

The Catholic Record

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LONDON, SATURDAY, JUNE 30, 1917

ST. PATRICK'S PURGATORY

The famous sanctuary in Donegal known as St. Patrick's Purgatory dates from the days of St. Patrick himself. The legends that describe its foundation are full of Dantesque episodes which have won for the shrine a place in European literature. It is noticed by medieval chroniclers, found its way into Italian prose, was dramatized by Calderon and is referred to by Erasmus. It is situated on Station Island in Lough Derg and hence is also known as the Lough Derg pilgrimage. In recent years the number of pilgrims each season, which lasts from June 1st to August 15, is about 3,000.

The ownership of this historic old sanctuary has just been decided in an Irish court of law. The plaintiff, who set up the claim which involved the ownership of Station Island, is Sir John Leslie whose estates surround Lough Derg. This estate came into the possession of the Leslies in 1661 when Dr. John Leslie abandoned his episcopal charge in Scotland and came to Clogher where he was appointed bishop and became possessed of thirty thousand acres of church lands. These he bequeathed to his son and they have remained in the hands of the Leslie family down to the present day.

The island itself is a barren rock and entirely valueless apart from the pilgrimage. Nevertheless, in 1881 Sir John Leslie, the father of the present baronet, set up a claim to the island on which the ecclesiastical authorities had erected a hospice for the accommodation of the pilgrims. Both sides had employed eminent counsel, and everything was ready for the final determination of the claim when at the last moment legal proceedings were abandoned, and the case settled by the solicitors. In this settlement the late Sir John Leslie claimed only the ownership of the bed of the Lough and this claim was acknowledged by the Prior of the Pilgrimage who took out a perpetual lease on that part of the shore or bed of the lake over which the hospice projected. The Judge who tried the case, which has just been concluded, held that the abandoned action and settlement of thirty-five years ago had an important bearing on the evidence submitted. The fact that a tenant had paid rent to the present landlord of the Leslie estates since 1884 was the chief ground on which the action was based. The same tenant also paid rent to the Prior for the same house, as had been the custom long before Sir John Leslie asserted any claim. The Judge bluntly said that he took it that this formal Leslie lease was made for the purpose of showing at a future time, such as the present, that there was a definite letting at a definite rent. In His Honor's opinion they had to be guided by matters as they stood in 1881 and not by subsequent attempts by either party "to make evidence."

In dismissing the case Judge Cooke thus in part summed up the reasons for his decision:

"The title of Sir John Leslie, as far as he gathered, was as follows: The Leslie family, he assumed, had been there since about 1660, and he also assumed that there was a deed in 1682 from the consistory to them of the estates that surrounded Lough Derg. It was stated, and he believed it to be the case, that these lands were formerly church lands. All the estate surrounding the island belonged to some church. Prior to the Reformation there was

no doubt that it belonged to the Catholic Church. That was so at the time the estates were handed over to the Church of Ireland. Then a certain Dr. Leslie, who was Bishop of the Isles, and who transferred his affections from Scotland to Donegal, was put into possession of what had been apparently the lands of the Catholic Church surrounding Lough Derg, and which were then in possession of the Irish Protestant Church. The bearing that point had in the case was that this ancient pilgrimage to St. Patrick's Purgatory had been continued for time immemorial, he believed from the days of St. Patrick himself. They found it mentioned in the annals of the Four Masters, and they also found a statute in the reign of Queen Anne dealing with it, which showed that it was in operation all these years. To his mind, when this estate was transferred from one church to another in the course of the Reformation, the Catholic Church, through its adherents, never gave up possession of the island, because it was always used as a place of pilgrimage. The claim of Sir John Leslie arose from the fact that he owned the surrounding estate, and the inference was that the island should also pass to him. Having regard to the history of the case and the Act that was passed at one time trying to prevent the use of the island for this pilgrimage, His Honour thought the natural inference was that the Catholic Church held on to it through the ages, and the possession of it never really passed along with the rest of the estates. The island was a barren rock, which owed its entire historical importance and everything else to the glamour thrown around it by reason of the fact that it was alleged to be a place where St. Patrick once lived, and to which pilgrims and devotees made a pilgrimage, otherwise it was valueless."

