

The Catholic Record

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Publisher and Proprietor, Thomas Coffey, L.L. D.
Editors: Rev. James T. Foley, B. A.
Thomas Coffey, L.L. D.

Associate Editors: Rev. F. J. O'Sullivan,
H. F. Mackintosh.

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LONDON, SATURDAY, AUGUST 11, 1917

THE IRISH CONVENTION

Though the shadow of the world-war overcasts the British Isles, Ireland looks towards the future with unblinking hope. Convinced that in the quality of her youthfulness will be the fulfillment of her aspirations she renews her youth and hope with each succeeding generation of her patriot sons. Were it not for the boundlessness of Ireland's hope we should be at a loss to explain her high pulse and light heart during her long and desperate struggle for national existence. In the days of revolution and famine the sun of kindly hope warmed the grey chill of despair into the confidence of a brighter tomorrow.

Hope, it would appear, is the outstanding characteristic of the three peoples designated as the "Celtic fringe." Though as nations they have been worsted and badly beaten, as distinct peoples they have never been conquered. The Irish, the Scotch, and the Welsh retain the habit to an eminent degree of never being whipped and of always keeping up the fight. Their poetry and idealism keep them young in mind and heart. Hence that rare quality of reckless youth, commonly known as "Celtic daring," must be sought within themselves rather than in any actual circumstances from without.

In the cheery optimism and cheerful vision of the future Ireland forges ahead towards the goal of her longing. She wishes to repossess herself of her ancient constitution. She believes that the speed-limit of her progress should be rejected and the boundaries and enclosures in which her life has been set for a century, removed.

What concerns every sane Irishman today is a pacific settlement of the Irish question. He wants an orderly adjustment of her national life. Having never gone beyond the federalistic basis we still believe and hope that her grievances removed there may be found enough of the old walls upon which to build an Irish Dominion that will rival Canada in good-will and loyalty to England.

Towards this end we think a good start has been made by the convocation of the present Irish Convention. We believe that in bringing this assembly together the British Government wished to make an honest effort to heal an old sore and make a new friend out of an old enemy. We hope that the constructive work of those whom it has directly sent to the Convention may afford proof sufficient of the honesty of its intention.

Left on the ebbing tide of a vanishing population and seated at the doorway of famine, Ireland is in no mood to be hoodwinked or bullied. Any postponement of Home Rule will chill like a dead hand the warm enthusiasm of all who believe in constitutional methods of reform. Her case, no less than that of Belgium and Serbia, has gone before the Supreme Court of Civilization. Because of the wasteful necessity of emigration she sits in the chair of sullen invalidism as a nation suffering from the effects of a disastrous war. Delays and disappointments have bred in her heart that sombre disquietude and weariness of spirit which always makes a rich soil for revolution. There can be no doubt that England's official obstinacy and contemptuous disregard for Ireland's feelings have been fast turning that country into a school of anarchy. When shall we begin to remember that as long as Ireland's condition is left unchanged so long will her

rebellious ideas and opinions remain unchanged!

The monuments of historic crime that rise up on all sides over Ireland keep green the sanguinary memories of British misrule, while the grossly irregular manner in which the law has been administered through Dublin Castle makes rebellion a dramatic necessity. The application of ninety Coercion Acts since the Union has only succeeded in driving Ireland to take the law into her own hands after each promulgation. It is now a historical fact that every new application of despotism on the part of England only drove Ireland to seek freedom through the portals of revolution. With the vision, therefore, of young Ireland disappointed and desperate, slipping away at full gallop from the principle of constitutionalism, we believe that Irish statesmanship will score a signal triumph by bringing out of the Convention to the people of Ireland a Constitution that will entitle them to live their own life in their own account and in their own way, while giving them a place in the sun with the other self-governing British nations. Our hopes are especially strengthened by the fact that Irishmen have come together to settle their own difficulties. Most of the great reforms during recent years have been accomplished along those same lines. The constructive platform of the Convention has adopted adds much to our hopefulness. The unanimous appointment of Horace Plunkett to the chair is in itself a good omen of success.

