

EACH APARTMENT, it is further stated, had its balcony overlooking the street, joining that of the next flat, so as to make a kind of corridor on the outside of the second floor. We can picture to ourselves these balconies filled with gay Roman ladies, gathered to gaze upon the passing pageants, so essential a feature of the ancient city. These Ostia buildings, adjacent to Rome proper, which are preserved to a height never before found anywhere, in the unity of their design and arrangement resemble the modern flat, and are the first to give us an idea of how the middle classes were housed under the Roman Empire. The more we know of these ancient civilizations the more is it brought home to us that amid all the mutations of time human nature in the concrete remains the same.

ON THE BATTLE LINE

BATTLE OF THE CARPATHIANS

The Battle of the Carpathians which Berlin describes as "the most gigantic battle in the world's history" and Petrograd characterizes as "stupendous" dwarfs all other operations. Despite the optimistic reports of its progress which prepared us to hear any day that the Russian army was marching in force through the plains of Hungary having swept up like chaff the shattered remnants of the Austrian forces, there is yet no assurance of the ultimate outcome. Following are the official statements:

The Petrograd correspondent of The London Daily Telegraph cables: The stupendous battle in the Carpathians apparently is rapidly approaching its climax. During such a crisis in the interests of military operations it is the custom of the Grand Duke, Commander-in-chief, to reduce to a minimum his communications to the public.

Sectional counter attacks, particularly in the hills overlooking the Uskok road, have ended in another Austrian defeat with heavy losses. The Russians on Tuesday got to the rear of the Austrian position south of the main ridge near Volosate. The Austrians on Wednesday and again yesterday attempted to change front, but the Russians attacked and drove them some miles to the southwest. There is now considerable artillery fire across the Dunajec.

Russian movements in Poland have established the fact that at several points, especially on the left bank of the Bzura, the Germans are numerically weak.—Globe, April 17.

BROKE THROUGH WITH BAYONET

Petrograd (via London), April 16.—The official communication of the Russian War Office this evening says: "In the Carpathians our troops, noiselessly approaching the enemy's barbed-wire entanglements between the villages of Tolpocza and Zuelta, broke through and after a brief engagement, gained possession of two heights and took numerous prisoners. The enemy sent the 121st Reserve Regiment to make a counter-attack, and the fighting continues."

"In the direction of Rostok the enemy made fruitless attacks near the village of Oroszpatan against the heights occupied by us."

"On Wednesday we successfully repulsed persistent attacks by the enemy in the direction of the Stryj."

"Reports arriving from various sectors of the Carpathian front show that everywhere the roads are in a bad state, owing to the thaw and the swollen rivers."

"On the rest of the front there is no change."

"Yesterday in the Black Sea, our destroyers sank, off the Anatolia coast, four steamers, two of which were laden with coal, and several sailing vessels, and also exchanged fire with the Sunguldaik (Asia Minor) batteries."

GERMAN OFFICIAL STATEMENT

Berlin, April 16.—The official statement issued here says:

"According to a report from Austrian headquarters, the four weeks' battle in the Carpathians is the most gigantic battle in the world's history. Not less than three and a half million men are taking part in it. The battle reached its climax several days ago, the report states, when the Russian offensive was stopped and driven back with most appalling losses."

"Large numbers of trains are daily carrying the wounded back to the interior of Russia. The field hospitals are overcrowded with wounded and sick, thousands of whom succumb without adequate medical attendance."

"Captured Russian officers describe the conditions as terrible and unbearable."

"On the eastern front the situation is unchanged. In skirmishes near Kalwary (Russian Poland) in the last few days 1,040 Russians were taken prisoners and seven machine guns were captured."

AUSTRIANS CLAIM VICTORIES

Vienna, April 16.—The following official communication was issued today:

"In Poland, near Blotze, east of Piotrkow, a Russian attack has been repulsed."

"On the lower Nida our artillery set fire to a Russian ammunition

store. Several trenches within effective range of our artillery were quickly evacuated by the Russians."

