhere—old white-haired men, too old for soldier work, were conscripted and sent over the earth to keep the boys fit and cheerful. No wonder the entire country today and every soldier lad here or there singing the praises of the men who made everybody welcome and everything free. It is not surprising that every Catholic who is practical and not a dram seller is joining the ranks of the Knights of Columbus—the cream of Catholic manhood, the truest Knights of the Cross and of the flag."

"Still looking back since I preached my first war sermon in this Cathedral two years ago, I can thank God that I belong to the Catholic Church; to the Church of Benedict, Mercier, Gibbons, Ireland and Foch; to the Church of Petain, Castelnuovo and Faur; to the Church of Benson, Sims, the Sixty-ninth, and to the Church of God and His Marines. Were I not a Catholic, I would love to worship with Hurley, Ryan and Schwab, and with the fighting men who, from every town and village of America, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, followed the flag and only halted when commanded on the banks of the Rhine."

"Five months ago the fate and future of the world was transferred from the soldier to the statesman, and here, I am sorry to say, anxiety begins; clouds gather, at least the picture changes. Although promised 'merciless publicity' we have been kept in profoundest ignorance; though the War was won by prayer as much as by bullets, there is no time for prayer at the Peace Conference, and God has been kept away from it with as much jealous care as if He were a Hohenzollern, Romanoff, Hapsburg or a Sultan."

"Though our soldiers were taught to be Crusaders and the Cross was honored as the flag, the statesmen and politicians of the peace party seem to have veered to other standards and to strange gods. The first cloud at the Peace Conference is the absence of God—of prayer, of any recognition of the oft invoked God of Battles. There is no champion of the old order of Christian justice and political morality there, or invited or permitted to be there. If Lecky was right when he wrote that Catholicism laid the foundations of modern civilization, would it not seem good statesmanship to have the same builder at the reconstruction work? If Macaulay was right when he declared that 'there never was on earth a work of human policy so deserving of examination as the Roman Catholic Church, why is not that same policy invited to assist in shaping the policy that will control the world's policies in the future? We are not interested in any accidental glory that such an invitation would bring to this world-wide religion, but we are vitally interested in the

kind of peace which will either make or mar the world of tomorrow.

"We are all the more anxious when we read that the price paid to one of the belligerents was the exclusion of the Pope from any place at the Peace Conference. Any wonder, with God and His accredited agent left out, there are many of us who fear a scientific, materialistic peace totally divorced from the principles of eternal justice and democratic fairness? Our fears are not fanciful, nor groundless, as we witness the alarming progress of anarchy and Bolshevism threatening the last remaining strongholds of law and order and authority all over the world. Just as nature abhors a vacuum, so where God is not the devil is likely to be."

"Another cloud darkens the horizon in the form of broken promises, and we wonder will the new peace be a new scrap of paper. Until five months ago we heard much about 'self-determination' to be applied universally to all nations, big and little. We were taught by those in authority that all nations had a common inalienable right to be free. Today the test to the truth or to the sincerity of the words of a great leader are being applied, and all over the liberty loving world there is asked: 'What about Ireland?' Ireland is a nation distinct from her oppressor, or distinct geographically. No political boundaries other than those God gave her are needed to mark her nationality; distinct in origin, in her history, language, literature and ideas. Here is a nation that asks to be free—asks it today by seventy-five per cent of her people, just as she asked and demanded it for seven hundred and fifty years of fruitless struggle to shake off chains shackled on free men. Will she get free? Perjury and bribery made the only link binding her to her enslaver."

"The international court of the world is asked to pronounce the contract null and void and of no binding force, and the only answer we can gather yet is that even America is plotting to perpetuate the perpetual enslavement of Ireland while working hard to free others. Why this? Western Europe, older than gallant Belgium, or brave France, and richer, bigger and better than other nations torn from other oppressors and enriched with freedom and given self-determination."

"The Peace Conference that excluded God also excludes Ireland's case, and we may well wonder what the future of the world will be. A man and a half free and half slave is not an American doctrine."

"Perhaps I should not bring these world shadows into an Easter sermon, but excluding them will neither remove them nor make our Easter better or happier. We are at the crisis of the most momentous events that ever happened. We are either sweetening or poisoning the wells of the future. There will be either world wide democracy or world-wide Bolshevism as a result of this Peace Conference. No wonder we are alarmed; we are alarmed as were the early seekers at the tomb of Christ when they learned that 'He was not there.'"

