

The Catholic Record

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LONDON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1916

A VERY REGRETTABLE MISCONCEPTION

The Meredith judgment on the latest phase of the Ottawa Separate school litigation brings forth, as was to be expected, the usual jeremiad from Le Droit.

There is, however, a point on which we should like to set the Journal right. It says: "The trouble arose purely between French-speaking and English-speaking Catholics."

All through the article this is assumed and often expressly stated.

Thirty years ago—people can forget with a rapidity that is astonishing, and in thirty years a large proportion of the electorate is made up of those who never knew—thirty years ago the bilingual trouble had its origin right in the constituency of the Journal.

We do not need to recapitulate the history of that and subsequent elections; suffice it to say that it was not only hurtful but ineffective as well precisely because the French language question was confounded with the question of Separate schools.

In 1899 a Commission was appointed to investigate alleged conditions in the Public—not Separate—schools of Prescott and Russell. Following the Report of this Commission regulations were issued restricting the use of French to what was strictly necessary, and insisting on English as the language of the schools of this English province.

Regulation XVII, not only allows French as the language of communication for the first two or three years, and provides for the teaching of French in subsequent years, but makes elaborate provision for broad interpretation and lenient administration by the Chief Inspector.

At the present time the Department Reports show many bilingual Public Schools; thirty-four in one inspectorate.

What we wish to impress on the Journal and those ill-informed or wrong-headed people who share its regrettable misconception is this: the bilingual difficulty is not of Separate school origin nor is it confined to Separate schools at the present time.

Perhaps the Journal is thinking only of the question as it exists in Ottawa. Even apart from the fact that this is but a local phase of the larger question we are very far from

admitting that friction between French and English Catholics is the real cause of the trouble. There would never have been any friction had the Department of Education been properly administered for the last twenty five years.

The English Separate schools of Ottawa obey the law, observe every regulation, are staffed not only with qualified but competent teachers; their work compares favorably with that of the Ottawa Public schools or any other schools in the Province.

But no; they have had to fight for their very existence. Because of a condition, brought about largely by shifty political opportunism, the English Separate schools of Ottawa were involved in a quarrel between the government and its spoiled children, the "bilingualists," who flouted its authority and defied its officials.

Not merely to settle a dispute between English and French Catholics, but for very shame's sake the Government was bound to find a solution or confess that its Department of Education was powerless to fulfil the duties and discharge the obligations with which it was charged.

REDMOND'S GREAT SPEECH

The Irish leader's great speech needs no editorial elucidation or emphasis. Lucidity and forcefulness are characteristic of Mr. Redmond's oratory. Its tone and spirit are worthy of the great occasion, and worthy of one who is a great Irish patriot and who, at the same time, holds an outstanding position amongst the great men who are charged with tremendous responsibilities in this great crisis of civilization.

In referring to that part of his historic speech in which Mr. Redmond protests against the entire lack of official recognition of the conspicuous services and heroic bravery of the Irish troops, our object is not to make the regrettable situation clearer—that were impossible—but rather to anticipate and perhaps dissipate a very natural and very warm feeling of resentment which the perusal of the speech may beget in our readers.

On this side of the water we have a rather plentiful crop of bigots who gain a livelihood by slandering their Catholic fellow-countrymen. It would be a grievous mistake to allow our indignation to carry us so far as to confound this unclean brood, or the ignorant dupes whom they misled, with the great mass of fair-minded and square-dealing Protestants.

So the little anti-Irish cads, even though they reach the position of official chroniclers of the War, must not be confounded with the people of England. We are living in stirring times. Just now the gigantic War overshadows events which by themselves would have made our generation interesting to the student of history in centuries yet to come.

One of the historic events of our time is the settlement of the Irish land question. The future student of history, viewing it in its true perspective, will see in this one of the most momentous events of a century. In itself, in its circumstances, in the fact that Ireland led the way, this will be an interesting and instructive chapter of history; but above all in its consequences, which led inevitably to the overthrow of landlordism in Great Britain, will the Irish agrarian movement claim a great deal of serious attention from the future student of social and economic development in the British Islands.

Specially favored classes naturally stand together against the rising power of democracy. So in England a powerful political party, dominated by the privileged classes, and entrenched apparently in an impregnable position behind the House of Lords, could successfully set what the classes considered safe limits to democratic legislation.

But again, Ireland leading the way, the House of Lords was shorn of its power.

The democracy of Great Britain gives the democracy of the sister isle full-hearted recognition of the indispensable Irish aid in storming this very citadel of the political power of special privilege.

These and other considerations will make plain the reason why socialists in official positions could allow their political prejudices to inspire their contemptible suppres-

sion of the names of Irish units in official despatches.

