

The Catholic Record

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

Associate Editors: Rev. D. A. Casey, H. F. MacIntosh, etc.

Advertisements for teachers, situations wanted, etc., 50 cents each insertion.

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LONDON, SATURDAY, JANUARY 1, 1916

THE DRAIN OF WAR ON THE NATION'S VITALITY

In a recent lecture on "The Nation's Vitality" George Bernard Shaw with his customary sparkling epigram and striking paradox gave expression to some rather obvious truths, and to some other statements which, whether true or not, are likely to compel thought.

A year ago he got himself into bad odor because, as he tells us, he suggested for the first time that English arrangements were not absolutely perfect and that the Ministers were not all Solons, Cavour, and Napoleons.

Public opinion now having gone all the other way, when he said that the German was not quite perfect and British Ministers not quite imbeciles, he would probably still be called program.

Mr. Shaw is so emphatically opposed to peace that he considers it impossible even if the German Emperor were to withdraw from all occupied territory and retiring within his own frontier, should say that he had shown his power, but that, nevertheless, he did not believe that we should be governed by the sword, and would leave the matter to be arbitrated upon by the President of America or the Pope.

We should still have to go on fighting in order to show that Germany could not treat us that way.

In fighting the German Army England was not fighting a wonderful, infallible and perfect organization. From that romantic dream it was absolutely necessary to awaken the German nation.

The subject of the lecture was "The Nation's Vitality." People were all very much preoccupied just now, with the drain on our vitality which was made by war. The one thing which many thought could alone put an end to this drain was peace. He desired to show that peace was the only remedy which was absolutely available, and he suggested that it was an altogether inadequate remedy as well.

Which is the greater, he asks, the drain of war or the drain of peace? "The drain of war is shown by the figures just published. We have lost 100,000 men, killed in the war. If we take for the purposes of comparison the first year of war we had under arms in that period 3,000,000 men. Seventy-five thousand men were killed. It is the military tradition that a country is defeated when it loses 20 per cent. of its men. We have lost only 2 1/2 per cent. That is not very alarming. The drain of war does not seem to be so terrible as it is imagined to be.

"Take the other side. If we take the number of babies conceived in the womb of the women of this nation and who ought to be born we have 988,000. The number which succeeds in getting born is about 800,000. This is not a good beginning. It means that 188,000 have not sufficient vitality to get themselves born; it also means that the mothers were not properly fed and properly instructed. Of the 800,000 babies who do manage to enter the world 100,000 die before they are one year old. This means dirty milk or no milk at all—stums; bad food, and ignorance. We lose 100,000 before one year of age, we drop another 100,000 before they reach the age of 15, just when they are becoming industrial producers and available for military service, and of the remainder who do grow up we find that another 100,000 have to be rejected for military service because they are unfit; that is 37 1/2 per cent. destroyed in peace for the 2 1/2 per cent. destroyed by the whole German Army firing shot and shell at them.

"We have the assurance of Walter Long, President of the Local Government Board, that the infant mortality rate is rising, probably as the result of modern education and organization. Ladies and gentlemen, don't be mean. Don't say these things are inevitable, don't blame God for what is your own fault. Other people have tried to improve the situation

and have succeeded. In New Zealand it occurred to the people that babies were worth taking care of, and they got the mortality rate down to 5 per cent. What the New Zealanders can do we could do. Macaulay in a way prophesied the downfall of London in the passage describing the traveler from New Zealand standing on the broken arches of London Bridge sketching the ruins of St. Paul's. In his imagination the New Zealander was a black man, but he will be a man who has simply taken the precaution of looking after the children."

Mr. Shaw showed that even in certain English districts that care had reduced mortality amongst infants under one year to less than 5 per cent; and instanced the work of the mayor of a French village who looked after the sanitary affairs of his village for ten years in which not a single child died.

"If War makes us give our attention to these matters and stop the drain on the nation's vitality in peace time we shall actually gain on the balance."