As a friend of Ireland Sir Horace Plunkett's achievements stand high. By those who disagree as well as by those who agree with his views on Irish reforms he is counted a man of integrity who should be trusted because he has been tried so often. In England no less than in Ireland he is regarded as a man of sureness and of strength, moderate in speech as he is resolute in act. As Chairman of the Convention we feel confident that he will exercise in his own discreet way that strength of character, with his other human qualities that in the past have been successful in bringing friend and foe together, which will weld the views of that historic assembly into a harmonious resolution for an autonomous Ireland.

It was in 1893 after the defeat of the second Home Rule bill that Horace Plunkett, then Unionist member for South Dublin and an opponent of Home Rule, issued an invitation to the leaders of the Unionist and Nationalist parties. Though Justin McCarthy as leader of the anti-Parliamentary party and Colonel Saunders the leader of Ulster Unionism refused, John Redmond accepted a place in the Committee known afterwards as the "Recess Committee." By the harmonious work of this Committee prominent Unionists and Nationalists came together for deliberation, including such extremes as the Mayor of Belfast and the Mayor of Dublin. It also won the support of men as far apart in politics and religion as the Rev. Dr. Kane, Grandmaster of Belfast Orangemen, and Father Peter Finlay, a Dublin Jesuit. By the co-operation of those men the industrial and agricultural interests of Ireland got a new lease of life. The Irish Department of Agriculture is a standing monument of its success. By the development and application of scientific methods of farming a new era of prosperity set in for the Irish farmer. Out of this small beginning Ireland got later the Local Government Act which transferred the local government from the old minority to the representatives of the people of Ireland and helped Redmond and Plunkett to bring the landlords and tenants of Ireland to an agreement on the question of land purchase which ended the dual system of indirect and absentee ownership and settled the Irish agrarian war of a hundred years.

We hope that the constructive genius of Plunkett and Redmond may achieve the same beneficent and harmonious results in the Irish Convention.

ANSWER TO CORRESPONDENT

We have no law in Canada to prevent a Province from breaking away from Confederation since the granting or refusal of repeal belongs to the Imperial Parliament. Our Constitution was conferred by an Act of the British Parliament based on a mutual agreement among the Colonial statesmen in London, 1867. Should the Dominion Parliament contravene the Provincial autonomy of Quebec it would flagrantly violate

the B. N. A. Act which forms the keystone in the arch of Confederation.

As the Provinces did not come together to put their powers into a common custody but to make certain concessions and compromises, the force of Confederation lies in its ratification of that bargain. Should the B. N. A. Act be violated there is no further obligation of remaining a constituent Province of the Dominion. Besides, the Act makes no provision for dealing with a Province that goes "on strike" after the secession has been effected.

Consult John Morley's Life of Richard Cobden where he refers to Canadian Confederation.

THE TRAGEDY OF NEW WATERFORD

The terrible fate that overtook the miners of No. 12 Colliery, New Waterford, where an explosion occurred on the 25th ult., surpasses in the profundity of its pathos many of the terrible incidents of the War. No sooner had the awful news of the disaster gone abroad than hundreds of frenzied relatives and friends rushed towards the mine-pit. During the hours of suspense while the rescue parties returned from the different landings with the remains of a loved one, sorrow, pain and death seemed gathered together in one agonizing whole.

The great heroism displayed by the local clergy and laity gave a dramatic setting to the weird and dangerous work of groping for the dead in the charnel-house below. The noble and self-sacrificing efforts of all who undertook this sad office were, however, rewarded by the rescue of twenty-one corpses, all of whom were Catholics.

It is hard to reconcile such an appalling catastrophe with the morality of things. Nature as it works outside of man's will is indiscriminating and pitiless. But it is not so relentless as would appear at first sight to those who respect and obey her laws. Where there are great risks there should be precautions and safeguards commensurate with the dangers. Those who pitch their tent on a volcano should see to it that a means of rapid escape be at hand in the event of an eruption.

Divine Providence not only embraces the human family but the great forces of nature as well. The exercise of man's free will often determines it. It may sometimes happen that the circumstances of one life is so interwoven with those of another that the just man is carried into the vortex of the unjust.

If man were not to die a mine disaster such as that of New Waterford would be terrible in the extreme. But as we all alike must undergo the ceremony of death it may be that a sudden passage into the "pale Kingdom" was planned by Divine Providence as the best for that particular person.