Apart from the fact that the religious associations and traditions attaching to the oldest and most venerated Pilgrimage in the Christian world make Station Island in Lough Derg holy ground for Irish Catholics, the case has other features of peculiar interest.

The landlord, Sir John Leslie, is a Protestant and was active in the organization of Carson's Ulster volunteers. His eldest son and heir to the title (and presumably to the estate) is the well known author, Shane Leslie, a Nationalist, a convert to the Catholic faith, and a captain in the Irish volunteers. His mother is Leonie, daughter of the late Leonard Jerome, of New York, and younger sister of Lady Randolph Churchill. Shane Leslie is, therefore, a cousin of that meteoric genius, Winston Churchill, whose reappearance in the political firmament may be looked for at any time.

By his marriage with Marjorie, daughter of Hon. H. C. Ide, U. S. Minister to Spain, Shane Leslie is a brother-in-law to Bourke Cochran.

Educated at Eton, the University of Paris, and King's College, Cambridge, Shane Leslie has already made a name in the world of letters: "Songs of Oriol," "Lough Derg in Ulster," and the "Isle of Columelle" are amongst his published volumes, while he is a prolific contributor to current literature.

No one is better informed on the complex situation in Ireland. Elsewhere in this issue our readers will find an able, interesting and instructive article of his—"The Great Irish Crisis."

CONSCRIPTION

As the debate and discussion of the momentous question of selective conscription go on in and out of Parliament there emerges a very clearly defined sense of injustice if compulsion is to be confined purely to military service. It has become a common-places that modern warfare is not the work of armies alone, but involves the mobilization of all the resources, industrial, financial, commercial, of whole nations. Amongst them the man power at home in every walk of life not less than on the field of battle. While the effort is voluntary, stimulated if you will by impassioned appeals to patriotism and duty, this phase of the question received only vague consideration. But when it is proposed to apply compulsion to one department of national war effort, military service in the field, while practically everything else is voluntary, the vague sense of unfair discrimination is beginning to deepen into a keen sense of injustice. Furthermore, the fortunate worker in a munition fac-

tory who is earning double, treble as much as he ever earned before, is privileged to stay at home while his less fortunate brother is ordered to the trenches and given no choice in the matter. The farmer with two or three sons is engaged in an essential industry, so he may, undisturbed, devote all his energies of getting rich and assuring himself and his family an independent position in life; while the town dweller who lives from hand to mouth must risk life and limb on the battlefield. Money and credit are as essential as soldiers, but money and credit are secured from those who make their patriotic duty a safe and profitable investment.

Hence the conviction is growing that the only fair and just measure of compulsion is compulsion all round. Munition workers are necessary, but it is by no means necessary that men of military age and fitness engaged in such work should escape military duty. Their places may be supplied by others militarily unfit, and by women. Farmers are engaged in a work absolutely indispensable, but the young farmer should not be a privileged person under conscription. His place, too, can be supplied under a general scheme of compulsory mobilization of the man power of the whole country. It will be an extremely dangerous thing to appeal for votes to conscript the other fellow. Already there are indications of just such a course. English voters may be asked to force those French-Canadian slackers to go to the front. Even in the House of Commons it has been pointed out that conscription will bear lightly on Quebec; for Quebec is almost exclusively an agricultural province, and French-Canadians marry young. The farmer may patriotically vote to compel the town-dweller to do his duty and the worker at munition-making and other essential industries may feel quite virtuous and safe in compelling less fortunate workmen to do the King's uniform.

All such presentation of the case for conscription is dangerous and cowardly. The whole question should be squarely put before the people as a comprehensive measure, vesting the Government with wide powers to mobilize the entire resources of the nation and to exercise compulsion on those who stay at home as well as on those chosen to go to the front, to claim the same authority over the incomes of the rich as over the lives of the poor. This is the logical and necessary outcome of the principle involved, and a courageous application of it will meet with greater popular favor and respect than any measure will receive whose narrow application seems to involve unfair discrimination.