MAGAZINES YOUNG PEOPLE READ

There never was a time in the world's history when so much reading was being done by so many people as now. Presumably this ought to be an index of the deep intellectual interests of our generation and of its ardent seeking after knowledge. A friend of mine to whom the aphorism "Reading maketh a full man" was quoted to prove that "the masses" are profiting wonderfully by the reading habit they have now contracted, shrewdly remarked: "But, Bacon, observe, does not say of just what material reading maketh a man full. That depends on what the reading is. Much of the light reading done nowadays makes our young people full of nonsense, while much of the serious reading others indulge in fills them with conceit."

One thing our modern passion for reading does not do is to make people full of thought. There are many things connected with educational institutions in this country who aver that there was never a time when people did less thinking than now. The dean of the literary departments in one of our leading universities said, not long ago, that if the present craze for reading cheap, trivial stuff was not halted soon there would be no one left in this country who could do real thinking. As for the taste that is being developed by all this reading one needs only to see the "shows" that our people attend, the cheap, catchy music that they delight in, the cartoons and "comics" that hold their attention, to find a very serious indictment of our modern intellectual life. This generation that does more reading than any other in the world's history, has more trivial interests than any other of which we have any record.

The reading the older people indulge in perhaps does not matter much. They have decided that they are not going to use their intellects in life for any serious purpose, so I suppose they may be permitted to use them only for furnishing themselves with cheap amusement. It is different, however, with the rising generation. There is still some hope of promoting the intellectual life of the young, for they are extremely susceptible to suggestions received from their reading. Young people are inclined to think that anything that is printed must be true, and that a writer who gets into print is wiser than any one in their own environment, no matter how much experience or education he or she may have.

Now I venture to say that the greater part of our young folk's leisure hours is used reading the magazines. A great French teacher once said that it does not make so much difference what a man does with the hours in which he has to work, but the best possible index to his character, and usually the best hint as to his future, is to be found in what he does with his leisure. But I fear no one would value highly either the present or the future of young folk who read our present day popular magazines.

These popular magazines used to be rather instructive and, as a rule, quite harmless periodicals, which gathered together articles, on a number of interesting topics and stories that sometimes had distinct literary merit, but were generally chosen with an eye to their absolute innocuousness, for it was felt that the slightest infraction of decency in any way would ruin the circulation of the magazine. They were meant to pass from hand to hand in the family. But in the effort to increase their circulation, they have now changed their character very materially. It was soon found that appeals to the sensual side of humanity were very attractive to young readers having an insatiable curiosity in such matters, and so it was not long before a serious degeneration took place in the character of even the magazines that used to be quite free from such undesirable matter. The instructive articles have nearly all disappeared, or, if printed, they prove to be some scientific sensation that is a travesty on real science.

No one accepts the "feature-writers" magazine articles as serious contributions to knowledge. The latest solution of the mystery of life, the latest nonsense about hypnotism, the weight of the soul; "twilight sleep" and its vagaries; sex hygiene and eugenics; these are the so-called instructive articles of the magazines. They give young people the idea that they know a great deal more than their elders about things in general, and thus increase that lack of respect for the opinions of others that is so striking a characteristic of our generation. Information obtained in this scrappy way from magazine articles, even when it is quite correct, does not really educate or develop the mind, because it fails to show the relations of the knowledge thus acquired to other knowledge, and is usually, therefore, worse than useless.

The "magazine habit" ruins power of concentration; it has another and more serious result. In recent years the popular magazines have become

purveyors of very undesirable ideas for young people. I fear few parents realize how unsuitable for young folk's reading many of the most popular magazines have become. It requires only an occasional dip into them to find that while they are of no usefulness except as a cheap pastime, they frequently contain stories that are well calculated to do a great deal of harm to young minds. Let me illustrate what I mean by some concrete comments.

In one of the popular magazines, which a few years ago used to be, perhaps, the most widely-circulated magazine in the country, and whose name was a guarantee of reasonable freedom from anything objectionable there appeared not long since a story that for unspeakable viciousness is almost unparalleled. I do not say this of myself, the story was called to my attention in a group of men who had all been for more than twenty years in newspaper work, from reporter to editor, and who were not likely, therefore, to be prudes. They agreed to a man that they had never read anything that was quite so vile and vicious in its suggestion as was this story. It was literally a tale of animal lust. It appeared under the name of a man who belongs to an old American family, and who has, on occasion, turned out good work. That it should have been published in a magazine that was freely sold on our newsstands and should have been widely read by young folks shows to what a pass license in the publication of evil suggestions has come.

