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LONDON, SATURDAY, DEC. 19, 1925

MUSSOLINI AND FASCISM

Though we dealt with these subjects about a year ago in the columns of THE CATHOLIC RECORD, the mighty propaganda against Mussolini and Fascism which has been organized by a certain section of the public press in England and elsewhere make it opportune to deal with them again. This propaganda often comes the despatches in the news columns, and the communications of special correspondents. Of course there are great newspapers whose reputation and standing with their intelligent constituency rests on honest and square dealing with the news of the world; whose foreign correspondents are of such a character as to render them immune to the propagandist influence; and which, in controverted questions, give a full and fair presentation of both sides of the controversy. But there are sufficient weaker brethren to serve, more or less effectively, the purpose of the propagandists. Many no doubt are sincere, for even some Catholic publications have been carried away by the current of this stream of propaganda whose source is anti-Catholic as well as anti-Fascist.

In early youth Mussolini was an ardent Socialist. He got into difficulties and fled to Switzerland, whence he was soon expelled. He returned to this country as Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary of Italy to take his place amongst the leading statesmen of Europe in international conference. After his expulsion from Switzerland began a period of work and wandering that put the young Socialist into intimate touch with social conditions in many lands. It was a valuable education and doubtless had its influence on the development of Mussolini's ideals of social betterment.

His character, his personality, his energy and wholeheartedness gave him a position of importance in Socialist circles; but it was not until the Great War that he grew into a figure of international interest and international importance.

It must be remembered that Italy was a member of the Dreifund, the triple alliance of Germany, Austria and Italy. Added to this, Germany had carried her policy of "peaceful penetration" so far that she had a strangle-hold on the financial, economic and industrial life of Italy. Governments are peculiarly susceptible to such influences as Germany brought to bear on the Italian Government. Moreover, the Italian Socialists were violently opposed to intervention. If Italy did not enter the War on the side of her Central European allies it appeared certain that she would at least remain neutral. Had she done so the issue of the conflict would almost certainly have been the reverse of what it was. That Italy threw her weight into the balance against her former allies is due to Benito Mussolini who so organized the campaign for participation in the War that the tide of popular sentiment finally swept the anti-intervention Government into the declaration of war. For his advocacy of war the Socialists had long before this expelled Mussolini from their ranks.

But the Socialists pretty nearly had their revenge in bringing about the disaster of Caporetto. After the retreat or rather the rout of the Italian armies it was a question whether Italy's entrance into the War had not done more harm to her friends than to their foes. Again it was Mussolini and those friends, whom he has always been able to attach with such wholehearted devotion to himself and to his cause, who retrieved the situation. He led the campaign to organize the

national resistance with such success that defeat was turned into victory.

When one recalls the uncertainties and anxieties of the dark days of the giant struggle, and the tremendous consequences that hung on its issue, one might suppose that few names and few achievements for the common cause would be so likely to be remembered with gratitude in the English-speaking world, in France and in Belgium, as the name and the achievements of Benito Mussolini.

Italians have another great achievement for which they owe—and pay—to Mussolini the homage of a grateful nation.

We often see references to "the Fascist revolution"; really, the Fascist movement was a counter-revolution.

In the North American Review, January, 1925, an American writer paints this picture of post-war Italy:

"By the end of 1919, revolution had actually broken out in Italy. Strikes in all the most vital services were almost permanent. In Turin and other large cities army officers were frequently assaulted and often killed in the streets. Barracks and forts were attacked, and army magazines were blown up; general railway strikes were declared; portraits of the King were removed from the public schools, and the national colors were replaced by the red flag. Landowners were compelled to employ Red Union men, and if they took their own produce to market in their own cars or carts they were condemned to pay fines. A refusal to pay the fines resulted in the abandonment of rural work at critical times of the year, destruction of crops and provisions, arson of hay and houses, and the abandonment of cattle. Fear reigned supreme—even physicians were prevented from ministering to the sick and injured. For half a century Italy had not been swept by such wild passions. The whole social order was on the verge of collapse, and the Government was supine, apathetic, impotent. The fundamental law of the State guaranteeing private property was no longer enforced."