The tendency all too manifest to present the matter of compulsory military service as affecting after all comparatively few is precisely the most disquieting thing in the whole discussion. It is as despicable as it is dangerous, and abandons the only ground on which compulsory national service is justified.

THE GRAVE POLITICAL SITUATION

"It may be said without any exaggeration whatever, that the life of Sir John Macdonald, from the date he entered Parliament, is the history of Canada, for he was connected and associated with all the events, all the facts which brought Canada from the position it then occupied—the position of two small provinces having nothing in common but their common allegiance, united by a bond of paper and united by nothing else—to the present state of development which Canada has reached."

These words are taken from the eloquent and generous tribute paid by Wilfrid Laurier twenty six years ago, June 8th, 1891, on the occasion of the announcement in Parliament of the death of Sir John Macdonald. Last week we reviewed the political history of Canada during this period especially with regard to Sir John's policy and practice so far as the French Canadian element of the population was concerned.

The result of that policy of sympathetic understanding and friendly relations was that for many years he was sustained in power by the almost united support of Lower Canada. To quote again from the leader of his political opponents: "The fact that he could congregate together elements the most heterogeneous and blend them into one compact party, and to the end of his

life keep them steadily under his hand, is perhaps altogether unprecedented. The fact that during all these years he retained unimpaired not only the confidence, but the devotion—the ardent devotion and affection of his party is evidence that besides those higher qualities of statesmanship of which we were daily witnesses, he was also endowed with those inner, subtle, undefinable graces of soul which win and keep the hearts of men." The heterogeneous elements were of course the Orangemen of Ontario and the Catholics of Quebec whose united support and cordial co-operation under Sir John's leadership are a matter of history.

We have seen, however, that this very statesmanship or political astuteness if you will, on the part of Sir John gave rise over a half century ago to "the old cries" of French and Catholic domination, to political appeals to race and religious prejudice. And generations of Canadians grew up familiarized with these political cries.

After a short, unsettled period Sir Wilfrid Laurier succeeded to the place of leadership left vacant by Sir John Macdonald. During his time of undisputed sway, he, also, enjoyed the almost unanimous support of a united Quebec.

The perpetuation of the old cries and the pernicious appeals to race and religious prejudice was a temptation to which politicians easily succumbed—the parties of course changing roles. In all such cases the tendency is towards reckless and dangerous extremes. All this has inevitably gone on pari passu in Quebec as well as in Ontario, and to some extent in other provinces. Perhaps in Quebec it was bound to assume more dangerous proportions from the fact noted by Sir John Macdonald that the chief defect of this "quiet, moral, law-abiding tolerant people" is "a predisposition to fall a prey to demagogues, and an extreme sensitiveness on matters affecting their race."

The lessons of the past are said to be a lamp to the feet of the wise who carry the burden of responsibilities in the present. If so there has never been a time in Canada's half century of national life when her past political history claimed more serious and anxious study.

T. P. O'CONNOR'S LETTER

Readers of T. P. O'Connor's weekly letter are informed that the reason for its absence this week is the fact that T. P. is on his way to America. Millions, not of Irishmen alone, will wish the veteran Nationalist leader success in his mission to his compatriots on this side of the ocean.

The marvellous manifestation, sympathy and understanding of the life and death of his colleague Willie Redmond, may in America as well as in Great Britain and Ireland, point the way to that solution of the Irish problem which will satisfy the sea-dwelling Gael and at the same time contribute immeasurably to the better understanding and closer union of all the English-speaking peoples of the world.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

It is an old axiom, hoary with the accumulated experience of countless saints and sages, that the first step on the road to reform is the realization of error in the past. That many of the wisest and best in the various divisions of Protestantism have taken that first step becomes every day increasingly evident. Hence the aspiration to reunion which, especially since the outbreak of the War, gathers new strength as the weary months roll by. The essentials of Christian union may not be adequately apprehended and eyes may be turned in the wrong direction, but the existence of the aspiration itself, founded as it unquestionably is upon a realization of the evils of division, is full of hope and consolation for the future.