We do not of course doubt that English public life is, on the whole, sound; but we are inclined to think that Sir Herbert Holt must have had some personal knowledge of the intense political bitterness and infinite pettiness of decadent Toryism when in his anger he said that British politics are absolutely rotten. We must expect, even at such a time as the present, some evidence of that spirit which placed politics over patriotism and recklessly brought the country to the verge of civil war.

In this age it is the people who count. And the great, clean, hard-working, red-blooded part of the population of England, Scotland and Wales fought side by side with the people of Ireland for social amelioration and political emancipation. They are now fighting side by side in the trenches in this supreme crisis of their common history. When the great struggle issues in final victory, side by side the peoples of the sister islands, with mutual confidence and good-will deepened immeasurably, will resume their fight for freedom and social betterment.

In reading the speech of the great Irish leader let us bear these facts in mind and let us not make the grievous mistake of extending our indignation to people who resent as warmly as we do the petty and contemptible discrimination shown by the writers of the official despatches.

In his cable letter T. P. O'Connor tells us that as Redmond pointed out this glaring discrimination of "Shames!" "Shame!" came from all parts of the House. Suppression of the truth is sometimes the blackest of lies. We may well leave our little slanders by suppression to the luxury of their own feelings as they listen to the cry of "Shame!" from every honest-hearted and red-blooded British subject throughout the Empire.

AN INTERVIEW REPUDIATED

In the Toronto Globe of November 23rd, under headlines that could scarcely fail to attract the ordinary reader's attention, appeared some literally astounding statements attributed to the Hon. G. Howard Ferguson, Acting Minister of Education. The sub-heading of the article was "Acting Minister of Education Comments on the Sturgeon Falls Case." As the Acting Minister in the Globe of Nov. 26 repudiated the offensive, impertinent and misleading statements attributed to him it is useless to give them the consideration we had intended.

But a word about the repudiation. We read the Globe, as usual, on Friday, Nov. 26th. We did not see the Acting Minister's repudiation. On being assured that it was there we instituted a diligent search and finally located it in an obscure and unlikely corner where doubtless it escaped the notice of the majority of the readers of the previous article.

The reporters seem to give out an astonishing amount of misinformation with regard to the Sturgeon Falls case, but as it is still *sub judice* at the present writing we shall reserve any comments we may have to make until the Ontario Railway and Municipal Board shall have handed down their judgment.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

THE QUESTION of international amity as between Great Britain and the United States being so much to the fore in these "piping times," it cannot be unreasonable to recall an incident in the life of General Washington which, while touched upon in some biographers of the "Father of his country," has never been accorded that prominence which its bearing upon the relations of the two nations one to the other, makes desirable. In the early years of the Republic when a feeling of international resentment still ran high, and the wounds of the Revolution were still far from healed, this was perhaps not surprising. But now, in the dawn of a second century of peace, and the accompanying re-birth in both nations of that sense of kinship and devotion to a common ideal severed a century and more ago by unwise statesmanship, the words of Washington in the midst of the crisis may be recalled with advantage to all.

It is related that an Episcopal clergyman, the Rev. Jacob Duché, who had been elected chaplain to Congress just prior to the outbreak of hostilities, found himself out of sympathy with the aspirations of his countrymen and consequently resigned his position. Not content to

maintain a quiescent attitude under events that followed he persuaded himself into the very unwise step of addressing a letter to Washington soon after the latter's appointment as commander-in-chief of the Continental Army, in which he endeavored to persuade the General to resign this command and espouse the British cause. Duché was undoubtedly actuated by the highest motives in this action but seems not to have weighed its import in regard to Washington himself. The Army lay at that time at Valley Forge, and under the pretext of paying a friendly visit to its commander-in-chief, Mrs. Ferguson, bearer of Duché's letter, obtained access to his presence and duly acquitted herself of her mission. This lady was the daughter of a Scottish physician then resident in Philadelphia.

WASHINGTON RECEIVED his visitor with every mark of respect, she being well known to him, and having received the letter read it attentively. A contemporary account states that he was much agitated as he proceeded, and that, having got to the end of it, rose from his seat, and paced up and down for some time without speaking. Then, turning to his visitor, he addressed to her these memorable words: "Madam, I have always esteemed your character and endowments, and am fully sensible of the noble principles by which you are actuated on this occasion; nor has any man in the whole continent more confidence in the integrity of his friend, than I have in the honor of Mr. Duché. But I am here entrusted by the people of America with sovereign authority. They have placed their lives and fortunes at my disposal, because they believe me to be an honest man. Were I, therefore, to desert their cause, and consign them again to the British, what would be the consequence? To myself perpetual infamy; to them endless calamity."