In 1920 the elections for village and town councils were won. The tactics of Moscow were then rapidly followed in the establishment of Red guards recruited from such municipal employees as the clerks, the firemen and the police. More than two thousand municipalities fled the Soviet red flag, emblazoned with emblems of Leninist Communism, over their town halls. Red Leagues, Red Unions, Red municipalities dominated the country. Life was regarded as cheaply as in Soviet Russia. A man who showed the national colors or saluted the national flag was liable to be beaten to death. At Bologna organized "executions" took place and several city councillors were murdered by their Communist colleagues. At Turin a Communist tribunal, composed partly of women, ordered "executions" by flinging the accused into blast furnaces.

In the Anglo-American Review May, 1921, an Italian writer indicates the horrors from which Fascism saved his country:

"Whoever lived in Italy between July, 1919, and June, 1920, knows by what a hair's breadth the country escaped being thrown into the most appalling anarchy beneath the oncoming tide of Leninism."

That was revolution, red, riotous, anarchistic revolution, in full tide sweeping over Italy. It was the part of Mussolini and Fascism to turn back this tide, to save social order and civilization in Italy, and perhaps in Europe, to free his loved Italy from the tyranny of the Red terror, and restore ordered freedom to his fellow countrymen. To the wild motto of the anarchists "Neither God nor master" he opposed the sane and inspiring legend, "God and Native Land." Small wonder that the hearts of all classes of his compatriots go out to him in gratitude, and that with complete confidence they entrust him with the government of the country which he saved from the mad forces of anarchy. Small wonder, too, that amongst these he should have enemies, bitter and unscrupulous; but the wonder is not small that the tyrants of the Red terror should find allies amongst the lovers of liberty and democracy in their campaign of defamation of the savior of Italy.

RELIGION IN EDUCATION

In the Annual Report of the President of Columbia University Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler has some interesting paragraphs on "Religion in Education." He introduces the subject with this quotation:

"We see in our land tens of millions of men and women who acknowledge no connection with religion, and, as a result of this, a large proportion of our children growing up without religious influence or religious teaching of any sort."

"These very definite and most disquieting words," comments Columbia's learned President, "are found in the Pastoral Letter addressed by the bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church to their clergy and laity at the close of the triennial convention of 1925. The accuracy of this statement by the bishops cannot be doubted and the significance of the facts to which it calls attention is far too important to be passed over in silence."

Dr. Butler states quite definitely that religion is an essential element in education.

He writes: "In the modern State, with its elaborate system of tax supported schools, and as public opinion now is, it is not practicable to include religious instruction in the program of studies on the same plane with literature, science, art and morals. Therefore, unless religious instruction is to disappear entirely, provision must be made for it by the family and by the Church. The outstanding fact is, however, that both the family and the Church have abdicated as systematic and serious teachers of religion and that is why the condition exists to which the Pastoral Letter refers in so uncompromising terms. Of all the many different branches of the Christian Church which are represented in the United States, it is probably the Roman Catholic Church alone which makes serious, systematic, and highly organized effort to give genuine religious training to the children of its faith. The so-called Sunday Schools of the Protestant churches, with here and there honorable and highly commendable exceptions, are, educationally speaking, of little avail, and it would be no exaggeration to describe their influence as factors in religious education as almost negligible. In this condition of affairs are to be found the elements of a very difficult social and educational problem and one which, if not satisfactorily solved, may completely alter the aspect of civilization within the next generation or two."

"Primarily, and throughout the years of elementary and secondary education, the duty of giving religious instruction and training rests upon the family and the Church. The program of secular instruction should always be so arranged as to offer, at stated and reasonably frequent intervals, ample opportunity for the religious instruction of those students whose parents wish them to have it. After the stage of secondary education is passed, conditions alter. The college, if it is to do its full duty, must not only offer opportunity for religious worship, but it must also provide definite instruction in religion for those who seek it. It would be quite as unreasonable to exclude religion from the college curriculum as it would be to exclude literature, or science, or the fine arts, or the study of the ethical and institutional life of man."

The President tells of the provision made in Columbia for courses in religious subjects and adds that "the attendance upon these courses steadily increases and their good effect is marked."

"Harvard College was brought into existence by those who determined to advance learning and perpetuate it to posterity" and who dreaded "to leave an illiterate ministry to the churches when our present ministers shall lie in the dust." The declared purpose of Yale College was to fit young men for service "in church and civil state."