Though what we may say will add little to the consolation of the bereaved and take away little of their grief we wish none the less to record our sympathy and sense of loss.

IRREVERENCE FOR THE INDIVIDUAL

In order to understand the attitude of some modern governments towards the individual subject, it is necessary to refer briefly to the original institution of society. God established but two societies, the family and the Church. The State was established by man, with the sanction of God, to attend to those temporal matters that would constitute a too onerous or impossible burden for the separate unit. Such, however, is human nature that the State strove to arrogate to itself rights and duties that belonged to the individual. The Church has ever stood, as a barrier, against these usurpations of the State. What is history but the story of the struggle of the individual to maintain his rights in the face of tyrant kings and governments, and of the efforts of the Church that right and justice should prevail? A Hildebrand (Pope Gregory VII.) forces the haughty King of the Germans to go to Canossa. Innocent III., through Stephen Langton and King John at Runnymede the great charter of the rights of British citizens. A Saint Pius V. excommunicates Elizabeth, and a Pius VII. meets out the same punishment to Napoleon, because both had infringed upon the religious liberty of their subjects. But long before the days of the great Emperor,

several of the States of Europe had thrown off their allegiance to the Papacy. Others, France among the number, followed in their lead. The result was that there was no longer an united Christendom, and hence no longer a spiritual weapon to restrain the exercise of kingly power or to uphold the just exercise of legitimate authority. What is the effect of this? It is that State Absolutism, of which Prussia is the most conspicuous exponent.

The order instituted by God has been reversed. The State, like the Sabbath, was made for man, not man for the State; but now man is a mere cog in the wheel of the State, and is valued only in as much as he can contribute to its security and realize its ambitions. There have been bad men in the past, and there have been wars in the past, but never was there such a spectacle as the world is witnessing today—armies weary of slaughter, nations longing for peace, but unwilling to submit to the one arbiter, the representative of the Prince of Peace, who because of his universal jurisdiction is the only power that can, with confidence, be appealed to.

It is this spirit of State Absolutism coupled with the absence of the true faith that is responsible for the degradation of the individual. Human life is not held sacred because the supernatural end of man is ignored, and with it the right of even the unborn child to live that it may come into its supernatural inheritance and gain merits for eternity.

We are shocked by the casualty lists in our daily press, but we have it on the authority of one of the leading physicians of the United States that there are ten times as many infants done to death in the hospitals of that country in one year, as men are slain in two Anglo-German drives. The growing popularity of cremation is another indication of this irreverence. Men have been too busy in recent years, accumulating wealth, to take time to bury their dead and now the armies at the front have not time to bury their dead.

In the school the child is deprived of a religious training because the State does not deem that a necessary qualification for citizenship. A bank manager recently remarked to us that the less religion his employees had the better it suited him. "In fact," said he, "I would prefer to have a staff of atheists." Can there be any reverence for the individual in the mind of such a man? Yet that is the attitude of many heads of corporations and of some governments.

The poor, the sick are no longer treated with Christian charity, as Christ's representatives, but as an unavoidable source of expense to the State that must be disposed of in the most economic manner possible. The spirit of faith gave birth to that Christian chivalry, one of the brightest jewels of the Middle Ages, that gloried in the honor that it paid to woman, from the queen on her throne to the barefoot peasant girl. But the civil authority by assuming the right to annul marriage has degraded woman and de-throned her from her proud position as queen of her household. To this action of the State is mainly due the fact that many women of our day render themselves unworthy of honor and that many others do not claim the honor that is due them.

Thus it is that with all our boasted liberty and enlightenment the individual citizen is less free and less honored than in the days when the world acknowledged the authority of the Supreme Pontiff, and its kings bent reverent knees before the time-honored altars of Catholic worship.