WE HAVE been much interested in the discussion of union between the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational bodies as it has developed week by week in the official organs of those denominations, and while it seems to us that under existing circumstances the antis have had the best of the argument, that in no way lessens the evils of division or detracts from the merits of union, rightly conceived. The evils of division are, indeed, self-evident, and have been so from the beginning of the great revolt of the sixteenth century. But, men's eyes have been blinded by passion and prejudice

even to the extent of denying, in matters of religion, the maxims upon which they have laid most stress in regard to civil Government, family life, and those innumerable spheres of human endeavor upon which the moral or material welfare of the race have been grounded. They have at the same time in regard to the spiritual, generation after generation, magnified into a virtue the thing which in other spheres of conduct they have most deplored as an evil. If the War, then, has in any degree helped to remove the veil from their eyes, moralists will in process of time be disposed to regard it as anything but an unmixed evil.

AS A simple illustration of the changing character of men's views in this direction, and not in any sense as a caustic comment upon the weaknesses of our non-Catholic brethren, we cite from one of the denominational weeklies this candid, perhaps even, under existing conditions, courageous arraignment of the divisions of Protestantism. Those for whom this spokesman stands may still be far from discerning where the true centre of union lies, but to have apprehended at length so vividly the misery of their present state surely points to a happier tomorrow. The "Protestant Church" of which this gentleman writes has of course no existence in fact: it is but a formless abstraction impossible to define. And "Christianity" or "the Church" in his hands are in the same category.

"The process of division and subdivision in the Protestant Church has made her worthless as a moral and spiritual force in the presence of national sins. Much may be done to quicken private devotion, but to arouse, educate and quicken the national life until that life compels Legislatures to register its mind in laws that make only for the welfare of the Commonwealth is beyond the power of a divided church. It must with sorrow be confessed that Christianity cannot mobilize its forces against national evil. With the rapid growth of democratic government accompanied with increased individual obligations to the State there comes a loud call to the moral and spiritual forces of the nation to mobilize and meet the new conditions into which we are entering with energy of purpose and clearness of vision. As an organization to unify and give direction to these forces the Church is of little use. Through other organizations must the work be done."

MR. ALFRED NOYES, university professor and poet, whose recent visit to Canada set many to reading his poems who had perhaps never heard of him before, has to his credit many vivid word-pictures of the excitement and dangers of life at sea during these troublous and tempestuous times. The following paragraph from his "Mystery Ships" has special point just now, since in the ruthlessness and uncertainty of Germany's submarine warfare, now at its height, is gathered up the tensest interest and anxiety of the War:

"A submarine may enter the seas indeed, and even go to America. She may even do some damage within their lines. But if she does this her position is known and, if there be any future damage done, it will probably have to be done by another submarine; for she has called up a thousand perils, from every point of the compass, to close upon her return journey."

"I have actually seen the course of a German submarine—which thought itself undiscovered—marked from day to day on the chart at a British base. The clues to all the ramifications of this work are held by a few men at the Admiralty in London. . . It is difficult to convey in words the wide sweep and subtle co-ordination of this ocean hunting; for the beginning of any tale may be known only to an Admiral in a London office, the middle of it only to a commander at Kirkwall, and the end of it only to a trawler skipper off the coast of Ireland."

THE WIDE publicity given to Sir Oliver Lodge's recent work on spiritualism, and the unsettling of men's mind not otherwise securely anchored, for which it has been responsible, gives special interest to the affirmation of an Anglican clergyman of prominence in England—Rev. E. J. G. Forse, Vicar of Southbourne-on-Sea—that in all his studies along this line he has never heard of any medium eliciting a communication from one who had died a Catholic. His own words in this connection are worth reproducing:

"Some years ago I spent much time (by no means wasted) in studying the monumental volumes of Myers, Podmore, Gurney, etc., and was greatly struck by one verifiable fact.