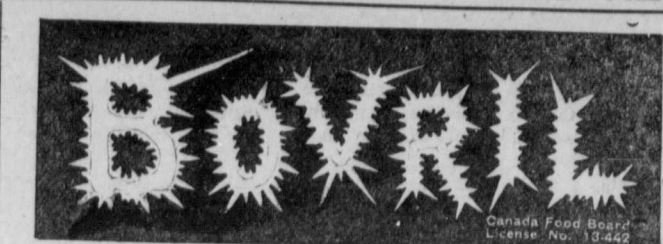
"We, as Christians, have been accustomed to expect signs of repentance before absolution. We see no such signs from the culprits of today who are at the world's judgment seat for a deed. For four years a read, thanks to the merciles publicists now denied us, of the greatest crimes ever perpetrated against God or humanity, but as yet we have detected no sign of repentance, contrition or promise of amendment. No wonder the great Foch fears, and we little people fear with him. A moral force at the peace table would have demanded repentance, satisfaction, restitution and guarantees, and it alone would have been worth a dozen Leagues of Nations. The civilization we represent grew out of the foolishness of the Cross, and if we honestly want its reconstruction and its perpetuation we have to bring the world again under the shadow of the Cross and teach it again the lessons of dependence on God, the lessons of justice and humanity preached on Calvary and given Divine sanction and Divine approval by the Resurrection. The risen Christ has been the only cornerstone of things that lasted for these two thousand years. If rejected, human imitations will be like so many Babels and produce only intolerance, bigotry, and in Bolshevism."

"Looking back we are glad and proud; looking at the present, depressed as we are at that promised 'merciless publicity,' we are anxious; looking to the future we are reminded of the words of the Hebrew prophet about the vanity of building without making the Lord a partner."

—N. O. Morning Star.

LITTLE THINGS IN RELIGION

Can anything connected with religion be called a little thing? It is true that some practices have a greater importance than others. Nothing can make up for the loss of Sunday Mass; nothing can take the place of the Sacraments of penance and Holy Communion. In compactness with these duties of paramount importance certain practices may in themselves be regarded as small; yet the mission of them may have serious consequences. When we find that grace at meals is habitually neglected in the home, we cannot but regret it. When we see a person pass into church without using holy water, we feel that there is something wanting in that individual's devotion. When a fumbling movement of finger



of thumb is made to do duty for the sign of the Cross, and when a genuflection to the Blessed Sacrament is scarcely perceptible, we deplore this slovenliness in little things. When Catholic men and boys pass a church without raising their hats, we feel that though they may have the faith, there is something lacking in their respect for the Divine Presence in the tabernacle, and when in speaking to a priest the title of Father is habitually omitted, we know that the speaker is wanting in courtesy—and something more.

The list of these so-called little things might be extended to many pages.—Sentinel of the Blessed Sacrament.

MARY'S MONTH

Spring, with its fragrant promise of good things soon to be, fills the earth with gladness. Flowers push their way riotously through soil and green sward. Birds chirp lustily in the trees for sheer joy at the golden sunshine that warms all creation and awakens into new life. The blood in beast and man is whipped into quickened glow under the impact of Nature's ebullience. It is the gladdest, happiest month in the whole year, when men vie with Nature welcoming the bounteous season that promises to provide us with the food-stuffs we need to keep body and soul together.

Therefore, with her sure instinct for the fitness of things, Holy Mother Church sets aside the month of May as a season of special devotion to Our Lady. The joyousness of Nature is as nothing compared to the gladness which possessed the heart of humanity on learning that the Expected of the Nations was about to come, as the noontid sun, to melt the icy barriers which had kept us aloof in reverential awe from Him. And in condescension to our weakness He chose to come in a fashion that we could not but understand. As He wished to become our "Elder Brother," so as to prove the solidarity of the human race, so, too, He came through Mary to prove the genuineness of His condescension to our poor estate.

Rightly do we honor Mary in this month of her month of the year, for with her coming the Great Promise for four thousand years began to be fulfilled. She was the dawn that gave hope of the early rise of the Sun of Justice that would soften the hard hearts of men, and produce therein flowers of virtue fragrant and pleasing in the sight of God.

Since the beginning of the War there has been a real revival of religious feeling which has extended even to those who have hitherto not given much thought to the things of eternity. Many men now realize for the first time that they have a soul to save. During Our Lady's own month, let us beg her with special fervor to keep the shoots of piety which have sprung up under the cannons' roar from dying down in the soft days of peace.

Let us see her who is the special Patroness of America to make this land in very truth a "Lamb without spot," seeing the good works we put forth, may delight to "feed among the lilies" of those virtues which He desires to see in individuals and nations.—Rosary Magazine.

GERMANS TORTURE PRIEST

BELGIAN SUFFERS INHUMAN CRUELTY TO PRESERVE VALUABLE DOCUMENT

An almost unbelievable story of the hardships undergone by a Belgian priest to keep safe a document entrusted to him by Cardinal Mercier has just been sent to this country by Calvin S. Chalmers, a Knight of Columbus secretary, who met Father Philippe Musche, now a chaplain in the K. of C. service at Havre when the latter was visiting the K. of C. clubrooms in Paris. Father Musche underwent a term of terrible solitary confinement rather than deliver the paper and finally turned it over to His Eminence without its having fallen into the enemy's hands. At the beginning of the War he was a teacher in the Institute St. Louis and was one of three brothers, all priests. The other two were shot by the invaders. Father Musche relates his experiences as follows:

"There is not much to say of the things that happened in Brussels in those terrible months that has not already been told. You know how the priests were compelled to endure all kinds of torture under the deluded and cruel invader. My two brothers, both priests, were shot. We had been active in the defence of our country, and I, the third, was singled out by the German authorities as a possible source of information. It was strange that my brothers should have given their lives for refusal to produce a document which I had, and the discovery

of which would have resulted in wholesale massacre.

