

The Catholic Record

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Dominicans, Franciscans and other religious orders had already such schools established and the prospect was unpromising for another which would have to encounter such competition. Nevertheless the St. Joseph's Mission House school was opened up at Rozendaal and in a short time had 88 boys fitted with the zeal for the foreign missions enrolled on its register. Amongst these was young Biermans, the present Bishop of Uganda, with whom we ourselves and some of the dearest children in the whole Catholic world were brought—is it presumptuous to think by the direct inspiration of the Holy Ghost?—into such interesting relations a few years ago, and from whom still more recently we heard the story of St. Joseph's Missions in his historic native land. There was no need of an interpreter for Bishop Biermans spoke English as one to the manner born, his education and formation at Mill Hill being English. And at the other side of the world his field of work is still within the far flung limits of the British Empire.

It was impossible to listen to this Anglicised Dutchman's simple recital of facts—stranger and of more absorbing interest than the most daring fiction—without a stirring of the soul to a wider conception of the priceless privilege of being a Catholic and sharing in the working out of the divine plan of bringing all nations and races, all peoples and tribes and tongues, into the One Fold under the One Shepherd. And we asked ourselves if the Catholics of England, over-burdened as they are at home, could found a Missionary College, and if this College could successfully establish Apostolic schools in Protestant England, in more than half Protestant Holland, as well as in the Catholic Tyrol; if difficulties of race and language and national prejudices and predilections could be overcome in these foreign countries, why at least could not a similar preparatory school be established in English-speaking Canada? And if it were started who will venture to say that here as in Catholic Holland we should soon see 38 clean-blooded, innocent, virtuous Canadian Catholic lads who would respond to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit and amongst whom a few years hence would be many a Bishop Biermans? This preparatory school there was every reason to hope would in time develop into a Canadian Missionary College which should be a worthy embodiment and expression of Canada's national contribution to the fulfilment of Christ's command "Go teach all nations." The time for this development could be looked for when our own Father Fraser should come back eminently fitted by the knowledge and experience gained in the Chinese missions to spend the evening of life as head of the Canadian Mission College where he should pass on the fire of undiminished and enlightened zeal to those who should make permanent and perpetual the work to which he had consecrated his life. This project we discussed with many Canadian Catholics, with priests and with bishops, always meeting with warmly sympathetic interest. The late Apostolic Delegate to Canada was not only sympathetic, he was enthusiastic. "Why do you not advocate this in the CATHOLIC RECORD?" he urged. "Because," we answered, "it would be largely an academic discussion as yet. We must have a project, definite and concrete; discussion of a nebulous proposition might be edifying in a futile sort of way, but might be even worse than barren of results."

Now Father Fraser is home; driven home by the menace of utter ruin to the Chinese Missions. The Missions Etrangères of Paris, the great French Foreign Mission Seminary, which used to send as high as thirty priests in a year to the foreign missions has passed clean out of existence, it has not one student preparing for foreign missionary work, not one. Vast districts in China are confided to the Missions Etrangères, where the work has been carried on by French priests under French bishops—Vicars-Apostolic. Not only the young men who constantly recruited or augmented the ranks of the French foreign missionaries, but the French priests and even bishops of military age actually engaged in foreign mission work have joined the clergy at home, and as chaplains, stretcher-bearers, officers or privates in the ranks, 26,000 of them are fighting shoulder to shoulder with the manhood of all France to

repel the tide of the new barbaric invasion. What is true of the great Seminary of Les Missions Etrangères is true of every other missionary college, secular and regular, in all France; and in Belgium and in Germany. The sources of men and money in all Europe from which the foreign missions used to draw are practically all dried up. It will take long years to fill the depleted ranks of the clergy at home; longer still before the vivifying streams will again set in again to water the vineyards planted in the fields afar.

Father Fraser, single-minded, with unaffected humility, but burning with that zeal which accomplished wonders in China, comes to us with just that concrete proposition for which we longed, a proposition by which the Catholics of Canada, spared by God's mercy from the horrors and devastation which the War has carried to other Catholic lands and peoples, may now do her bit to save from destruction the work of generations of apostolic zeal in the lands still subject to heathen superstition.