Mr. Shaw did not say anything about other drains on national vitality which nevertheless have been very real intimates of peace. There would have been 500,000 more babies born in England last year if the birth had not fallen so alarmingly in the last few decades. The consequences of race suicide are now being brought home to neo-Malthusian France; if, indeed, the War itself is not one of them. There are those who are appalled at War's awful drain on national vitality who condoned, even justified, this form of national suicide. Yet the most savage warfare is nobler than the sensual, sordid self-indulgence that regarded the duties of parenthood as irksome burdens to be shirked and avoided.

The conditions of life in great cities which in times of peace compel so many unfortunates to join the great army of the unemployed are responsible for another appalling drain on national vitality compared with which war's toll of human life is insignificant.

The fight for national existence may bring home to the national conscience that all preventable or remediable drains on national vitality in peace times must cease. Then, indeed, on the balance will be immense gain, and coming generations may bless the War whose indirect consequences had such a mighty influence on the betterment of social conditions.

THE CHAIN PRAYER NUISANCE

A subscriber writes: "The enclosed note containing chain prayer was sent to me last week by a prominent Catholic. If my memory serves me right this same prayer was condemned in the RECORD some time ago. I have looked over my clippings from the CATHOLIC RECORD but cannot find anything in reference to it. I should be obliged if you would give me your opinion on this chain prayer letter."

The prayer reads as follows: "Oh Lord I implore Thee to bless all mankind. Bring us to Thee. Keep us to dwell with Thee." This prayer, in itself, has nothing objectionable in it. It is a form of words which might be used by any one, pious or otherwise, Catholic, Jew or Protestant. The superstition, is not in the prayer, which in itself is a good prayer.

But this, from the accompanying letter, is rank superstition: "It was said in ancient days that all who wrote it would be free from calamity, and all those who passed it would meet with some calamity or misfortune."

This is an appeal not to piety but to superstition; the object is not to broaden the charity of the prayerful so as to include all mankind in their petitions to the Throne of Grace, but to induce them to write this prayer with its impudent promises and threats and pass it along to some other fool with the request that he also become a party to the humbug.

Again, what reason has any sane person to believe this? "Copy it and send it to nine friends in nine days and on the tenth day you will meet with some great joy. 'Don't break the chain.'"

The Chain Prayer of our boyhood days when we first heard the parish priest denounce it as superstitious, was more elaborate. The prayer itself was a long rigmorale, it had been found in the tomb of our Lord, etc.; and the promises and threats were quite explicit. In the present case whoever started it shows more cunning. The first thing that will strike the reader is that the prayer is all right, it is a good prayer, it is all-embracing in its

charity. Hence a favorable impression is formed. Then, instead of the open menace of calamity to those sensible people who would throw it in the waste basket, the menace is subtly suggested—"It was said in ancient days . . . that all those who passed it would meet with some calamity or misfortune."

Any value the prayer may have depends, like that of any other prayer, on the earnestness and fervor of the one who uses this form of words to help him raise his soul to God. To write out this prayer, or to write out any other prayer, and send it to a friend is no harm; but the only good that can be hoped for is that the friend will find in the prayer an aid to piety and so use it. To write out this or any other prayer and "chain" it throughout the world with absurd promises to all who write it and send it along, and still more absurd threats to all who pass it over is to be guilty of the sin of superstition. Ignorance or thoughtlessness may excuse most people from serious sin in the matter, but Catholics—least of all prominent Catholics—should not be amongst those whose superstitious antics must delight the impious and impudent Puck who first set the fool thing going.

PROTESTANT TRIBUTE TO BELGIAN NUNS

Following is an extract from a letter written from Belgium by Private Hugh B. Griffith attached to 6th Field Ambulance Corps: "I made a very interesting trip a day or two ago in the ambulance. We took the Mother Superior and three of the Sisters from our convent here down to the town where we left the train in France. It is a trip of about forty miles and made a pleasant change from the wretched roads of Belgium. We went to visit a small convent run by the same order of nuns as the ones where we are. They have a number of young Belgian children here. Many of them are orphans and all of them are from the towns on the firing line. The convent here seem to be engaged in a very practical kind of Christian work and do a great deal for refugees. I do not know if I ever told you how much I think of the Mother Superior here. She is the best specimen of Belgian womanhood I have seen yet. She seems very, very kindly and practical. They have a modern laundry and power plant here which sometimes goes out of order. On these occasions it is the Mother Superior herself who digs in and gets the engine started again. I have seen her buying herself over loads of refugees, going from one car to another, leaving each load of these old people much happier. She is greatly concerned about the war, and feels the burden on her people very much."