DORE EVERY CRUELTY TO KEEP TRUST

"They spared me, but I would gladly have accepted death, had such been the will of God, rather than undergo the suffering which followed. I was first searched for precious papers. My clothing was carefully examined and every indignity possible to the imagination was heaped upon me. Then I was sent to the heart of Germany and incarcerated in a military prison. I had expected to be given at least the privilege of mingling with other unfortunates, but this was denied.

"Against my most vigorous protest I was placed in a dungeon, five feet by seven feet in size. There was a window far up the wall which opened into a small enclosure with no other outlook. The surroundings were in keeping with the stories of early barbarity in Europe. I had supposed that such things were no more, but here I was made to know that the cruelty of untutored and uncivilized ages had been transmitted through centuries of culture.

"After a few months, three, I think, I asked again to be given access to the outer prison, if only for a few hours each day. I was told by a fellowing the important secret matter that the Germans sought I might regain my liberty. This I refused to do and the solitary confinement continued. My companions were few, my food was vile. I had become emaciated and nearly demented, yet the torture kept on. At the end of the first year I thought there could be no more misfortune in the whole world."

"But the thought that I was still able to preserve the matter entrusted to me by our beloved Cardinal kept the little remaining spark of courage lit in my breast alive."

SENT TO MINES BY POILED CAPTORS

"Day followed day, and month after month brought no success. Physically there could be no more to suffer. Mentally I am not sure what my condition was, for forgetfulness came with the starvation. During all of this time the Germans sought by every means to discover from me the data which was to be the price of my liberty.

"As time wore on their task became hopeless and I was frequently told that I would be either shot or sent to the mines. I really did not care which disposition they might decide upon. The will of God must prevail. And so when every endeavor to pry the secret from their prisoner failed the Germans sent me to the mines.

"I could scarcely walk, and of course was utterly unfit for any kind of manual work. When I reached my new goal there was a terrible shortage of food and my presence there meant simply one more mouth to feed. Therefore in the interest of economy I was discharged and allowed to make my way back to Belgium. The hardships of that journey do not need to be mentioned, for that is not an essential part of my story.

"During all the time that I was incarcerated in that German prison my trousers were never taken from the bottom of the hamper constantly worn by the priest's of Europe. My captors had ripped that other garment to shreds in their search. The trousers were examined only superficially, and hope of finding the document concealed therein had been abandoned. During those two years and nine months I was never allowed a change of clothing, so the garment was never out of my possession.

LIBERATED, FIND K. OF C. HUT HAVEN

"As soon as I had reached a safe spot from German espionage I changed my garb to that of a Belgian peasant. The tattered fragment of what had once been a respectable article of clothing, of course, was cast aside—but not before I had carefully ripped the seam at the bottom of the right leg and removed from the hem the long sought and once vital document. It was later returned to the proper authorities."

All of the foregoing did not satisfy the questioner as to the physical and sartorial metamorphosis which brought Father Musche into the clubrooms of the Knights of Columbus on that cold and dismal winter evening in the uniform of Uncle Sam's service.

"It was soon after my return to Belgium that I heard of the work of the Knights of Columbus," continued the chaplain. "I was told of the activity of that big Catholic organization at the front, and learned that there was need of priests in the ranks of its workers I made application through the regular channel, and with the consent of our Cardinal was accepted.

"Although for a long time there was but one chaplain to minister to the American soldiers there, it is a happy privilege to say that not one of those splendid men was ill, died, or was in trouble without the consolation of the Church. Now that there are many more men there I find the work still more congenial."

—Philadelphia Standard and Times.

STICKING TO THE TRUNK

A correspondent of the London Universe relates a good answer made by a Catholic lady of his acquaintance to an Anglican parson, who had been importuning her to attend his church, her own being at a considerable distance from where she lived.

"But I am a Catholic," she protested. "I cannot possibly think of going to your church."

The parson then took another tack.

"We are all Catholics, you know," he declared. "Our church is a branch of the Catholic Church."

The declaration was doubtless quite as familiar to the listener as to the speaker.

"If you don't mind," was her answer, "I think I'll stick to the trunk."

Let us force ourselves to be affectionate, gentle, and humble in our intercourse with those whom God has given us as our companions. Never let us consent to be of the number of those who, out of their own house, appear like angels, but more like devils at home.

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