Of this great work to which we firmly believe the finger of God points as Canada's duty of the hour we shall write more in detail next week.

THE USE OF WORDS

In the current number of The Catholic World, with his characteristic lucidity and force, Hilaire Belloc points out the confusion and loose thinking due to the modern use or misuse of the word "Christianity." He deliberately brands the word as a "neologism." "I do not think," he writes, "you will find any word which you can translate by 'Christianity' used anywhere until well after the Reformation. I know of no Latin or Greek word which will translate it. There was certainly no French word to translate it until the advent of the horrid neologism 'Christianisme'—which was popularized by Chateaubriand. I conceive that the idea for which the English word 'Christianity' stands is not only a false idea, but an essentially modern bit of false historical idea and part of the modern confusion about the past."

The objection is briefly this: "That the word 'Christianity' connotes the historical existence of an unreal thing; of something which never did exist, never will exist, and in the nature of things never can have existed. It connotes a common religion which never was or could be."

Answering the superficial but inevitable objection: "That may be the Catholic point of view, but you cannot expect us to accept it," Mr. Belloc says: "If you look at the matter coldly you will see that it has nothing whatever to do with the truth or falsehood of Catholic teaching, but everything to do with the right teaching of history—of objective history—in other words, of what really happened as contrasted with what you imagine may have happened or might have happened."

"What happened historically was that a certain strict society came into being at a certain time—the reign of Tiberius Caesar—claimed to have been taught certain things—some of them apparently most improbable; others quite outside the region of proof—and to have been taught them by a certain Person to which the founders of that society were witnesses; this Society declared these, its doctrines to be divine and immutable truths. This society was multiplying and spreading what it claimed to be the doctrines of this historical Person, Christ, was known as the 'Ecclesia.' It was always organized and the stronger it grew the better did it become organized. It was always highly distinct from the world around it. It was always from its very origin passionately concerned to preserve its personality and identity as a thing not a theory, and from its very origins it developed as all organizations must, and performed the functions of exertion as well as absorption. No one ever thought of it as anything but a highly distinct, defined, limited, organized body. Even those who broke away from it did so upon the plea that they were the real organization, the main branch in the right tradition. They did not, before quite modern times, pretend that you could be possessed of false doctrine and yet be part of the Church. Neither they nor their opponents, were ever concerned with what there was in common to contending parties but entirely with that which was not in common; for upon the latter depended the whole definition and cause of their existence."

"Take a concrete example: An Ebonite would say: 'The true original doctrine was that Jesus Christ was a human teacher and divinely inspired, but not Himself a divinity.' To which the contemporary Catholic answered: 'You are quite wrong. It is your rationalizing which is the innovation and not my transcendental doctrine. That

has been held from the beginning.' "Now the historian is perfectly free to say that the transcendental doctrine taught by the Catholic was false and that the rationalist doctrine taught by the Ebonite was true. He could say that in the most positive manner affirming it as his private opinion, and remain a sound and accurate historian. But if he went on to say or to imply that these two ways of judging the Founder of the Church were less important to the Catholic and Ebonite than the common acceptance by both parties of that Founder as a teacher, he would be saying something thoroughly unhistorical. If he said or implied that the Ebonite, though rejecting the Divinity of Our Lord, thought far more of the fact that after all Catholics also accepted all that part of His teaching which said nothing about His Divinity, he would be talking bad history. That is my point. The word 'Christianity' implies a general doctrine of fundamental importance, which has admitted accretions and differences between various bodies, who all at any rate admit and are governed by the supremacy of the central doctrine. There is historically no such thing as the modern fiction of 'Christianity.'"

We have given this rather too lengthy quotation because the writer so effectively punctures a very popular bubble, shows the unhistorical and unreal idea connoted by a term that is responsible for much confusion of thought which, under the pleasing camouflage of liberalism, leads to downright scepticism and infidelity.

