

# The Catholic Register.

"Truth is Catholic; proclaim it ever, and God will effect the rest."—BALMEZ.

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## Current Topics.

### The Boer War

For the first time in an indefinite period of British history, the weather is at a discount as a topic of conversation. War is all the talk, and pretty serious it is too—for the British. Three British Generals, Gatacre, Methuen, and Buller, the Commander in Chief of the British forces in South Africa, have successfully met with decided reverses, if not practical defeat at the hands of their stubborn, heroic foes. To face the situation, the British authorities have sent General Lord Roberts to assume supreme command in South Africa, with General Lord Kitchener as his chief of staff. The gravity of the situation is well summed up in the following utterance of Right Hon. Mr. Asquith, in his address at Newcastle, England, on Saturday, the 10th, inst.

"It is our title to be known as a world power that is now upon trial, and it is fall here, the empire ceases." So it has come to this, that a paltry republic, with scarcely half a million of people to draw from, has set the whole British empire at defiance, and in a few weeks has reduced it to the extreme position of a world power fighting for its life. The recent British reverses form a never-failing subject of jubilation to the continental press, which almost universally exults in Britain's humiliation. Boer stock, of course, has gone up, and it would not be very startling, if the splendid valor, endurance and skill in the art of defensive warfare displayed by the Boers, yet won for them auxiliary recognition from some of Britain's powerful foes, and finally their independence. The weakness of the campaign so far, in the judgment of those who profess to know, has been in the lack of sufficient and efficient artillery, in the neglect of proper scouting, in the want of cavalry, and, evidently in the opinion of the British War Office, in inferior British generalship. The great hope for the future lies in the unobscured bravery and conspicuous gallantry of the British troops, but even this will not avail, unless general competent to grapple with the difficulties of the situation are placed in command. The British losses in every battle have been frightful, and apparently far in excess of those of the Boers. But this is only what might have been expected in attacks of almost unassailable positions, held by such redoubtable foes as the Boers. If it were not for the gallant defence of Mafeking, Kimberley and Ladysmith, the three central strongholds against which the Boers have dashed themselves in vain, the position of the British in South Africa would be well nigh untenable. The failure of the Boers to capture or reduce those places leads to the conclusion, however, that the Boers are as much bold in offensive operations as they are in advance in defensive warfare, to which the nature of the country so readily adapts itself. While the British Press and the British people accept the present critical situation with calmness and equanimity, there are signs of dissatisfaction and coming trouble for somebody, probably for Mr. Chamberlain, certainly for the Salisbury Government, if it does not succeed within a reasonable time in making matters more in South Africa. Altogether it is generally acknowledged that Great Britain has received a setback that has scarcely a parallel in the country, and has now a war on her hands that promises to tax the resources of the Empire to the utmost. Should foreign complications arise, as they may, her empire would most certainly be in serious jeopardy.

When the first Canadian contingent started on its voyage to the Cape, it was sagaciously predicted that with fair winds, they would arrive just in time to hear that the Union Jack was waving at Pretoria. It was also surmised that our Canadian boys would be relegated to mere garrison duty, and that the expedition would be something in the nature of a picnic. They arrived at the Cape, and were disappointed that they would be regarded as treated in the same manner as the soldiers of Her Majesty's soldiers, and were promptly sent to take their chances at the front. This is as it should be, and in with the wishes both of the contingent which desired to go to the front, and of Canadians at home. At present, the Canadian contingent is somewhere in the dangerous neighborhood of Modder River, assisting in guarding

General Lord Methuen's lines of communication. Whatever the fortune of war may lead them, Canada's sons may be relied upon to give a good account of themselves. The adverse turn that the course of the war has since taken, has decided the British authorities to accept further offers of men from the colonies, giving preference to mounted troops. A second contingent, larger than the first will be sent from Canada, so that those who could not gain a place in the first contingent, will have an opportunity of enlisting in the Queen's service, which just at present promises all the fighting most ferocious fire-eater could desire. It is said that the Minister of Militia has been good with applications from all over Canada and the United States, with offers to go on service in South Africa.

The composition of the 2nd Canadian force will be probably as follows:

1. "A" and "B" Batteries of the Permanent Corps. Their peace strength is 230 combined, but the full field strength is over 300, and they will be brought up to that. They will take twelve guns.
2. A force of 500 or more cavalry or mounted infantry, made up from the Northwest Mounted Police and the Royal Canadian Regiment of Cavalry.
3. A battalion of infantry, probably 600 strong. This will be made up of volunteers.