POPULAR ACTRESS PREACHES USEFUL LITTLE SERMON

In the Toronto Daily News Mary Pickford tells something of the hardships of her childhood with a directness and simplicity that would not be without interest even if the story revealed nothing more than unimportant details in the life of one whose name is on everybody's lips and whose counterfeit presentment lives and moves before everybody's eyes. But her story does much more than gratify popular curiosity; it preaches a very useful little sermon especially to girls and their mothers. This little girl's father died when she was four years old, leaving the mother with two children younger than Mary as well as their paralytic grandmother who was as helplessly dependent as the babies. Mary remembers quite distinctly the father's death, the mother's hard struggle against poverty and her own wistful question: Mother, when shall I be able to help?

The opportunity came when the little girl was only five years old; and since that time she has constantly worked and risen in her profession until now her weekly salary is greater than the annual earnings of many fairly successful men and women.

Now she is not a particle ashamed of the lean days of her childhood, nor is she inordinately proud of her success; but she is glad, glad every day of her life, she tells us, of the discipline of poverty; glad that those lean days she ate meals without pie and cake trimmings in order to save something to send home to her mother; glad that owing to that discipline she is now happy to live more frugally and simply than many girls who earn nothing. When she sees a poor little girl staring wistfully at the inaccessible wonderland

inside a shop window the rich young actress is grateful to God that she, also, has been a very poor child. She feels that it is better for her, and she adds, she tries to make it better for her little poverty-stricken sister whose heart she is able to understand and to reach.

Now to point the moral would be unnecessary, perhaps were it not for the fact that we fear amongst our readers are to be found blind, or at least dim-sighted mothers with self-indulgent daughters. With them it is the mothers who deny themselves the pie and cake trimmings and many things more necessary that their daughters may have more unnecessary things. The pity of it is that this mistaken self-denial on the part of the mothers is thoughtless but real injury to the objects of their unintelligent love. Into the hearts of the young victims self-indulgence casts its corroding way until at last the broken mother's eyes are opened to the ugliness of soul and character imperceptibly wrought by her mistaken kindness. Self-indulgence and self-denial are poles apart; they are mutually exclusive, mutually destructive. And here the little sermon links up with the great eternal lesson of the Saviour of the world the very condition of whose discipleship is self-denial.

There is another passage in the popular actress's account of herself which we shall quote: "My memory has remained good because I have never loaded it with trashy literature. . . . Occasionally, but very rarely I read a modern novel as an appetizer, and I never read or discuss the sensational stories found in every day's news papers. I have always refused to listen to or repeat a questionable story or joke, and am grateful that my days are always too full for gossip."

"I think perhaps to this refusal to clog my brain with the debris of indecency I owe largely the joy of a memory that grows stronger every day."

This is but another phase of the same; subject, self-denial—or self-indulgence if you will.

And quite in keeping is this: "I have tried consistently to think pure thoughts and have always, good as I know how, punishing myself promptly when I have failed."

We have heard that Mary Pickford is a convert to the Faith but have not been able to verify the fact. Be that as it may, the popular and successful little actress, whatever her religion may be, preaches a wholesome little sermon to Catholic mothers and their daughters. Indeed it need not be confined to mothers and daughters; and its application will be most useful not where the need is evident, even to the least observant, but in the innumerable cases where the ugly germ of self-indulgence is yet hidden amid the lingering charms of childish innocence.

THE LATE MONSIGNOR LORRAIN

His Lordship Bishop Lorrain, for the past thirty-three years Bishop of the Diocese of Pembroke, died Dec. 18th. His death had been expected, as for the past three weeks the venerable prelate had been lingering.