Closely related to this misuse of words, and perhaps a result of it, is the custom making its way in spite of its obvious absurdity of speaking of all the sects, all the half-baked opinions and theories of modern rationalists as "The Church." "The plain historical fact is that the Catholic Church is a certain thing or historical phenomenon or institution from which other things have broken away (forming sects or heresies as the Catholic Church calls them), but there is no one thing common to this institution and to the waltz of those who have been derived from but have quarrelled with it." Much less can all these taken together with the Catholic Church or for that matter apart from it, be called "The Church." As well call Germany, Russia, France, the United States and England "The State." All these States, and other States also, whether civilized or not, have certain objects in common, for instance the preservation of order, the security of life and property; but calling them all "The State" does not make them less entirely distinct and separate entities. Speaking of "The Church" or "Organized Christianity" may cover up for those who have eyes and will not see a festering sore but it will do nothing to cure it. "The State" as a term including all organized civil society would do little to bring the warring world together as one nation.

Mr. Belloc quotes Aristotle and Confucius as agreeing on one point: "It seems that what both these eminent people said was that a mark of decline was the use of words in a wrong sense. They pointed out the wrong use of words as a mark of decline in a State, and I suppose the doctrine would apply to the decline of the power to reason and of a good many other things which go with a healthy civilization."

The growing use of the term "The Church" as including separate, distinct and even hostile organizations is surely a mark of religious decadence, of loss of power and desire to reason which go with a healthy religious spirit.

THE LATE EDITOR OF THE REGISTER

In the untimely death of the late J. A. Wall, K. C., Catholic journalism in Canada has sustained a serious loss. In another column we give the sketch of his life and work which those who knew him best furnished the Toronto Star. Scholarly, studious, a sincere, earnest and loyal Catholic he gave up the life and work in which he had already achieved success to place at the disposal of the Catholic cause the fruits of studious life and the service of his facile pen. Master of a clear, vigorous English style and conscientious to a degree in his study of the questions he treated as a journalist, he succeeded in great measure in leaving the impress of his personality on the Catholic Register during the too short period of his editorial control of that paper.

To our esteemed Catholic contemporary, the bereaved family and to the Diocese of Toronto the CATHOLIC RECORD extends its heartfelt sympathy in the great loss sustained by the death of the scholarly gentleman whose whole-souled devotion to the

exacting duties of his chosen calling overtaxed a physical strength none too robust. It is this very fact that enhances the merit of his abandonment of the legal profession to take up new duties in a new environment with little thought of personal ease and comfort at a time of life when these considerations might without impropriety be paramount. May he rest in peace.

BEGINNING AT THE WRONG END

There has been a great deal of controversy of late in our Catholic papers and periodicals anent the project of enlarging the scope and influence of our Catholic press, and of placing it on a more substantial basis. Much has been said about a million dollar endowment, a Catholic Press Sunday and a central bureau of information. The possibility of a Catholic daily has been pointed out that it would be possible to have many Catholic dailies throughout the country if some central agency could secure the services of the best available talent which would furnish the leading editorials, a condensed survey of current events, religious articles and literary reviews, all of which could be forwarded at comparatively small expense to the various papers, leaving to the managing editor of each merely the task of collecting the local news and of attending to the other matters that would naturally fall within the sphere of his official duties. All this is very good; but it ignores the very important consideration that it is useless to offer for sale something for which no market has been created. Would the fact that a paper had on its staff an editorial writer like Father Tierney of "America," a controversialist like Father Hull of the Bombay Examiner, a popular religious teacher like Father Noll of the Sunday Visitor, a scientist and historian like Dr. Walsh of Fordham, a sociologist like Rev. Paul L. Blakely and a literary critic like Agnes Repplier or the late Joyce Kilmer, increase its circulation to any appreciable extent in the ordinary Catholic community of today? We think not.