"THE SEEDS of everlasting division," he continued, "are sown between the two countries, and were the British again to become our masters, they would have to maintain their dominion by force, and would, after all, remain in subjection only so long as they could hold their bayonets to our breasts. No, Madam, the proposal of Mr. Duché, though conceived with the best intention, is not framed in wisdom. America and England must be separate States; but they may have common interests, for they are but one people. It will, therefore, be the object of my life and ambition to establish the independence of America in the first place; and, in the second, to arrange such a community of interests between the two nations as shall indemnify them for the calamities which they now suffer, and form a new era in the history of nations. But, Madam, you are aware that I have many enemies; Congress may hear of your visit, and of this letter, and I should be suspected were I to conceal it from them. I respect you truly, as I have said, and I esteem the probity and motives of Mr. Duché, and, therefore, you are free to depart this camp, but the letter will be transmitted without delay to Congress."

THE RESULT of this eventful incident was, of course, that both the writer of the letter, and its bearer, were obliged to quit the country. They made their way to England, and, it is perhaps painful to some to add, were allowed to pine unnoticed by the Government they had endeavored to serve. Duché had been celebrated as a preacher throughout the Thirteen Colonies, but, in the words of one chronicler was, after his return to England, heard of no more. As to Washington, his course in the event was necessarily applauded by Congress, and by his countrymen. It is all the more surprising, therefore, that it should have been made so little of by subsequent historians. Now, however, that the community of interests between these two great nations are, as Washington predicted, becoming every day better understood, and the bonds of kinship and friendship being daily tightened, his words should find their way into every textbook, and his spirit be applied to the solution of every international question. Then will the children of the "Father of his country" enter fully into their heritage.

THE ALL pervading passion for wealth and distinction, and the tendency even on the part of those of

whom something different might have been hoped, to stigmatize those as failures who have not attained to "position" in the world, seems not to have been mitigated in the least by the throes of War. Everywhere we hear of greed and graft, and of our hostilities as the opportunity of the many to profit by the sacrifices of the few. This has been a growing passion for a century and it suffers no diminution now. It is over eighty years ago since John Henry Newman, standing in an Anglican pulpit, thus characterized the times in which we live: "Has not," he said, "the desire of wealth so eaten into our hearts, that we think poverty the worst of ills, that we think the security of property the first of blessings, that we measure all things by wealth, that we not only labor for it ourselves, but so involve in our earnestness all around us, that they cannot keep from the pursuit of it though they would. Does not the structure of society move forward on such a plan, as to enlist into the service of the world all its members, almost whether they will or no? Would not a man be thought unambitious and unproductive, who cared not to push forward in pursuit of that which Scripture calls 'the root of all evil,' the love of which it calls 'covetousness which is idolatry,' and the possession of which it solemnly declares all but excludes a man from the kingdom of Heaven? Alas! can this be denied?" If this were true how Newman wrote these words, how much more so now! And the remedy?—where else but in renunciation and in the benign aspiration of Pius X.—the restoration of all things in Christ? The age needs a Saint Francis of Assisi.

ON THE BATTLE LINE

THE GREAT event of the week is the understanding with Greece whereby Greece agrees not to disarm and intern Allied belligerents who may retire before the enemy into Greek territory.

THE GREEK DANGER IS PAST

NO attempt will be made by the army of Greece to interfere with the allied troops should they, under any contingency, find it necessary to cross the Macedonian frontier into Greece. In that event railway and other facilities will be afforded them, as in the case of the troops now going north from Saloniki into Serbia. This ends a perilous situation. Greece will not join their enemies. That the guarantees given have satisfied the British and the French Governments is indicated by the release of many grain-laden ships en route to Greece, which is now announced had been held up at Malta pending a satisfactory outcome of the negotiations. It is reported that the allied powers agree to reimburse the Greeks for any damage done within their borders during the occupation of Greek territory by the allied armies.

THE FRANCO-BRITISH Army, freed of the menace at its base, is now in a position to go forward to help the Serbs, but, unhappily, there is not much of Serbia left to save. The German and Bulgarian armies occupy every town of importance in the little kingdom save Monastir and Jakova and it is reported that a combined movement of the German and Bulgarian armies has been begun down the valley of the Vardar and by way of Prilep toward Monastir. The allied army in the southeastern district of Macedonia must now be a large and finely equipped force. From the Gallipoli Peninsula, it is asserted, a very considerable number of seasoned troops have been drawn, while the Germans themselves recently announced that eighty British transports have gone through the Straits of Gibraltar recently, eastward bound.—Globe Nov. 26.

