

The Catholic Register

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—Pope Pius X.

TORONTO, NOV. 12TH, 1908.

TO THE READERS OF THE CATHOLIC REGISTER

I desire to announce to the readers of the Register with whom my relations have been of the happiest since I assumed control of the paper some three years ago that I have now disposed of the entire property to His Grace, Most Rev. Mgr. McEvay, Archbishop of Toronto and Rev. Dr. Burke, who will hold it for the Catholic Extension Society of Canada, and no doubt make it all that a Catholic paper ought to be.

George Plunkett Magann

With reference to the above the Catholic Church Extension Society of Canada, which has been fortunate in securing the Register for the promotion of the interests it has so much at heart, need only assure all concerned that for the present at least, and until some one of the clerical members of its Board of Governors shall be able to remain at the offices in residence—which may not be a too far distant day—no change of any radical nature at least, shall be made in the management of the paper; and all the engagements entered into by our predecessor will be faithfully carried out.

It is our desire to attain, too, as speedily as possible, the high ideals which the Register has so constantly kept before it—free and untrammelled service to the Church, under competent authority and devotion to the institutions of the glorious land we live in. Time may be required to reach the limit of our ambition in these regards, but we can safely promise our readers that the paper will not be suffered to deteriorate in any respect at least, until we are in a position to improve it, to make it a bright, progressive and reliable exponent of Catholic Truth for all our people and a valiant defender of their rights wherever impugned.

For this purpose we shall endeavor to secure the best writers in the land, men perfectly acquainted with the matters they discuss and devoted to the defence of Truth for its own sake. Those writers shall, in every case, have the full and complete approbation of their ecclesiastical superiors and must speak with such authority in matters of faith and disci-

pline as to compel the ready adhesion of all minds. In a word, the high approbation which the Register under its new direction must ever enjoy in order to carry out the objects for which it has been acquired, will necessitate a degree of intrinsic merit which cannot be attained save by honest, prudent and intelligent endeavor.

The Register may well be counted on, then, to elevate the standard of Canadian Catholic journalism at all times and to cheerfully assist its conferees in the field in the noble task they have before them. For the present, too, it must carry the important message of Catholic Extension to the ends of the Dominion.

The secular press of the city of Toronto in particular and that of the whole Dominion in general, has made most favorable mention of the Extension Movement in Canada lately and wished its Executive a fervent God-speed in the noble mission it has before it. Perhaps we cannot do better than accommodate to these columns the full and fairly accurate description of the aims and objects of the new society as contained in their pages:

"The city of Toronto is to be the centre of another great Church society having under its special care the home missions of Canada. Already headquarters for the missionary societies of the various Protestant Churches are found in Toronto; this time it is the Catholic Church that moves. The new conditions which a great West, rapidly filling with European Catholics of all the nations and an immense influx of those already submitted to the influence of the English language, coming from the United States and the older Provinces of Canada presents, call imperatively for a complete organization within the Church, which, like those of the Presbyterian, Methodist, Anglican and Baptist Churches, will stretch from end to end of the Dominion and conserve the best missionary interests in it.

This Society, which is known as "The Catholic Church Extension Society of Canada," was organized during the past summer and held its first executive meeting here in September. It is modelled for the most part after the United States society of the same name—an institution which has done marvels in a short time—except in this, that the one established here is purely and simply Canadian, and as patriotic as it is religious.

Simply, the objects of the new society may thus be stated: To foster and extend the Catholic faith in Canada by cultivating a missionary spirit in the clergy and people, by founding a college for the education of missionaries, by the building and equipping of chapels in pioneer districts, by contributing to the support of poor missions, by the circulation of good literature and by everything else proper to the main purpose of the society.

The means of support, as with all such institutions, will be the voluntary contributions of the people, individually or in association, and already those blessed with plenty of the world's goods, we are informed, are contributing munificently to the good work. The missionary spirit in recent years has been strong in all the Protestant communities of the country, and a revival is now being preached by them, which contemplates the raising of an immense fund to bring all the peoples of the world within the Gospel's light in this Twentieth Century. "Convert the world to God in the Twentieth Century" is their cry, and it is certainly as noble a one as ever fired Crusaders of old to heroic exertion. The Catholics of Canada once so noted for missionary endeavor, will also imbibe this new enthusiasm through the medium of the new society and the result cannot fail to strengthen greatly the struggling pioneer communities and signally uplift Canadian civilization.

Catholic Extension has purchased from the owner, G. P. Magann, Esq., the plant, assets, title and good-will of the Catholic Register newspaper, and will henceforth carry on its business and issue its matter from the offices at 119 Wellington St. W. It is the intention of the society and its Chairman, Archbishop McEvay, who is also head of the Archdiocese of Toronto, to continue the publication of the paper and to make it the best, most authoritative and widely circulated of the English Catholic journals of Canada. Its message will be truly Catholic and national, serving the Confederation from end to end. It is to be carefully and efficiently edited, conducted on thorough business lines and made a distinctive force in the Church and State of the country.

