

The Catholic Record

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LONDON, SATURDAY, JANUARY 20, 1917

"ENGLAND"

What different emotions are stirred by that single word—England. Now, indeed, in the throes of deadly war, it is quite natural that each struggling nation should be taken as typifying what we conceive to be its dominant motive. But even at other times when passion is dormant, when the blood is cool, and the mind unclouded—in any other sense than as a geographical term—there would be in different minds an astonishing diversity of meaning, in different hearts widely varied sentiments aroused by the word "England." For into that word there is compressed long centuries of history—history affecting more or less intimately every family of the human race. And history is viewed from many angles.

Of one's own country one is apt to have a fairly accurate conception. But there is a temptation, a tendency, to personify a foreign country. And to this fictitious personality we are prone to attribute the characteristics, the views, the crimes even, of a long historic past.

It becomes easy in this way to feel towards a nation as we might feel toward a single person—distrust, resentment, hatred, fear. A whole people now living are made responsible for centuries of past history by a mere figure of speech.

Elsewhere, under the title "The British Oligarchy," we reproduce part of an article, "What People think about the War," by the famous English writer, H. G. Wells, in the Saturday Evening Post.

Trying to explain to Frenchmen the meaning of "England" Mr. Wells illustrates the "grip of a certain narrow and limited class upon British affairs." To loosen that grip "is the problem that every decent Englishman is trying to solve today."

"It holds the class schools; the class universities; the examinations for our public services are its class shibboleths; it is the church, the squirarchy, the permanent army class, permanent officialdom; it makes every appointment; it is the fountain of honor; what it does not know is not knowledge; what it cannot do must not be done. It rules India as its back garden; it will wreck the empire rather than relinquish its ascendancy in Ireland. It is densely self-satisfied and instinctively monopolistic. It is on our backs; and, with it on our backs we common English must bleed and blunder to victory."

Over and over again, as our readers are well aware, we have pointed out this truth so far as Ireland is concerned. The people of England, "every decent Englishman," every man of that greater Britain which has supplied these five million volunteers, have shown their sympathy for the Irish people, and have again and again in many a hard fought electoral campaign decided that it was their desire and their will that justice be done to Ireland.

To acknowledge this, to bear it in mind and in heart is the truest Irish patriotism. It was not the English people who made fish of the Ulster volunteers and flesh of the Irish volunteers. It was not the English people who hailed with delight the flouting of authority and the imprisonment of the police at the gun-running of Larne; and saw treason justifying the murders of Bachelor's Walk in the gun-running of Louth. It was not the English people who brutally executed the poets and visionaries who led the Dublin rising. It was the "oligarchy so inevitably fortified" of whose spirit in Ireland Maxwell and the murderous Bowen-Colthurst were the embodiment. It is consoling to

think that it was this shameful Prussianism that dealt the deadliest blow to Ascendancy which it has ever received. It is easy to understand even while we heartily deplore the effect on Irish sentiment. But he is no true patriot who deepens the ranking sense of injustice of Irish men at home or abroad by attributing all the mistakes and crimes past and present of a small ruling class to—"England."

This slipshod use of a figure of speech is largely responsible for increasing the difficulty and delaying the solution of the Irish problem. It is, of course, true that "Ireland," also, has been similarly personified and thus deliberately misrepresented by the class who would "wreck the empire rather than relinquish its ascendancy in Ireland."

It is well to heed Mr. Wells and to grasp the deep significance of his words when he says:

"It becomes more and more imperative that the foreign observer should distinguish between this narrower, older official Britain and the greater, newer Britain which struggles to free itself from the entanglement of a system outgrown. There are many Englishmen who would like to say to the French and the Irish and the Italians, and India—who, indeed, now feel every week a more urgent need of saying—'Have patience with us.' The Riddle of the British is very largely solved if you will think of a great modern liberal nation seeking to slough an exceedingly tough and tight skin."

