

The Catholic Record

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LONDON, SATURDAY, FEB. 25, 1922

THE RECORD AND THE FARMERS PARTY

As our readers are fully aware it is the constant and invariable policy of the CATHOLIC RECORD to maintain a position of absolute neutrality on the issues that divide political parties. That policy of complete political independence we do not so interpret as to preclude criticism of measures or of men when Catholic interests may be involved; nor to withhold due praise when either Catholic or the general interest is well served. Nor do we feel bound to refrain from criticising any measure affecting the general welfare though Catholics may be concerned no more than others. Our policy simply obliges us to affiliate with no party, to oppose no party; to be in fact as well as in name non-partisan in politics. Conceivably the occasion might arise in which we should be compelled to support or oppose some political party; but in such a contingency the determining consideration would be that for which the CATHOLIC RECORD exists—the intelligent service of Catholic interests.

Politics and political parties as such are quite outside the sphere of our activity. We repeat, the RECORD is affiliated with or opposed to no political party.

We are impelled to make clear this non-partisan attitude of the CATHOLIC RECORD because of certain exceptions taken by some of our readers to articles by our contributor, The Observer, on the Initiative, the Referendum, and the Recall. We regarded these articles first, as the expression of our contributor's individual views, not necessarily endorsed by the CATHOLIC RECORD; and secondly, as a purely academic discussion of abstract principles.

We know, and our readers in Ontario and in the Prairie Provinces know, that there is nothing revolutionary in the Farmers' political movement.

Over three years ago—to be exact January 11th, 1919—the CATHOLIC RECORD made this editorial reference to the new political leaven then beginning to work in the agricultural half of our population:

Nothing that has happened in Canadian politics for a long time approaches in importance and significance the present political movement of the farmers. It is not so much—indeed it is not at all—their political platform, its merits or demerits, to which we attribute this importance and significance. It is primarily and above all that the farmers, and especially the farmers of Ontario, are beginning to do their own political thinking and to discuss intelligently those matters of which, under responsible government, the people are the supreme judges and the final court of appeal.

And, after referring to the catchers or boogys by which the farmers had so often been kept from deciding political questions on their political merits, we thus concluded an article too long to reprint in full:

The isolation of the farmer's life is proverbial and the consequences thereof are one of the great problems of every country today. It militates against effective organization and against what must precede organization, adequate political education. But if these obstacles can be overcome the farmers' political movement, by affording a more enlightened class interest as well as a broader national vision and influence, may go far to solve the distressing prob-

lem of the urban drift from the farms. At any rate when the whole world is talking democracy it is an encouraging sign to see the most befooled section of all self-governing peoples giving evidence of awakening to a sense of their dignity and responsibility as free and intelligent voters who are supposed to give their representatives in Parliament their mandate and to exact from them an account of their stewardship.

From which it will be seen that far from being alarmed we welcomed the Farmers' movement as a wholesome activity in our political life; and we have seen no reason to change our opinion. As a political party charged with the responsibilities of government they will, like other parties, have to give an account of their stewardship to the electorate. But no one is a bit alarmed over their "platform."

We may or may not believe that the Initiative is a wise provision. But when or where has it in practice justified the alarmist fears of theorists? The Referendum we have had with us for a considerable time, both in theory and practice; but it has never yet been used by the Farmers' party. And so good a Constitutionalist as Sir Wilfrid Laurier proposed to submit the question of Conscription to a referendum.

We confess that we don't know just what the constitution of Canada is beyond the British North America Act which constituted Canada. Insofar as we participate in the unwritten British Constitution we, like the people of the old lands, modify it to suit what we think are our needs. And the Parliament of Canada, with full knowledge of the "unconstitutional" Recall plank in the Farmers' platform, did nothing whatever, at a time when the Farmers or Progressives were numerically negligible, to protect itself or to compel that party to refrain from subverting the "Constitution."

Everything is not in the Constitution, written or unwritten; the Ten Commandments for instance. Representatives have before election solemnly pledged themselves to a certain course of action; and after election found it to their interest to break their pledged word. There may be nothing "unconstitutional" about that, but it is not satisfactory to honest men. If in the Recall the Farmers have found a means to make public men respect their pledged word, to compel representatives to keep faith with their electors, then so much the better for honesty and decency in public life.

