



Note and Comment

On the invitation of the United States Government, the crew of the Don de Dieu, which took part in last summer's tercentenary festivities, will take part with that vessel in the tercentenary discovery of Lake Champlain in June next.

The Irish party will decide its future policy on the Irish Land Bill and other questions at a national convention to be held at the Mansion House, Dublin, February 9 and 10.

The Redemptorist Fathers of St. Clement's College, Saratoga, N. Y., give the following report of their work during 1908: One hundred and sixty-eight missions, renewals, retreats and triduos were conducted, and the number of confession heard was 110,219.

A Protestant American, Mr. Henry D. Sedgwick, in the Atlantic Monthly, says: "Those lovers of Italy, however, who are most in sympathy with the national sentiment which most affected the unity of Italy, must remember that to the world the Roman Catholic Church is far more important than the Italian kingdom, and if there were a doubt whether the Church or the kingdom would derive the greater advantage from the possession of Rome, that doubt should be resolved in favor of the Church. . . . All things may come to the Church that waits."

The Apostolic School of Dublin, Ireland, is sending a number of its students into the foreign mission field, and this year attention is being given to providing laborers for the Chinese. A famous athlete of Stonyhurst College, England, is at present in the Paris Seminary preparing himself for the Chinese mission. In five years it is hoped that the missions of the Far East will be well supplied with Irish priests from Irish colleges.

An unique scene was witnessed in a hall in Scotland recently, when an ex-minister of the Scotch Presbyterian Church, now a Catholic priest, was the lecturer at a special meeting of the League of the Cross Literary Association, and the chairman at the meeting was also an ex-Presbyterian minister, Father Gray Graham, M.A.

Father John of Cronstadt is dead. Father John was the miracle-worker of the Russian Church. Tens of thousands of Russians visited him every year, seeking his aid. All accounts point to him as a deeply religious, zealous, charitable man.

Statistics published by the Journal Official show that the population of France is again increasing. The figures for the first six months of 1908, now compiled, show that the births exceeded the deaths by 11,000. During the corresponding period of the previous year the deaths exceeded the births by 55,000.

Saskatchewan, where separate schools are in force, is considering the exemption from two and one acres in favor of schools and churches respectively to three acres for each. Winnipeg, where the Catholics must support the dual system of schools, is considering putting a tax on church property.

For the first time in the history of Massachusetts, the House of Representatives was opened last Wednesday with prayer by a Catholic priest, the Right Rev. Monsignor Thomas Griffin, D.D., pastor of St. John's Church, Worcester.

The preparatory work for the beatification of the Venerable John Duns Scotus, the great Irish Franciscan champion of Our Lady's unique privilege, has just been concluded. It fills two large printed volumes.

According to "Littell's Living Age" a Brahmin is translating the "Imitation of Christ," for publication by a Hindu firm.

In an autograph letter addressed to the editor of the Irish Messenger of the Sacred Heart, the Pope has deigned to grant to all the readers of the Irish Messenger and to those who joined the "Jubilee League of Prayer" for his Holiness and for

the welfare of the afflicted Church in France, the Apostolic Benediction and the precious privilege of a Plenary Indulgence at the hour of death. A facsimile and translation of this letter will appear in the February issue of the Irish Messenger of the Sacred Heart.

More than usual activity is being displayed in New York religious circles. At St. Francis Xavier Church, Sixteenth street west, the Jesuit Fathers are conducting a mission to Catholics and non-Catholics. The first week was devoted to the women, and a hundred converts have been brought into the fold. This week, men are flocking in thousands to hear the sermons and attend the services, which begin at five o'clock in the morning and are held in both the upper and lower churches. The evening services last until ten o'clock at night, and both churches are crowded. There is a mid-day service beginning at twenty-five minutes past twelve and ending at five minutes past one. The subjects discussed are: "Is Christ God?" "Is One Religion as Good as Another?" "What Church Did Christ Found?" "Who is the Pope?" "What Is Papal Infallibility?" "The Catholic Church and the Bible." "Invocation of Saints." "Who is the Blessed Virgin?" "What is Confession?" "What are Indulgences?" "What is the Holy Eucharist?" and "Christian Marriage."

For the first time in the history of the Senate of the State of California a Catholic priest was chosen as chaplain, in the person of Very Rev. Henry H. Wyman, rector of old St. Mary's Church, and Superior of the Paulist Fathers on the Pacific Coast. Father Wyman is well known on the Pacific Coast, where as a Paulist missionary, he has labored from Seattle to San Diego. He is in his sixtieth year, having been born in Massachusetts in 1849. He was graduated from Brown University in Providence in 1871. He was ordained priest in 1876 and was assigned as rector of old St. Mary's in 1895. Since then he has resided in San Francisco. His ability has been recognized in every field, and especially in the literary, his book, "Certainty in Religion," having attracted widespread attention in the English-speaking world.