The suggestive form of story in practically all the cheap magazines just now is one that, I suppose, is meant to make its appeal to the young girl. These are the most numerous readers of magazines, and evidently they are interested in this type of story. Hence the uniformity with which it is found in practically all the cheap magazines. It is the tale of the young girl yearning for experiences in life, and somehow or other getting away from social conventions and having "adventures," sometimes with low sailors in some Eastern port; with Chinamen in San Francisco; or with prize-fighters and questionable characters in Paris, yet somehow escaping unscathed and marrying some one who has rescued her from some especially thorny situation and, of course, living happily with him ever after. She has kept her virtue but oh, the knowledge of men and of the world that she has gained from her experience, and the breadth of view of life! "Real Life"—only capitals express it adequately—that has been obtained from the risks through which she has passed!

These stories are meant to show that even the men of the brutal classes are at once converted from the error of their ways and put off their brutality in the presence of the pretty American girl who is out seeking adventures. The lion being led home by the Virgin Una in the fable is as nothing compared to the way in which these young women, with a glance of their eyes and the wonderful influence of their maidenly presence convert hardened sinners and old rogues into the gentlest of protectors of maidenly virtue and innocence.

I doubt if fairer views of life can possibly be found than those given in these stories. Yet this is the principal reading of large numbers of our young women, and particularly those whose occupations take them away from home and into association with men of all kinds. They are tempted to see adventures that are very alluring to youth, and are told that this is the only way to get all there is in life and to be broadened and educated and rendered experienced.

Now, let us not forget that the magazines which contain such dangerous nonsense are selling by the hundreds of thousands in this country. One is said to have a circulation of more than 1,000,000 a month. Advertisers are willing to pay for advertising on the basis of those figures. It is computed that each magazine is read on the average by, at least, three persons. It is the girls, moreover, rather than the boys, who are reading these magazines. Therefore we should not be surprised to hear almost daily of elopements, hasty marriages, seductions, and worse, for our magazines are preparing the young for these things. Youth always takes what is suggested to it, if the suggestion is frequent and positive enough, unless by chance there is character, environment and training to safeguard the young from temptation. Even these fail, however, to be of service against the constant suggestion of evil, foolishness and worse. For the fascination of trifles," says "Holy Writ, "obscureth good things."—James J. Walsh, M. D., Ph. D., in America.

AN ELOQUENT TRIBUTE

The Rev. R. J. Cambell, an Anglican Divine, in the course of a sermon preached in the City Temple, London, took occasion to make the following friendly allusion to the Catholic Church:

"I wish—oh, how earnestly I wish—all members of all churches, and of no church, could come to think of human society as Christians once thought of the Church universal and undivided. I never go into a Catholic Church without catching something of the spirit of that older day. In the silence of the kneeling worshippers; in the lamp that burns before the high altar; in the pictures that adorn the walls, showing the Stages of the Cross on which the life of Christ was sacrificed, that He

might draw all men unto Himself, I see symbols of the vaster unity that is yet to be achieved. There is a solemn stillness, a suggestion of heaven and unseen helpers, in that earthly temple made with hands. It is impossible for any man with reverence in his soul to stand in that silence without feeling that it is the speech of God."—The Lamp.

SIDELIGHTS ON THE GREAT WAR

A CONVERSION BEGUN IN THE TRENCHES

In a Paris hospital, served by nuns, a young soldier of twenty two has just been baptized, writes a correspondent of the London Catholic Times. He is the son of a French Freemason, and of an English Protestant, and was brought up without any religion in a distant colony. He is naturally of a frank, open and thoughtful temperament, singularly intelligent and has been well educated in the Government schools. On the subject of religion only his mind was a blank. He was brought in a dying condition to the hospital to which I allude; later he expressed a wish to learn something of Christianity, and gradually, of his own free will, he acquired a knowledge of religion that has enabled him to receive the sacraments of baptism, penance, Holy Communion and confirmation.

