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CURRENT COMMENT

This is Holy Week, the commemoration of the tragedy that transformed the world. Have you entered into the spirit of that tragedy? Have you fulfilled your Easter duty?

Duty! That is the watchword of the perfect man or woman. The highest and best result of true education is the acquired habit of doing one's duty. And most opportunely has "Love of Duty" been chosen as the General Intention of the Apostleship of Prayer for the month of April. As the Canadian Messenger of the Sacred Heart says very truly, We hear a great deal nowadays about rights, the rights of labor, of capital, of woman, of nations, but precious little about duties. Yet if everyone did his duty, every other one would have his rights. The best and quickest way to ensure both our own rights and the rights of others is to be faithful to our own duties, first to God and then to our fellow creatures.

"The Messenger" of New York has done well in publishing separately, as a five-cent pamphlet, "Dr. Harris and the Agnostic School House," by Father (Timothy) Broshnan, S. J. Among the papers read at the annual convention in Boston last July, of the National Educational Association was one by Dr. William T. Harris, the U. S. Commissioner of Education, entitled, "The Separation of the Church from Schools Supported by Public Taxes." The scope of this paper was much wider than its title warrants. It was, in fact, writes Father Broshnan, "a plea for the exclusion of religion from all schools in which instruction in secular knowledge is given, whether supported by public taxes, by church revenues, by private contributions, or by any other means whatsoever." Dr. Harris's "fundamental proposition is, that instruction in secular knowledge is of its very nature so antagonistic to religious instruction as to render the communication of both in the same school an impossibility." To this fundamental proposition and the attempts at proof in support thereof Father Broshnan makes a most satisfactory and complete reply. A perusal of these thirty pages leaves a deep sense of their power. There are passages of singular beauty and eloquence in which the broad sweep of great thoughts reminds us of Newman. Unfortunately space forbids us to quote these passages, but we earnestly commend this pamphlet to our readers as a masterly defence of Catholic education. Write to "The Messenger," 27-29 West 16th Street, New York.

While admitting that, in the hands of certain teachers, secular knowledge may antagonize religion, Father Broshnan shows that this is due not to the secular knowledge itself, but to the narrow methods of those who impart it. "The real subject matter of human knowledge is not an assemblage of distinct and unconnected facts, which may be assorted and pigeon-holed under religion, mathematics, political economy, biology, or physics; but one vast complex fact with multitudinous facets. The man who asserts that one part of this immeasurable and infinitely complex world of truth is contradictory of another, simply claims for himself more knowledge than any human intellect will ever possess. Hostility to or scepticism regarding any body of truths is therefore a species of intellectual intemperance which any specializing and emotional bigot may indulge in. Intellectual sobriety preserving the means of culture does not attitudinize in poses of scepticism."

To Dr. Harris's contention that the principle of authority, which religion makes so much of, does not enter into secular education as an element of training, Father Broshnan replies by proving that this assertion is not only untenable, but ludicrous in fact. Authority may mean either the moral right of exacting obedience or the intellectual right of a trustworthy witness to produce, in his hearers that mental assent which is called belief. In both these senses authority is a necessary element of all true education; the right to command, in order