There is a rumor afloat that the Holy Father will hold a Consistory for the creation of Cardinals and preconsentment of Bishops towards the end of January, but it has been quite impossible to obtain any confirmation of it. The year 1908 was remarkable in that it was consistory-less, although the number of Cardinals has been reduced by deaths from 62 to 55, leaving 15 vacancies in the Sacred College. Whenever the next Consistory is to be held it may be taken as very probable that the Holy Father will create at least six Cardinals. One of them will be a Portuguese, Mgr. Bello, Patriarch of Lisbon, and at least one will be a French prelate. There is a general feeling, too, in Rome that the English-speaking world will supply at least one of the new Cardinals. Through the happy longevity of the Church such an event has become very rare, for it is sixteen years since Cardinal Logue received his "Hat," and twenty-three since Cardinal Gibbons received his, and twenty-four since Cardinal Moran became a Prince of the Church.

One of the subjects to come before the Congress of the United States, now in session, will be the various Discovery day bills introduced at the first session. It was hoped that these bills would receive consideration before adjournment, but the fact that they did not has spurred to keener effort the members of the Knights of Columbus who are leading the campaign to secure proper recognition of the achievements of the great Columbus. The chief interest in the proposed Discovery day legislation centers at the present time in a joint resolution introduced in the House of Representatives shortly before the adjournment of Congress, by Hon. Joseph A. Goulden, of New York, making Oct. 21 a national holiday and designating it Discovery Day. The resolution is in the hands of the committee on judiciary.

Irish Land Purchase Act.

(The following letter to the Dundalk Democrat has been sent to us by the Rev. Canon McKenna, Shanagh, Ireland, with the request that we publish it "for the sake of our poor people in order to bring public opinion to bear upon those who are impoverishing our people and depopulating our country.")

To the Editor of the Democrat:

Dear Sir,—With your kind permission I wish to place before your readers a few remarks regarding land purchase finance. Already, now well on in the twentieth century, the peasantry are the owners of the soil they occupy and labor in all other Christian lands. We need not weigh in the comparison England, where 95 per cent. of the landowner's income is derived from sources other than agricultural holdings. In transferring the ownership of agricultural lands to the occupying tenants in those Christian lands the system adopted by the paternal governments of those countries was after the following method. The State, which consists of the people, on account of its great stability and collective wealth, can borrow and lend capital to be employed in safe investments at not more than half the interest usually charged by joint stock banks or private money lenders. Thus, if ordinary interest payable by borrowers be 5 1/4 per cent., and after reserving the quarter of 1 per cent., partly for official expenses and partly for profit, and 2 per cent. for interest, there will still be a margin of 2 1/2 per cent. for the carrying out of some scheme of national advantage or benefit to the State. The Ashbourne-Balfour Act was copied pretty closely from the method adopted in Continental countries when peasant proprietors were being planted by their respective paternal Governments. And of the remaining 2 1/2 per cent. half was reserved for the purchasing tenants to root them firmly in their native soil as peasant proprietors, and the other half was for the landlords to save them from embarrassing burdens of heavy interest. Thus the tenants were charged 2 3/4 per cent. rate of interest, the 1/4 per cent. mentioned above being included. The interest rate, 2 3/4, and the amortization or sinking fund rate, 1 3/4 per cent. united making 3 per cent., constitute the annuity rate. The larger the amortization rate the better for the purchasing tenants, and as a consequence, the lower the amortization rate *ceteris paribus* the more burdensome it is on the purchasing tenants.

So much being premised, we can now proceed to discuss the land purchase finance act of 1901, and of the proposed coming Land Purchase Act. From a meeting of the Irish Landowners' Executive Committee, held a few weeks ago in Kildare street, Dublin, attended by a large number of landlords and their agents, a two-fold demand regarding land purchase finance was set forth. First, that the interest to be paid henceforth by the tenant purchasers should be increased from 2 3/4 to 3 per cent. How very kind and considerate of the Irish landlords and their agents, so kind and benevolent during last October and a few weeks earlier in November, when they had an axe to grind, now to make such a demand in a matter that does not directly pertain to them, in a matter that directly pertains only to the Irish tenants in their dealings with the treasury, and only to those tenants that have yet to purchase their holdings. And, secondly, they demand that the rate of annuity should continue at 3 1/4 per cent. Your readers can now see the meaning of this. Thus they are at having the rate of interest and the rate of annuity as nearly as possible the same, and with little or no sinking fund. They would thus have the terms of amortization unchanged apparently, but substantially, totally, and oppressively changed against the interests of the purchasing tenants, as I shall show, I trust, pretty clearly. A heavy burden in hard to bear, but the last straw breaks the horse's back. I will give their words—"We strongly deprecate the proposal (clause one) to raise the tenants' annuity from 3 1/4 to 3 1/2."

