

The Catholic Record

Price of Subscription—\$1.50 per annum... United States & Europe—\$2.00

Advertisements for teachers, situations wanted, etc., 50 cents each insertion... Approved and recommended by Archbishops

LONDON, SATURDAY, JULY 3, 1915

BELGIUM, CLERICALISM AND PROGRESS

Clericalism like Socialism is one of those familiar but elastic terms whose meaning is somewhat elusive

In the columns of the Ottawa Citizen recently there has been carried on an interesting discussion

The controversy—if we may so term it—has the rare merit of being courteous, informing and timely

Dr. Sarolea, who is not a Catholic, was recently in America as the accredited representative of this clerical government

It is characteristic of Belgium that she may best be described in superlatives, and in superlatives which are mutually contradictory

But unfortunately for the Citizen's argument the facts are entirely with Father Cavanagh, and the Citizen's assumption that plural voting in Belgium is the same as plural voting in England is entirely gratuitous

Then the Citizen goes on to quote Lord St. David on the heirs to the plural vote in England who were born did a day's work since they were born

All of which is quite true of unclerical England but has nothing to do with Belgian clericalism nor with Belgian plural voting

Compare or contrast Belgium with England. In England a handful of people own the land and a powerful oligarchy until very recently had a practical monopoly of political power

Belgium is in the world's eye just now. The world would be all the wiser if it would modify its prejudices and preconceptions in the face of facts

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The usually well-informed and open minded Citizen has allowed its subconscious anticlerical assumptions to take the place of first hand study of the question in issue

Henri Charriaux, commissioned by the French Government to study this and kindred questions, thus describes the Belgian franchise in Belgique Moderne:

1. Every man in Belgium has first of all a right to one vote in the election both of deputies and senators. The age at which the citizen enjoys this right is: twenty-five years for the Chamber of Deputies; thirty years for the Senate.

2. One supplementary vote is given to every elector of thirty-five years who is the father of legitimate children, and who pays five francs (\$1.00) as a personal contribution to the state.

3. One supplementary vote to the proprietor of real estate, having a cadastral revenue of at least 48 francs. (Elsewhere we have seen this given as real estate to the value of 2,000 francs, \$400, which probably amounts to the same thing.)

4. One supplementary vote to every voter who has 100 francs income from state securities or from the National Savings Bank.

5. Two supplementary votes to electors having certain certificates of superior education.

6. Two supplementary votes to certain categories of persons whose capacity is presumed by reason of public functions, positions or professions.

Now be it noted that in no case can an individual have more than three votes; nor can he vote elsewhere than where he is domiciled. The Socialist workingman if he be the father of legitimate children and has exercised a very modest degree of thrift can have just as great voting power as the honor graduate of a university who is also Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and a millionaire.

In England, like so many other things in that country free from the incubus of clericalism, plural voting favors the wealthy and privileged classes. In Belgium plural voting is something entirely in accord with an enlightened conception of true democracy. We find, in Belgium, civic recognition of the dignity and responsibility of the heads of families; encouragement of thrift; and the recognition not of wealth, nor of class or privilege, but of the enlightened responsibilities of those who have been favored with a liberal education.

Answering Father Cavanagh's defence of plural voting in Belgium The Citizen says:

"Unfortunately it is hardly right to say that the plural voter is required to provide himself with means to support his family. It is only necessary to HAVE means to be entitled to an additional vote; and the means of the plural voter are generally provided by some one else, the common worker."

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And as for plural voting—what about the 80,000 English agriculturists who have the same representation as 800,000 industrial workers? Is that not practically giving, and giving arbitrarily, ten votes to each voter of one favored class?

There are a great many other anomalies that have developed since Clericalism gave England the Magna Charta but, however interesting, entertaining or instructive, space forbids their enumeration.

The Citizen's press despatch myth that clericalism compelled "the people" to strike, and that the strike compelled clericalism to yield will keep till next week.

THE SUMMER SCHOOL AT GUELPH

The priest in a rural parish is not engaged in agriculture; he may not be even interested in the work of the farm, and yet faithfully minister to the spiritual needs of his congregation. But it goes without saying that if he is intelligently interested in the work of his people he can more fully enter into their lives, sympathize with their difficulties and aspirations, and greatly increase his influence on their welfare both temporal and spiritual.