That the Farmers' Council or a Farmers' Convention may recall a representative in no wise subverts the principle that the member of Parliament represents all the people of his constituency, even those who voted against him. For in his re-election or in the election of someone else to replace him all the people have their full constitutional right to cast their votes and use their influence. Members have resigned again and again merely to show the House that their constituents were with them on some question or other. The last instance of this kind that occurs to our mind was Mr. Burnham's resignation in West Peterborough.

Now if an individual member may thus resign when he sees fit, why may not a member resign at the instance of a large and influential number of his electors?

We do not pretend to go fully into all these questions; we are quite sure that time, experience and the unfailing good sense of the people will finally determine the acceptance, the rejection, or the modification of every "plank" in every political "platform."

An election is not by any means a plebiscite on a "platform." The electors come face to face with the candidates, see them, hear them, know them; and finally choose their representative with an encouraging amount of intelligence.

What we want to make clear is that the CATHOLIC RECORD is in no wise opposed to the Farmers' political party, and has not the slightest fear for the Constitution or the general welfare of Canada should that particular party gain control all along the line.

And what we have said of the Farmers is true mutatis mutandis of the Labor party; though this party has so far to go before getting control of government in Canada that it must be a very nervous person indeed that would be alarmed at the prospect.

FOUR THOUSAND YEARS OF PROGRESS

The collapse of the Knickerbocker Theatre in Washington recently, causing appalling loss of life, was due to faulty if not fraudulent construction.

Five army and navy engineers testified at the inquest that they found on examination twenty-one weaknesses in the structure. The fall of the roof, which caused the loss of ninety-eight lives, was "a direct result of failure to provide sufficiently for the unusual conditions existing at the junction of the curved Columbia Road wall and the stage wall."

An engineer of the District of Columbia Building Inspector's office said that "the insufficiency of construction" should have been discovered by inspection; that an ironworker had pointed out that beams above the stage lapped over their supports only one or two inches; but he was laughed at when he said that he would never witness a performance in that theatre. In short it seems proved beyond doubt that this place of amusement was a jerry-built structure; that contractors and building inspectors were dishonest to the point of callous indifference to the safety of the people whom they knew would throng this place of public resort.

We pride ourselves on our progress. Each succeeding age is in advance of its predecessors; and ours is necessarily the most advanced and enlightened of all.

Well, some twenty years ago, was unearthed the now famous Code of Hammurabi, the sixth King of the Babylonian dynasty, who reigned 4,000 years ago. Father Scheil, O. P., who translated the Code, places the probable date of Hammurabi's accession to the throne at 2016 B. C. And Biblical scholars consider it very probable that Hammurabi and Amraphel of the XIVth Chapter of Genesis are identical.

The 229th section of this famous Code, now easily accessible in English, reads as follows:

"If a builder build a house for a man and do not make its construction firm, and the house which he has built collapse and cause the first death of the owner of the house, that builder shall be put to death."

Human nature seems to have been pretty much the same 4,000 years ago as it is now; but how much "progress" have we made in legislation on this matter of honest building?

NOTES AND COMMENTS

COMMENTING ON Bishop Fallon's Toronto address last week, the Mail and Empire affirms that had the Bishop's ideas in regard to the scope of Separate School education been clearly put forward before Confederation there would have been no Separate Schools. In which event, the Mail editor forgot to add, there would have been no Confederation.

THE VERY REV. M. Mighirian, Archpriest, and Vicar Patriarchal in America of His Grace, Paul Peter XIII. Terzian, Catholic Patriarch of Armenia, is visiting Canada in the interests of that much persecuted portion of the Lord's Vineyard. It is already well-known on this Continent how cruelly the Armenian Catholics suffered at the hands of their Turkish oppressors during the War. The atrocities inflicted upon the struggling congregations at Erzeroum, and in other parts of Asia Minor were graphically described at the time by correspondents of the greater London and New York journals, who, at least to the extent of their opportunities, conveyed to the public mind some idea of the sad straits to which this long-suffering people had been reduced by the horrors of War.

It is only now, however, that the full extent of these sufferings is being revealed. From a table compiled by the Patriarch we learn that no less than 6 bishops and 111 priests suffered martyrdom at Turkish hands. Of these 36 belonged to the beleaguered city of Erzeroum alone. The people themselves were massacred by thousands and innumerable unfortunate women suffered a fate worse than death. Those who escaped death were deported, so that where in a given number of dioceses there were before the War 98,800 Catholics, they were in 1919 reduced to 33,000, and of 156 churches but 31 were left standing.