THE GLEANER

NOTES AND COMMENTS

THE DEATH in April last of Sophia, Dowager Countess of Albemarle, recalls several distinguished and interesting figures in the public life of Canada before Confederation. Sophia Mary MacNab, the second daughter of Sir Allan Napier MacNab, was born at the parental residence, "Dundurn," Hamilton, in 1835. Sir Allan himself was one of the outstanding figures of his generation in Canada and as Premier of the old United Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada rendered memorable service to his native country. His conversion to the Catholic Faith and his reception into the Church on his death-bed in 1862 was made the occasion of an acrimonious attempt in the daily press to prejudice and excite the public mind against Catholics on the plea that, as the Globe put it, "Sir Allan had been unfairly

dealt with in his last moments." The complete and outspoken statement of the facts published at the time by Bishop Farrell was sufficient to set all such wild insinuations at rest.

VISCOUNT BURY, to whom Sir Allan's daughter was married in 1855, had come to Canada in the preceding year, prior to which he had had for a young man rather a distinguished career. As an officer in the Scots Fusilier Guards he had seen service in India, and was for a time aide-de-camp to Lord Frederic Fitzclarence. Resigning from the Army he returned to England and became private secretary to Lord John Russell, then Premier. He came to Canada in 1854, and was appointed Superintendent of Indian Affairs, a post which he held for about three years, during which he devoted himself to studying Indian life and character. "During the short time he remained in this country," says Morgan, "he took a great interest in its history and affairs, and made himself thoroughly acquainted with its wants; he saw much of the country and became well-informed with regard to its geographical bearings and vast and valuable resources." This knowledge, he was later, as a member of the Imperial Parliament, able to put to good use when the project of Confederation in Canada was up for discussion and final ratification by that august assembly.

LORD BURY returned to England in 1857, but re-visited Canada during the following year in the interests of transatlantic steam navigation. It is said that had he been able to enlist the sympathies and active co-operation of Canadians in his project of organizing the Galway Steamship Company he would have obtained the establishment of a weekly line of steamers from Ireland to Canada, and anticipated the developments of thirty years. His subsequent career as member of Parliament, as privy councillor, as treasurer of the Queen's household, and, upon the death of his father, as Earl of Albemarle, does not so directly concern us. His own death took place in 1894.

SINCE THE Earl's death, the recently deceased countess resided chiefly in London, where she breathed her last on April 5th. She had been a constant attendant at the Brompton Oratory during her later years, and it was there her Requiem Mass was celebrated. Interment took place at the family seat, Quidenham, Norfolk. Lady Albemarle is said by those who knew her to have possessed a gracious and pleasing personality, and a heart and purse ever open to the poor and distressed. She had a large family, three sons and seven daughters, the eldest of whom is the present Earl. Her passing will recall to the few survivors of her father's generation in Canada the many historic events in which he took a prominent part, and the large number of really distinguished men who with him laid the foundations of the present flourishing Dominion.

FRANCE DEPRIVED OF PRIESTS

CARDINAL MAKES APPEAL THAT SOME BE SPARED FROM FIRING LINE TO PERFORM RELIGIOUS DUTIES

London, June 28, 1917.—The recent amendment passed in the French Chamber at the instance of Mons. Sixte Quentin, which calls to the colors and the trenches priests up to 45 and even 50 and withdraws from the fighting line all those serving at present in the "Service de Sante," has had a disastrous effect on the parishes of France. Whole regions are now deprived of their priests, and the aged and infirm clergy, who alone are left, cannot fulfill the place of all the absent ones. Cardinal Dubois has written a letter to the president of the council-general of the Seine, who has proved sympathetic. He asks the president to take up this serious matter with the Chamber of Deputies, which refuses to recognize the Bishops. He points out that not all doctors, bakers, and men of other absolutely necessary trades or professions are taken, and asks that priests, who are necessary, should be treated in a like manner. He says the Law of Separation professed to guarantee liberty of conscience and it cannot ignore the exercise of religion. In certain parishes even the Sunday services have had to be abandoned, the catechism cannot be taught regularly, children die without baptism, and the sick without the sacraments. The cardinal says he appeals now for the faithful, not for the priests who so willingly go, although he considers that they should be appointed exclusively to the services of charity for the wounded, which are quite as dangerous, but more in keeping with their sacred calling.