Dr. Butler deprecates the fact that ministers are not now trained in the colleges in separate theological schools whose "educational standards are, for the most part, lamentable." He continues: "Many of these theological students have no college training whatever and many more have had a college training in whole or in part

which would not differ greatly from that offered by an average secondary school. In other words the standard of intellectual and scholarly attainment is low. Not a few of the most distressing and widely-heralded of present-day happenings in the United States are traceable directly to this fact. Unhappily, that 'illiterate ministry' which it was the purpose of Harvard College to forbid, is now, after three hundred years, in ample evidence on every side."

Later, on this subject he adds:

"The widespread intolerance which has recently had so many unhappy manifestations throughout the United States, together with the pathetic character of the theological disputes which receive so wide publicity, act to deter many men who might otherwise do so from choosing the Christian ministry as their calling in life. If the full truth were said, it would probably be that the greatest obstacle at present to religious faith, religious conviction and religious worship is the attitude and influence of a very large proportion of the poorly endowed and poorly educated Protestant clergy."

In concluding this subject he says: "What the world sorely needs, if it is to have its religious convictions deepened and its faith made more sure, is another St. Dominic or St. Francis, another Wesley or Whitefield, another Newman or Pusey or Keble, another Lacordaire. The religion of modern man will not long survive if fed on husks alone."

It would not be fair to quote the following paragraph as if coming under the heading, "Religion in Education," but with the warning against this inference we quote, from another part of the Report, the following comment on "the widespread lawlessness that has attracted the attention of the whole world:"

"Law-breakers are almost uniformly graduates of our common schools, and not infrequently of our colleges as well. This fact tells the story. They have not been disciplined, trained, educated, either at home, at school, or at college to those habits of self-control, self-mastery, and self-direction, which are the only effective protection society has against law-breaking and lawlessness. Of course, in addition, law must learn to mind its own business. It must not attempt to invade the field of civil liberty, for if it does, it will surely be resisted, either covertly or openly and thereby the habit of law-breaking will receive added strength. Robert Browning's line states a profound truth:

"Those laws are laws that can enforce themselves."

"If law will confine itself to its own proper field, and if human beings are given that discipline which is the ladder that leads to self-discipline, the story that the next generation will have to tell will be a far different and far more encouraging one."

Dr. Butler has given us all something to think about. Catholics will be led to prize more highly than ever the Catholic ideal of education; but for Catholics, too, there is ample matter for self-examination, something more profitable and more wholesome than self-complacency.

THE GLOBE AND THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL

The Globe urges the "return" to the pre-war two-cent-rate on letters. The Postmaster-General in reply states that the Post Office Department is "both willing and eager to assist in removing the one-cent war tax and restoring the two-cent postage rate," but adds that the matter does not come under the jurisdiction of his Department. It must be determined, the Postmaster-General explains, by the Department of Finance "on considerations of revenue and policy that are within the special purview of the latter Department."

Thereupon The Globe rejoins: "The endorsement of the proposal by the man at the head of the Post Office Department encourages The Globe to press further for its consideration at the hands of the Hon. J. A. Robb, Minister of Finance, and his Department. When Mr. Murphy voices not only willingness but also eagerness to bring about a return to penny postage, we feel assured that he believes that such loss of revenue as would result from the change would speedily be

made up by increased use of the mails by the public. Mr. Murphy has proved himself an exceptionally capable and businesslike administrator, and would not be likely to favor any reduction in postage rates which would permanently cripple the revenue of his Department."

The Globe evidently misunderstands the Postmaster-General and the facts of the situation. We have reason to think that the misunderstanding is pretty general. And Mr. Murphy's expression, "restoring the two-cent postage rate," is, we think, unfortunate inasmuch as it tends to confirm this misunderstanding.

The postage rate was never increased; the rate, so far as the Post Office Department is concerned, was and is two cents; but a one-cent war tax was added which did not increase the Post Office Department revenue a single cent in a year, or for that matter in all the years since the tax was imposed. In the beginning the additional one-cent stamp was not a postage stamp at all, but a revenue stamp plainly labelled "War Tax." Later, solely for convenience, we were allowed to substitute an ordinary one-cent postage stamp for the one-cent war tax stamp. But the revenue from this tax always went, and still goes, not to the Post Office Department, but to the Finance Department.