From the guilds and crafts of the middle ages down to the Catholic workmen's associations in many countries of the present day the priest has always taken a prominent part.

But there is no reason why the priest's activity, why his helpfulness and sympathy should stop short with the workers in industrial centres. As a matter of fact a great movement has been going on in Ireland for some years which has in large measure effected the regeneration of agricultural Ireland. In the political limelight great leaders stand out prominently; but without making any invidious comparison we think that Sir Horace Plunkett, who for the first seven years was head of the Irish Department of Agriculture, has been one of the greatest benefactors that Ireland has had in a century.

The task of Sir Horace Plunkett and of those associated with him was to make agriculture attractive by making it profitable, and then to make social conditions agreeable. "Better farming, better business, better living" was the motto.

The work of Sir Horace and of the Department since as well as before his retirement received its most intelligent and effective support from Father Finlay, S. J. who has been the soul of the Irish Agricultural Organization Society. The I. A. O. S. enlisted the sympathy and active cooperation of priests and ministers, Orangemen and Catholics, Unionists and Nationalists. The result of intelligent and persistent effort is a marvellous betterment in the conditions of rural life in Ireland.

"One effect," says Sir Horace Plunkett in the Atlantic Monthly, "of organizing adult farmers for business purposes is that it completely changes their attitude toward their own problems. I could cite instances where agricultural co-operative associations, composed of individuals generally regarded as hopelessly unprogressive, have displayed in business, in politics, and in promotion of education qualities which, if applied to the more opulent circumstances of the agricultural community of the United States, would place American farming in a higher position than it occupies to-day."

A gentle intimation that the ex-president of the Irish Board of Agriculture found progressive America behind regenerated rural Ireland so far as farming conditions are concerned.

The interests of agriculture are now being recognized in Canada as national interests. The press is devoting a great deal of attention to the matter. Much that is important is receiving intelligent attention and discussion. But the Summer School at the Ontario Agricultural College is at once the most sensible and most practical attempt to give effect to the general desire for the amelioration of methods of agriculture and of the conditions of rural life.

Millions are spent by Departments of Agriculture, federal and provincial, experimental farms and agricultural colleges. Before the farmers, whom all this is designed primarily to benefit, can derive any adequate return from such expenditure there must be the vital, personal relationship between them and the institutions intended to serve them. This must be provided by those who by education, sympathy and residence are fitted for rural leadership.

If priests of the rural parishes of Ontario take advantage of the Summer School at Guelph (July 26th-

Aug. 7th) they will, to the profit of their people and the enlargement of their own sphere of usefulness, put themselves in the way of becoming the living medium between Ontario's great Agricultural College and the people for whose benefit this institution exists.

We hope that this Summer School may be the means of initiating many of the rural clergy into that work for the betterment of their people which so many priests in Ireland have energetically undertaken and carried on with such signal success.

MR. JARVIS' HOME RULE GOSSIP

Editor CATHOLIC RECORD—I enclose a marked passage clipped from the Toronto Globe of June 16. I have the good fortune to be of Irish descent; and I join daily with thousands of Irish Canadians in praying for the success of the Allies; and also with them look forward to Home Rule for Ireland. Hence my desire to know if Aemilius Jarvis be right in his statement.

Sincerely, CONSTANT READER OF RECORD, Montreal, June 17, 15.

This is clipping enclosed: Under the surface in Britain there smouldered the fires of political feud, and the general impression was that party lines would never be the same again as they were before the outbreak of war. The feeling was growing that Home Rule for Ireland was now a very remote issue, said Mr. Jarvis. The south of Irelanders had not recruited well, while the men of north Ireland had stepped into the breach in large numbers.

"The young men are emigrating to America from the south of Ireland at the present time on every boat that leaves Liverpool," said Mr. Jarvis. "The steerage on the boat I crossed in was fairly swarming with them." They say over there, he added, "that fear of conscription is driving the young men from the southern counties of Ireland."

Mr. Jarvis bitterly denounced the "swankierism" of certain Canadian representatives stopping at the fashionable hotels of London, and trying to make use of their military uniforms for selfish ends.

Our Montreal friend must have heard some political gossip about Canadian affairs in his time, and have lived long enough to know its worth, or rather worthlessness.