Another Australian mounted contingent of 1000 men will sail for South Africa before Jan. 10. An additional New South Wales battery of artillery is to sail immediately.

To sanctify the night of December 31, 1900, the Holy Father has granted permission for the celebration of mid night mass in all the churches of the world, along with the privilege of receiving holy communion. The Holy Father also extended the concession, so that midnight mass may be said on the 31st of December, 1899, as well as on December 31st, 1900.

The Dilemma. The universal decree, dealing with the celebration of the Holy Year, will be found on another page. The absurd contention made by a number of papers, that the Pope by his proclamation has shown that in his opinion, the nineteenth century closes on the last day of the present year, so that the new century begins with the year 1900, instead of the year 1901, is disposed of by the words of the decree itself, which says:—

"Since, moreover, at midnight of the last day of December, of the coming year, the present century will come to an end and a new one begin so." The obvious intention of the papers alluded to, was to reflect on the infallibility of the Pope, who, it may be observed, was not on this occasion speaking ex cathedra, or on a question of infallibility. As the Catholic Mirror very reasonably remarks: "The point is a small one and unworthy of the comment it has so far received, but lest any one be misinformed as to the true wording of this document, and not rightly comprehending the dogma of the infallibility of the Pope, should be led astray by arguments designed for such purpose, it is well to give a clear exposition of the true inwardness of the case."

Referring to the unfriendly attitude assumed by the French Canadian Press towards the people of Ontario, M. Benjamin Sulte, of Ottawa, the well known historian and litigator, takes occasion in La Presse to read his fellow-Canadians of the Lower Provinces a very sharp lesson. He says that the French-Canadians in Upper Canada in 1800, numbered less than 10,000; at present they are in the neighborhood of 150,000. After extolling the enterprise and progress evinced by these transplanted Canadians, amongst whom he has lived for thirty-four years, as compared with their compatriots of the Province of Quebec, he charges the French-Canadian press with the deplorable habit of never speaking of the English without insulting them, and in consequence the French-Canadians of Ontario have to pay for those insults. M. Sulte warns the French-Canadian press, that if it persists in such a course, the French-Canadians of Ontario will soon refuse to recognize the bond of sentiment which has hitherto linked them to the mother-province, and which is not so durable as the people of the mother-province may think.

### The Manitoba and P.E.I. Election.

The defeat sustained by the Conservative Governments of Manitoba and Prince Edward Island, should furnish food for reflection to the Liberal Administration at Ottawa. Whatever may be the cause of this sudden and to some extent unexpected change, whether in Manitoba, it may be due to an unpopular railway policy, and an undue regard for Provincial rights, or in Prince Edward Island, to the prohibition question and popular caprice, it looks as if a Conservative wave were setting in, which may repeat the political tragedy that befel the Mackenzie Government in 1878. It behooves the Liberal party, if they are desirous of retaining power, to put on their thinking caps and get at the root of things. Political waves are no exception to the general rule, and have a characteristic knack of growing in their course in size, force and destructive power. There are not wanting in the country other signs of danger to the Laurier government, chief of which promises to be a Quebec isolated from the rest of the provinces.

### Socialists and Religion.

The Catholic Times (Eng.) administers a severe but well merited castigation to one, Mr. Burrows of St. John's College, London, a leader of the English Socialists. Mr. Burrows, in a lecture on "Socialism and the church", began by charging the English Socialists with the abolition of cruelty to animals. This may or may not be true; but this lecturer, like most of his kind, could not shut his mouth when his own venomous shafts against the priests of the Catholic Church were flying.

"In France and Belgium and Austria," said this venacious polemic, "they saw the priests supporting corruption and rottenness, while here in England they were invariably opposed to popular education." The Catholic Times takes the occasion of paying the following tribute to the energy, devotion to duty and self-sacrifice of the Catholic priests of England:—

