

The Catholic Record

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LONDON, SATURDAY, NOV. 20, 1920

DOGMATIC RELIGION

For some years it has been the foolish habit of Protestant clergymen who wish to be considered broad-minded to rant and rail at dogma in religion. Nevertheless these gentlemen are usually very dogmatic—in the usual acceptance of that term—about many things that Christ and His Church have left free. Now a dogma is simply a revealed truth expressed in definite terms. The acceptance of such truths no more hampers the human intellect than does the acceptance of similar clearly defined truths of physical science or of pure mathematics. As a matter of plain fact there is and there can be no progress whatever in human knowledge of any kind without dogma, or, if that be restricted to revealed truth, the counterpart of dogma.

Undogmatic religious teaching is necessarily indefinite, and obscure. In the absence of definite and clear religious doctrine appeal may be made to sentiment and emotion; but it was not sentimental or emotional appeals that converted the pagan world. It was definite and dogmatic truth revealed by God through Jesus Christ Who died for man's salvation. Nor will anything else reclaim the present age from the semi-paganism or neo-paganism to which it is in such great measure given over.

It is interesting to note that earnest Protestants are beginning to realize that ranting and railing at dogma by "broad-minded" clergymen is not conducive to well-informed apprehension of the truths of Christianity. For faith is rooted in the intellect, not in the emotions.

At the recent Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, held in Brantford, Ontario, the Rev. Dr. MacNeil points this moral very clearly. He is thus reported in the press:

"President MacNeil expressed regret at the ignorance on the part of the young people of today on the essential elements of Christianity.

"With shame we must confess that within our church membership," said Mr. MacNeil, "the ignorance of what constitutes the essence of Christianity is nothing less than appalling."

"Further, he said: 'It is evident that the majority of our youth is growing up without any clearly defined and intelligent idea of what Christianity means, and I for one can see very clearly no chance for our progress and power as a Baptist people until we address ourselves to that which is fundamental to life—the instruction of our young people in the essential elements of their most holy faith.'

It will be noted that Dr. MacNeil refers to the "appalling ignorance within our church membership." A few days later at Belleville, at a meeting of the Ontario Religious Education Council, formerly the Ontario Sunday School Association, Prof. Fred Langford of Victoria College, Toronto, "noted the large percentage of young people who are not associated with any church, or who have left the Sunday school. Conditions in this respect, he thought, were not any better in Ontario than they were in the United States."

The same newspaper report under the subheading, "Place of Religion in Education," has this paragraph:

"Prof. M. A. Honline of Dayton, Ohio, in an address on the place of religion in education, urged that parents should be as much interested in the pedigree of their prospective sons-in-law and daughters-

in-law as they are in that of the animals in the barnyard. The religious nature was inborn but required proper cultivation. The child's potential powers, which are for good or evil, should be properly guided."

Which may be a very meagre and inadequate report, but shows that the learned professor failed to impress the reporter, whether clerical or lay, with any very definite or inspiring message as to the place of religion in education.

At St. Catharines, where the annual convention of the western section of the Ontario Religious Education Council closed on Nov. 5th, the same note was struck according to the following newspaper report:

"Rev. W. J. Knox, of London, speaking on 'The Place of the Home in Christian Nurture,' said the Protestant church has failed lamentably in the early training of its young children, being far behind the Roman Catholics and the Jews in this particular. The Roman Catholics and Jews pay strict attention to the early education of their children, particularly as regards religion, and the children of these sects carry the beliefs and instruction to the end of their days, steadfastly believing in everything taught them.

"Protestants," said Mr. Knox, "believe in letting their children grow up any old way, hoping to get them back into the church in later years. But unless we Protestants reform our methods and get after the children in their early years we are going to fall all along the line."

Which recalls to mind and makes very appropriate here a clipping we made from the New York Times of Oct. 5th last:

"Presbyterian churches here took the first step yesterday, through their pastors, to prepare to give week day religious instruction to their young people if the Board of Education shall put through a proposition now pending to dismiss the public schools an hour earlier one afternoon each week and send the children to such church as their parents shall decree for religious and moral instruction.

"The action was taken by the Presbytery of New York at its first Fall session in the First Church, Fifth Avenue and Eleventh Street, through a resolution offered by the Rev. Dr. David G. Wylie, Secretary of the Presbyterian Board of Church Extension. The resolution urged that the Rev. Dr. Harlan G. Mendenhall, the Moderator of the Presbytery, appoint a committee of four, of which he should be a member, to confer with committees from other religious communities and associations 'as to the expediency of supporting the movement for religious education before the Board of Education.'

"It was pointed out that both the Roman Catholics and the Jews were ready to take care of their children if the Board of Education takes the contemplated step, and that scores of Catholic churches and synagogues are already giving this week-day instruction."

The most precious heritage that Catholics can leave their children is the Catholic Faith. And the seat of faith is the intellect which must apprehend the definite and essential truths of revealed religion before religion can become the guiding influence which moulds or transforms our lives. Hence Catholics always and everywhere insist on clear and definite teaching of the eternal truths.

This teaching is dogmatic, must be dogmatic.