The fact of the matter is that the south of Ireland has contributed its full quota of recruits; while of Carson's erstwhile army of 200,000 "drilled and disciplined troops" barely 15 per cent. have enlisted and they "have stepped into the breach" for home defence.

There are probably 50,000 casualties amongst the Irish Nationalists in France and Flanders. Before us is a casualty list of 1,000 of which 514 are south of Ireland names. And this was about the time that the home defenders of Ulster were refusing to give up their German rifles for use at the front. But this is no time for recrimination. The Orangemen are Irish and will, we trust, do credit to Ireland yet. Let Mr. Jarvis' travellers' tales and political gossip about Ireland pass; as we may also quietly ignore his Yellowplush denunciation of the "swankierism" of Canadians "stopping at the fashionable hotels of London, and trying to make use of their military uniforms for selfish ends."

"THE GRAVES AT KILMORNA" II Considered as an analysis of the Fenian movement, the "Graves at Kilmorna" is admirable. But as a picture of present day social and political conditions in Ireland, it is overdrawn.

From the quiet seclusion of his study at Doneraile Canon Sheehan looked out upon the Irish political world, and saw his country in the melting pot. The old order of things was changing, and the change was decidedly for the worse in his opinion. Materialism was eating into the hearts of the people, and undermining the foundations of the splendid idealism of the past. The old simplicity was yielding place before the advance of complex modern conditions. The stock broker's office, and not the village chapel, attracted the eyes of the later nineteenth century Irishman. Ireland was breaking with her past. "We are going after strange gods," he writes. "We Irish were a race apart; so surely as Jehovah of old selected the Jews as his people—the chosen nation—so we, by God's design and destiny, stand aloof from the nations around us. Their ways are not our ways; their God is not our God. But we are forgetting ourselves, just as the Israelites forgot themselves under the thunders and lightnings of Sinai."

From this it will be seen that the picture the Canon sketches is, in

many respects, a depressing one. But at the risk of seeming presumptuous we venture to challenge his verdict. We think he is a little too general in his condemnation. We said so before in reviewing "The Blindness of Dr. Gray." Like Luke Dalmege in the novel of that name, and Myles Cogan in the present volume, we are of the opinion that Canon Sheehan lived so much among his books that he hardly understood the people. The Irish people are not all saints; nor are all Irish politicians pure souled patriots. There are self seekers in Ireland as in everywhere else. There are those whose hands are itching to touch the golden counters. But for all that we believe that the heart of the nation is sound.

But in the end the author thinks all will be well. Just as in St. Augustine's famous saying, the soul is made for God, and is restless until it finds its rest in Him, so Ireland cannot be permanently satisfied with the things of earth. She will yet slake the thirst of the pursuit of material things; and then, he writes, they will build a monastery on every hill top, and Ireland will become a second Thebaid. It is worthy of note that this is the ultimate destiny of Ireland as predicted by another distinguished writer, the late Mr. Benson.

Although we cannot accept Canon Sheehan's picture of present-day Ireland in its entirety, yet we believe that his rather exaggerated criticism will do good. It is good for the Irish people to have their faults and shortcomings held up before their eyes by the kindly hand of one who loved them as did the gentle Canon. His is a warning not to break with the past. He tells them that their past was great and inspiring even if defeat be written across its pages. And it is good for a people to be told that defeat oftentimes spells victory.

Canon Sheehan, genius though he was, was out of touch with the times. He held that the rigid unity demanded by the parliamentarians meant the sacrifice of independent thought. Hence he sided with O'Brien in his ridiculous All-Ireland movement, a protest against the modus operandi of the official nationalist party. Much of the gloom that overhangs his pages is begotten of this thought.

For the last time we have reviewed a book by the great ornament of the Irish clergy. Never again will we walk with Canon Sheehan "Under the Cedars and Stars." "The Graves at Kilmorna" comes to us as a gift from the dead hand of the gentle priest of Doneraile. Our pleasure in its perusal is shadowed by the regret that the voice that speaks through its pages is stilled for ever, and that never again will we be privileged to listen to the wisest of teachers and kindest of philosophers. His books are a noble legacy, and it is too much to hope that the inspiration of his example will encourage others of his class to overcome the "damosa hereditas" that has made the Irish clergy look askance at the literary profession.