His first religious impressions came to him in the trenches on the line of fire. One day an order was given for the men to charge "a la baionnette." A soldier-priest was in the trench. "You have a dangerous task before you," he said. "Kneel down and I will give you a general absolution." The soldiers, one and all, knelt and bowed their heads; our unbaptized lad did like the others, but the thought of this mysterious rite haunted him afterwards and paved the way to further discoveries. He seemed at that minute to have realized for the first time the existence of another life above and beyond the life threatened by bullets. The seed had fallen on good soil, and later, in the peaceful atmosphere of a hospital that is directed by nuns, the young soldier followed up the light that had been sent to him at a tragical moment of his existence.

It would take volumes to relate the cases of the conversions wrought by the war; the presence of danger and of death, joined to the influence and example of our soldier priests, is working spiritual wonders among the fighting men of France. "Life in the trenches is the best of retreats," said one, and another added: "The cannon is more eloquent than any preacher."

ORDINATION ON THE BATTLEFIELD

How the life of the Church goes on in the midst of the death and destruction caused by the most terrible war in history is shown by a touching ceremony which took place on Belgian soil a few days ago. In a fold of the sand dunes, not far from La Panne and within sound of the sea, there is a small chapel served by the Oblates of Mary which has so far escaped the ravages of the human tempest. At 7 o'clock the other morning a long procession of priests and seminarians, with a Bishop bringing up the rear, left the neighboring convent for the little chapel. The latter building was filled with officers of all grades, soldiers and some poor refugees civilians. It was an ordination. Six young deacons were to be raised to the priesthood by the Coadjutor Bishop of Nancy, himself a soldier, to fill the gaps made by the war in the Diocese of Namur. The six young priests are all brandardiers, the assistant to the French Bishop is the divisional chaplain of the fourth section of the Belgian army; the acolytes are all soldiers also. The Mass is celebrated in the accompaniment of a military band. In a beautiful address at the close of this elevating ceremony the Bishop said: "Never has the beautiful definition of the sacerdotal life been so well verified as now. It is the immolation of man joined to that of God."—Standard and Times.

MR. DILLON AND THE WAR

In the final appeal for recruits Mr. Dillon set forth the reason why England and Ireland were fighting together. After pointing out the great change which had come over the country indicated by the right of the Volunteers to drill and carry arms, Mr. Dillon said:

"For the moment, the great war has suspended politics, to a large extent—I might say almost entirely—in Ireland, and with the practical common-sense of Belfast Nationalism, which has so often in the past taught a lesson to the South of Ireland, you have realized what was the most urgent duty that lay upon true Nationalists who mean business in the National cause. The National Volunteers of Belfast have not been content with drilling here in Belfast on Irish soil. They have set an example to the rest of Ireland by sending their best and bravest in hundreds to prepare to go to the front, to fight in Flanders and in France for the liberty of Europe."

To day, as Mr. Devlin has said, England and the Empire are fighting on the side of Freedom. England occupies a great position before the world. She has come forward as the champion of small nationalities and of oppressed peoples; but how could she have assumed that position, how could she have dared the public opinion of the world if she had not placed upon the Statute Book the Home Rule measure, and if she had

not given liberty to South Africa, following our policy and our advice in that respect? . . . That is why England is able to take her stand in the proud position she occupies, and because she has had the courage to do these things she is able to go before Europe and say, "I am the champion of human liberty." In spite of all the grievances we have got against England in the past we, the Nationalists of Ireland, have never yet turned our backs on a good cause, and in this cause, when it is clear that England is fighting on the side of liberty and justice, Nationalist Ireland is with England in this fight, and I am proud and glad that the Nationalists of Belfast have had the good sense as well as the courage to show to the Nationalists of Ireland one more good example in the conduct of this struggle.

CORSICA OR CALVARY?