Three years ago, realizing that he was in a state of permanent ill health, he had the Right Rev. Patrick T. Ryan, D.D., appointed auxiliary bishop.

The Right Rev. Narcisse Zepherin Lorrain was born at St. Martin, Que., on June 3, 1842, and was educated at the College of St. Theres and Laval University, where he graduated in 1864 with the degree of B. Sc. and D. D., Gregorian, in 1882.

He was professor and assistant director of St. Theres College from 1867 to 1869, parish priest at Bedford, Vt., from 1869 to 1880, and Vicar-General of the Diocese of Montreal, 1880 to 1882.

He was appointed the first Bishop of Pembroke, with the title of Bishop of Olythere and Vicar Apostolic of Pontiac, on Sept. 21, 1882.

The late Mgr. Lorrain as pioneer Bishop of Pembroke built solidly the foundations of the new diocese and endeared himself to all classes during the thirty years of his zealous apostolate. Courteous, dignified, scholar he was always actuated by a keen sense of justice and responsibility.

A pleasing evidence of kindly disposition and sterling worth is the fact that on the occasion of his silver jubilee in 1907 the Protestant Ministerial Association of North Renfrew joined in the felicitations to His Lordship.

We bespeak the prayers of our readers for the repose of the soul of the gentle and justice-loving prelate.

ANOTHER MILESTONE

"Full knee deep lies the winter snow, And the winter winds are wearily sighing: Toll ye the church bell sad and slow, And tread softly and speak low, For the old year lies a dying."

The passing of the old year and the beginning of a new year suggests serious thoughts. We naturally pause to look back upon the past and forward to the future. The past, with its disappointments and its failures, with so much attempted and so little achieved, is gone from our hands forever. The future, pregnant with mighty possibilities, stretches out before us. If we are spared to begin another new year what will be our summing up of the year that now is dawning? Will it fall of failure or success? The answer is in our own hands. The days of this new year will be as we make them. If we are wise we will learn from the mistakes of the past, and resolve to do better. Then next new year's day will find us a little more advanced on the way to Heaven. But if we refuse to learn—if we are content to muddle along somehow, without any system to guide us, without any ideal to aim at, then when the twelve months have passed we will find in our hands nothing but dead ashes and disappointed hopes.

But will another new year be vouchsafed to us? God alone knows. How many who looked eagerly forward to this year that is now dead have themselves died with it? The passing days dig many graves, and each tick of the clock counts off some vacant chair. Friends are taken from our side, and we search in vain for the likeness of some well loved face. Some day, sooner or later, it will be so with us. The bell that tolls for the passing year will one day toll for us. And what if its knell finds us with our work unfinished, and our hands empty? Let us be wise in time, for soon the night cometh when no man can work.

Let us enter on the new year, then, resolved to retrieve the mistakes of the past. And let not the thought of the long years during which we will have to keep on trying discourage us. We have not to fight during all those years, but just for a day. We never get two days together. And surely no one is so faint hearted that he cannot fight for one day? Let us go on, then, trying from day to day. And even though failure should dog our footsteps let us not be discouraged, for it is

"Better to have failed in the high aim Than vulgarly in the low aim succeed."

With God the effort is everything. We need not stop to bother about the measure of our success.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

ONE OF THE many institutions of Europe which has been temporarily put out of business by the War is the celebrated gambling resort at Monte Carlo. This institution which for many years has been familiar to every tourist in the Mediterranean, and been the capacious man into which has been poured alike the surplus cash of the idle rich and the hard earned accumulations of their excitement-craving poorer brethren, has for the time being closed its doors. That section of the manhood and womanhood of Europe from which its patronage was formerly drawn, has been obliged to turn aside from this deleterious form of excitement by the call of patriotism, and find a nobler outlet for their energy in following "the flag."

Whether, when the war is over, the siren will beckon them again to Monaco remains to be seen. But should the Casino be permitted to resume its questionable functions, history for once will have failed to repeat itself if it opens its doors in vain.