There is an old saying that one must travel in order to acquire a taste for olives. We have reason to doubt the truth of this statement, having noticed at a picnic how a couple of young untravelled ladies did justice to a bottle of this Spanish delicacy. However it will serve as an illustration. A man who does not care for olive oil would not appreciate having a bottle of this now expensive luxury placed on the table beside his tomato salad. Neither would one who has not acquired a taste for Catholic literature thank you for subscribing for him to a Catholic paper. In all probability like the bottle of olive oil it would remain unopened though both are good for the system. Once a person has laid aside his prejudices or his indifference and tasted Catholic literature he will find it to be so good that he will not only develop an appetite for it but a veritable hunger. The accomplishment of this task of inducing subscribers to relish the literary and soul-nourishing feast that is spread before them is, to our mind, the most essential element in the truly apostolic work of furthering the interests of the Catholic press.

Some priests, by exhortations from the pulpit and by a personal canvass of their parishioners, have succeeded in placing a Catholic paper in almost every home in their parishes. No one can gainsay the merit of this work, but it stops short of the accomplishment of the end in view. Under this mild form of compulsion most Catholics will subscribe for a paper. But will they read it? Will they subscribe for it next year if there be a change of pastors? The women folk will read the story, but the rest of its contents will, in most cases, diffuse as much light in the household as do the illuminating facts contained in the "Directory of Catholic Information" that supports the lamp on the parlor table.

In all the literature that has grown up about this subject we have seen but one practical suggestion made as to how best to induce people to read Catholic papers. This appeared in an article dealing with the recent Catholic Press Convention in Chicago. The writer, Mr. L. F. Happel, M. A., suggests a Catholic press hour once a week, or at least once a fortnight, in our Catholic schools, that the youthful reader of the Catholic press of today might be the full-grown reader of the Catholic press of to-

morrow. Very pertinently he remarks: "How many of us would ever have read a line of Milton or Shakespeare, or possibly even of Scott or Thackeray, had we not been gradually trained to an appreciation of such literature by patient instructors during long hours of classroom reading?" The conclusion he draws is that Catholic editors are facing difficulties that they themselves cannot overcome. "Only the heartiest co-operation," says he, "of the Sisters and priests of the Catholic parochial schools, academies and colleges the country over can create the demand for a better Catholic press than we have to-day."

We would not presume to suggest the reading of passages from the Catholic paper from the pulpit. Albeit we know of one priest who was accustomed to do this. He was a good reader—a very essential qualification in this matter—and while he may have wearied his congregation a little at times, he left them a well instructed people and fostered in them a devotion to the Catholic press.

A plan that can be open to no objection would be to devote a portion of the evening at the regular meetings of our men's societies to a discussion of the topics of Catholic interest treated in the current issues of the weekly Catholic papers. The pastor could briefly review these topics and call attention to the articles dealing with them. The result of this would be a thirst for further information among the men of the parish and an aroused interest in the columns of the Catholic paper that is lying on the table in their clubroom or that comes weekly to their homes. Such practical aid to their self-education would be much more beneficial than a glowing panegyric on some ancient worthy that would merely tickle the ears of his hearers and create a momentary enthusiasm.

THE GLEANER

NOTES AND COMMENTS

THERE SEEMS something heartless in the way most of the big Canadian dailies print casualty lists—long columns of names crowded together without regard to alphabetical order, making search for a given name a matter of no little tedium and difficulty. If space be the consideration why should editors in this time of stress and anxiety not sacrifice some of the trivialities of the sporting page to the solicitude of the thousands of anxious hearts among their readers. There are some honorable exceptions to the practice indicated, but it should be the rule.

THE STATISTICAL review of the criminal record of the Provinces of Quebec and Ontario prepared from the records of the Department of Trade and Commerce by a Parliamentary official, showing that crime, both adult and juvenile, is much more prevalent in Ontario than in Quebec, should prove instructive reading to the Toronto daily (and others) which has a habit of juggling the figures of Government statistics to the prejudice of Canadian Catholics. The favorable showing of Quebec ("Catholic Quebec") in this latest review is rightly attributed to its schools, wherein religious training is the rule, not the exception. In this connection the figures given should furnish food for thought to the people of Ontario generally.