"When and where did Mr. Burrows learn of the fact of the world in which we live is very limited. The true sacerdotalists are the Catholics, and their Church and clergy have no more to fear from the hands of the Socialists. At times Catholic priests have been too conservative or too much attached to feudal or dynastic notions just as other folks, but take the broad page of history since the inception of the Christian era, and the names of the great truth that the sacerdotalist, the priest, has been the poor man's friend. He rescued him from barbarism, stood up for his rights when trodden upon by the baron or the monarch, and against the progress of civilization, and placed him upon the path of progress. When tyrants became unbearable the priest heeded not to lay down his life for the people, and in the long roll of the Church's martyrs are the names of large numbers who have sacrificed for the honor of the altar is that they served the people even to the shedding of their blood. To come to our own day, what right, we ask, has the Socialist to proclaim that our priests are against the progress of the laborer and the poor? We wish to say nothing disparaging of the daily labours of the Socialists. True, we feel sure, Socialists who continually exert themselves according to their lights and to the best of their ability for the improvement of their fellow-men. But we put it to Mr. Burrows whether their self-sacrifice in ministering to the poverty-stricken and thus suffering equally to that of the Catholic priests. Go at once to the man who weans sweat and misery have found their victims and whom are you more likely to meet? The Socialist or the priest? Not even Mr. Burrows will venture to deny that on every single occasion upon which the Socialist may be encountered, the priest will be met with a hundred times. Tried by the inflexible test of personal service, Mr. Burrows' charge not only breaks down but tells against himself. Nor does his accusation against the priests in France, Belgium, and Austria help to support it. In France the clergy may have been carried away by Chauvinism during the Dreyfus case. This, however, is a disease not confined to France. In Belgium the priests are working for the interest of the people, and the benefits which the toiling classes have received from the Catholics whilst in power are the best proofs of the progressive spirit in which the Government is conducted. The Catholic clergy of Austria as a whole are also faithfully doing their duty by the people, and are in favor of useful legislation for them. The assertion that the clergy in England have invariably been opposed to popular education is absurd and need refutation. We Catholics, despite much poverty, have taxed ourselves heavily for elementary education; our clergy have built schools and strove hard to maintain them. It is equally untrue now to be told by a platform Socialist that the Catholic priests have been against popular education. Mr. Burrows is rendering poor service to the cause which he professes to champion.

So far, the English Socialist, we think

their continued brethren, have shown little inclination to identify themselves with hostility to religious creeds, knowing well that to do so would be to do it to sterility and destroy its usefulness, which can only be maintained by allowing full religious freedom to its votaries. A leader who will make such ill-founded and unjust statements as those quoted above, can be of no practical use to the cause he advocates.

### The Support of the Catholic Press.

In dealing with the question of the co-operation of all sections of Catholics, in promoting the work of the Catholic Press. The London Monitor, which somewhat comprehensively claims to be the Catholic organ for Great Britain, has something to say as applicable to the English speaking Catholics of Canada, as it seems to be to the Catholics of the Mother Isles. After claiming the right to deal freely, even with party politics, if they choose to come its way, it offers these very sensible remarks, which we in Canada endorse most heartily:

"Having, therefore, explained our position on the matter, we think we may therefore venture to appeal to the Catholic community, to take an active interest in the work of spreading Catholic literature and Catholic news papers. We do not ask them especially to push our publications or to recommend them, although, of course, we shall be very glad to do so. It is not our duty to urge any one to do so, but we must surely strike everyone as a short-sighted and unfortunato policy to stand by and see our Catholic homes invaded by 'Godless literature, our Catholic youth of both sexes more or less degraded, and our Catholic homes more or less overrun by Catholics who are cold and indifferent under its influence, without taking some step to supply an antidote? And the only effective antidote is sound and healthy Catholic reading."

A Catholic newspaper consists, in matters referring to the Church and the Priesthood. In sketching out an ideal Catholic journal, our Holy Father the Pope, expressly warned Catholic journalists to abstain from making a Catholic newspaper of the week a Catholic journal of view with questions of the day, political, social, and industrial; it must be a journal of the week's news; it must give attention to such subjects as sports, to books, and to a multitude of things that are not in themselves expressly Catholic, but which interest Catholics as they interest other members of the community, and to such subjects are treated of in a Catholic journal or at least are shorn of anything injurious, and while, in the same publication, we are able to give attention to the purely Catholic questions, we can hope to induce Catholics to buy our publications and support them, and to contribute from their homes other publications of a character that may be mischievous and harmful.

Our aim is, therefore, to make popular newspapers for the masses of the people, papers that will attract attention of even the poorest of our Catholic population, which will provide suitable reading for them, and that will not root them by being over their heads or "high-bred," that young and old will be inclined to read them. These are the lines we have deliberately adopted, and they are the lines upon which we intend to proceed. No doubt we have not the approval of everyone for our policy, but that is unavoidable. What we do contend is—and we do so, anyone, no matter how much they differ from us, to drop it—that our papers, at any rate, are Catholic in tone and feeling, and create a Catholic atmosphere around them, and that, however much some people may dissent, say, from our official views, they are bound to admit that, in this respect, we preach no doctrine that is un-Catholic. We are free to hold opinions in politics of the most advanced character, so long as we do not conflict with Catholic teaching, and, after all, even the politics of the non-Catholic Press, whether they are on one side or the other, are not always such as Catholics can heartily approve of.