It is an infinite pity that the "narrower, older official Britain" should have been able to darken with doubt, suspicion and distrust "the one bright spot" during this awful time of trial. But when the triumph of liberty and democracy has been achieved Ireland will recognize that her true patriots were those who like John Redmond sought to allay ill-informed resentment and promote understanding, sympathy and loyal cooperation with the great modern England who while fighting the battles of freedom has yet to free herself from the grip of "a narrow and limited" and "invincibly fortified" privileged class which still rules in England as well as in Ireland.

THE ALLIES' REPLY TO PRESIDENT WILSON

In striking contrast with the Teutonic reply to Wilson—indeed in contrast also, with their own vague and disappointing reply to the German peace proposal—is the definite, clear-cut and masterly exposition in response to President Wilson's famous peace Note. After a good deal of resentful misunderstanding and misrepresentation of the American Note on the part of the press, it is refreshing to find that the sober judgment of those who guide the destinies of the Allies in this great war has rightly understood the spirit of the Note and realized the opportunities which it offered of placing squarely before the world, neutral and belligerent, the Allied aims and objects and consequently the conditions of peace.

It may seem at first blush the outline of terms such as might be imposed if the Allies were completely victorious. Closer examination reveals that there is ample ground for serious negotiation on the part of the German Allies without forfeiting self-respect or any vital national interest. By this is not meant, of course, the dreams or ambitions of German militarism.

For instance: "The restitution of provinces or territories wrested from the Allies in the past by force or against the will of their populations."

Here we have a supremely just basis of adjustment: the will of the people who are themselves concerned. Whether Alsace-Lorraine would prefer to remain German or to become French; or whether the French-speaking portion go to France and the German-speaking part to Germany is a matter which can be decided fairly and equitably only by the voice of the people concerned. And so the Slav populations of Austria should have the preponderant voice in deciding their own national destiny.

This has well been called "a new declaration of independence in behalf of civilization." For the cornerstone of the American Declaration of Independence is that "Governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed." This declaration of the Allies is the death-knell of the imperialism which rests on force. It stirs the conscience and thrills the heart of all freedom-lovers throughout the world.

But the conscience of the world will not stand for two weights and two measures in this matter. Roumanians, Slavs and Czechs can have no inherent national rights that may be shamelessly denied to Irishmen.

Again the Reply lays down the principle that all peoples, great or small, have the right of enjoyment of full security, of free economic development and guarantees of land and sea frontiers against unjust attack.

This is a tremendously important principle destroying utterly the chief ground of appeal to the German people to continue the War because their enemies desire the destruction of their national existence.

Regarded as the maximum rather than the minimum demands of the Allies there is good reason to think that Germany may find in this full and frank statement a real basis for negotiation as to terms of peace.

THE CATHOLIC RECORD AND THE CATHOLIC PEOPLE

Occasionally we hear the querulous note of faultfinding with the Catholic people for not supporting the Catholic press. Perhaps there is ground for complaint; and perhaps the ground for complaint is not all on one side. In any case we are glad to bear testimony to the fact that the honest and conscientious efforts of the CATHOLIC RECORD have met and are meeting with generous recognition on the part of the Catholic people. The sale, moreover, of tens of thousands of Catholic books from our book department within the last couple of years is another fact which might give the faultfinders some reasons for examination of their own conscience.

Even though there be still room for improvement it may not do our "common scolds" any harm to learn that the Catholic people are actually better than any others in the matter of supporting their press. The Christian Guardian (Methodist) has this to say of the Methodist papers of the United States:

"The Christian Advocates of the Methodist Episcopal Church have been losing money recently, and losing it badly, dropping \$353,000 in the last four years. But there is another side to it. A Mr. J. W. Fisher put it this way. He said: 'I am a tanner, and have lived in the woods for forty years. But I want you all to know that I would be a backwoodsman now if it had not been for the New York Christian Advocate. That paper has made me a country-wide and world-wide Methodist. And, under the blessing of God, I personally have given to the educational and other benevolent enterprises of the Church, through the influence and information of our Church papers, more money than all the publishing deficit amounts to.' It is unfortunate that religious journals should so often be published at a deficit, but at the same time we should remember some of the items on the credit side of the ledger which do not appear on the yearly balance sheet."