As will be remarked, the officiality of Extension comprehends the heads-men of Canadian Catholicity, lay as well as cleric, and these names should and undoubtedly will, immediately inspire the greatest respect and confidence everywhere: Patron, His Excellency Most Rev. D. Sbarretti, D.D., Apostolic Delegate, Board of Governors, Most Rev. F. P. McEvay, D.D., Archbishop of Toronto, Chairman; Most Rev. L. N. Bégin, D.D., Archbishop of Quebec, Rt. Rev. J. C. McDonald, Bishop of Charlottetown, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles Fitzpatrick, K.C.M.G., Chief Justice of Canada, Hon. Alex. Taschereau, D.O.L., Minister of Public Works, Quebec, Hon. Mr. Justice Beck, Judge of the Supreme Court of Alberta, President and Managing Governor, Rev. A. E. Burke, D.D., LL.D., Vice President, Rt. Rev. J. A. Archambault, D.D., Bishop of Joliette, Secretary, Rev. J. T. Kidd, D.D., Toronto.

The Society starts off with a splendid Board and excellent officials; it has a great and important work to do, not alone for the Catholic Church, but for Canada and everyone regardless of religious affiliation, who wish it every success."

The friends of Extension—and they are as numerous as the Catholics of Canada—can now help along the great missionary cause in any way they feel able by sending their offerings to the Society directly. The address is: "Rev. A. E. Burke, President Catholic Church Extension Society, 119 Wellington St. W., Toronto." More particulars about the working of the Society and its plans

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for the future will be given in our next. Prepare, then, to take out some sort of membership in it and thus help on the best and most necessary work of the Canadian Church. If you cannot be a Founder and give five thousand dollars to its funds, you can perhaps become a Life Member and contribute in ten payments one thousand dollars; or pay for a student's support in the Missionary Seminary of the Society until he is priested, and ready to go up to the Altar and recompense you in the greatest possible way. If you cannot be a Life Member then become some other kind of contributor, but act at once and thus do a double charity.

CANADA AT THE EXTENSION CONGRESS.

At the great Catholic Extension Congress which meets in Chicago this week, Canada will find met representation, and will doubtless gain added impetus to further the work of the Canadian branch, already launched under most favorable circumstances.

First amongst the representatives will be His Grace, Archbishop McEvay, who will be one of the hundred speakers who from as many pulpits will send forth the sound of the mighty gathering on Sunday next from the churches of Chicago. His Grace will speak in the Cathedral at Vespers and another Canadian speaker of fame will be Rev. Dr. Burke, whose subject, "The Missionary Spirit," gives the true note of the times. Father Burke will also give an address during the week on the "Necessity for the Missionary Seminary." Rev. Father Kidd, D.D., Secretary to Archbishop McEvay, who is also Secretary of the freshly organized Canadian Catholic Extension Society, will likewise be present, whilst on behalf of the laity, Sir Charles Fitzpatrick will speak on the "Lay Apostolate." Representing the French section of the West, Mgr. Legal, Bishop of St. Albert, Alberta, and Mgr. Meunier, Administrator of the London diocese, will occupy French pulpits.

While those speakers will doubtless gain by contact with the numerous earnest spirits amongst whom the Extension movement originated, there is no doubt but that they in turn will add an instructive and inspiring quota to the work of the sessions. Canada was primarily the missionary field. Her missionaries had sown the seed of the Gospel amongst the Hurons and Algonquins, while yet the fierce Iroquois of America knew not of, or remained deaf to the teachings of those who brought with them the blessed tidings of peace. The blood of those early martyrs who fell on Canadian soil is even now fructifying the land, and the revitalizing of the missionary spirit will undoubtedly gain strength in Canada and under fairer auspices, finish the work begun almost three centuries ago by such intrepid heroes as Brebeuf, Lallement and others of that early band of glorious missionaries.

THE SOULS IN PURGATORY.

It is worthy of remark that the month of November is known as the month of All Souls rather than of All Saints. It is the child who is on a bed of suffering rather than those who are romping in the sunshine, that engages the mother's attention. And so our tender mother, the Church, on the very day on which she is celebrating the glory of her children in Heaven turns our thoughts to those who will be there as soon as they have come all fair and without spot from the crucible of suffering in which every debt of temporal punishment must be expiated, every stain purged away. And as she calls us away from the contemplation of the happiness of the saints that are, to the relief of the pangs of the saints that will be, on the first day of November, so it is with the latter she wishes us particularly to consort during this month.

This course she adopts for two reasons, one concerning ourselves, the other regarding the sufferers.