That there is a God is a dogma.

That man has an immortal soul is a dogma.

That man is accountable to God who will reward or punish in the next life according to our deserts in this, is a dogma.

That Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son of the Eternal God, died to save us from sin and its consequences, is a dogma.

All these are dogmas, certain, definite, clear, incontrovertible.

Unless there is dogmatic teaching of these dogmatic truths there is no teaching of them at all, there is no Christian teaching; and we need not be surprised at the "appalling ignorance of what constitutes the essence of Christianity" as the result of the senseless and un-Christian flouting of dogma.

The Catholic Church is wise with the wisdom of the accumulated human experience of nineteen hundred years as well as the wisdom that comes from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit of God who, accord-

ing to Christ's promise, abides with her forever. That wisdom of the Church reinforces by command what common sense and common prudence dictate; namely, the dogmatic teaching of dogmatic religion to every Catholic child. Where possible, even if difficult and entailing material sacrifice, the Church counsels, where easily possible she commands, that the whole educational life should be surrounded by a Catholic atmosphere, permeated by Catholic influence, illumined by Catholic truth.

Though Catholics may be tempted to tell Protestants to set their own house in order before fussing themselves so much about Quebec and South America, the real reason to be drawn from these confessions of Protestant failure and tributes to Catholic success in religious teaching is that Catholics should take more deeply to heart the counsels and commands of Holy Mother Church in the matter of religious education. Where Catholic schools are available use them; where secular schools must be used make it a bounden duty of conscience to supplement in every way possible on the religious side the education there received.

THE TERROR IN IRELAND

The colorless accounts given in the daily papers give but a faint idea of the reign of terror that obtains in Ireland. We give on page 1 the Manchester Guardian's account of two revolting murders in Thurles. Such murders are of daily occurrence; they are mere incidents in the policy of frightfulness which, when defended by Germans, was held by all the world to brand them as savages. Frightfulness is none the less savage and devilish when practised as a policy by the junkers of England.

In many English papers there are human touches in the accounts which help us to realize conditions in Ireland much more keenly than is possible from reading the bare recital of facts, though these are horrible enough.

The policy is that which is now quite generally referred to as "the Re-conquest of Ireland."

The spirit in which it is carried out is pretty clearly revealed in the following letter from an English officer taken from the mails in one of the Sinn Féin seizures of the mail bags:

"Dear—, Got yours all right. Glad you are fit. Your budget of news is most welcome. You need not be bothered by what you read in the papers. For one thing, we are all in it, and nobody will suffer for what the rotter Asquith calls 'our hellish deeds.' Lloyd George has put Tudor on the job, and his praise of his compatriot as 'the bravest man he ever knew' is well understood here. We are going on and will give the fish 'more of hell' till they chuck it. It is really a re-conquest of these savages, and it must be thorough.

"Cromwell knew how to deal with them, and we are repeating the dose. After all, they are but a foreign and inferior lot. Just like the Kaffirs except the color.

"The Ulster lot are not a bit better, but they are on our side, and so we tolerate them as we do the Basutos in South Africa. You should see a Belfast gang of Orangemen in the main street of an evening, and if ever you saw a black, brutal and truculent mob of semi-savages, there you have it. They wave the Union Jack because behind it they are safe from attack by our fellows. But they are a low lot.

"The worst of it all is that we have sometimes to do with chaps that were with us in France and Belgium and elsewhere. They came back here and are just as rabid Sinn Féiners as the lot that stayed at home. So down they go when necessary.

"If Asquith and the Labour crowd could be shut up for a few weeks, we would make a flash of matters here.

"But while it lasts it is great fun. 'Some of our chaps are a bit squeamish, especially about the women and children. But there is no use in playing at the thing. It has to be put through. We all feel that it is down with them or it is up with old England.' So we don't flinch."

It is true that this is a letter taken from the mails seized by Sinn Féiners and we have no other assurance that it is genuine than their word, unless indeed that it reflects exactly the spirit in which the policy of raiding, burning, torturing and murdering as told in the graphic accounts of the English correspondents of English newspapers.

The desire to shut up Asquith and the Labour crowd is of a piece with the threat to shoot the correspondent of the Daily News at Tralee if he dared to transmit any despatches without first submitting them to the police.

And the Daily Telegraph of September 30th had a leading editorial from which the following is taken:

"Irregular reprisals are wrong, but there is much to be said for organized and properly controlled punitive measures exercised upon recalcitrant sections of the population. In some of our Asiatic and African Dependencies a murder will occasionally be committed in a village or by a tribe, in which all the inhabitants concur in shielding the criminal. The authorities will then impose a fine upon the community, billet extra police upon it, and render it in other ways so uncomfortable that it ends by giving up the wrongdoer and promising to abstain from offence in the future. Would not some adaptation of this system be feasible in rebel Ireland? The Sinn Féiners would be powerless without local and civilian help. Civilians, whether active sympathisers or terrified accomplices, should be taught that, on the whole, they will find it more inconvenient and burdensome to aid and abet the insurgents than to keep clear of them and assist the law. But let the lesson be taught by Government in pursuance of a systematic plan; not by sporadic outbreaks on the part of the military and the auxiliary police."