Not by the Sword, though men it might acclaim; No shouting cohorts can from Earth expel Hate's monstrous brood, the progeny of Hell, That feast and fatten on the sickening shame Which men call War; no arm of flesh can tame Those pampered fiends which in Man's bosom dwell, But only His Who doeth all things well, And in His Cross, by His Almighty Name. That Cross by Roman legions unwithstood, Chastening to silence the loud hosts of strife. Shedding glad visions on each heart that grieves; For by the dewfall of its Victim's Blood That sapless Cross became the Tree of Life. The healing of the nations in its leaves. —GEORGE BENSON HEWATSON

On Christmas Day the British and German troops in the trenches agreed to a truce for the day, and fraternized as though there were no war, groups of them being photographed together.

AN ANGLICAN EDITOR ON THE BELGIANS IN ENGLAND

It is with the Belgians chiefly that we have been brought into sweet and wholesome contact. The emigration of the French clergy at the end of the eighteenth century did much to soften the sour Protestantism of the English people, and the present Belgian emigration has done much more. It has done more, because contact with the refugees has been more general. It is by no means the case that all Belgian refugees are good Catholics, or that all those who are good Catholics present their own specific variety of Catholicism in the most favorable light. But they are satisfactory enough in general to break down prejudice. There is a well-authenticated story of the two old ladies in the Midlands, of pronounced Evangelical views, who were dismayed to find that some Belgians hospitably entertained by them were Papists. After some days, however, they told their pastor with surprise, "But they are Christians! In fact, they are better Christians than we are, for they have no bitterness or hatred in spite of all they have suffered." The discovery of Christian virtues in a Papist is disconcerting to some minds, but the disturbance caused is a wholesome stirring of the waters. The terrible insularity of English religion begins to give way, and English Protestantism is often nothing else but insularity. Many who would regard an English or Irish Papist with incurable distrust are drawn out to a loving sympathy with suffering Belgium, and where there is loving sympathy Christian charity cannot be far distant.—Church Times (Anglican)

AND THEY WERE NOT INSPECTED

Here is another glimpse at the doings of those uninspected religious who are giving such concern to the evil-minded busybodies. "Don't ask me what I think about them or what they are doing; it will take me two or three days to get over my astonishment," exclaimed a non-Catholic merchant who had just returned from an unintended visit to a house of the Little Sisters of the Poor, and had seen something of their noble charity. The Ave Maria, narrating this incident, gives another illustration—the case of a friendless Jew who the Alexian Brothers in Chicago cared for during a long illness. So great was his gratitude that he expressed the hope that some day he would be in a position to befriended every Catholic institution in the city. Furthermore he declared that he would never miss an opportunity of defending the Catholic Church.

A probation officer in St. Louis, Missouri, wrote to Father Dunphy, the Working Boys' Home to tell him what he thought of that institution as a boy savior. He stated that the Home had an unusual place among institutions, particularly from the Court point of view. Hundreds of cases had to be dealt with quickly, and the willingness of the Home to receive Catholic, Protestant, or Jew afforded the opportunity to care, "for boys in the most homelike way," for boys

who needed a temporary home, pending some permanent arrangement. Said this officer:

The Home is indeed the refuge of many a youngster refused by other institutions—too old for the Orphan Home and too good for the Industrial School. You seem to have a place for all the odd pieces of the boy puzzle. Better yet, all the "fifty-seven" or more varieties of boys, nine times in ten respond unconsciously to the principle on which the Home is based,—of bringing out by the honor system for each boy every bit of his pride and self-reliance, by making him feel that he is the boy for whom the Home exists. . . . We congratulate ourselves on the benefit the Home is, and has been, to the juvenile Court; and I congratulate the boys in having in a man such a Home can turn out. A priest, travelling east, had as his chance companion a well set up man in the thirties, evidently educated, evidently prosperous. "Whatever I am," he said, "I owe to Father H—, He took me off the streets, a poor, ragged, starved little newsboy; gave me shelter in the Home, at first free of all charge, then as I earned more, a tiny sum was charged for board; he taught me to read and write, and better still how to live a clean, upright life; he put ambition into us boys, and I am only one of many he started on the highway to success. I have a good business, a home of my own, with a good wife and four fine children in it—and all that I owe, under God, to Father H—"—Sacred Heart Review.