Purgatory is a doctrine intimately connected with, in fact demanded by, a high ideal of the justice and sanctity of God. An authority so little liable to be biased in favor of Catholicity as Chambers' Cyclopedia, in an article on Purgatory, remarks that the high and pure conception of God revealed in the New Testament, necessitating a corresponding excellence on the part of His worshippers—without holiness shall no man see the Lord—must have greatly assisted in the establishment of the doctrine (of Purgatory), for how could men only recently gross heathens, possessing

yet but the rudiments of the new faith, and with most of their heathen habits, still clinging about them, be pronounced 'holy' or 'fit for the presence of God.' We need ask no better argument than that contained in this passage from a non-Catholic pen to establish our first point, namely, that the existence of that place or state of expiation and purification in the next life known as Purgatory, is intimately connected with, nay, demanded by, a high ideal of the justice and sanctity of God. Now this high ideal of God is, according to the non-Catholic authority quoted, the conception of the New Testament, and of the Old Testament as well. No one can read the visions of the Apocalypse, the Epistles of St. Paul and St. John, the Sermon on the Mount, in fact any page of the New Testament without being awed by the conception of the sanctity and majesty of the Godhead there outlined. God is "the King of kings and Lord of lords, Who inhabited light inaccessible" (I. Tim. vi. 15-16.) "God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness." (I. John i. 5.) And round the Eternal Throne the four living creatures of the Apocalyptic vision forever say: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and Who is, and Who is to come." (Apoc. iv. 8.) "This high and pure conception of God demands a corresponding moral excellence on the part of His worshippers." This is self-evident. Light calls for light, and sanctity will not join hands with imperfection. If Scriptural proof were wanted in confirmation of this it would be found at every turn. "Be ye perfect," says our Lord to the multitude on the Mount, "as your heavenly Father is perfect." "If we say that we have fellowship with God, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth," says St. John (I. John i. 6).

Now face to face with "the high and pure conception of God demanding a corresponding excellence on the part of His worshippers, and still more of those who see Him face to face, we have, as the non-Catholic writer quoted, points out the manifold imperfections of those who are of the household of faith even of the better portion of them. The river of humanity that flows every day into the great unending ocean is turbid and sadly in need of filtering. Rarely can the gold be found unmixed with dross. Hence if we are not to consign practically all humanity to never-ending reprobation, we must accept the alternative of Purgatory. In this we are only developing the position and pointing out the logical conclusion of the non-Catholic writer whose words we have given. And what food for thought these words should afford to us! The all-pure God demanding a corresponding excellence, as far as the creature's limitations can go in that direction, on the part of those who are admitted into the glory of His presence. What of our easy-going carelessness, and our innumerable sins, offences, and negligences? What of that death-bed repentance on which we perchance stake our salvation. Suppose that we should get that grace (which we have no ground whatever to expect) can we think of passing at once from the cesspool of sin into the glory of "Him Who dwelleth in light inaccessible!" Ah, no! Divine justice will see to it that the rust and the dross are thoroughly purged away, before the gold is admitted to the heavenly treasury.

Thus does the Church wish to turn our thoughts to Purgatory in order that the fear of the rigorous purging imperfect souls will be subjected to in that crucible of divine justice may inspire us with a dread of committing venial sin and a readiness to make satisfaction for those grievous offences the guilt of which we hope the tribunal of Penance has cancelled. To these and other points concerning Purgatory we will return in subsequent issues of this paper.

THE ORIGIN OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

A writer to the "Sunday World" tells of a monster meeting at which 1,200 men, all workers in the Sunday Schools and interested in organized Bible study, sat down to a banquet and afterwards encouraged one another by interchange of thought regarding their work.

The gathering was certainly a notable one and we have nothing but praise for men who in a conspicuous, materialistic age, could bring about so colossal a gathering for the purposes for which it was convened. A statement, however, which struck us as suggesting that this band of workers were laboring under a misconception regarding the Sunday

School was the following, "the president told of the remarkable strides this newly organized Bible Class movement is making all over Protestant Canada and indeed the Anglo-Saxon world."

Now, if this means that the movement is new amongst Protestants only, the statement may be quite correct, but if it means that the idea of Sunday-school and Bible-classes is altogether new, then the statement is entirely wrong.

Away back in the 16th century St. Philip Neri and others had their Sunday Schools in Rome, when they gathered the children about them and taught them the stories of the Bible and the doctrines of Christianity, just as do the teachers of to-day. The study of the Scriptures is co-existent with the Sacred writings themselves and it is long since the Catholic day-school and the Catholic Sunday-school began to accompany each other. To-day wherever a parish has its school for the imparting of secular subjects, there, too, as a general thing, is the Sunday-school, and sometimes the latter exists where the former is not yet founded.

So long have the Catechism classes or Sunday-school, been part of the equipment of a Catholic parish that the inauguration of the movement is lost in the oblivion of antiquity. To-day thousands of Catholic children in every city pour forth from our Sunday classes, and the sight is nothing new.

When people state that a movement for Sunday-schools and Bible study is new, it should be understood that the statement is true amongst certain sections of the community only, and that within the Old Church, both existed in some form from the beginning, and that systemized effort along both lines had its beginning in bygone centuries and long since attained a ripe development amongst us.

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