It would be better to enact that the annuity should continue to be 3 1/4, but that rate of interest and sinking fund . . . should be variable by the Treasury." (Sic) . . . "Every if this result in the future interest being permanently 3 per cent., the whole period would not extend beyond 86 years." (Sic) . . . There seems to be here a very insidious suggestion. Not only do they seek that the tenants' interest should be raised from 2 3/4 to 3 per cent., but they even suggest or request that the British Treasury have the option of raising it from 2 3/4 to 3 1/4 per cent. if they desire to do so, thus sweeping away all amortization. We, the people of Ireland, distinct from Dublin Castle privileged landlords (for such we can easily show them to be) know the British Treasury too well to be third party in any triangular game

with the British Treasury and the Irish landlords, who would be sure to have in existing circumstances the advantage ground to themselves. Should the British Treasury obtain such authority by Act of Parliament, what would be to prevent them from adding six-tenths of a penny per pound more of interest on the amount to be borrowed, and thus sweep away the whole Sinking Fund and thus turn those who might be supposed to be peasant proprietors, with their heirs and successors, into tenant occupiers again and for ever, as no Government in future days will have another opportunity of giving them a sinking fund whereby they might be converted into peasant proprietors? It may be of service to the Irish tenants who have yet to purchase and their friends to translate into plain English some more of the jugglery adopted by the Irish landlords, assisted by the English Government.

Assuming what we are led to believe—that the lands yet to be purchased—about three-fifths in area of our country and largely, if not chiefly, the poorest—will cost the purchasing tenant farmers £100,000,000, and that the rate of interest, be raised from 2 3/4 to 3 per cent., as the landlords request, and the rate of annuity remain where it is, 3 1/4 per cent.—the effect of the change would be to add one extra thirteenth of the whole £100,000,000, or almost 8 per cent. of an additional burden on the Irish purchasing tenants and their successors. And in this way the period of their annuity payments would be prolonged 18 or 19 years over and above the 68 1/2, the number of years determined by the act of 1903. Five years ago the Irish landlords and their friends lengthened the period of annuity payments from 42 1/2 (without decennial reductions) under the Balfour Act to 68 1/2, the number of years determined by the Wyndham Act, which gave an inflated and fictitious value in the Irish land market to the lands proposed for sale. By it the rate of annuity, not the rate of interest, has been reduced from 4 to 3 1/2 per cent. Thus it raised the number of years' purchase abstracting from reduction at time of sale from 4 per cent. rate of annuity (100 div. by .4 equals 25 years' purchase to three-and-a-quarter per cent. rate of annuity) 100 div. by 3 1/2 equals 30.77 years' purchase, with the result that land purchase prices under the Balfour Act, at any fixed percentage of reduction contrasted with land purchase prices under the Wyndham Act at precisely the same percentage of reduction bear the same relation to each other that 25 years' purchase does to 30.77 years. Thus 25 : 30 3/4 :: 100 : 123; and in addition to the change made in 1903, the Irish landlords now propose to add 8 per cent (£8,000,000) of a further burden on the purchasing tenants and their successors. Eight millions at present value increase to sixty million pounds sterling between 68 and 87 years hence. Thus we see £100 raised to £123, and lastly, through those £8,000,000 of an additional burden the £123 to be raised to £131 on those purchasing tenants, bulk of whom are the poorest peasantry in Christendom, because they are the most plundered and ill-treated. And it must be remarked, when they go to America or Australia, few with their opportunities are so prosperous. There are many other serious burdens to be considered, but there is not either time or space for doing so here.

Hon. W. Bourke Cockran Replies To His Critics.

Congressman W. Bourke Cockran, of New York, whose admirable discourse at the great Catholic Congress in Chicago, in November, was published at the time in the True Witness, has issued a reply to those who criticized his utterances on that occasion. As in his great Chicago speech, there is no hint of defence or apology, but a strong vindication of his former position, and a counter attack on those who would deny his statements or conclusions. The letter is in reply to a pamphlet by a Lutheran professor, sent to Mr. Cockran by the publisher, it reads as follows:

Washington, D.C.,
January 7, 1909.
Mr. Edmund Selig, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.,
Dear Sir:—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated December 29th, and of the brochure wherein, according to you, "the Reverend Professor W. H. T. Dau politely points out some of the inaccuracies in my recent Chicago speech." I must confess that I am at a loss to discover any historical inaccuracies which this brochure points out, or any which it even imputes to me. If the author really intended to charge me with error of statement, I assume he had reference to my discussion of the conflict between Pope Boniface VIII and Philip the Handsome, or the Fair, of France, which I stated was based not on the narrative of any Catholic writer, but of Guizot, a Protestant historian. I did not, of course, profess to give the language employed by Guizot, but merely its substance in my own words, as I was speaking entirely from memory. The extracts from a translation of Guizot's work given in the brochure (p. 24), far from impeaching confirm the substantial accuracy of my statement.