The abolition of this tax, therefore, could not possibly "cripple the revenue" of the Post Office Department; it could affect the revenue of that Department no more than the abolition of the revenue stamps on cheques, or for the matter of that, the doing away with the amusement tax on theatre tickets.

The widespread misapprehension as to the war-tax on letters has discredited the credit due to Mr. Murphy's "exceptionally capable and business-like" administration of the Post Office Department. What Mr. Murphy has accomplished was done without any increase in the postal rates.

IT MUST DETER

BY THE OBSERVER

No one wants to go back to the cruel and irrational methods of punishment for criminal offences which prevailed long ago. Humane methods are recognized and prevail today, and are likely to prevail in the future. For all that is necessary in the prevention of crime, which is the proper purpose of punishment by law for crime, for prevention, humane methods are sufficient.

But law and legal punishments may be humane without being foolishly weak and ineffective. There is no sense in heaping criminals with all sorts of kindness. Our prisons are in some danger of becoming as comfortable as most of the hotels in the land. If molly-coddling be the true aim of law let us put criminals up at good hotels. If the main purpose of legal interference is, to be as nice and kind as possible, let us give them a good time at the lowest possible cost to the country, and abolish our prisons and save the cost of keeping them up.

No one wants to see the cruelties of the European prisons back again; and, anyhow, we never had them in Canada in anything like the same degree of hard-heartedness as they existed, for instance, in England, in the days when such a man as Michael Davitt, a statesman and a patriot, was fastened to a rude, offensive fellow prisoner who had a disgusting disease. But no such question arises. We have a different situation to consider. The question now is, shall we go on coddling criminals under the self-deception that that is a sure way to reform them.

The main purpose of criminal punishment is the protection of society. If in any given case, a decision must be made between the protection of society and the reformation of the criminal, there can be no doubt where public duty lies. If the reformation of a certain number of convicted criminals can be secured by a certain policy or certain methods of treatment, but at the same time it is reasonably sure that that very policy and those very methods will, by their mildness, encourage into crime a further number of citizens who as yet have committed no crime, why then, we conceive, the reformation of certain convicts becomes of less importance than the protection of society; and to the protection of society, the

authorities of the country should look first of all.

In other words, punishment should be relaxed as much as is consistent with the necessity of discouraging those who have not yet offended from beginning a career of crime. When the mildness goes beyond that point, the great aim and purpose of criminal courts remains unsecured no matter how many convicted criminals may be reformed. It is a mistake to banish from our law enforcement the idea of deterrent punishment for the sake of society, and to substitute for it merely the notion of the possible reform of individual criminals.

Moral error enters here. In the first place an error is made by those who imagine that fear of punishment is not a legitimate method of reform. This idea finds its expression sometimes in the dictum that people should not be frightened with the terrors of hell fire, but that preaching should be directed only to the persuasion of the sinner. The answer is, that the whole authority of Christian Revelation is to the contrary of that proposition. And man, when he exercises the power given him by God to interfere with his fellow man for the protection of society, has in his scope and sphere a right to punish and to frighten if he can with the prospective terrors of that punishment.

Not only that, but with some offenders, it is the only way to deal, if they are to be dealt with at all. Reform is very good; but what of the man who hardens his heart against it, and prefers his passions and his own way? What of him? Those who imagine that mere mildness in punishment, and certain methods of instruction and suggestion will reform any man who enters a prison, is too credulous to be entrusted with important duties towards society.

What guarantee have we that the preaching and teaching of prison officers and social workers will suffice to reform all persons for whose benefit such ministrations are designed? And if we could have such a guarantee, we should want another. What guarantee could we have that the millions of possible criminals—for all mankind are possible criminals—will be deterred from crime by merely hearing vaguely that the criminals who have preceded them to trial and conviction are enjoying a combination of hotel and technical school.

This is not intended as a criticism of any genuine humane method of instructing and reforming criminals. It is a protest against making sentences so short as not to cause fear, and against making prison life so tolerable as to deter no one from taking a chance of having to endure it.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

ACCORDING to the Edinburgh Scotsman, 180 Scots passengers left Glasgow for Canada by the S.S. Montrose on November 21st. Included in the party were domestic servants, farm workers, and several complete families. Among them were three girls who had already been in Canada, and had done so well that they had been able to enjoy a long holiday at home, and returning now to this country, had induced several others to accompany them—an incident which goes far to discount the rather gloomy account some others had given of their experiences here.