THOSE WHO at the beginning of hostilities had occasion to deplore the scarcity of money might have studied with profit a little report issued earlier in the year by the "Societe des Bains de Mer de Monaco," or, done into English, the Monaco Sea Baths Company, a corporation which is therein shown to have made a net profit of \$8,774,650 during the year 1913. That any company catering to the praiseworthy pastime of seabathing should show such an enormous profit is incredible on the face of it, but when it is explained that the Sea Baths Company is none other than the controlling power behind the roulette tables the mystery is solved. In time of prosperity or adversity,

under famine, pestilence, war, or any other calamity, the gaming tables at Monte Carlo have never ceased to yield enormous dividends. It has taken the greatest upheaval in history, the present War, to put a stop, temporarily at least, to the progress of this colossal delusion.

IT HAS BEEN calculated that throughout the year 1913, and the first six months of 1914, over \$100,000 was risked daily on the green boards of Monte Carlo, and that notwithstanding occasional big winnings by visitors, a very large percentage of this sum was "scooped" into the coffers of the Company. The man with a "sure winning system" might extract what comfort he could from this fact but the "man who broke the bank" was, when the institution closed, as remote a possibility as ever. The amateurs from all parts of the earth played, and the professional, the man sitting on the inner curve, quietly pocketed the profits. Singular the fascination that continues to persuade a man that there is anything in the dealer's risk at all proportionate to his.

THE BATHS which undoubtedly exist at Monte Carlo but which form so convenient a blind for the roulette tables may have made a small proportion of the millions which have passed annually to the proprietors, but it is very small. Nobody goes to Monaco for a purpose which may be as well or better served elsewhere, and the baths, it is said, are quite free to permanent residents. There was a time when the baths were really more important than the gaming room, and it is said that the latter originally arose from a deduction on the part of the directors that after a person had indulged in a bath there was likely to occur some physical reaction, and that it was desirable to provide for some such form of entertainment. What better, under these circumstances, than a "quiet little game"? So permission was secured from the reigning sovereign of the little principality—Prince Charles III.—for the erection of a house of recreation, and the "little game" began. At the breaking out of the War it had lasted fifty years, and at three and a half millions a year—a little more or a little less—the total return to the proprietors may be better imagined than described. It would form a war budget which at this time would be a welcome addition to the coffers of any one of the belligerents.

IT IS WORTHY of remark in the present juncture that the first proprietor of the Monte Carlo resort was a German with a French name, M. Blanc from Hamburg. He had controlled the fashionable gambling resort in that city, and things being on the wane, he cast about for a new location. He chose Monaco, and with the eye of an artist saw its possibilities from a scenic point of view. He spent millions of dollars upon it and transformed it into one of the beauty spots of the earth as every visitor has testified. Its fame soon spread and pleasure seekers flocked there, at first attracted by the charms of its situation and comfort, and then in increasing proportion year by year, by the unnatural excitement which M. Blanc's "little game" afforded. Its progress was uninterrupted for a long course of years until its very name became synonymous with the very spirit of gambling.

THE TOTAL earnings of M. Blanc and his partners it would be hard to estimate. One of them, M. Camille, is said to have died worth from fifty to seventy-five millions. His family have married with royalty also, one of his daughters being the wife of Prince Roland Bonaparte and a granddaughter the wife of Prince George of Greece. They are also not without honor in their own country, the Monacians regarding them as public benefactors. And well they may from one point of view, for the entire expense of the principality is borne by the gaming tables. There are no taxes to pay, and no public utilities to be maintained by them for the Casino does it all. Possibly too, as an outcome of the War and the stoppage of the "industry," they may regard the Kaiser as the man who really "broke the bank at Monte Carlo."

Prayer is absolutely necessary for those who labor for the salvation of souls, both to maintain their fervor and to inspire them with new zeal and courage in serving their neighbor. —St. Vincent de Paul.