MISSION CHAPELS, schools, convents and rectories similarly disappeared so that with the return of peace the Church in Armenia had to go back once more, practically, to the conditions of fifteen hundred years ago, and begin again the work of building up the material fabric as well as the more precious fabric of human souls. "At present there is nothing in Armenia," wrote the venerable Patriarch in 1919. "All our churches, schools, rectories, orphan asylums, convents were given back to us in ruins, or with only four bare walls. We stand in need of chalices, ciboriums, ostensoriums, altars, linens. And the faithful Catholics? Poor people, we are searching for them here and there, in the mountain, in the houses of Kurds, hungry, exhausted, starved. We cannot describe the misery! All Armenia is full of corpses, dead bodies in pieces, horrible to behold."

On Friday afternoon the third session of the conference was opened by an inspiring address from Rev. Brother Barnabas, Superintendent of Catholic Charities, Toronto. Mr. Frank C. Anders, Executive Secretary of the Hamilton Association, led the discussion of "The Scout Troop and Interior Economy"; the discussion of "From Cubbing On" was led by E. O'Callahan, Executive Secretary of the Toronto Association; and the "Badge Programme" was discussed by Frank C. Irwin. These discussions were followed by the opening of the "Question Box" and the discussion of its contents by Prof. John A. Stiles, Assistant Chief Commissioner for Canada.

This recent conference was undoubtedly a great success, the varied mass of information derived by the many Scout officers from their fellow workers being of great value in the future development of their work among boys. Already great hopes are held by these officers for many like conferences in the future.

SCOUTING PROGRESSES

On the afternoon of February 2nd, 1922, the 11th Annual Meeting of the Ontario Provincial Council of the Boy Scouts Association was held in the Pompeian Room of the King Edward Hotel, Toronto. Many Scout and Cub officers who were in Toronto for the Scout Officers' Conference represented their local associations at this meeting. The big feature of this year's meeting was the attendance of His Excellency, Lord Byng of Vimy, Chief Scout for Canada, who addressed the Provincial Council on "Scouting and Leadership." The remarks of Lord Byng were not merely congratulatory. They were filled with practical ideas which are only gained by actual experience in Scout work.

The rapid growth of the number of Scouts in Ontario was shown in the report of Provincial Commissioner W. K. George. "The total membership of Scout and Cub officers and Boy Scouts and Wolf Cubs at the end of the year 1921 was 13,218," said Mr. George. "The total number a year ago was 9,000, Toronto alone, in the last six months has reported an increase of 300 Wolf Cubs."

"One of the best indicators we have as to the amount of real Scouting being done throughout the province is the steady stream from headquarters of Proficiency and other badges. The issue of badges for 1921 was 6,136, public service badges such as Fireman, Ambulance, Pathfinder, etc., being well to the front as usual."

"The slogan of the Boy Scout Movement is 'Be Prepared,' and the files of our Headquarters give many concrete evidences of the use to which Scouts and Wolf Cubs put their training and their Scouting education. The report of the Provincial Board of Honor lists a number of most noteworthy cases of heroism on the part of our boys, while I wish to draw attention in this report to the fact that other Scouts and Cubs without number are daily displaying courage and resourcefulness in the face of danger as a result of their training and loyalty to the Scout Promise and Law."

BOY LIFE

SCOUT OFFICERS' CONFERENCE

What is of More Importance than a Boy? This was the main thought underlying the many discussions of the Provincial Boy Scout Officers' Conference which was held in the King Edward Hotel on Thursday and Friday, February 2nd and 3rd. The first session on Thursday morning was opened by Rev. Rabbi Brickner's inspirational address "Scouting and Citizenship." Rabbi Brickner stressed the importance of service in citizenship and the great opportunities which the Boy Scout Movement offered for the training of our younger citizens in this call for service. The main discussion of the morning was "The Patrol System in Scouting," opened and led by His Excellency, Lord Byng of Vimy, Chief Scout for Canada. Lord Byng, with his usual brevity, summed up the situation with this advice: "Let us not speak of Canada as being so many miles from ocean to ocean, but of Canadians, their making and their citizenship."