COLUMBA.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN A RECENT issue of the Presbyterian occurred this paragraph: "Roman Catholicism is an easy religion and human nature is inclined to take the easy road. When for a consideration responsibility can be shifted to another's shoulders and when for a fee religion can be done by proxy it is not an easy thing to persuade men that the more difficult and arduous path of personal responsibility to God or the 'Vis Dolorosa' is the way to life."

WE WOULD not think of contending with the writer of the above as to the "easiness" of the Catholic religion further than to remark by the way that the assertion scarcely coalesces with the ordinary imputation from such a quarter that Catholics are in effect slaves, and so oppressed and priest ridden as to render it a pious duty on the part of Presbyterians to labor strenuously for their emancipation. To this end the sect in question is in the habit of spending thousands of dollars annually in what, on the showing of many of its own adherents, is a vain attempt to shatter the faith of the Catholics of French Canada. If "Roman Catholicism" is so easy a religion it is surely senseless, or dishonest, or both to extort money from the pockets of the credulous on the opposite pretext. For upwards of three centuries the Presbyterian sect has been railing against the "tyranny of Rome" and shedding what prove to be crocodile tears over the woes of "Rome's dupes." Now it is "Rome" that is the dupe and the

Catholic Church the merest tool of its stolid and pleasure-loving members!

THE IMPUTATION of easiness then from such a source scarcely merits consideration. It may be put down as the irresponsible gabble of an ignoramus. Of a different character, however, is the underlying insinuation that all the graces of the Sacraments and the numerous other aids to salvation which are the inheritance of the faithful Catholic can be bought for a price like any other commodity, and that "for a consideration" responsibility for one's acts "can be shifted to another's shoulders." This is a calumny which has done duty in the hands of Protestant controversialists for three hundred years but which is none the less reprehensible on that account.

NOTWITHSTANDING the progress of education and enlightenment which is the characteristic boast of the age it need not be matter for surprise that this heritage of vicious slander should still find lodgment in the brains of the shallow and ignorant, or prove a ready instrument for exhorting applause from a Twelfth of July audience. But that the organ of an influential denomination in Canada, which makes special parade of its scholarship and lays great stress upon the Ten Commandments, should open its columns to a vulgar libel of the sort is surely calculated to weaken our confidence in human nature as therein exemplified. The editor of the Presbyterian would consider himself insulted were an attempt made to use his columns as a vehicle for the slander of an individual, no matter how depraved. Strange is it not, that the Christian Church, the Bride of Christ, should not merit an equal degree of consideration.

DISCUSSING the "union" movement in the Presbyterian General Assembly recently held at Kingston, a reverend delegate who favored fusion with the Methodists pertinently asked: "What did the church do before the name 'Presbyterian' was invented?" and casually quoted Shakespeare's famous epigram, "a rose by any other name would smell as sweet." Published reports of the Assembly's proceedings do not indicate that there was any response to the enquiry. Evidently the Assembly as a body thought it prudent not to raise the issue, or, being raised, to pass it unheedingly by. For the name Presbyterian as so used has no roots in the past and the sect which marches under it is no less a thing of yesterday.

WRITING on the question "Anglican and Roman," a correspondent of the Canadian Churchman asserts that "you may search the city of Toronto in vain to find a single Romanist who honestly believes that he cannot be saved unless he believes all the decrees of the Council of Trent, and I doubt whether you could pick out ten who could tell you offhand what the Council of Trent has decreed"—a safe assertion to make in the columns of an Anglican weekly. But let the gentleman travel outside of his own restricted sphere and he may ascertain that with Catholics the Faith is not a thing to be whittled and sifted according to one's own whims and caprices but is a revelation from on High, "built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets," and safeguarded by the Holy Ghost through all ages. With Anglicans as with every other denomination of Protestantism, it is on the contrary but the creature of the human intellect—which makes all the difference.