Our claim upon the support of our fellow-Catholics is, therefore, we think, a strong one, and we shall continue to urge it with all possible energy, until we succeed in accomplishing our purpose, which we can do no harm by restating, name.

To secure that a Catholic publication of some kind, shall find its way once a week into every Catholic home in these countries. We might add, that as far as Canada is concerned, party spirit is carried to such an extent, that a Catholic paper distinctly stamped with a party stamp would be likely, certainly, to find favour in the eyes of only about one half of the reading public. The Catholic paper in Canada, therefore, if dependent upon public favour for its subsistence, must appeal to the whole Catholic body, and bear the name at least of being independent in politics—better still, if it is really and truly independent. From a politically useful standpoint, the Catholic party paper might often find itself greatly hampered by its own partisanism, in rendering service to the Catholic cause, particularly in a country where the party spirit is so rampant, and antagonistic creeds. But that the Catholic paper should be free to take up the cudgels, where the liberties or privileges of the Catholic community are assailed, or on questions of national importance must be conceded, other-

wise its sphere of influence would be greatly curtailed.

In connection with this important question of the sphere and usefulness of the Catholic Press, Cardinal Vaughan says: "We are now in the age of the apostolate of the press. It can penetrate where no Catholic can enter. It can do its work, not only in the past, but in the future. It is an instrument in our hands. All should take part in this apostolate; here at least there is work for everyone. For ten who can write, 10,000 can subscribe, and 100,000 can scatter the seed. Say not that to scatter books, pamphlets, tracts, and leaflets is to sow bad loss, if you have but a grain of faith in the gospel parable of the sower. God himself, with bountiful hand, is always sowing His grace over the world of men, and what is the history of His sowing? Is greater praise to spring up under the hand of the Master? But for every effort we make there is an eternal reward. We need writers, a multitude of subscribers, and a numberless body of men and women sowing and scattering the truth wherever English is read or spoken."

Archbishop Ireland also has recently said: "There is a great power for good in the hands of the laity if they will only exercise it, and in particular, this power can be used to excellent advantage by the Catholic Press. In my country the Catholic Press has been most instrumental in pressing upon the Government of the day, the needs of the people, and it should be the same in yours. Don't hesitate to make your journals representative of the shades of Catholic opinion. Let in plenty of fresh air, and let each organ be distinctive. I am a strong advocate of viewing things outside faith and doctrine in a healthy and progressive spirit, and of treating all matters not bound by the decision of Holy Church in a broad and critical light."

### The Ethics of Reviewing.

Catholic writers, not unfrequently and with some show of justice, complain that their literary efforts do not attract the attention of the general press, that notice and appreciation accorded to the works of non-Catholic writers. On this question in the ethics of reviewing the Weekly Register, London, England, has the following thoughtful and appropriate remarks, which we reproduce in justice to the non-Catholic press and Catholic writers, who will readily see that works of a distinctively Catholic character will be of exceptional interest only to the Catholic Press. But it is the duty of the latter to be fair in dealing with the works of Catholic writers, and not to ignore or damn them with faint praise as is too frequently the case.

"This counsel of faithful dealing would seem to have a special application to the Catholic Press. Books written from our point of view appeal to a relatively small and close public; they often treat of points which are obscure or uninteresting to the general reader; and so they are apt to get less than their fair share of attention from the non-Catholic Press. It follows that their criticism by our papers should be as intelligent and well-informed as possible, because our people depend upon this for whatever information or guidance they may desire in regard to such books. On Catholic reviewers, the whole responsibility rests for a scholarly presentation of our own special literature; a presentation which we would have as critical, and with as much independence of opinion as a strict and independent criticism to the books of Catholic authors, whether they deal with technical or general subjects. It has been a distasteful, but we venture to say, a very salutary task, to criticize unfavourably in these columns, more than one such book. Nor can our papers permanently command the confidence of our public in the estimates they put forward of Catholic work, unless they maintain as high a level of criticism as that meted by critics as competent as those of the non-Catholic Press. We are afraid that there is a good deal of indiscriminate praise showered on Catholic books from a mistaken sense of esprit de corps. Of course we do not wish our critics to dip their pens in gall, or to take up a passionless, unadmiring attitude; but we do claim that their views should be executed adequately, fearlessly, and without favour."