On Friday morning the second session was opened by Dr. James W. Roberson, Chief Scout Commissioner for Canada. Mr. Andrew Frame, District Scoutmaster of Hamilton, led the discussion of "The 'Out' in Scouting"; Lorne W. Barclay of National Headquarters, Boy Scouts of America, addressed the conference on "Scouting and Religious Education"; the discussion of "The Troop Committee" was led by Alder Bliss, District Commissioner and Secretary of Ottawa; and J. M. Shuttleworth, Member Executive Committee, Brant County Association, discussed the question of "Scouting in the Schools."

the very pick of our manhood, and without thought of cost to themselves are giving their time and energies outright to the boys under their leadership. Upon their faithfulness, their ability, their resourcefulness and their unselfish service to boyhood, depends the success of the whole Movement. These men are deserving of our deepest gratitude as well as that of the parents of the thousands of boys with whom they work, and it is greatly to be hoped that no community in the province will fail in recognition of the service being rendered by these workers.

RT. REV. M. F. FALLON IN MASSEY HALL SETS FORTH CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS OF SEPARATE SCHOOLS

The Globe, February 11

"Constitutional rights"—not "sectarian privileges"—were what the Right Rev. M. F. Fallon, Bishop of London, claimed for the Roman Catholic Separate Schools of Ontario in Massey Hall last night.

In an address extending nearly three hours, and to an audience that hung with rapt attention to the concluding sentence, Bishop Fallon covered, at times in detail and again in outline, the course of Common school development in Canada since 1763. It was in that year, he said, that denominational schools were first established. Later, in the year 1816, the first Common School Act of Upper Canada was passed, and that act made the Bible a text-book in all the schools. Today he thanked God that the sturdy Christians of those days had determined that the greatest of all books should form part of the education of their children. From that very fact, he argued, there were denominational schools in Canada.

The act of 1841 first gave this country Separate schools, and the Roman Catholic Separate schools were made part of the Common school system of Upper Canada (Ontario) in 1868. This legislation was absorbed in the act of Confederation, which was more than a law, it was a treaty, solemn covenant which conferred equal constitutional rights on the Protestant minority in Quebec, and the Roman Catholic minority in Ontario.

PUTS QUESTIONS TO THE GLOBE

Throughout the length of the entire address not one word was harshly spoken by Bishop Fallon. He directed a number of questions to the Globe asking why one portion only of his recent open letter had been used in editorial comment. He claimed that his remarks in Peterboro were misinterpreted, and he never claimed that the school taxes paid by corporations should be divided on the basis of population. There were three methods open, he said. One was by population, another by assessment, and the third, which he thought the most fair, on the basis of average school attendance.

Even in his remarks to the Worshipful Grand Master of the Orange Order, H. C. Hocken, M. P., Bishop Fallon was moderate, although he claimed that Mr. Hocken's articles in reply to the claim of the Roman Catholics were not accurate, nor had he attempted to find the true state of affairs in the Province of Quebec. In support of this statement Bishop Fallon read a letter from Rev. Dr. Dickie of Montreal, who admitted that throughout the years the Roman Catholic minority in Quebec had been fairly and generously treated.

ASKS CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

In the first half-hour of his address Bishop Fallon took his hearers back a hundred years to the time when, in 1816, the first Common School Act ever put on the statute books of the Dominion was passed. He pointed out how the authorized Protestant version of the Bible was made a text-book in those schools. He dealt with the petition of the Catholics of 1841, in which year they were told they might go and educate their children as they saw fit. Coming to the legislation of 1868, he said the act of that year was the fundamental principle of their constitutional rights, and that they were asking for the fulfillment today in a straight, honorable, decent and generous sense.

BETTER SPIRIT PREVAILING

"There is a sort of a wild rumor going about that we are looking for something that does not belong to us," declared the Bishop. "Well, there is just one thing that I have never been stupid enough to go out for in the Province of Ontario, and that is anything that does not belong." (Laughter and applause.) "But I think things have changed since I was a boy," he went on. "I do not believe there is a bitter spirit abroad among my non-Catholic fellow-citizens of this Province, and I have a profound conviction that if our case can only reach their ears, unaffected by prejudice or by a baseless opposition, we shall secure by their decision a victory in keeping with our just claims."