that proper discipline may be used in this formation of character, and the right to be listened to and believed when communicating instruction on many subjects which, from this nature of the case, the pupil cannot learn by investigation or personal experience. Father Broshnan instances history and geography. Dr. Harris had said that the pupils of the public schools are "taught in history to verify the sources and to submit all tradition to probabilities of common experience." Father Broshnan replies: "It is incredible, first, that any one should expect us to believe this. Fancy the boys and girls of some elementary school, or even high school, sedately verifying the sources of history, surrounded by ancient tomes, original records and the documents of official archives, delving into the public and private correspondence of historical personages, collating passages from one source with those from another, reading with ease the various languages in which diplomatic and State papers are written. . . . Fancy, again these same children, after their historical investigation has been completed, sitting upright in an attitude of severe thought, while they gravely test the truth of their researches by the probabilities of their common experience. . . . It is, secondly, incredible that a man of logical acumen should think he had banished authority in the teaching of history when he has shifted it from the teacher back to the original sources. How can these original sources be proved authentic except by tradition and authority? If the authority of the teacher, who by years of prior study and by searching examination has been proved competent to teach history, is out of place, why is the authority of those who testify to the authenticity of some musty and lifeless document, to be accepted? Still more ridiculous is the notion of testing the facts of remote and unfamiliar ages by the probabilities of a modern child's common experience. What can the common experience of an American school boy avail as a means of estimating the conduct of a medieval Englishman, when we know how few learned Americans of mature years understand their English contemporaries unless they have lived in England? And at best personal experience only shows that the past event is probable or improbable, not that it actually took place. "Yet history does not profess to teach us what might, could, would or should have taken place, but what, in fact," really occurred. And some of the most certain facts in history are antecedently very improbable.

Perhaps the extreme absurdity of Dr. Harris's principle is best shown in the teaching of geography. To be logical, he would have to require personal visits of verification on the part of the pupils, to the spot where Nansen, who is the sole witness and not a very trustworthy one, says he reached what was then the farthest northern point. It is obvious, as Father Broshnan remarks, "that most of us, grown men and women and children alike, learned and ignorant, teachers and pupils, must accept the facts of geography on the authority of some expert, or go without the information." And even those who are privileged to visit foreign countries cannot get a comprehensive knowledge of their physical aspect unless they consult the authority of the maps.

Our German friends of the "St. Peters-Bote" have such confidence in the support their people will give them that they confidently announce the use to which the profits of that paper will be put. It is intended therewith to build a monastery and ecclesiastical seminary in the new St. Peter's colony near Rosthern, Sask. We have yet to hear of any Catholic paper in the English language able to make such an announcement in its first number. Most of us find it hard enough to make both ends meet. In this respect the German Catholics, with their daily Catholic papers, are an example to their brethren of English speech in America.

We have, however, a small crow to pick with our Rosthern contemporary. In its number of March 1 it reproduced a couple of editorial comments of November 14 last without acknowledgment. One was an inference we drew from the statistics of the religions of the world as to the vast preponderance

of the Christians who believed in the Real Presence. The other was a paragraph about the principals of the New York city public schools petitioning the board of education to remove the restriction on corporal punishment. The humor of our phrase anent teachers who "were told to spare the rod and spoil the child" escaped the German translator, who simply wrote that for many years past such punishment was deemed barbarous. But the rest of the paragraph was evidently copied from us. The same may be said of a news item we were the first to publish about the then (Nov. 14) approaching arrival from Europe of two Basilian Fathers of the Ruthenian rite. This item looks queer in a paper issued at the beginning of March, when these good Ruthenian Fathers had been here three months. To quote ourselves as translated by our German friends, we may truly say, "It takes a long time—es nimmt geraume Zeit" for some things to reach Rosthern.

The storm of the 25th of March is responsible for our four instead of eight pages last week. The snow was so deep that several of the printers could not get to their work. As the unprecedented blizzard showed no signs of relenting when the hour came for going to press it was thought best to omit all clippings and confine that issue to original matter, much of which was found so interesting that many of our readers did not notice the absent pages. This week again, owing to Good Friday being a holiday, we print four pages only.