An Appeal From the Orphan.

The Sisters of St. Joseph in charge of the Sacred Heart Orphanage, Sunny-side, respectfully call the attention of the public to the fact, that there are nearly three hundred children in the Institution, and as they have not the necessary means to procure for them, what they would wish, they take this opportunity of asking their kind friends and benefactors, to remember the "little ones" at Sunny-side, by having their "Christmas Cheer"

with them, and by so doing, add to the happiness and pleasure of the children, as well as their own.

The splendid book for a visit from "Santa Claus," but it is only through the charity and liberality of the good citizens, that they may expect to receive a call from him. Our Lord loves the poor, and those who love the poor, will be abundantly recompensed hereafter.

### A BEAUTIFUL CEREMONY

Miss Minnie Heddle, of Waterloo, takes the White Veil.

The beautiful, little inside Chapel at the Convent, was the scene yesterday afternoon of an interesting and impressive ceremony, when Miss Minnie Heddle, of Waterloo, took the white veil. Miss Heddle is an exceedingly bright and clever girl, a graduate in music of Toronto Conservatory of Music, and holds five certificates from the Toronto Art School.

She is very proficient in painting and fancy needle work. She will be, therefore, a valuable addition, intellectually as well as religiously to the ranks of those devoted sisters of the Holy Sepulchre Community who have dedicated their lives to Mother Church.

Rev. Father Solanus, Superior of the Franciscan order, acted as Officiant while the Rev. Father D. Fennessy, O. R. of St. Jerome's College, Berlin, addressed the candidates on the nature and importance of the step she was now taking, explaining in eloquent and impressive language, the great sacrifice she was making and the nobility and sanctity of the life she had chosen with the view of consecrating herself more completely to the sweet service of Jesus Christ.

Father De Paul filled the office of Deacon, and Father Hurman that of second assistant. Five exquisitely gowned little girls, Henrietta Collins, Nellie Radlow, Augusta Crotty, Rhea Martin, and Lea D-zill acted as Flower Girls and added much to the beauty and solemnity of the ceremony. At the conclusion of the function the nun's choir rendered a beautiful choral service in four parts. In religion Miss Heddle will hereafter be known as Sister Mary Carmel—Chatham Banner, Dec. 9, 1899.

### DECEMBER: A CHRISTMAS DREAM

Tell me now for the best or worst, Who is the last, who is the first Of all the palmers that Eastward go, Dragging their shackles across the snow?

The first is Adam, and was in Eden, For the way is heavy to far Judee, The second is Eve, and her eyes are dim, But her smile is for Adam, and none but him.

The third is Lillith, and fair is she, As only a spirit of air can be; The babe she strangled this very night Lies in its cradle stark and white.

The fourth is Adam, the fifth is Cain, Sick to die and forgot again. The sixth is Lot; and I see but seven That I trust to pray to the Lord of Heaven.

Kneeling low by the stable stall, Hear ye the cry of the pilgrim all? "Give me love, Lord!" and "Give me peace!" "Did ye love to win its gaining cease?" "Make me a woman that am but a spirit, Not to be moved of grief or delight!" And the Child that lies in the manger-stall, He speaks in His sleep and He answers all.

He hath given a clod of Eden earth To weary Adam, that he may have mirth, Seeing the seeds of his sowing grow As they did in Eden an age ago.

He hath given a rose from Eden gate To Eve, and she mourns not her woman's fate. He hath given to Lillith a sword blade blue, To thrust in her heart and let her through.

He hath given to Adam the grace to follow The way of her mate over hill and hollow. He hath breathed on Cain that his eyes may weep, And while they are wet may close in sleep.

He hath given to Lot to dream on omelette Of the happy time and the good days of '90. Or over the heavens wot fiery rain On the sinful fair Cities of the Plain. Now all have gone from His Presence shorn, Save the greatest and first and last of the seven; And the Child in His sleep spoke out "What wilt thou?" The woman has bridled thy head!" And the Snake writhed hence, and round Lillith's waist It clung, and it would not be unloosed, But the wound in her bosom dropped with red, And the eyes went blind in the Serpent's head, Deaf and blinded, he could not see The trees arising on Calvary; The song of the olives he could not hear, That sang for the young Child eras'd in a year; "No still, O need: thou art not a spear; Abide thy time and thy place, as we." —Nora Hopper, in St. Peter's.