THE MANNER of man that is at the head of the Allied armies in France is set forth in a few striking paragraphs in the Strand Magazine by Henri de Forge, whose writing bears every evidence of first-hand knowledge. Better than long columns of panegyric these simple characterizations of the great soldier upon whose genius and devotion the whole world now leans, reveal him as he is. M. de Forge's words, therefore, cannot find too wide publicity. The German authorities themselves know him, and display no disposition to minimize the gravity of the situation that now faces them. "He is a leader," said the Gazette de Cologne recently, "who knows what he wants and who will act with calm tenacity."

FIRST, AS TO General Foch's simplicity and unostentatiousness: "The same calm gravity which marks his religious life makes him see all brilliant and showy functions. On principle, he refuses to attend all those to which he is invited. In his own words he 'hasn't the time'; he has 'to go to work.' In his dress, as in all else, he tries to avoid everything that does not make for sim-

licity. Fancy, or pretty uniforms irritate him, and, preaching by example, he is nearly always to be seen in the ordinary sky-blue uniform. But for the hardly perceptible little stars, one might take him for a soldier of the ranks. . . . His table also reflects his mode of life. His are a soldier's meals, eaten quickly and without conversation. As a man of action he possesses a good appetite, but one meat course, a dish of vegetables and a cup of coffee constitute his daily menu."

SECONDLY, HIS devotion to work and to duty. The few who have the honor of coming in contact with him, we are told, say that he hardly sleeps at all, and that he has no set hours of rest. "At the time of the last offensive towards Marne, and at the time of the offensive against the British, he was awake during five days and five nights, his ear bent to the telephone, in constant communication with his generals." Further: "He is little seen nowadays. His herculean daily task—heavier than it seems humanly possible for one man to undertake—pins him to his headquarters. . . . Even when he does go among his troops—for instance, to assure himself of the importance of this or that position—he hardly ever pauses."

THEN AS TO his relations with his brother generals and his subordinates. We have seen that he goes but little amongst his men, but to those whose duty bring them to him he is "always affable." Though a man of few words his relations with his generals are "singularly happy." And so far from expecting blind obedience from those under him, his professed doctrine as a tactician is that "to command has never meant to be mysterious; on the contrary, the idea which animates the order should be explained to the immediate subordinate. For, while it is necessary that a commander should have the hearts and minds of those under him completely subordinated to higher authority, we must enlighten our subordinates, because blind obedience does not necessarily make for rational and logical execution of the idea conceived by the generalissimo."

ALTHOUGH NATURALLY reserved, when General Foch does talk he becomes animated, we are told. Usually, however, "his calm face is stamped with sadness, for he has given his son and his son-in-law to France." His intense love of country and his feeling for those to whom, like himself, the War has brought bereavement, are expressed in his own words. "Ah, you do not know what a father suffers when mourning enters into his household. My son is gone, and one of my daughters is widowed. I shall return to a home that I left full of happiness on a summer Sunday to find poor little orphans who never even knew their father. I am nearing the twilight of life, and I think I have been a faithful servant whose hope is to rest in the peace of our Lord. There are, like myself, thousands and thousands of fond old fathers who have lost all they loved, the sons on whom their hope was set. But, we have no right to self-pity. Our country—our beloved patrie—is all that matters. Let us accept the sacrifice. The whole of humanity is at stake. Liberty must first triumph. Afterwards, we may weep."

FINALLY, AS TO the Generalissimo's religious character. Born in the Lourdes country, and educated by the Jesuits, he has never lost the fruit of that training. M. de Forge writes: "No one has told, although it is a fact, how never a day passes without his withdrawing for a few moments of meditation in the nearest church; it may be only a shell-shattered ruin. He always goes alone, and never mentions his going to his officers. It is no mere parade of religion. It is simply that he needs every day to withdraw a while from life's turmoil and draw close to the Master of all men and all destinies. There is nothing theatrical about this action—no pompous invocation of the Almighty, after the manner of the Kaiser. It is a simple act of true piety by a simple man." Therein lies the secret of his strength.

ASIDE FROM his superior qualities as a man and a Catholic, and his achievements in the industrial and financial world, the elevation of Mr. M. J. O'Brien to the Senate of Canada.