Here we see that the religious press of the largest Protestant denomination on this continent is able to keep alive only with the aid of hundreds of thousands of dollars from general church funds. We know of no Catholic paper thus subsidized.

The CATHOLIC RECORD at any rate is a reputable business proposition, paying a hundred cents on the dollar without other aid than that of the generous cooperation of appreciative friends amongst bishops, priests and laity.

Those who from time to time with the best of intentions, doubtless, but without the necessary knowledge of the business side of the matter, tell us that the subscription should be reduced to \$1 a year, will find reason to modify their uninformed views on reading the account of the Methodist experience in the matter of religious publications.

Nor are the Methodists alone in this experience. The Canadian Churchman (Anglican) thus concludes an article on the subject:

"Fathers, mothers, young men, maidens, see that your library table for the year 1917 carries a copy of the Canadian Churchman, which is the only weekly Church paper that has survived many brave but fruitless ventures at church journalism in this Dominion."

The history of Catholic journalism in Canada has also its record of "many brave but fruitless ventures;" the CATHOLIC RECORD is a case of the survival of the fittest.

There is, however, an especial reason why Catholics should lead in the support of the religious press. Our environment in this country is Protestant. The secular press, honest and fair-dealing though it be, is owned, controlled and edited almost exclusively by Protestants. It cannot help viewing all things

from the Protestant standpoint. All the relations of life, our business and social intercourse, are permeated with the assumptions and principles of Protestantism. We live in a Protestant atmosphere. This state of things has its advantages. It makes for a more sturdy and vigorous Catholicism; a more thorough and more intelligent apprehension of the reason for the hope that is in us. Either that or weakening of the faith by an easy-going acquiescence in the generally accepted views prevailing around us.

The weekly visit of the Catholic paper to the Catholic home is in these conditions always of the highest utility, and generally speaking an imperative necessity, in keeping before the minds and hearts of those whose character and habits of thought and life are forming "the one thing necessary." It is a corrective of prevailing tendencies; it is a stimulus and an aid to right thinking and right living; it is an intimate Catholic influence good and wholesome in any condition, but an hundredfold more so for those who live and move and have their being in a Protestant or agnostic atmosphere and environment.

THE FATHER FRASER FUND

The continued generous assistance given to Father Fraser's Chinese missions is very gratifying. The great help that this fund has been to the great missionary work of our apostolic fellow-countryman will bring to the generous donors the hundred-fold reward promised by our Lord Himself.

With regard to the transmission of the contributions to Father Fraser the following letter from the Post Office Department is of interest:

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT, CANADA MONEY ORDER BRANCH
 Ottawa, Jan. 3rd, 1917.
 Editor CATHOLIC RECORD:

Dear Sir,—On different occasions applications have been made at Post Offices in Canada for Money Orders in favor of the Rev. J. M. Fraser, a Missionary at Taichowfu, China, but this Department has no arrangements for advising of Money Orders for payment in that place. The only offices in China on which Money Orders can be drawn are as follows, Hong Kong, including Amoy, Canton, Foochow, Hoihow and Swatow; Shanghai, including Chefoo, Hankow, Liu King Tau, (Wei-Hai-Wei), Ningpo and Tientsin. Japan has the following agencies in China: Changsha, Chinkiang, Hangchow, Kiukiang, Nanking, Pekin, Shashi, Tongku and Wuhu.

If, therefore, it is possible to furnish this information, it is requested that you will please inform this Department whether such orders could be drawn on one of the above described offices and arrangements made for the Rev. J. M. Fraser to obtain payment through some banking agency.