In the Holy Father's encyclical on the Jubilee of the Immaculate Conception a phrase occurs which has given rise to many faulty translations. Several French versions, appearing in clerical publications which are generally trustworthy, excepted from the jubilee fast "the days included in the Lenten indulgent." According to these versions the jubilee fast could not be performed on Lenten days where meat is allowed by indulgent. True, our translation, based on the translation of "The Tablet and the 'N. Y. Freeman's Journal,'" read: "Except the days NOT included in the Lenten indulgent"; but so long as we had not the original Latin text we refrained from insisting on the correctness of our version. Now, however, that the Latin text comes to us in the American Ecclesiastical Review, everybody admits that we were right, and thus the true state of the case is exactly reversed. The only days of Lent that could have been chosen for the jubilee fast are those which are now gone forever, namely, the days included in the Lenten indulgent. For those good people who have already suffered the privations of a black fast in vain so far as the indulgence is concerned, it will be a great consolation to reflect that the self-denial they then practised is infinitely more valuable than any plenary indulgence could be; for a plenary indulgence—even when gained to the full, which is probably a rare event owing to the perfect interior dispositions required—is after all, only a temporal blessing, the cancelling of the transient pains of purgatory, whereas an act of self-denial performed by a soul in the state of grace is, prospectively, an everlasting blessing. Forever and forever, so long as God is God, the immortal soul, if ultimately saved, will enjoy a higher of that one act of self-denial. And it is precisely with a view of stimulating the faithful to the performance of proclaimed with such solemnity.

Persons and Facts

While the nuns in the convent of the Sisters of St. Anne, at Aversa, near Naples, Italy, were engaged in reciting prayers for the dead over the confined body of aged Sister Josephine recently, who was supposed to have died the day before, Sister Josephine sat up in her coffin, which was encircled with lights and flowers. The Sister was finally carried to her cell put to bed and died during the night.

On March 14 an almost unique tribute was paid to an English Catholic in the opening at Covent Garden opera house, London, of a three days' Elgar festival. In the brilliant audience were King Edward and Queen Alexandra,

Princess Victoria and Prince and Princess Charles of Denmark. Herr Richter conducted a fine performance of Elgar "Dream of Gerontius," a marvellous setting to music of Cardinal Newman's dramatic poem describing a Catholic dying and passing into purgatory. The succeeding evenings were devoted to performances of Elgar's "Apostles," his latest oratorio, and to some of his orchestral and vocal works.

Munsey's Magazine and the Cosmopolitan, two great rivals in the popular illustrated monthly line, are at loggerheads about air ships. The February Munsey gave a rather disheartening sketch of the prospects of aerial navigation. Thereupon in March John Brisben Walker comes out in his Cosmopolitan as a prophet in favor of the proximate conquest of the air. Both are extremists, Munsey because he depreciates unduly the achievements of Professor Langley, and J. B. Walker because he makes too much of them and too little of the difficulties and dangers of aeroplanes.

Says the Casket: "The British expedition into Tibet is being referred to in certain quarters as another proof of John Bull's greediness and disregard for the rights of weaker peoples. The fact is that some step had to be taken to counteract Russian designs in that country. Tibet is nominally a vassal state of the Chinese Empire, but seeing how powerless the latter is growing, it has largely entered into communications with Russia. . . . As Tibet is several thousand miles distant from the nearest point in Asiatic Russia, and only three hundred miles distant from the frontier of British India, it is quite clear that Russia intended to use the dominions of Lama for the purpose of encroaching on Britain's possessions. The mission of Colonel Younghusband is therefore fully justified."

Notre Dame university will not entertain the interstate oratorical contest this year, as had been arranged. The faculty's reason for the change is because the oration of Luther M. Feefer, Indiana's representative, reflects on the Catholic faith, and Notre Dame could not with propriety permit it to be delivered at that institution. Feefer's oration deals with Gustavus Adolphus.

The splendid library of Leo XIII., which contained more than 5,000 volumes, most of them magnificently bound presents, has been dispersed by order of Pius X. A close examination of each volume was made and those which were of the greatest importance were placed in the Vatican library. All the others have been distributed among the ecclesiastical colleges of Rome.

Archbishop Ryan, of Philadelphia and Bishop Shanahan, of Harrisburg, have recommended to Catholic families three hundred Catholic children of the Carlisle Indian school who are prepared to go to work in homes. Responsible families may select a boy or girl for service, to be taught habits of industry and morality. After two week's trial terms of longer service can be arranged.