ON THE BATTLE LINE

THE DARDANELLES From Tokio comes an apparently authentic report that seven German submarines have entered the Mediterranean by way of Gibraltar. They will not be able to stay long in the western part of the sea, because every foot of shore line on which there is a possibility of concealing stores of fuel oil will be guarded by the French and Italian patrol boats. They may hope to replenish their oil tanks from Austrian vessels running the blockade along the Dalmatian coast, and whence shipping passing to and from the Suez Canal, but it is much more likely that they have been despatched to assist in the holding of the Dardanelles against the attack of the Allies. The first German submarine that ran the gauntlet of Gibraltar sank the Triumph and the Majestic, and the Kaiser probably thinks that a few more in the same waters would greatly increase the difficulty of provisioning and reinforcing the armies of the

Allies operating on the Gallipoli Peninsula. The presence of even one efficient German submarine in the Dardanelles has forced the British and French Admirals to guard their fighting ships very carefully, and a sevenfold increase of the peril from torpedoes would be no joke.—Globe, June 25.

The marked lack of news from the Dardanelles is depressing, if not ominous.

THE ITALIAN FRONT

It looks as if the Italians may have to flank the Isonzo lines by landing an expedition on the Istrian shore near Trieste. The presence of Austrian destroyers and submarines in the Adriatic makes such an expedition somewhat risky, but it is evident that the forcing of the Isonzo lines is going to be a slow job, and the Italian navy may be called in to help by guarding and facilitating a landing to the east of them.

THE RUSSIANS

The indomitable Russians are already beginning to come back. Official reports from Petrograd, confirmed by admissions from Vienna, show that along the Dniester, between a point almost due south of Lemberg and the Bukovinian border, the Russians are not only holding their own, but at two places have forced Austrian columns which had succeeded in reaching the north bank of the river to withdraw and fall back to the river, after suffering losses which the Russian report speaks of as enormous. The Russian left flank on the Dniester must be withdrawn so that it may remain in touch with the general retirement of the centre, caused by the evacuation of Lemberg, but it is quite clear from yesterday's reports that the Russians in the Dniester region are capable of outflanking the Austrians, and are retiring not after a defeat, but after an important victory. In the balancing of accounts it may be found that the Austrians have recently lost as many men along the Dniester as they captured on the re-occupation of Lemberg, and in the week's fighting which led up to that event.

Berlin, June 25.—The fighting, according to Berlin despatches, has been uninterrupted for four days and nights, and the Russians wasted the lives of their troops by recklessly marching them in masses into the Austrian fire. Large heaps of Russian dead, it is asserted, lie before the Austrian trenches.

The fighting is declared to be particularly desperate eastward of Zale Zaczky. The Russians are said to be charging repeatedly along the front line, but they have been repulsed. The fighting here has been reported, but suffered frightful losses, and were compelled to retire before the determined Austrian resistance.

Similar scenes, it is asserted, are being enacted daily in Besarabia. The Russian fighting here has been guarded chiefly from the home guards and by levies on the eastern provinces.

THE WESTERN FRONT

There is comparative calm all along the western front, according to the night French official report. A few combats with hand grenades are reported, but the only fighting of importance took place in the Vosges, where a German attack in the Fontenelle region was repulsed. There was violent fighting on the heights of the Meuse on Thursday night, in the course of which the Germans assailed the entire French front at Calonne with flaming liquids and asphyxiating bombs, and then launched an infantry attack. They reached and occupied some of their second line trenches captured by the French a few days ago, but the French, returning to the attack, recaptured them. The German report claims the "recapture of a stubbornly defended communication trench from the enemy," but this was evidently sent before the final French attack—or ignored it. In the renewal of active hostilities along the Meuse and on the Lorraine frontier there is evidence that the Germans are strengthening their forces in eastern France in the hope of relieving the pressure in the region of Arras, having for its object the recovery of Lille and the industrial district by which the Manchester of France is surrounded.

Jacques Dhur, a French expert in international law, has startled his fellow countrymen by the assertion that no small part of Germany's food supply is reaching her from France by way of Switzerland. A convention ratified between France and Switzerland on July 26, 1914, provides that in case of war France shall supply the Federal Government of Switzerland with 200,000 tons of cereals a year. According to M. Dhur, 100 trucks, each loaded with between twelve and fifteen tons of cereals, cross the French frontier every day for the Cornavin station at Geneva, while in ordinary times the monthly exports did not exceed 4,000 or 5,000 tons. At the same time enormous quantities of potatoes, beans, oil and other vegetable products are passing into Switzerland via Pontarlier. To prevent commerce in contraband, all merchandise is forwarded to a particular depot in the province of the Swiss Confederation. M. Dhur, in his investigations of this distribu-