

A. Sunday of the Saw Dust Trail? Where? When the Great Charter had to be "wrested" from the unwilling hand of an unwilling monarch, where were "the above," "the foregoing," and the individuals "named," respectively? The real truth, good bishop, is, that these folks had not yet been born. The Great Charter "saw daylight" for the first time in the year 1215. They were all Roman Catholics then, just as we all might have been Roman Catholic now, if the pre-reformation believers had only been real good and behaved themselves. They were all Roman Catholics then. Even King John, himself, was a Roman Catholic. Not a very good one, of course, but nobody ever called him a "Protestant." But speaking seriously, those Roman Catholic barons, bishop or no bishop, were inspired by the Protestant spirit. The Magna Charta enshrines a protest, sublime, glorious and imperial! The spirit which dares to protest is the hope of the world.

But our own Archbishop Langevin, whose acquaintance I own and whose friendship I crave, was also among the speakers, and in his address before the representatives of the Roman Catholicism of Western Canada he made the rather startling statement that: "No historian of value will refuse to admit that the papacy has done more good for humanity than any other institution in the world." There was no wine drunk at that great banquet, and for that noble example of sobriety we are thankful and not lacking in appreciation, but they dealt in superlatives nevertheless. The archbishop's statement, however, is a skillful one.

Who would care to deny that the Roman Catholic church has accomplished great good in its history? Who would dare to deny that the Roman Catholic church is doing much good today? Could a church which has spread its sheltering wings over the saints of a thousand years fail of deeds of good charity and tender service? No other Christian church has ever had the prolonged opportunities for doing good as the Roman Catholic church; but if the good natured archbishop of St. Boniface had ventured to reverse his statement, he might have uttered words equally true, namely, "No historian of value will refuse to admit that the papacy has done more evil against humanity than any other institution in the world." One statement is about as accurate and reliable as the other. If my friend, the archbishop, finds enjoyment by indulging in sweeping generalizations, he opens the door for counter assertions, of the same sort. The truth is that the history of Roman Catholicism presents a strange admixture of evil and good. Imagine that Lecky the historian is not exaggerating when he says that "the Church