T. P. O'CONNOR'S LETTER

THE EVACUATION OF GALLIPOLI AND ITS EFFECT

Special Cable to CATHOLIC RECORD (Copyright 1915, Central News)

London, Dec 25:—The evacuation of Gallipoli by the British forces has produced a deep impression in England. Mixed feelings, however, predominate. The fact that it is a splendid escape from an impossible position with little or no losses has created a feeling of satisfaction almost as great as if it were a big victory instead of a belated retreat. There is no doubt that the crash of the whole Dardanelles campaign was brought to a head by dissatisfaction over the way it was conducted. This feeling was augmented by soldier's stories and the delayed Ian Hamilton report. Fortunately for himself Winston Churchill is beyond the reach of criticism and the lightning will flash around Hamilton's head only.

The Gallipoli evacuation also enters into the political struggle now being waged between the conscriptionist and the anti-conscriptionist sections. The response to Lord Darby's appeal was magnificent but the conscription controversy has now shifted into the narrow battleground of proportion between single and married recruits. Another cleavage of opinion is between those who insist on more millions in the field as the chief need of the hour and others in commercial life who insist that with such a costly war and with huge loans to her Allies, England must guard against depleting her industries and weakening her finances. All are however agreed that the struggle must be fought out with great vehemence.

Unfortunately the controversy is extending to the Cabinet with Lloyd George representing the conscriptionist section. The brilliant young Runciman is however strongly vindictive the business man's view. The Irish party is undivided and shows no hesitation in opposing conscription. Redmond in strong and Dillon in passionate language have both declared they would support the war by every means in their power but will not agree to conscription. It is clear that the Irish pronouncement will probably prevent the proposed conscription even though the offer is made to exclude Ireland. If Premier Asquith is finally overcome by the conscriptionists it may lead to serious material developments and end in a wholly conscriptionist or anti-conscriptionist cabinet.

The anxiety among the public regarding operations in the field is rapidly diminishing and evidence is accumulating that Germany is approaching economic exhaustion. These facts together with the pressure exerted by the deadly fleet lead to the belief that Germany must in the near future appeal for peace.

THE IRISH BRIGADE

I saw when the Queen reviewed the 16th Irish Division, the last page in a very interesting new chapter of Irish history. At the beginning of the War, Mr. Redmond suggested to the Ministry that he should create an Irish Nationalist Division. He gave to it the popular term Irish Brigade, which of course technically is not correct. In the early days of the war, red tape was still undisputed master of all its dealings, especially with Wales and with Ireland. The whole tradition of that department was against any definite separation of the Army into National divisions. Mr. Lloyd George had to fight a stern battle before he was able to get the consent of the War Office to the creation of a separate Welsh Brigade. The splendid response that Wales made was the basis of the famous Welshman's contention. The Irish, however, had not the advantage of a powerful Cabinet Minister, and the difficulties for Mr. Redmond, therefore, were greater and more prolonged. Mr. Redmond, however, who is very tenacious, refused to be either discouraged or baffled or to allow himself to be enmeshed in the red tape; and proceeded with his work. He was enormously assisted by Mr. Devlin, whose word is law among the Nationalists of Belfast, and who was able to add to the Division both from there and from City between 2,500 and 3,000 men. There was then considerable trouble over the appointment of the officers. Red tape insisted that they should be drawn as usual from the upper middle classes, with the curious result that while in the Ulster Division—that is to say the Division for the raising of which Sir Edward Carson was mainly responsible a Catholic was not allowed to be even a private soldier. In the Irish Nationalist Division while 90 per cent. of the privates were Catholics and Nationalists, some 80 per cent. of the officers were in the first instance Protestants and Unionists. Some of them even were Orangemen, and had been active agents in the Ulster Orange campaign. There was a further difficulty which seemed really like an attempt to break up the Division, when many of its men were sent to other divisions. Again Mr. Redmond refused to be beaten, and insisted on the Division being kept intact.

When, with Mr. Dillon, I went down some weeks ago to pay a visit to the 16th Division, it was with a certain amount of fear and trembling. However, I found that extraordinary transformation which the comradeship of the barracks, and still more that of the battlefield, creates among men who in peace times