"Amid the vast accumulations of thousands of alleged communications from beyond the grave, I could

find no single word from one who died a professed Catholic: nor did any of these planetic souls seem to have met any Catholics in their wanderings.

"It seems to be quite clear (on their own evidence) that the world into which the 'Big Hole' has been broken' is not the place where dead believers go."

A GOOD story comes from the trenches in France illustrative of the alertness and agility of the average American, born of his corner-lot training in the mysteries of baseball. Such training may be said to be the birthright of every normal citizen of the United States, and for that matter of every Canadian too, for baseball has come to be only a shade less the national game of Canada than it is of the neighboring Republic. In the incident recorded, this baseball training was made to serve a good end in one of the most violent phases of modern warfare.

IT APPEARS that an American soldier, enrolled in one of the French regiments, took part with his corps in the defence of Verdun. They were bombing and being bombed by their German foes. The German grenade throwers seem to have gotten the range of the squad in which was this American, and seven grenades, which ordinarily would have had disastrous results, were thrown at them in rapid succession. The American stood in one corner of the trench or crater and notwithstanding that these grenades were timed to explode within five seconds after being thrown, he deftly caught them and just as deftly tossed them back into the German trench where they exploded with disastrous results. When this exploit had been repeated several times, the officer in command realizing what was happening, and wishing to report such a dexterous feat, asked the American for his number, and the latter, thinking he must have violated some rule, exclaimed aloud in his native tongue: "Oh h—l, what have I done now?" and gave a fictitious number. So it happened that one soldier in the ranks failed to get a medal of honor earned by and designed for him.

IT USED to be a current saying in England that Waterloo was won on the playgrounds of Eton. With perhaps equal truth it might be said that Germany suffered at least one repulse before Verdun as a result of corner-lot baseball in America.

ON THE BATTLE LINE

FIGHTING ACTIVITY is again lively on the Galician front, according to German and Austrian official reports received during yesterday and last night. One of the Austrian reports speaks of the use of heavy artillery. The Germans say that the activity was at Smorgon, to the west of Lutsk, on the Zlochov-Tarnopol Railway, and on the Narayavka River. This is old fighting ground in the present war, the scene of Russian victories subsequently followed by the campaigns that led to the capture of Lemberg and later of Przemyel. Since the recapture of much of the ground by the Teuton forces, and particularly since the collapse of the Russian efforts to create a diversion during the Romanian campaign, there has been little to cheer for, from the Allied point of view, in this quarter. There is nothing in the despatches as received last night to indicate that the recrudescence of Russian liveliness is on a grand scale. There are too many disturbing elements within the Russian Empire at the present time to permit of optimistic forecasts, something like a mutiny in the Black Sea being one of them.

ON THE FRENCH FRONT there has been some very heavy fighting north of the Aisne, the Germans attacking along a front of about a mile and a quarter being driven off at all points with the exception of one salient in the centre which, it is admitted by the French, was penetrated, and is apparently still held. The famous Chemin des Dames was the scene of the attack by specially picked forces on a considerable front. The Germans on the other hand claim that southeast of Moronvilliers they held most of the positions they had won against the French attacks, losing only one unimportant portion of the ground. They also admit that they lost a part of the positions they had captured at Vauxaillon. The fighting in this area bids fair to develop into a great battle in the near future, and it would appear as if the Germans were seeking to force the fighting in order to draw off the Allied forces from attacks elsewhere. The Germans claim to have repulsed British attacks northwest of Warneton and at other points along the line held by Haig's forces. General Haig's laconic reports show that the attacks exist in the German imagination, several raids by the enemy having been repulsed.

FROM ITALY, by way of Amsterdam, comes a story that the renewed battle in the Trentino has assumed extraordinary dimensions, and ex-

tends along the entire front in the Sugana Valley to Asiago, the old fighting ground, on which the attention of the Allied countries was fixed with great hope for some time after the Italians commenced their first offensive in that region.