Yours truly,
 F. E. S. GROUT,
 Superintendent

It goes without saying that most of our readers know that subscriptions to this fund are sent to the CATHOLIC RECORD, acknowledged therein, and sent on to Father Fraser.

At the special request of Father Fraser himself the money is transmitted to him by personal check rather than by express order or bank draft. Accordingly the first of each month Father Fraser receives a check for the amount contributed during the preceding month. There are absolutely no charges of any kind against the fund; the last dollar and the last cent are forwarded by check to Father Fraser. As this has been going on for three years the banking agency with which Father Fraser deals has entire confidence in the financial standing of the CATHOLIC RECORD and consequently honors the checks on presentation. Presumably only those who did not understand this mode of procedure and acting without further consideration on the impulse to help Father Fraser sought to procure money orders directly in his favor.

Anyone desiring to send contributions direct must make his own arrangements.

THE BANNING OF MIRTH AND HUMOR

This is certainly an age of prohibition. Some things are prohibited because one has not enough money to buy them. Other things are justly prohibited because their abuse constitutes a danger to the public weal. But many things, that are neither expensive nor dangerous, are vetoed on account of the zeal of some alderman to pass a by-law. It is very interesting to watch the intense, set expression on the face of one of these gentlemen, while he awaits his turn at the council board to exhibit his new instrument of coercion. Town councils seem to be obsessed by the

idea that it is their duty to put as many restrictions as possible upon the citizens; whereas they are acting ultra vires when they restrict the liberty of any citizen in any matter that does not seriously affect the well-being of the community. The boys and girls, and even older people who had not lost the spirit of youth, used to sleigh-ride down a hill in a certain town. It was pleasant to hear their merry laughter ringing out upon the stillness of the evening air. It made one feel that the town was alive. Such dissipation and frivolity, however, was too much for some seriously minded aldermen. Hence the hill is now deserted, the movies are better patronized, and another by-law is added to our municipal code.

The same spirit seems to have invaded our Catholic life. Some very correct people are shocked at the merriment indulged in by their Polish and Austrian coreligionists on the occasion of a wedding or a baptism. "We can understand," they say, "the reason for the nuptial festivities; but why so much ado about a baptism?" Now these people are theologically wrong, and are guided not by the spirit of faith but by the spirit of the world. Even granted that matrimony is not what the small boy defined it, "a place of punishment, etc., etc.," the Polish Catholic is right in making a major feast of the christening; for a child of wrath has been made a child of God, one of his own kith and kin has claimed his heirship to the kingdom of heaven, and received the greatest of all titles.

The up-to-date Catholic couple arrange for their wedding after the manner of an ordinary business transaction, get married quietly, and have their nuptial dejeuner in the dining car. When the baby arrives they wait for two weeks, and often a much longer time, before they bring it to the church to be christened. It would be cruel, you know, to expose the poor little thing to the air any sooner. The christening is another businesslike performance; in fact it does not occasion half as much stir in the household as the advent of the baby's first tooth. O for the faith of the good old Irish mother who would not kiss her child till the regenerating waters had been poured upon its head! There may have been an overabundance of lager at the Polish christening, and perhaps the happy Irish father may have lifted his little finger once too often; but these were minor evils compared with the absence of Christian merriment from what ought to be the most joyous of festivities.

Mirth's twin sister humor seems also to have taken her departure. Subjectively speaking, our daily press is absolutely devoid of humor; but objectively, it certainly touches the funny bone. The Wit and Humor column is a misnomer and the cartoons are for the most part inane.