"AN EDUCATIONAL CZAR" On the subject of educational grants, he said: "All along for forty years there was no trouble about the division of these legislative grants. The general Common school system, called the Public schools, received its fair share and the Separate Common school system, called the Separate schools, received its share, until the year 1907, when, by regulation of the late Superintendent of Education, a change was made in the way of allotting the monies that belonged to the Separate schools." He referred to the late inspector as an "educational czar."

Now, in ordinary intercourse there is an interesting name to apply to such a transaction," he said, after mentioning that \$100,000 had thus been diverted from the Separate schools. "Of course, when you get into higher realms the name changes, but when I do it I am a common thief."

"Since 1917 the Separate schools of this Province have been paid the amount of the legislative grant that is theirs, and it has been divided among them according to their earning capacity and the perfection of their work. It is equally true that the grant has been a fair size for certain schools and it is equally true that the grant has been small and insufficient for other Separate schools."

SOME PRESS GYMNASTICS

There has been some gymnastics in the daily press about how is it that Separate schools get such a grant in such places. Well, it really isn't anybody's business, because it is our own money. It is the Separate school portion of the legislative grant. It is divided by a law that we didn't make, by regulations for which we are not responsible. It has been divided since 1917 on the basis that prevailed before 1907 and it has been divided by the Minister of Education, without asking us how it should be divided.

"But the Province of Ontario owes still—and it is a debt not merely of honor but of justice—over \$100,000,000 to the Separate schools of this Province; the grants that were not paid to them from 1907 to 1917, and they aggregate, I am told, and I have seen the figures, more than \$100,000,000."

SOME ATTENDANCE FIGURES

With some sarcasm the Bishop pointed out that although there would be no newspaper headlines in certain newspapers showing how the system worked out in the Public schools, there were two schools in Frontenac, one of them with a registration of one pupil, with one teacher receiving a salary of \$800 a year, getting a grant of more than the teacher's salary, and the other with two pupils and one teacher, also receiving a grant larger than the teacher's salary.

"Under the law," he said, "a Common school system is a real, complete educational entity, and under the laws of common-sense as well. It takes a child from the alphabet and brings him to where some other thing definite educational entity faces him, and that other definite educational entity is the university."

"Now, in 1871, dealing with the general Common school system, the Legislature of this Province divided it into two parts, but there was no power inherent in the Legislature of this Province after 1871, directly or indirectly, prejudicially to affect the Separate Common school system, and therefore the law which in 1872 divided the general Common school system into Public schools and High schools did not affect our constitutional rights, because it could not affect them."

MUCH MISCONCEPTION

Even among the Roman Catholics, Bishop Fallon stated, there was the utmost of misconception as to what were the exact rights of the Separate school supporters. He said in passing that he would rather that the audience which faced him was one composed entirely of Protestants, so that he might convince them of the justice of Catholic claims.

"It is a common and easily misunderstood misconception," he said. "We so readily make ourselves a part of the traditions and circumstances in which we live. If I were to ask almost any one of you a couple of months, or especially a year ago, 'Where does the Separate school system end?' you would say without thinking, 'At the entrance examination.' If there is any power in the Province of Ontario to end the Separate school system at the entrance examination, at the fourth form, that same power can end it at the third or the second or the first. It cannot abolish the first form, because that would be utterly unconstitutional and would shriek out of itself."

When Separate schools were put into force, he said, the Roman Catholics were in no position to take full advantage of the legislation; there were only a comparatively small number of Roman Catholic and a small number of Separate schools established. But they grew in numbers, and in 1871, when the division of the general Common school system was made, the Hon. Edward Blake asked Hon. Sandfield Macdonald, "What about our Roman Catholic friends?" Bishop Fallon quoted Premier Macdonald's reply on that occasion as: "When our Roman Catholic friends want High schools, all they have got to do is to ask for them."

"He realized," said the Bishop, "as any man who gives thorough attention and study to the question must realize, that there was absolutely no power to abridge or shorten or amputate the Separate Common school system."

On the subject of educational grants, he said: "All along for forty years there was no trouble about the division of these legislative grants. The general Common school system, called the Public schools, received its fair share and the Separate Common school system, called the Separate schools, received its share, until the year 1907, when, by regulation of the late Superintendent of Education, a change was made in the way of allotting the monies that belonged to the Separate schools." He referred to the late inspector as an "educational czar."