

The Catholic Record

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London, Saturday, June 5, 1916

THE REGENERATION OF FRANCE

That the heart and soul of France is turning to God and returning to the practice of religion is so strikingly apparent that no one gainsays the multiplied evidence of that consoling fact.

Such doubters forget that there was a marvellous revival of religion in France before the War, a revival which was characterized by the Headmaster of Eton preaching in Westminster Abbey in November, 1913, as "the most momentous event occurring in Europe for at least a century."

There are many things in the present situation that indicate a permanent change for the better in the national life of France.

Only ten years ago was exposed the most contemptible, and at the same time the most dangerous of the petty intrigues that have disgraced and degraded French political life.

"M. Guyot de Villeneuve, Nationalist deputy for St. Denis, who had been dismissed from the army by General de Galliffet, brought before the Chamber a collection of documents, which, it seemed, had been abstracted from the Grand Orient of France, the headquarters of French freemasonry, by an official of that order?"

"Foch is the hero of the Marne, the man who perceived on Sept. 9 that there must be a gap between the Prussian Guard and the Saxon Army, and who gathered enough artillery to crush the guard in the St. Gond marshes and forced both the Prussians and the Saxons, now separated, to retreat."

"Foch is the man of Ypres, the commander who was in general control of the first successful fight made by the French and the British, aided by the Belgians, to prevent the Germans from breaking through to Calais."

Yet General Foch would have been blacklisted by the Masonic spies ten years ago, for he is a devout Catholic and the brother of a Jesuit priest.

ately successful in securing a parliamentary majority the movement did its share in preparing the way for the magnificent national unity which France to-day is showing to her enemies.

In an article "Joffre and the New France," James Middleton, in the World's Work, gives a luminous and accurate account of the transformation effected in the last few years.

In 1911, when France determined to reform and reorganize the army demoralized by anti-clerical politicians "the whole French mind and heart turned towards General Pau, the one-armed survivor of the Franco-Prussian War. The Cabinet and the army heads themselves indorsed this popular demand."

Dr. Elliot is a great educationalist and was for forty years president of Harvard University; but he is not a Christian; he possesses the prophetic reason why he is sure of a respectful hearing from professedly Christian clergymen.

We had grown accustomed to the cheap scoffing of shallow and irreverent writers at the people of contending nations praying to the same God for victory for their respective sides in the great War. President Elliot gives us a slight variation of the popular misconception of prayer.

It is necessary to clarify our ideas of prayer when such rubbish passes for wisdom. The Catechism teaches that "prayer is an elevation of the soul to God, to adore Him, to bless His holy name, to praise His goodness, and to return Him thanks for all His benefits."

And prayer is also but only in the second place "a humble petition to God for all necessities for soul and body."

Primarily and above all prayer is the spiritual union with God the Source of all grace, all strength, the all-powerful and all knowing Creator.

Another interesting sidelight on the passing of the clique of Masonic politicians is furnished by this extract from an article in the New York Times on "General Foch, the New Master of War."

When King George of England was at the front in France recently he conferred the Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath—the highest military distinction in the form of an order within the gift of the British Crown—on two Frenchmen. Joffre was one. The other was Foch.

tionization of the schools of France, declared lately to an interviewer: "If you ask me to summarize my views, my choice is made: the policy of to-morrow should be the methodical and organic continuation of what is called to-day the 'sacred union.'"

These and many other things which we have noted from time to time lead us to believe that the War will go far to complete the regeneration of Catholic France.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

So much heathenish humbug has been talked about prayer, and so much savagery has entered into the discussion of peace that it is perhaps not surprising that Dr. Elliot's advice on prayer for peace should receive such respectful not to say reverential hearing.

ABOUT BOOKS AND READERS

The Catholic author and the Catholic reading public are usually strangers to one another. For this neglect of our own writers we have many excuses. In the first place, Catholic books are inferior. Are they? What non-Catholic novelists excel Benson, Sheehan, John Ayscough, to mention but a few.

Again we are told that Catholic books are too dear. If Catholic books are dearer than the like publications of non Catholics there must be a reason. And it hardly ever occurs to us that the reason is our own rigorous boycott of the literary output of our co-religionists.

Another objection that our indifferent Catholic readers make is that one has to hunt in the byways, and have the detective sense highly developed, before he can discover Catholic books, whereas the works of other writers stare us in the face at every book stall.

The most crushing argument of all is that very many of our people cannot afford to buy books, and have to be satisfied with what is provided for them in the public libraries.

"Do not pray for peace now," says Dr. Elliot; lest, it would seem, the infinite and omniscient God might be led into some mistaken course.

The colored sunsets and the starry heavens, the beautiful mountains and the shiny seas, the fragrant woods and the painted flowers,—they are not half so beautiful as a soul that is serving Jesus out of love, in the wear and tear of common, unpoetic life.—Faber.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

THE LATEST information about General Joffe is that while always at least a nominal Catholic or nothing, he has since the outbreak of the Great War become what we are accustomed to call, a practical Catholic. This is definitely and undeniably asserted and proved by the well-known author and Academician, M. Maurice Barres.