While I cannot admit the authority of the Reverend Professor as an exponent of inaccuracies, logical or historical, his "politeness" is beyond all question. So also is his courage. This, indeed, is not only beyond question, it is beyond comprehension. Few men who are either reverend or learned would venture to describe the violent assault on the person as well as the authority of Pope Boniface VIII, by a few of his own subjects, instigated and encouraged—by Philip the Handsome, as an invasion of the Papal States by a French army (p. 23). The Rev. Professor's expansion of Nogatet, the French King's agent—and his purs filled with corruption funds—into an army, might be considered a brilliant display of enterprise in that field of journalism known as "yellow." As a specimen of historical statement it is, to speak mildly, bold in the extreme.

It requires no little courage to speak gently, almost approvingly as does the Reverend Professor, of the ruthless violence with which Philip, to satisfy an unbridled rapacity, butchered the Knights Templar, seized property admittedly belonging to the Church, and completely paralyzed the commerce of his own subjects by the title of "Philip the Counterfeiter," under which he is known to this day—while at the same time condemning in vehement terms the language in which the Pope protests against some of these enormities.

The Reverend Professor boasts that he possesses a translation of Guizot's work in which practically all the charges ever made against Pope Boniface are collected and considered. Assuming him to have read it, he must know that Pope Boniface stands accused of no offence except extreme energy in maintaining the prerogatives of his office. Arrogance in asserting Papal pretensions is perhaps how the Reverend Professor would describe it.

Philip, on the other hand, is acknowledged by every one to have been a murderer of peculiar atrocity a counterfeiter who debased the circulating coins current in his kingdom—pillager of property wherever he could seize it on any pretext. And these crimes were perpetrated not under the influence of misguided fervor or perverted patriotic instinct, but to gratify the basest and most sordid avarice. Quote the Reverend Professor says (I quote his exact words): "The Lutheran ministers have only a negative interest in the moral character of Boniface VIII, and Philip the Handsome, but in a choice between the two, they would regard Boniface VIII, as the villain of the deeper dye." His authority to speak for all the Lutheran ministers is perhaps open to question. His right to speak for himself cannot be doubted.

This surely is an astounding spectacle.

Here is a man avowedly reverend, and presumably learned, capable of at least writing coherently, who has obviously read something concerning the reign of a king, which through all the intervening centuries has remained a sinister monument of unbridled violence and prostituted power, ministering to human depravity, and yet has nothing but expressions of toleration for stupendous crimes that have cast a dark shadow over the age in which they were committed, and words of actual approval for gross personal outrages perpetrated upon a man, over eighty years old who (whatever may be thought of the Papacy as a religious institution) occupied what was universally considered at the time the most exalted place in Christendom! Even for the brutal blow which Sciera Colonna struck him in the face, this Reverend Professor has not a word of condemnation, or even of criticism. But he has abundant expressions of contempt and denunciation for the venerable Pontiff who though unarmed, deserted, helpless, captive, threatened, beaten, yet declined to surrender the great office to which he had been chosen—to abase its dignity or compromise its independence—at the demand of a tyrant enforced by the fist of a ruffian.

And stranger still, other men enjoying equal advantages of education and association appear willing to approve openly this attitude of the Reverend Professor W. H. T. Dau.

If it be a sound maxim of conduct that a man shall be judged by the company which he keeps, it is equally sound to judge him by the historical characters whom he honors.

This Reverend Professor who declares that he prefers Philip the Handsome to Boniface VIII, must therefore be held to proclaim that in his judgment wholesale torture and butchery of human beings, innocent of any offence except the possession of treasure coveted by their murderer, and the perpetration of robbery on a gigantic scale through violence and fraud by a ruler whose sworn duty it was to protect these limbs that he mangled, these lives that he destroyed, this property that he seized, are less heinous and therefore less objectionable than energy, zeal, "arrogance" (if you will), in asserting with absolute sincerity and maintaining with unconquerable courage the powers of the claims, "pretensions" (call them what you choose) of his sacred office by a Pope who at the time was the only spiritual force in Christendom capable of protesting with any effect against the wrongs perpetrated or contemplated by royal authority. This certainly is self-revelation which leaves nothing to be desired on the score of candor or of courage.

Thus revealed, I leave the Reverend Professor to enjoy the encomiums of those who by circulating this production of his pen announce that they share the views which it embodies. These views I cannot undertake to discuss. I cannot even claim to understand them only that I might express my wonder at them, and at the men who appear willing to acknowledge them.

Yours very sincerely,
W. BOURKE COCKRAN.

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