A few months ago the well-known English convert, Lord Bray, offered a scholarship worth \$500 a year with a view of promoting the study of Scripture in Catholic universities. The subject chosen by the Rev. David Fleming for this year's paper is: "To expound and discuss the principal differences between the Greek text and the old Latin versions of St. Mark's gospel."

The men's mission at the cathedral this week is well attended, the preaching and spiritual direction of the two distinguished Oblate missionaries, Fathers Prod'homme and Legault, be most effective and encouraging.

Clerical News.

The Right Rev. Louis Maria Fink, D. D., O. S. B., Bishop of Leavenworth, Kansas, died at his episcopal residence, Kansas City, on St. Patrick's Day. Bishop Fink was Bavarian by birth, but came to this country when yet in his teens, and joined the Benedictines in Pennsylvania, making his profession

in 1854. Hew was ordained a priest in 1857. He was consecrated titular Bishop of Eucarpia in 1871, and was vicar-apostolic of Kansas till the erection of the see of Leavenworth, when he was transferred to that bishopric.

Rev. Father Proulx, S. J., writes from St. Joseph's church, Ishpenning, Mich., where he is taking the place of the parish priest, that the weather has been very cold there necessitating the use of furs, and that he has a great deal of work.

Rev. Josaphat Magnan, B.A., who returned last Sunday from the Grand Seminary in Montreal in order to recruit his health, reports that in the second year of theology, which comprises seventy-five students from many dioceses of Canada and the United States, the first in order of merit is Rev. Adonias Sabourin, B.A., who graduated in 1902 from Manitoba University through St. Boniface college, while the second is Rev. Mr. Joubert, of St. Pierre Joly's. Thus the two best students in that year are Manitobans.

Rev. Father Drummond, S.J., left last Tuesday for Port Arthur, Ont., to assist Rev. Father Neault, S.J., in the holy week and Easter services. He will return next Tuesday.

Rev. Father Hugonard, O. M. I., is staying at St. Mary's presbytery, where Rev. Father Chaumont, O.M.I., of St. Laurent, was also at the beginning of the week.

Rev. Father Lacombe, O.M.I., arrived here from the west on Monday and will proceed eastward on Monday next.

Rev. Father Vales, O.M.I., who has been laid up at St. Boniface hospital with an attack of fever, is now able to be about and will probably return soon to Port Alexander.

Rev. Father Chaput, S.J., went on Thursday, March 31, to St. Jean Baptiste to preach on that evening, Good Friday and Easter morning, returning on the afternoon of Easter Sunday.

Rev. Father Jette, S.J., goes to Selkirk on Good Friday to help Rev. Father Thibaudeau, S.J., for the Holy Saturday and Easter services.

Regina Notes.

We have had some very severe weather this winter and the week ending March 26 was certainly no exception. On Thursday of that week a blizzard raged all day, few people were able to travel about. To give an idea of the state of the roads, a farmer who drove twenty-four miles on Friday said he was twelve hours on the road, and had to unhitch his horses nine times. As the roads are almost impassable the Reverend Oblate Fathers were all in Regina on Sunday, March 27. Rev. M. J. Kasper, O.M.I., celebrated the High Mass at eleven o'clock. There was a communion service early on Sunday morning when a great concourse of people received Holy Communion, and again there was a great number of communicants at the Mass at half-past nine.

Rev. Hamilton Wigle, the Methodist minister of Regina, who is at present on a trip to Palestine, writes from New York, to the Daily Standard, Regina, of March 18. He speaks of the observance of Sunday in that great city. He says: "The churches are fairly well attended," and adds: "The Catholic churches are the best attended. The people attend church by conscience. They have no ushers and no fictitious attractions but religious impulse and church discipline combine to hold them bowed to it."

"The Protestants pose as self-interpreters of Scriptural teachings, and self-arbiters of ethics, and need to resort to all kinds of modern inventions and artifices to get the people to venture inside the church doors. Here is food for thought. Who is right? What do you think about it?"

To-day (Monday, March 28) is a beautiful spring-like day and the snow is disappearing; but, oh, there are mountains of it to go!

GENA MACFARLANE.