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ON THE BATTLE LINE

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REVERTING to the religious character of the French Generalissimo, it may be said that though always a man of high character—above reproach, it is said, in public as well as in private life—he could not, before the War be said to belong to the "body" of the Church.

IT is stated authoritatively that of the members of the Newfoundland contingent to Europe the majority are of Irish descent. From Waterford and from County Wexford chiefly, came those sturdy men whose pluck and tenacity laid the foundation of the Island's fisheries, and made famous her reputation for producing the best of the world's sea-men.

IN GALICIA

For the first time since the Austro-German drive toward Przemysl and Lemberg began the German official bulletin reports reverse. It is stated that a German force on the right, or eastern bank of the San, ten miles north of Jaroslau, was driven back, and lost six cannon during the retreat.

IN FLANDERS

Upon the front there has been relative quiet, and the centre of interest in the west is the region between Armentieres and Arras, where the British and the French are hammering away in the direction of Lille La Bassée and Lens.

ST. PETER'S SEMINARY

On Saturday, May 29th, the Ordination services conducted in St. Peter's Cathedral, London, were among the most impressive ever held in the Diocese.

After the ceremony the Bishop addressed the newly ordained priests and the congregation in telling words, encouraging the young men to zealous and faithful work in the house of God.

The following priests were present in the sanctuary: Right Rev. Mgr. Aylward, Sarnia; Very Rev. C. E. McGee, Stratford; Very Rev. D. J. Downey, Windsor; Rev. F. White, St. Columban; Rev. J. Hogan, Lucan; Rev. W. J. Kelly, Logan; Rev. D. J. Egan, Stratford; Rev. A. E. Goodwin, St. Thomas; Rev. E. Goetz, Tilsonburg; Rev. J. Gnam, Ingersoll; Rev. J. Stroder, Zurich; Rev. W. Murray, C. S. B., Toronto; Rev. F. Powell, C. S. B., Sandwich; Rev. J. Stanley, Woodstock; Rev. P. Mahoney, Woodstock; Rev. J. Mahoney, Bathwell; Rev. Father Carey, Detroit; Rev. R. Fleming, Detroit; Rev. P. Lennon, Hamilton; Rev. M. J. Brady, Wallaceburg; Rev. J. Ronan, St. Mary's; Rev. P. Quinlan, Strathroy; Rev. Father Hodgkinson, London; Rev. T. Valentin, London; Rev. P. N. Doyle, C. S. B., London; Rev. J. Hamilton, London; Rev. F. X. Laurendeau, London; Rev. J. T. Foley, London; Rev. J. V. Tobin, London; Rev. C. Parent, Tilbury; Rev. J. P. Brennan, LaSalette; Rev. F. J. Brennan, London; Rev. J. G. Labelle, London; Rev. T. Corcoran, London; Rev. T. G. Hussey, Kinkora; Rev. T. Ford, Woodlee; Rev. C. Laliberte, Ruscom River; Rev. P. McCabe, Maidstone; Rev. D. Forster, Redgown; Rev. J. Dantzer, Haddon; Rev. H. R. Robert, Windsor; Rev. E. L. Tierney, Mount Carmel; Rev. T. McCarthy, Mount Carmel; Rev. A. Fuert, West Lorne; Rev. M. O'Neill, Parkhill; Rev. J. Fallon, Wingham.

SIDELIGHTS ON THE GREAT WAR

THE ATTITUDE OF ENGLISHMEN

By way of contrast with the above, the following testimony from that offered by a fine art publisher, recently returned to Germany from England, and printed in the Berliner Tagblatt, may be given: Hatred against Germany does not exist, and the great feeling of hatred that one encounters on arriving in Germany is quite foreign, and indeed, is incomprehensible to the English.

LIKE SARDINES IN A BOX

Private N. Revelle, of the 2nd Battalion Royal Irish Regiment, writing from France in acknowledgment of a packet of religious articles, says: We had a small service in one of the wooden huts at this place, and there were some of the men who came a long distance to go to confession and Communion. Father King is very anxious about the welfare of all his soldiers here, and he goes to a lot of pains to meet every

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recklessness in the hope of winning back their trenches. The report says that during yesterday they made five of these counter-attacks, but every time they were rolled back. On Thursday night two similar attacks had been made, so that in less than twenty-four hours the Germans near Arras, tried seven times to retake their lost positions and failed every time. In addition to these infantry attacks an artillery duel of special violence continued throughout the day. It would seem that the storm of war which recently spent its violence around Ypres has now broken out with increased strength east of the Lys.

It is pleasant now to remember that Duffy remained to the last unspoiled by success. It is related of him that much as he prized his athletic honors he thought still more highly of his mother's letters of appreciation. If she were pleased it seemed to him that nothing else mattered. He was always attentive to his religious duties, and now that he is gone those who knew him but he spoke of him as "so exemplary a son and so good and practical a Catholic."

His amiable disposition and agreeable manners endeared him to all, and the memory of Private James Duffy will not soon be forgotten. R. I. P.

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