The really humorous portions are the editorials and the letters to the editor. The men (or often women) who write to the editor are terribly, almost painfully, in earnest. This is what makes their ebullitions so extremely funny. It is the subjective unconsciousness of humor that gives charm to what is otherwise devoid of pungency. The editorials would be equally humorous were it not that we know that the editors have some sense of discernment and do not expect that everyone will take them seriously. There is a certain grim humor, however, in the fact that so many do accept the editor's dictum on all manner of subjects as an ex-cathedra pronouncement. One favorable sign of England's sanity is that its press has preserved a sense of humor and even indulges in "merry descants on the nation's woes." If a paper in this country were to poke fun at our soldiers as Punch, for instance, does at the British Tommy, it would be accused of being pro-German. We recently overheard a man remark of a certain citizen, "I think he is pro-German." "Why do you think so?" asked his companion. "Because," he replied, "I heard him say that he did not believe that the Germans were starving." That same attitude seems to dominate the press. Its policy seems to be to caricature the enemy's weakness and wickedness as ridiculously as possible, but not to admit any imperfection or even foible in its own political and military leaders or even among the rank and file.

Humor has its source in a correct estimate of the proportion of things. The absence of it has bred a generation of men that do certainly get on one's nerves. They are so per-

sistently and perpetually in earnest, each about his own pet scheme or his own pet theory, that they consider the interjection of a bon mot into the conversation as almost a profanation. The really big men who have done things in the past never took themselves half so seriously. If the stars have a sense of humor—and some claim that inanimate things have—they must wink at each other and say, as they look down upon these little Busybodies of our planet: "Ain't they funny?"

THE GLEANER.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

A CORRESPONDENT for whose opinion we have ordinarily much respect, and who in the present juncture writes "not for publication," thinks we have "drawn rather a long bow," in our recent remarks on John Knox and the Scottish Reformation. He does not, he says, quarrel with the facts we cited, nor with the judgment of the eminent writers whom we quoted as authorities, but he thinks that notwithstanding the flaws in the character of Knox, the Reformation, as Dr. Bruce Taylor contends, "is justified in its results," and that these were nothing less than "the moral regeneration of Scotland," and her "transition from a semi-barbarous nation into one of the most civilizing forces of the modern world." "Knox was not, after all," he adds, "the Reformation. It was an upheaval far beyond the initiation or control of any one man or group of men."

To what extent these assertions are true does not concern us here. We have shown on the testimony of eye witnesses and of historical scholars as free from bias on the Catholic side, as they are profound in their knowledge of pre-Reformation and post-Reformation history, that the "upheaval" as our correspondent terms it, was not an upheaval at all, inasmuch as it did not come from the people. The Reformation in Scotland, as in England, was born of greed, and had its inception in the cupidity of a body of men, the nobility, who had long had an eye upon the treasures of the Church, and in the effort to enrich themselves trampled under foot every sacred and honorable consideration. In the hands of these men Knox was after all, as he found to his cost, but a tool, so far as the pillage of the Church was concerned. He clamored for his share of the spoils, it is true, but when it came to sharing the proceeds he found himself out in the cold. It was no part of the nobles' secret scheme that a mere preacher should be on their level in the matter of worldly estate. Hence, in the working out of the plot, and not by his own volition Knox ended his despicable life a poor man.

WE HAVE already shown on the testimony of the highest authorities the nature of the "results" of the Reformation in Scotland and do not feel called upon to go over them again. Our necessarily brief survey related to the period immediately following the death of Knox, and the two following centuries. "People who know only modern Presbyterianism," says Andrew Lang, "have no idea of the despotism which the Fathers of the Kirk tried for more than a century to enforce. The preachers sat in the seat of the Apostles; they had the gift of the Keys, the power to bind and loose." "What was the result? Was it really the introduction of the reign of righteousness as these precious bodies claimed? Lang, who has sifted the evidence as thoroughly as any man, concludes that "nothing less righteous could possibly be found than the condition of Scotland after the Reformation." This, the outstanding "result," our correspondent, with Dr. Bruce Taylor, conveniently passes by.