ON THE BATTLE LINE

BRITISH FORCES successfully repulsed a series of violent German attempts to recover the ground taken northeast of Ypres, says General Haig's latest reports. He adds: "In every case the enemy's advancing lines were broken up and dispersed by our artillery barrage or repelled by the steady fire of our infantry." This is a direct contradiction of the Berlin report, which represents the British as making a series of desperate attacks and being everywhere repulsed; even the raids are thus described by the Germans, who are plainly making reports for home consumption regardless of the real situation. The British during the night in a counter-attack retook the ground lost on the Ypres-Roulers Railway, completely establishing their former battle-line. Philip Gibbs, whose special despatches to The Globe have been a feature of the war stories from the Western front, bears that the Germans were so confident of their ability to withstand anything on the West that they rushed six divisions of troops to the Russian front in the hope of striking a decisive blow there. At the same time they replaced a number of divisions broken by the British fire with fresh troops. These, however, as is now known, suffered heavily. A despatch from Amsterdam saying that the Kaiser has summoned a special meeting of Germany's War Council in Brussels may have to do with the losses on the West front, or may presage a new and desperate counter-attack by the Germans in the hope of staying the Allied plans for a renewal of the Flanders drive. All the despises from the Western front dwell upon the evidences among German prisoners of inferior morale. Many of the soldiers captured are very young, and most of them appear to have suffered from short rations and exposure.

RUSSIAN FORCES are still retreating generally, though in some sectors they are putting up a stubborn fight. There is a serious statement in one Petrograd despatch, namely, that the Uxull bridgehead on the Dvina River, fifteen to twenty miles southeast of Riga, has been taken by the Germans. The despatch says that the Russians evacuated the position; presumably there has been more treachery there. The Dvina River positions are very strong. A great German advance was halted there when it would seem that even Petrograd was threatened, and grave consequences may follow the abandonment of the positions. Fighting continues on the Dniester and the Pruth, but the Russians do not appear to have a sufficient number of men who prefer battle to argument. Continuation of the retreat will greatly widen the Teutonic front, which is already across the Russian frontier, and sooner or later will completely nullify the Russo-Romanian advances which have figured in the despatches from time to time. The Berlin report, indeed, declares that Teuton forces are now standing before Kimpolung, and that north of Czernowitz and south of the Dniester they are approaching the Russian frontier. It begins to look as if nothing would awaken the Russians to the stern necessities of the situation short of the taking of far more of their territory than is now held by the foe, with the seizure of the season's harvests, and the stern disciplinary methods that the Germans have followed in all the territories they have overrun.

MAJOR GENERAL MAURICE, chief director of military operations, in discussing the latest British advance, gives the impression that for the present it is completed. The British Commander's next move, he says, is to determine another objective and then after the customary process of preparation to proceed to its achievement. In this case, perhaps, the intention has not been to delay for any length of time after gaining the first objectives, but the heavy rains which have fallen through the past forty-eight hours have no doubt compelled a readjustment of a schedule. General Maurice also declares that the events of the past fortnight in Russia will necessarily mean the prolongation of the War. "We cannot longer count on any great material assistance from Russia," he said, adding that this would mean a greater burden on the Entente Allies and the United States, who must come into the field as soon as possible and with the greatest possible force. His statement follows upon news from Russia that General Korniloff, a popular hero, has been appointed to the command of the Russian armies in place of Brusiloff, whose fame as a leader has been greatly enhanced by his generalship in the Galician area. No adequate reason is assigned for the resignation of Brusiloff.—Globe, August 3.

IRISH TENACITY TO FAITH

"After studying Ireland for many years," said Augustine Birrell, former Chief Secretary for Ireland, "the main feeling left in my mind is how, after all the fighting and revolution and confiscation and menace, after all the penal laws and famines and tithe wars and coercion acts, after the destruction of native industries and the yearly drain on the population by emigration, there are still in Ireland four and a half million people, and that the majority of them still adhere to their old religion. Such tenacity to faith is, I believe, almost unexampled in the history of the whole world."—Catholic News.

CATHOLIC HUTS

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR OVERSEAS SOLDIERS

Garden party, Ottawa, July 5, \$453 00
Catholic Ladies' Patriotic Society, Sydney, N.S., 200 00
Rev. G. O'Toole, P.P., Cantley, Quebec, 5 00
Mrs. W. Herriot, Souris, Man., 5 00
From a friend, 4 00
C. Empeon, LeBelier, Man., 2 00

First it was the Knights who came forward to establish Catholic Huts for our Canadian soldiers; now it is the ladies who are advancing to the support of the movement.