SUPPLEMENTING THIS comes encouraging accounts of Father Macdonell's Hebridean settlements in Western Canada. Most of them have been through their second growing season and are doing well. Their prairie farms show careful cultivation. They are threshing very good fields of grain, usually up to one hundred acres each. The various holdings are stocked with horses, cattle, pigs, and fowl of the kind usually found upon the Canadian farm. They are thus ensured of better results than by confining their efforts to wheat growing. The verdict of those responsible for the settlement in the first place is that these hardy Highlanders are setting an example of steadiness and application to the newer problems that confront them in this country, and are rapidly carving out homes for themselves greatly in advance of those they have for generations been accustomed to in the Hebrides.

OF THEIR new homes an observer writes: "The women are learning the ways of Canada. Many of them are becoming good housewives.

Their homes are neat if bare, but clean and cheery. Muslin curtains on the windows, a few nice dishes on improvised shelves, and homemade furniture, has made their places of abode quite cosy. They are all full of hope, and plan to have comfortable and well-furnished homes as soon as their farms are paid for. A visit to their settlement at Everts, near Red Deer, Alberta, impresses the fact that, far from their native land, they have settled down to new conditions with a determination to succeed. In chatting with the women, the housewives and mothers, they revealed their very evident pride in their culinary accomplishments."

ANOTHER RATHER pleasing picture of these new homesteads appears in the columns of the Scotsman. Mr. and Mrs. Neil MacLean, with their eight children, live on their new farm near Everts. It is one of 100 acres; they have been there two years, and will thresh one hundred acres this season. Mr. MacLean's mother, known to the family as "Granny," lives in Red Deer, with two of his sisters. One of the girls, who had some years of experience in service in Scotland, is now employed as a housekeeper at seventy dollars a month. Six of the eight MacLean children attend school in the district of their farm, and Mrs. MacLean states that they are all very fond of their studies and "get lots of stars at school." "At home they did not like the master, and would cry when I made them go to school," she stated, "but here they holler if they have to stay at home."

"Mrs. MacLean's husband was a sailor and fisherman in the Hebrides. He was always away, and it is good to have him at home now, about the farm. We feel so much more settled. About eight years ago we bought a small croft of twenty-five acres on the Island and kept two cows. I did the work on the place, while my husband was at sea. I worked with a spade, so very hard, from dawn till dark, but we got very small returns. We finally came to Canada penniless. How I wish we had come eight years ago when we bought that croft. If we had we could be comfortable today. Father Macdonell told us of the chances in Canada and Alberta. We just left everything and came out with his party. Now I always pray for Father Macdonell for bringing us out here. It is the only thing that I can do for him."

NATURALLY THESE Hebrideans on the prairies at times grow homesick for the sea to which in the Islands they were always accustomed. Of them it may be said, as, indeed, it may be said of most Scotsmen, that they have traditions of the sea extending back through many generations, and that the lure of it is in their very blood. They have always lived within sight of it, felt its tang and known its fretful tempers. To be removed from all this is naturally a trial, and it is only by succeeding generations that it will be overcome. Their success in their new homes, however, and the lifting of the strain of making ends meet is ample compensation for this one great deprivation.

A SHORT distance from Red Deer, it is further related, are the group of cottages erected by the immigration society for the temporary accommodation of the Hebridean families until they are permanently located. At present they are generally occupied by Hebridean widows and their families. Work is secured for any of the children who are old enough to go out to service; the younger children attend school in one of the industrial buildings. A Gaelic teacher had been secured for them, that is, one who can talk Gaelic but is a certified Canadian teacher and will follow the system of the province in her work. It is planned to place these widows and their families on the land as soon as suitable places can be secured for them.

IT IS ALSO gratifying to know that by the industry of these people a new industry is being developed in Alberta. Many of the women have a knowledge of knitting, carding and weaving homespun fabrics. When they are later assembled in groups, and the problems of new settlement are surmounted, looms will be set up and the industry encouraged. There is no reason why an industry which means so