TURKS RETIRING

THE ADVANCE upon Bagdad continues, and the Anglo-Indian army must now be close to the defenses thrown around the city by the Turks. The British War Office received from Sir John Nixon last night a report that the Turkish army, beaten after a hard struggle at Oteshipon, eighteen miles from the capital of Mesopotamia, had fallen back to Dialah, which is only ten miles from the city.

OTHER FRONTS

THE ITALIANS after their prolonged and bloody struggle appear to be on the point of entering Gorizia. On the Western front, the fighting is confined to intermittent cannonading. There is not likely to be much fighting on a large scale on the Russian front beyond securing advantageous lines for winter entrenchment.

ONE WAY TO FIND OUT

"Pray that you may live for twenty or thirty years," says the Fortnightly Review, "so that you may find out the truth about what really happened in this war."

MASTERLY SPEECH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

the Irish point of view. It is not only an Irish question, because I am quite sure it affects every hon. member's constituency, and every part of England and Scotland and Wales as well. Let me argue it from my own point of view. The ultimate refusal to allow the Irish people to learn officially of the achievements of the Irish regiments, and the total absence of official recognitions of their gallantry does more harm to recruiting in Ireland than anything you could conceive. What happens is this. In the end we do get to know what our troops have been doing, but we get to know it from the statements, letters and interviews from wounded officers and men who come home. In that way we have heard a good deal about the gallantry of Irish troops and their sufferings, etc., but in the official despatches they have not even been mentioned. That is a strong statement to make. Let me substantiate it: Here is a letter which appeared in an English paper a little while ago, signed, "Father of Irish Soldiers":

FROM A FATHER OF IRISH SOLDIERS

I know this man. His only two sons are to-day with the army in the East, and were present at Gallipoli and Suvla Bay. He says: "One of the things which are felt in Ireland, and it is one of the ways in which the military situation is affected, is that while Irish troops get their full share of the hottest work, their achievements as troops do not get the official recognition. The latest case in point is Admiral de Robeck's despatch with reference to the first landing at Gallipoli. He describes each of the landings and mentions the work of the Australians, the Scottish Borderers, the Royal Fusiliers, the Lancashire Fusiliers, the South Wales Borderers, etc., and paid them glowing tributes, which were not more glowing, I am sure, than they deserve. The Admiral then goes on to describe the landing at Y. Beach, and said, 'This Beach was the most difficult to capture. It possessed all the disadvantages and difficulties that W. Beach had, and in addition, the flanks were strongly guarded by the old castle and village of Seddul Bahr, on the east and west.' He describes how on the first trip all were either killed or wounded. One boat entirely disappeared. In another there were only two survivors. The lighters were heaped with dead."

We know that these men who were the first to land there were the Dublin and Munster Fusiliers. Every one knows that to-day the few surviving officers who came back have given us full particulars. The men received the most lavish praise from other Generals in the field. The Commanding Officer of the New Zealand troops, for instance, sent a message to the remnant of the Dublin and Munster Fusiliers to thank them, and say what magnificent work they had done, and yet in this dispatch—and this is the only official dispatch which has been published—while the Australians, the Scottish Borderers, Royal Fusiliers, Lancashire Fusiliers, South Wales Borderers, etc., are all picked out for special praise, the Munsters and Dublin Fusiliers are not even mentioned. There is not even the mention of the word Munster Fusiliers or Dublin Fusiliers. That kind of thing is doing untold mischief. There is not a man of us who does not resent it (hear, hear.) In this Dublin Fusilier Regiment there was one battalion which was known as the "Pals" Battalion. It consisted almost entirely of well educated young men from the universities and schools and the professional classes. They were all practically annihilated and I know scores of families in Dublin to-day which are plunged into most terrible anguish because of the death of their children. I have seen letters from survivors to the parents of these dead boys, speaking in the most extravagant terms, I might almost say were it possible, of their gallantry and the gallantry of the regiment. What do you think the feeling of the young men in Dublin must be when we go and ask them to enlist, and when they are able to answer and send us out to be killed in the barbed wire entanglements at Gallipoli and then when we have all done our work and acted gloriously for our country and our regiment not one word is allowed to be published with reference to our achievements." I can't tell the House of Commons what a strong view I take of this (hear, hear). That, mind you, is not an isolated case. Let me take another—the landing at Suvla Bay back by Suvla. We have not heard the truth about that. I have received myself, not from men in the ranks, not from junior officers but from officers of high position in the 10th Irish Division communications which I dare not read to this House. I have sent them to the War Office. I felt it my duty to do so. I sent them to the Prime Minister. Some day these facts will come out. Sir Ian Hamilton is back here now. These things will have to be inquired into, and some day they will be known, and when they are I tell you that in the whole history of the war you will find that no troops ever were subjected to such horrible hardships and sufferings or showed such extraordinary gallantry as this 10th Irish Division, raised in Dublin and the Curragh, and commanded by General Sir Bryan Mahon (hears). Yet not one word of official recogni-