THE ITALIAN FORCES in the Trentino, as well as on the Carso Plateau, report successes. In the former area the Italians exploded a mine under the spur of a hill, killing the garrison and carrying the summit of the height. It is not clear from the despatches to what extent this advance carries the line toward Trent, but it seems to be a position of commanding importance. In the campaign against Trieste the Italians repulsed attacks on points they had taken near the coast line and further inland, and also succeeded in advancing their line for some distance.

THE UNITED STATES LIBERTY Loan was oversubscribed by more than a billion dollars. This is a gratifying bit of war news for all the Allied nations. For the moment it is not known how far advanced the first United States expeditionary force is in regard to beginning its work overseas. What is certain, however, is that a great effort is being made to place at the disposal of the Allies a very large fleet of airplanes and a large force of aviators. The necessity of maintaining supremacy of the air is now thoroughly recognized in every Allied country. No greater service can be done during the present summer by the United States than that of increasing the battle fleets of the air.—Globe, June 23.

CONVENT-INSPECTION BILL

PASSED IN FLORIDA

The convent inspection bill has just passed the Senate in Florida, disguised as a measure providing for the inspection of "all closed institutions." It was substituted for a still more odious bill which had been submitted to the House. Even had the press not clearly designated it as "the convent inspection bill" the debate in the Senate could have left no doubt as to its real purpose. The excuse given for its passage by Senator Fogarty (!) was the ingenious plea that it was intended to put an end to bigotry in the State. During the course of the debate Senator Johnson left the president's chair to speak against the original House bill. "I am a son of a Methodist minister," he said, "I believe that if the Protestants will use their religion to teach better living and leave off the agitation against other denominations they will accomplish more good for the people of the State." Alluding to those who were stirring up this strife, he added: "If Catholics go to hell they will have plenty of company from the Protestant congregations. I hope that both of the bills will be killed." Senator Andrews likewise rose to say that although he was a son of a Methodist, yet a certain Baptist, who had little religion he had, had given him more trouble than all the Catholics he ever knew. These two Senators were apparently the only non-Catholic members willing to ward off all injustice and indignity from Southern ladies whose sole crime it is that they have inviolably consecrated their virgin purity to Christ. Special credit is due to the many defense made by the only Catholic member of the House, Senator John of Escambia, who thus replied to the arguments drawn from popular ignorance and bigotry: "If I were to express myself as I feel after listening to the arguments on this floor, I might go too far. The Catholics of America expect and ask justice only, and the right to worship God according to the dictates of their conscience. I protest as a Catholic citizen against the enactment of any such law, as it is not necessary. We do not object to inspection. The present laws of the State provide for all the regulations necessary along that line. Grand juries of the various counties where our institutions are located have inspected such places and in every case have found them to be unexceptional. If any man who calls himself a good Christian knew of the good work accomplished by self-sacrificing women, as I do, it would make his blood boil to hear any person attempt to place a stigma on the character of these godly women."

While the rejection of the House bill by a vote of eighteen to twelve shows that at least a glimmer of light had penetrated the darkness, yet the substitute bill itself was passed by the overwhelming majority of twenty-six to three, and is now left to the Governor for approval.—America.

MINISTER-CONVERT

Liverpool, June 7.—Rev. Basil Withorne Holman, B. A., Cantab, who was ordained by the late Anglican Bishop King, of Lincoln, in 1901, was received into the Church by Father Carey, at Holloway, recently. After having spent four years in the Lincoln diocese, as curate of Horn-castle, he became acting Anglican Chaplain to the Forces in 1904 for eighteen months, and went to Lucknow diocese, in India, in 1905, as chaplain on the Bengal Ecclesiastical Establishment. He left on account of ill-health in September, 1913, and when the War broke out, he joined the New Zealand army as private in August, 1914, and was with that army both in Egypt and in France. He is still attached to the New Zealand army, in which he is now expecting his commission.