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LONDON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 25, 1915

CHRISTMAS GREETING

"Peace on earth to men of good will." While the insatiable carnage of the war has claimed as victims, husbands, fathers, brothers, and sweethearts, bringing desolation to millions of Christian homes, while millions more are swept like chaff before the tremendous sweep of contending armies, the Christmas message of peace and good-will may seem to many a cruel mockery of their grief.

OUR FRENCH-CANADIAN FRIENDS

Perhaps Mr. Bourassa is the negligible quantity that he seems to be, or, perhaps, as we think likely, he represents a body of sentiment in the Province of Quebec much larger than the dwindling influence of Le Devoir might indicate.

THE STURGEON FALLS CASE

The Railway Board has decided that the Spanish River Pulp and Paper Company cannot divert part of its taxes to the Separate school unless it can show that just that proportion of its stock is held by Catholic shareholders.

The opinion, we might say the conviction, of Ontario is that she has an absolute right to form her own school system.

The British North America Act permitted the Catholics of Ontario to have their own schools, which were a department of the Common School system.

In the pre-Confederation debates any rights of the French language in Ontario schools were simply unthought of. There was a discussion as to whether or not the use of the French language was to be obligatory in the Parliament of Canada.

When Mr. Bourassa talks of two-hundred thousand French-Canadians in Ontario conveniently forgets that one hundred thousand, and perhaps one hundred and fifty thousand or more are thoroughly anglicized, and would resist as ardently as the Orangemen or the hardly less objectionable Irishmen, any attempt to bilingualize their schools.

Just leave the French-Canadians of Ontario alone and they will settle all their difficulties satisfactorily. But when Quebec agitators, whose totally different educational ideals are formed elsewhere, get in their work there is trouble.

Therefore we should advise our Quebec brethren to mind their own business. There are language difficulties in many countries but in no country in the wide world has a conquered race been treated so generously as in the province of Quebec.

At any rate he is quoted in our newspapers as having said that the position of French-Canadians in Ontario is worse than that of the inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine; and that the problem of the two-hundred thousand French-Canadians in Ontario is more important than all the issues that underlie the present war.

We care nothing about past utterances of this accredited representative of French-Canadians when he takes a stand so decided and unequivocal in the present crisis.

Let us for a moment consider the grounds on which our French-Canadian friends base their school claims and their charges of Ontario Prussianism. Perhaps if such claims were voiced only by the eccentric and erratic Mr. Bourassa they would not be worth while noticing.

Legislation was sought and passed in 1904 validating the agreement between the Public and Separate School Boards. On account of the shameful manner in which the Public School Board had been induced to not this legislation had the unique distinction of being passed without a dissenting voice on either side of the House.

The mill changed hands and was subsequently enlarged to ten times its original capacity. The old agreement—validated by act of Parliament—had no longer any force; but the Board of Directors of their own free will by resolution under the Act directed that one-third of their fixed assessment should be set apart for the support of the Separate school.

Something that is worthy of note is that this action increased the company's taxes by about \$1,500; the Public school rate being about 5 1/2 mills on the dollar while the Separate school rate is 12 mills, and the total fixed assessment of the company's property being about \$900,000.

The action was taken on behalf of the Public School Board by C. W. Parliament and our old liberty-loving and fair-dealing friend, the Rev. Mr. C. Piercy. Without knowing anything about the Sturgeon Falls Public School Board we feel quite sure that only for the Rev. Mr. Piercy—and C. W. Parliament whoever he may be—no such action would have ever been entered before the Ontario Railway Board.

It should be noted that neither the Separate School Board of Sturgeon Falls nor any other Catholics had any hand, act, or part in the case just decided. It was not the Sturgeon Falls Public School Board, but the Rev. C. Piercy and C. W. Parliament on their behalf that instituted the action.

There are a lot of Protestants in Ontario who feel keenly the disgrace of counting the Rev. Mr. Piercy on their side. Before the Railway Board the Spanish River Pulp and Paper Company swore that 87 per cent of their employees' children were receiving their education in the Separate school.

PROVINCIAL BOUNDARY LINES "Rome, Dec. 9th.—At the Consistory Pope Benedict to day appointed Mgr. Mathieu Archbishop of Regina, Mgr. Bellevue Archbishop of St. Boniface and Mgr. Sinnott Archbishop of Winnipeg. Mgr. Sinnott is Secretary of the Papal Legation at Ottawa.