tion. Not one single word. Where allusions were made to them they were spoken of as a Division. Names are given to other Divisions, but being an Irish Division they were mentioned as simply a Division. Why should this be? (Hear, hear). We are engaged at this moment in trying to raise in Ireland, and we will succeed, reserve battalions for the 10th Division. Why is it that you will not tell us in Ireland what our brave lads are doing and suffering? Let us know that. The last instance occurred only the other day in the battle at Loos. Many of you have seen in the newspapers the graphic account of the gallantry in the battle of Loos of the London Irish Territorial Regiment. Nothing could exceed their gallantry, and their losses were very heavy, and they received the greatest praise in some of the unofficial notices which have come back. But General French, in his despatch to day, never mentioned them at all. He simply lumps them in as Territorials. The way we feel about the matter is this—God knows we do give our praise to an troops, and we were almost as proud as they were themselves when the London Scottish Territorials were singled out for lavish praise. They deserved it, and I was delighted that they got it. But when the Irish Territorial Regiments do the same, or practically the same, why are they not mentioned at all? That is the first thing which I failed altogether to get the War Office to take into serious consideration, and it is doing infinite mischief in our work of recruiting in Ireland (hear, hear). The second matter I want to mention is my complaint that the War Office has obstinately refused from the very start up to this moment to utilise the Volunteers in Ireland.

THE VOLUNTEERS IN IRELAND

It may be remembered that the very day the war broke out I rose in my place in this House and offered the Volunteers to the Government for home defence. I only spoke, of course, of the National Volunteers. I was not entitled to speak for the Ulster Volunteers, but I suggested that they and we might work shoulder to shoulder. From that day to this the War Office have persistently refused to have anything to say to these Volunteers. The Prime Minister a few days after I spoke in answer to a question told me that the Government were considering at that moment how best to utilise these Volunteers. They have never been utilised since. A few days after I made my speech I went myself to the War Office, and as a result of my interviews there I submitted to the Government a scheme which would have provided them at once with 25,000 men. If that offer had been accepted, not 25,000, not 50,000, but 100,000 men would have been enlisted for home defence within a month (Nationalist cheers). But no, it was obstinately refused. I hear that a member below me is now apparently inclined to take the point that the War Office took. The War Office said that would interfere with recruiting in Ireland. Of course, we know Ireland better than the hon. member. We know our difficulties in Ireland. We do not believe that it would. On the contrary, we believe that it would have promoted recruiting (hear, hear). We believe that the enlistment of these men, their association in barracks and in camp, with the inevitable recreation and fostering of a military spirit, would have led to a large number of volunteers for foreign service. Our views counted for naught. In this instance, they were not only our views. These views had the approval of the Irish Command, and from the purely military point of view, the Irish Command was in favor of some such scheme as I had outlined, and their reason was plain. They have to provide, and are providing to this day 20,000 to 25,000 men from the regular army for the defence of the coast of Ireland, guarding the coast, guarding piers, railway-bridges, and so forth. If these men of ours had been taken up, within two or three months of training and in camp, they would have been able to do this work, and would have done it ever since, and would thereby have released from 20,000 to 25,000 men. That is the chief reason, I fancy, why the military command in Ireland were in favour of this idea. But to this moment the refusal continues. I see that an unofficial Bill was introduced by the Marquis of Lincolnshire into the House of Lords, doing, to a great measure, for England and Wales what we have been asking should be done for Ireland. I claim that the Bill shall be extended to Ireland, and I must say if it is not extended to Ireland it will meet with the most severe opposition from myself and my friends (Nationalist cheers). As I have dealt with the question of Volunteers at all, let me give two figures to the House, which I think will be interesting, to show you that these Volunteers are willing and anxious to go to the front.

VOLUNTEERS WITH THE COLOURS

The latest figures, up to October 9th, show that 27,054 National Volunteers are to-day with the colours. Let anyone should imagine for a moment that I want to say anything unfair, let me say that the Ulster Volunteers have done better. I will give their figures. Their number is 27,412—that is about 350 more than ours. From these figures alone, you have an indication that these men are willing to go and do their share and take their part. Of course, many Volunteers are impossible for foreign service, because of age and