

The Catholic Record

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LONDON, SATURDAY, AUGUST 19, 1922

THE IRISH SITUATION

Perhaps it is but natural to find so much interest manifested in the situation in Ireland.

Whatever ground there might have been before the elections for dissatisfaction with the Anglo-Irish Treaty the vote of the Irish people removed the last trace of justification for active opposition.

Will the Irish people cooperate loyally and fearlessly with their own government to make their experiment in self-government a success?

OLD TIME INSOLENT

Catholics can only wonder what is meant when they are told that they are slaves in "chains of mental and religious bondage."

It is a very old story that the Catholic Church has been accused of being tyrannical and despotic.

Last Saturday the Toronto Globe rejoiced that certain groups in the new or disturbed nations of Europe were "breaking the chains that brought mental and religious bondage."

In his reply he said: "When the irregular leaders and their men see fit to obey the wishes of the people as expressed through their elected representatives and surrender their arms and cease depredations on persons and property of Irish citizens, then there will no longer be need for hostilities."

And the Irish Trade Unions in their annual Report, while not fully approving of the Government policy, give out this clear-headed criticism of the claims and methods of the "Republicans."

The political claims of the Republicans are irrational; their methods of warfare are deserving of strong denunciation, while their

ambushes, destruction of bridges, railroad tracks and buildings are tantamount to war on the people and certain to hurt the civilian population more than military opponents."

At another time we shall deal with other phases of the perplexing Irish question; for the moment we shall conclude with the expression of our absolute conviction that to the vigorous and successful assertion of its authority by the Irish Government, putting down with a strong hand vandalism, arson, robbery and rebellion, establishing security for life and property, there is but one alternative: the resumption of British rule in Ireland.

Ireland's invincible ally in her heroic struggle for freedom was the active sympathy and good-will of the world. If chaos be the result of her attempt to govern herself, not only will she have forfeited that sympathy and good-will, but world opinion will compel England to step in, restore order and establish peace.

It is, therefore, with a great deal of pleasure that we receive in receipt of a new publication by Rev. M. V. Kelly, C. S. B., entitled "Zeal in the Class-Room."

This book deals entirely with the spiritual training of the young, and, although primarily intended for teachers in boarding-schools, the principles which are enunciated, together with their practical application, are of untold advantage to all teachers, including parents.

ZEAL IN THE CLASS-ROOM

Now that the summer vacation is drawing to a close and our teachers have had ample opportunities by means of conventions to discuss the various phases of education, it seems to be a very opportune time to call attention to the fact that the Separate schools are in existence for the sole purpose of training our young boys and girls in the knowledge and practice of their religion.

During the summer our Catholic papers and magazines have been filled with the excellent papers that have been read, papers treating of every subject in the school curriculum. In all these discussions, while very good and even necessary, scant attention, if any, was paid to religious training.

The immediate question is, in Oklahoma and Oregon, the amending of the State constitution so as to compel all children to attend the Public schools, which would automatically close the Catholic Parochial schools.

All these considerations of course, count, with bigots, for just nothing at all. Malicious bigotry is not to be reasoned with. The proposed amendments in Oklahoma and Oregon are to be submitted to a referendum, in accordance with the constitutional procedure in those States.

In Ontario, the Catholic Separate schools are protected by the Constitution of Canada. No change can be made in it except by the British Parliament, and the British Parliament will not act in the matter without a practically unanimous vote of Parliament.

Now, in Oklahoma and Oregon, the matter is arranged very differently. The present crisis for the Catholic schools in Oregon, for instance, was brought about by a few ultra bigots who went around the State raising the war-whoops of bigotry.

That question is, shall all the children in the State of Oregon be compelled to go to the Public schools and give up their own Catholic schools? That question is now to be voted on at the polls; under all the circumstances of excitement and with all the accompaniments of

FRESH ATTACKS ON THE CHURCH

By The Observer

In several of the American States there is at the present time a recurrence of the bitter attacks on the Church which aroused Protestant bigotry to so fierce a flame during the Know-Nothing agitation about seventy years ago.

nothing new in either the nature or the method of the attacks. The heretical sects, great as is the number and the variety of their religious errors and vagaries, have nothing new to offer to a credulous and prejudiced world in the way of criticism of the Church of God.

It would, however, be a great mistake to suppose that because there are such men, it will do to take these organized campaigns lightly. It is not at all clear how many broad-minded Protestants there are who are ready to come to the rescue of the Catholic Parochial schools in the States of Oregon and Oklahoma.

The immediate question is, in Oklahoma and Oregon, the amending of the State constitution so as to compel all children to attend the Public schools, which would automatically close the Catholic Parochial schools. This iniquitous proposal takes no account whatever of the fact that the Catholics have paid and are still paying, for the up-keep of the Parochial schools, nor of the fact that they are also saving a vast amount of money to the Protestants by relieving them of taxes to that extent.

That Father Kelly has struck the right note, no one who has thought at all on the tendency of our schools will dispute. In the keen desire to see that our Catholic pupils are thoroughly instructed in the various secular branches of learning, and in the face of the competitions which public examinations cause, there is the danger that success in these subjects is the be-all and end-all of our schools, whether they are day-schools or boarding-schools.