The Northwest Review in giving this despatch adds "we have been unable to verify the report." So far as we are able to ascertain the report at the present writing still lacks authoritative confirmation. It is the appearance of truth. It is entirely in accord with the wise policy of Rome respecting state and provincial boundaries.

It is hardly necessary to point out that the consequences are undesirable and that here, also, Rome's wise and prudent policy should go into effect.

or archbishop of Winnipeg he will bring to his responsible office a fund of knowledge and experience that will be invaluable.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

THE PARTICIPATION OF Canada in the many trophies of former wars scattered up and down the country, whether in private hands, or, as public property, in the parks and squares of our cities and larger towns.

IN FRONT OF THE Parliament Building at Toronto there are two of these pieces which, as their inscription informs us, were taken from the Russians at Sevastopol, and presented to the Government of Canada as memorials of what, in the light of subsequent events, many statesmen have come to regard as the greatest blunder, the Crimean War.

THESE TROPHIES of the past may also be regarded as memorials of the alliance which then existed between Great Britain and France, and which, maintained uninterruptedly through the intervening sixty years, has been deepened and strengthened by their common championship of justice and civilization in the present titanic struggle.

REFERRING TO two trophies we are reminded of two interesting pieces which attracted our attention some years ago. Visitors to the quaint little town of Perth, Ontario, will have perhaps remarked two brass field-pieces (three pounders) which stand in the open space in front of the court house there.

ANOTHER INTERESTING fact which has been recalled by the War is that the "Father of the Russian Navy" was a Scotsman, Sir Samuel Greig, who flourished in the time of the great Empress, Catherine II. On occasion of the investiture last year of the Cross of St. Vladimir upon a member of the British Legation at Petrograd, it was stated that this was the first instance of the bestowal of this honor upon a foreigner.

SIR SAMUEL Greig, Admiral of all the Russians, was one of the first recipients of the Cross after the Order's institution by Empress Catherine. The letter conferring the decoration is an interesting testimony to the efficiency of the Admiral's services to his adopted country.

Class of St. Valdimir, and having with our own hands invested you with the insignia of the Order desire you to wear it in the established manner, firmly persuaded that having received this mark of distinction you, in course of your future service, will merit further proofs of our good will."

SIR SAMUEL DIED in 1788, shortly after the naval engagement off Hogland. For his services at that battle he received the order of St. Andrew in an autograph letter from the Empress. His valor as a seaman has remained one of the best traditions of the Russian Navy.

RELATING THE story of the conversion to the Catholic Faith of a Methodist Episcopal missionary in China—a conversion brought about through reading Cardinal Newman's "Apologia," a contemporary asks: "Did the Cardinal ever imagine that his book would reach a Protestant missionary in inland China, and lead him to renounce all to gain the pearl of great price? What, then, it may be added, about Catholic books under a weight of dust in many libraries? If you will not read them yourselves, put them into the hands of others.

BISHOPS OF THE Church of England in England have a long-established reputation for dignity and decorum. As teachers of truth or leaders of men they can scarcely, in the light of history, be taken seriously, but their character for the most part, as gentlemen and scholars has been pretty well maintained for at least a hundred years.

THE ESSAY—if such it may be called—is not specifically directed against the Catholic Church, but it requires the mere glance to see that that is its one motif and aim. The Bishop must be one of those Anglican dignitaries who, intersecting themselves into the War zone in France, and essaying to make use of Catholic churches for the holding of Protestant services were courteously but firmly reminded that a Catholic church was a consecrated temple, set apart for a sacred rite, and not, for one moment to be diverted to other uses.

THE BISHOP of Carlisle, we repeat, must have been one of these. At least, his Nineteenth Century article breathes pique and wounded vanity in every line. Its coarseness may be seen in its references to the Holy Eucharist; its ignorance in the worn-out calumny about absolutism being a matter of price; and its loose reasoning in that its author has failed to perceive that the same arguments which he directs against the Church may with equal or greater force be directed against Christianity itself or against its Divine Founder.

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Anglican churchmen will be prepared to follow the Bishop of Carlisle in so sweeping an hypothesis.

ON THE BATTLE LINE

Perhaps while our newspapers are giving us vain glorious twaddle about the War it may be useful to read what a pro-British Military Expert in a pro-British paper has to say about our military achievements.