WE PURPOSELY, and for two reasons, forbore extending our remarks to cover present-day Scotland. The first reason was that so many converging elements have had their share in the making of the nation as it is today as to render comparisons invidious and the second was that it was no part of our task to wound the feelings of anybody. If one wishes to study Knox's theories in their ultimate working out, he requires but to peruse the proceedings of the annual Assemblies of the several Presbyterian bodies as they at present exist in Scotland. The tone of these proceedings is anything but optimistic. But, as to one side of the

national life, Dr. Bruce Taylor, in his Toronto St. Andrew's Day address, laid some stress, and with a citation from that discourse we are content to leave the matter. No words of ours could deepen the colors of the picture: "The Scot who returned to his native soil found blots upon the ideal. There were sad scenes on the streets of Glasgow and Dundee on Saturday nights; there were big lonely wastes of land in the country and slums and tenements, saturated with dirt and disease in the cities"—to thrust themselves upon him and make him sad. Dr. Taylor did not include these among the "results" of the Reformation of which he so proudly boasted, but no student of Scottish history can shut his eyes to the fact that such scenes as described are chargeable to the social system which had its birth in the event which he glorified.

UPON ONE clause in our remarks our correspondent has laid especial stress. We said: "Such indeed is the power of this obsession that under its influence men of intelligence and education can shut their eyes to the indubitable facts of history as chronicled even by writers of their own school, and by some process of intellectual conjuring unrevealed to the outside world, persuade themselves that black is white; that the sun rises where it sets, or that virtue stalks abroad in the habiliments of the miscreant." This is where he thinks we "draw the long bow." It is not, he avers, a true intellectual portrait of the average Presbyterian, or of any considerable section of them. "Knox was not, after all, the Reformation," and "his misdeeds, real or imaginary, are not chargeable to Presbyterianism as such, nor are adherents of that sect intellectually blind."

FACTS, HOWEVER, speak louder than words. One of the most conspicuous ministers in Scotland during the last century, Dr. Norman Macleod, Chaplain to the Queen, laid it down as a maxim that "to know Knox is to know the Reformation." But, that by the way. The strongest part of the indictment is that those who for three centuries have so conspicuously honored Knox are blinded as to his real character. We propose to cite one or two examples. McCrie, who wrote the best-known Life—a standard text-book throughout the Presbyterian world—has made his book one long panegyric. He accepts unequivocally every thing that has been said in his subject's favor, and just as unequivocally rejects every atom of evidence that tells against him. Once only is he constrained to admit that the Reformer, in his dealings with others, "recommended dissimulation." A laud writer, D. Hay Fleming, is even more indiscriminating as a panegyrist than McCrie. The best example of all, however, is the late Mr. Andrew Lang, who, while having done more perhaps than any other writer of his day to uncover the wrongs and falsehoods of the past, stumbles woefully when it comes to weighing the character of Knox in the balance with his misdeeds. If such as he has fallen under the spell should have lost their bearings altogether; with a few citations from Lang's writings we shall leave the matter.

LANG HAS written of Knox in more than one of his publications. The reflexions upon the "Reformer's" character which he made in his "Mystery of Mary Stuart" ran so counter to popular feeling in Scotland as to constrain the writer to justify his position by going more minutely into the subject. The result was "John Knox and the Reformation," a book of 280 pages in which the available evidence pro and con were pretty thoroughly sifted. We are not aware that any serious effort has been made to refute his conclusions. The book is remarkable in the main as an honest attempt to get at the facts, but whether from a feeling of necessity to offset the unpopularity which the "Mystery of Mary Stuart" brought him, by throwing a sop to his Presbyterian audience, or because he lay under the spell to which we have referred, we have, in his later book, the extraordinary spectacle of a man praised as a good and just man in the very same paragraphs in which he is exposed as an unprincipled scoundrel. We propose to illustrate this contradiction in terms by a few examples.

AMONG OTHER virtues claimed for Knox by his admirers is that of