A number of Catholic ladies of Ottawa, most of whom belong to the "Catholic War Workers," organized under the leadership of Mrs. F. Chadwick, a Garden Party at Rockcliffe, on July 5th, and as a result of their splendid work, a cheque for \$453 was received for the Catholic Huts.

The following letter from Mrs. V. Mullins, Sydney, Nova Scotia, renders praise and comment unnecessary:

"Sydney, N.S., July 19, 1917.

"Major Rev. J. J. O'Gorman, Ottawa."

"Reverend dear Father,—I am enclosing a cheque for two hundred dollars (\$200), a donation from the 'Catholic Ladies' Patriotic Society,' to the Hut Fund for Catholic soldiers overseas.

"The movement to better the condition of the Catholic soldiers is very gratifying to everyone, and I trust you will meet with every success.

"Yours very sincerely,

(Signed) HELEN A. MULLINS, "Secretary."

The above-mentioned sums have been forwarded to Lt.-Col. the Rev. W. T. Workman, O. F. M., Canadian Headquarters, London.

In a letter dated July 3, 1917, Father Workman, writing from Office of Director of Chaplain Service, Overseas Military Forces of Canada, Oxford Circus House, 245 Oxford St., London, W. 1., states that he is at present making a tour of all the camps in England and of the Canadian area in France with a view of determining the best locations for Soldiers' Huts. "In the meanwhile," he adds, "you can say for me that by the time we shall have properly fitted out our camps and sent a good Chapel Tent to the Front we shall at least have spent well unto \$20,000."

This much has been written by the Canadian Knights of Columbus, but only a part of it has been collected and forwarded. It is for each Council to see that its contribution is sent on to the State Secretary at once.

Meanwhile the people of Canada will scarcely be satisfied to have but one Chapel tent in France. Fifty thousand dollars is the smallest sum that will be sufficient for the needs.

Since the above was written, two other letters have been received from Father Workman. He writes from London, July 11, as follows:

"I have just received your letter of June 25th, enclosing cheque for £1, 18s. Very many thanks. (This cheque was the proceeds of the C.N.D. Alumnae Concert at Ottawa).

"I have already received cheques for the following amounts: £10, 7s., 5d. (St. Patrick's Parish Guild, Ottawa).

£21, 18s (K. of C. Glee Club Concert, Ottawa).

£62, 12s., 11d. (Ottawa Council, K. of C. first installation), which makes, I think, the complete amount. Some of the letters take a long time to come, hence the delay in acknowledging them, but according to my books, the amounts received are correct.

"We need a hut at Crowborough; also one at Sandling, besides chapel tents for each division at the front. I wish you would continue to act as our agent in the matter and I will send you an account of money received and paid out, very shortly.

(Signed) W. T. WORKMAN, Lt. Col., A. D. C. S. (R.C.), Canadian Contingents.

As is seen from the above letter, Father Workman had not yet received the \$1 per capita contribution voted by the various Canadian K. of C. State Conventions. Those sums had first to be collected before being forwarded. However, Ontario Knights, I am informed, sent on July 3, \$5,000, balance of over \$2,000 to follow in August. Sir Knight, has your Council done its share?

Father Workman's letter of July 6th contains the following very important item:

"We should be glad to get as soon as possible all the funds we can in order to send out a church tent to each division. That is what the chaplains in a recent meeting in France have asked for."

There are four Canadian divisions in France (and not five, as is often erroneously stated). Four combination chapel huts are urgently required in France, and our chaplains at the front in joint meeting appeal to the necessities of Canada for the necessary funds. That appeal cannot and will not be left unanswered. Contributions will be forwarded by the undersigned.

JOHN J. O'GORMAN, C. F., Blessed Sacrament Church, Ottawa.

God loves us and He does not send us tribulations without some good purpose. Do not be uneasy, but abandon yourself to the Divine will, and all will be well. When we begin to give, God does the rest. Courage, confidence and peace! — Sister Blanche.