IN JUSTICE to England it must be said that the British fleet has cleared the seas and has thereby made it possible for the Allies to control the world's markets of food and shell. England has also supplied troops in numbers at least five times as great as what her Allies and herself considered her quota at the outset.

Neuve Chapelle saw the beginning of what should have been a great victory, truly important in its results. But its end saw the infantry disrupted and disorganized by an advance of only two miles, the British artillery pumping shrapnel and shell into their own infantry as fast as the artillerymen could work the guns, and utter lack of co-operation between the arms.

Somewhat later the German counterstroke came and the French saw the lines of the British thrust back around the Ypres salient, saw their first line of trenches occupied by the Germans, and the entire position by Ypres threatened, and this after numerous thrusts against the French line in the Argonne and elsewhere had been thrown back.

THE next blunder made its appearance in the latter part of September in the drive in Artois against Lens. Here the mistakes of Neuve Chapelle were repeated. The British went forward at Loos and advanced some distance east of Hill No. 60. The British commander at this part of the line selected the time when the British advance line was over a mile to the east of the present position on British prestige in the Far East if the troops do leave?

The final blow was the military and diplomatic failure in the Balkans. Not only was Bulgaria allowed to go against the Entente, but England utterly failed to send her quota of troops to Serbia's aid.

Lastly—and this affects England alone rather than her allies—there is the British defeat by the German-led Turkish troops in the region of Bagdad. Late in September the British forces under General Townshend won a decisive victory over the Turks in Mesopotamia between the towns of Kut and Nakhallat on the Tigris. But in the week past the tables were turned and it was the British Army that was in retreat.

In the Allies' war council. Rumors have reached us of dissension in the Allies' camp, and it is entirely conceivable that such exists. France and Russia have done their part and have suffered grievously. England boasts that she has not yet been wounded. Herdman, the great German writer, has made the same statement. That British statesman can point with pride to such a condition when France is bleeding at every pore, Serbia has experienced a catastrophe, and Russia holds a line of defense several hundred miles inside of her boundaries, indicates a rather peculiar condition of the British mind. Britain will be wounded, and sorely so, before a treaty of peace is made, and the sooner she can put herself in condition to receive her wounds while inflicting still more serious wounds on her enemies, the sooner the day of peace will come.

T. P. O'CONNOR

DOUBT AND UNCERTAINTY GIVE PLACE TO OPTIMISM

A VISIT TO BYRON'S HOME

LONDON, Dec. 18.—Last week ended in anxious uncertainty; this week, on the contrary, ends not only with a feeling of decided relief but actually with feelings of high hope for the Allies.

There was uncertainty whether the French and British troops could save themselves from encirclement and destruction by the German and Bulgarian forces hurled against them in Serbia, and even greater uncertainty whether the Saloniki expedition should be continued or abandoned. Military opinion in England foresaw difficulties from the beginning and forecast the impossibility of rescuing the Serbian army.

Russia in the meantime is slowly gathering and perhaps more slowly gathering her reserves. While Romania is biding her time she will doubtless join the Allies when Russia's backing makes her secure.

Partly owing to John Redmond's remonstrances, backed by the opinion of all English parties, these deeds of the Irish regiments have received full notice in all papers. All parties abound in recognition of the incomparable bravery of the Irish soldier. The chief regiments were the Munsters, Leinsters, Connaught Rangers and Innishilling. The first three are almost entirely Catholic and Nationalist, the last mixed Ulster Nationalists and Catholics.

Spending a week end at Nottingham, I suddenly realised that I was not far away from Newstead Abbey, the home of Lord Byron, nor from the little church in which he was buried. I found also that Newstead Abbey had passed into the hands of a friend of mine; so when I announced that I wanted to pay a visit to the shrine of the most compelling figure in British literature, I received an invitation to lunch, and had my own time to inspect the place. The present owner is Sir Arthur Markham. He is a Nottinghamshire man; was born within twelve miles of Newstead; has amassed a great fortune in coal, and is a striking figure in the House of Commons, outspoken, unobscured, almost an Ishmael, because he criticises so freely all men even in the highest positions. Whatever his eccentricity, however, in the House, he has the genius for business; no mine almost he has ever touched has failed to turn to gold.