IT HAS SLAIN ITS TEN THOUSANDS

Irony is the well dressed and comparatively harmless brother of sarcasm. Irony smiles; sarcasm is sardonic. Irony may in its wildest moments wield a lance or a rattan, medical, menacing; the rough-handed brother is a bludgeon and a buzz-saw. Sometimes, indeed, sarcasm is a means of defense, but so, too, is a sting, a fang, a claw, or the snap of sharp teeth. Unhappily, behind these weapons there is an irresponsible agent, and that it is which makes them formidable. So it is with sarcasm. The man who takes a pride in the glitter and edge of the dagger he loves to what will be tempted to display its burnished brightness and experiment with its sharpness. Sarcasm forgets the woes of its victim, while it exults in its own keenness and brilliancy. It assumes a superiority, which is maddening; and it will not only pierce its victim, but turn its weapon in the wound. Should it then be surprised if it roils the springs of human kindness and draws to the turbid surface the refuse and mean sediment which virtue keeps suppressed. There is something of the strong man beating a woman, or of an angry man kicking a horse in the ungoverned sallies of sarcasm. The ocean travelers may admire the white splendor of an iceberg floating majestically on the waves; but it would be expecting too much disinterestedness in mankind to think that the travelers will turn and bless this icy brilliance when their vessel has been dealt a mortal wound, and they are engulfed in the chilled waters. The cold, sharp edges of sarcasm numbers more victims than have gone down before the icebergs of the sea.

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FATHER FRASER'S CHINESE MISSION

Taichow, China, June 7, 1914. Dear Mr. Coffey,—When I came here two years ago I only had five catechists, now I have twenty-one. I owe this rapid progress principally to my dear friends of the CATHOLIC RECORD. God bless them and your worthy paper! It takes about \$50 a year to support a catechist and for every such sum I receive I place a man in a new district to open it up to the Faith. During the past few months I have opened up quite a number of new places and the neophytes are very pious and eager for baptism. You will appreciate the value of my catechists when I tell that I baptized eighty-five adults since the beginning of the year as a result of their work. I have even brighter hopes for the future if only my friends abroad will continue to back me up financially. J. M. FRASER.

Previously acknowledged... \$5,345 12 P. MacFhionghain, Sydney 50 Estate of late James Greene, 500 00 In memory of father and mother..... 2 00 Kate McCarron..... 2 00 J. P. Schmitz, Walkerton 1 00 A. D. Griswold, Ottawa..... 1 00

REMITTANCES TO FATHER FRASER

By cheque, April 25, 1918 \$ 780 00 " " May 15, 1918 5 00 " " July 11, 1918 736 70 " " Nov. 17, 1918 832 20 " " Feb. 11, 1914 1,320 80 " " Jan. 16, 1915 1,053 78

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Juggler whirling sharp knives cannot expect you to shake hands with him or, without fear of dire consequences to your nose, approach to kiss him. Imagine a man and wife or two sisters trying to embrace when both parties were keeping a dozen edged blades in the air. If you will be sarcastic, make up your mind to be a heart-berit. The delicate bloom of confidence and loving trust will never grow on the red-hot coals of a furnace.

The teacher, the superior, the wife, the husband, the older brother or sister, the human being who impales his victim on the cross of sarcasm and then shouts, Vah! at him, will be eventually forgiven, it is to be hoped, but the high degree of virtue required for such forgiveness is not at present a drug on the market. To expect conversion of any kind from sarcasm, displays in the user exceptionally rare faith. Since the time Adam got sarcastic with Eve, or vice versa, sarcasm has made almost as many converts as there are moons to the earth or suns in our planetary system or Christmases in one year. The sarcastic Herod did not deserve a word from Christ. Some Christian legends have canonized Pilate, but the devil's advocate had no trouble in excluding Herod from the roll of Saints.—F. P. Donnelly, S. J., in "Mustard Seed."

UPON THE CROSS

Methinks the cross that consecrated Calvary, Its arms outstretched in blessing, Like its Victor gone, Caught first upon its crest, exultingly! The first triumphant flashes of the Easter dawn. —MABEL BOURQUIN, FOSTER, O.

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