Father Kelly in his book deals with almost every detail of the pupil's life. In practical and concrete form he shows how religion should dominate every moment of the school-boy's life, and maintains in his thesis that as religion is the most vital factor, it can in no way be dispensed with, or neglected.

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deception, all the appeals to passion, which are usually to be seen at election time; and in this case the subject to be dealt with is one on which people are divided by religious feeling; which, of course, makes the matter so much the worse, and greatly prejudices the chances of a fair and just verdict at the polls.

If Ontario Catholics will imagine a similar state of affairs in Ontario, they will see at once what it would mean for them and for their Separate school system. Imagine what would be the situation if the Separate school system of Ontario were at the mercy of bigoted demagogues, who had the right, under the Constitution, to bring before the electors of Ontario at the polls, whenever they liked, and as often as they liked, the question whether the Separate schools of the Catholics should be continued or abolished.

This is exactly what is now taking place in Oklahoma and Oregon, and what our Catholic brethren in those States have to fight against during the next few months. There is the greatest possible danger that the bigots will succeed.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

An Anglican rector in Toronto boasts that he is furthering the cause of Christian Unity by permitting Mass to be said in his church every Sunday by a priest of the Russian Orthodox Church.

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THE VICAR is of course not the first person to "strain at a gnat and swallow a camel." He is but following in the footsteps of a considerable section of his clerical brethren for the past seventy or eighty years. We are reminded of one of the earlier attempts to expunge the memory of the Mass from English speech.

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time, suggested that before making the change members should themselves set the example by first reforming their own names, and that the mover of the resolution should drop the name Thomas Massey and be known henceforth as Mr. Thotlde Tidey. That settled it.

It is often, as it has been well said, but a step from the sublime to the ridiculous, and in their feverish anxiety to be "Catholic," at least in appearance, Anglicans not infrequently strikingly exemplify its truth.

A MORE glaring example of the truth of the saying occurred but last Lent in another well-known ritualistic church in London, when on Ash Wednesday the members of the congregation, according to an English exchange, blackened their faces all over before going up to the communion rail, and were told by the Vicar that they would find soap and water and towels in the vestry if they wished to wipe their faces before going home.

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offer condolences on the Pope's death, this being the first occasion in the nine hundred years of the schism that such exchange of courtesies has taken place. Definite efforts have been made during the last three pontificates to bring this unhappy division to a close, and signs have not been wanting since the War that they will in God's own time have their due effect.

BOY LIFE

"Talks to Boys", By Rev. J. P. Conroy, S.J. Published by permission of the Queen's Work Press.

HERE is a phrase that has done an incalculable amount of harm—"sowing wild oats." It is applied to youth, generally with a limited application to growing boys and young men. What does it mean? It is supposed to be a polite way of expressing the idea of a dissipated life, of years uncontrolled by any of the Ten Commandments; and to the "initiated," it always carries with it the underlying notion of a bad life.

In its practical application and interpretation, therefore, it is a phrase that is used to condone offences against God, to minimize sin, to make light of impurity, to pretend that uncleanness is a necessary thing in every young life—a thing to be expected, tolerated, overlooked, excused. Often enough we hear out of mouth of persons who pose as connoisseurs of life such talk as this: "Oh, So-and-So is wild, dissipated, a rake. But he is only sowing his wild oats. He'll turn out well, settle down and be a good man."

The effect of this teaching upon the growing boy is deadly. He hears it lightly said that what he thought was hideous and disgraceful is not so bad after all. He is practically told that impurity is the usual preliminary to the real work of life, a stage of growth through which a boy normally goes, a prerequisite to right living, a discordant yet necessary overture to the harmony of manhood's years, the common foundation on which everybody builds. And the listening boy is weak; perhaps already fallen, but struggling to get up from the mire. He hears this phrase, an encouragement to him to go ahead with his sin. The devil puts the catch word into his hands as an excuse for his habits: "Go on. Sow your wild oats. You'll be all right in the end. You'll settle down later." And the youth goes on.

Now, is this right? "No," you will tell me, "it isn't right." It is directly against the law of God, binding in youth no less than in age. And it is certain to be cursed in the end. From our earliest to our latest years God is the one who tells us what to do, and not these experimentering virtues.

But even apart from our faith, there is a single grain of reason in this advice to sow wild oats? Is there a shred of business sense, a spark of ordinary prudence in such a method of going about the great affair of our soul's salvation? Saving our soul is a business proposition. Is there anything like a business proposition in a boy's sowing wild oats?

What does the wild-oats idea mean? It means that about the early part of your life you needn't care. "Go ahead at any pace you choose. Follow passion, be anything you like in thought, in word, in action. Be impure, obey your animal instincts. All will be well later on. You can easily stop whenever you have a mind to."

I say there is not a particle of business sense in this idea. To throw away the early beginnings of your life, your youth, your young strength—and the rest will be all right—is this business?

Put the idea into any business you happen to think of, and see how it works out. For example, as we are talking of wild oats, the business of farming. Do you ever notice the successful farmer beginning his cultivation by letting weeds grow all over his farm? The farmer nowadays is looked on as a fool for neglecting any corner of his land. He watches every inch of it all the time. You will find none of his land set aside for a wild-oats crop.

In architecture and building. When the plans are made for a skyscraper or a bridge, is it not the foundations that are the great source of worry? And when the building begins, do you not see that