Here we have advocated openly in the editorial columns of a London newspaper precisely what is described in less guarded terms by the army officer in the private letter.

Following are some extracts from a private letter written from Lahinch, County Clare, which was sacked on September 22nd by the police:

"Well, you want a description of that terrible night, and as I am now getting an opportunity of sending it I'll give you as detailed an account as I can. On Wednesday night a great many people expected trouble and Joe came out to be with us if anything happened. We said the Rosary and went to bed, and I must have fallen asleep almost immediately. At about 2.30 a. m. I was awakened by a sound of shots and the most fiendish yelling imaginable. I slipped on my dressing-gown and shoes and went out to call Aunt Nora. She was terrified and wanted to get up, but I persuaded her that on account of the shots flying in all directions that she would be safer in bed for the present. You see, I was afraid that if she got up she would awaken Mary and that Mary's cries would attract the attention of the police. I never dreamt that they would burn a house where there were two defenceless women and a baby, but I assured her that if the worst came I would give her word in time. I went down then and called Mr. and Mrs. Pearson and Joe and told them the trouble had started. In the meantime they had broken into Tommy Flanagan's and drank all the whiskey they could find—raw—in pin glass faddys. They then went down to Paddy Walsh's yelling for the men to come out now and bring their rifles. Here they shot a young man named Salmon from Feakle—a married man with two children—who was here on holidays and was at the time helping an old man of seventy-five years to escape. The next thing I saw was Tommy Flanagan's, Susan Flanagan's, Paddy Walsh's and Mat Reynolds' houses in a mass of flames, and above all the din could be heard the hellish laughter and shouts of revenge from the raiders. . . . When we tried to escape they fired a shot after us. They burned all the other houses with petrol only, but they bombed us first and sprayed the house with petrol. When they left our house they burned Halpin's and Howard's. Then they lit their cigarettes and ran up the hill shouting for the Leabans. They dragged poor old Dan Leaban out of his bed, brought him out on the hill and in the presence of his poor wife shot him in the head because he wouldn't tell where his sons were. At that time poor Faye was burned alive in Flanagan's house. R. I. P. But neither Dan nor the wife know of it yet. Poor Faye got no time to prepare for death, but he was present at a public Mass we had here for the Lord Mayor on the Tuesday previous. Nobody dared try to save any of the houses, because they kicked, shot and burned Micky Linnane's son in Ennistymon for attempting to save his neighbor's house. R. I. P. Nora, we haven't a stitch of clothing, house linen, ware, anything except what kind neighbors are lending us, and they, poor creatures, can ill afford to lend to anybody because they have hardly enough for themselves, and all the well-to-do people are burned out. All I saved from the flames was a nightdress, dressing-gown, slippers and rosary beads. Everything else I

possessed is gone, every keepsake I held, my jewellery, clothes, autographs, antiques, books, music, fairs medals and prizes, 'First aid' outfit, home, everything, but I will be forever grateful to Almighty God for saving our lives and leaving us our senses. Since it was His adorable will and the Cause demanded that we should lose all, we willingly lay our humble sacrifices at the feet of God and Dark Rosaleen, and once again, more fervently than ever, we pledge our life's service to God and Ireland. You never saw anything so sad as the sights on the sandhills that morning. Nora, groups of men and women, some of them over seventy years, practically naked, cold, wet, worn-looking and terrified huddled in groups on the wet grass. I met two mothers with babies not yet three weeks old. . . .

"Mother is bearing up wonderfully. D. G. It is a greater blow to her than to anybody to see the fruits of her life's slaving deliberately burned to the ground. Poor mother! She never had any comfort or pleasure in this life. She worked early and late, slaved when other people were in their beds to make a comfortable home for us, and now it is all gone—£20,000 worth at the lowest calculation. Of course, I needn't mention that we wouldn't on any account accept compensation if it were leveled on the county. As far as we are concerned we can 'carry on' for the present, but there are other unfortunate families who are absolutely destitute and homeless."

It is only through such intimate touches—multiplied indefinitely—that we can get anything like an adequate idea of the reign of terror, the restoration of law and order by looting, arson and murder.

How far, how infinitely far, the terrorists are from attaining their object is shown by the quietly heroic, almost unconscious patriotism of this young woman who in a sentence of this intimate letter voices, we may feel assured, the sentiment of Ireland's womanhood:

"Since it was His adorable will and the Cause demanded that we should lose all, we willingly lay our humble sacrifice at the feet of God and Dark Rosaleen, and once again, more fervently than ever, we pledge our life's service to God and Ireland."

"It is not with those who can inflict most," as Terence MacSwiney said, "but with those who can suffer most that the victory will rest."

And on higher authority we have it:

"The patient man is better than the valiant; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh cities."

And again:

"Who shall find a valiant woman? far and from the uttermost coasts is the price of her."

A whole nation ruling its own spirit, the valiant patience of innumerable men and women and even children, is the marvellous spectacle that heroic, suffering Ireland presents to the world today.

Every man and woman and child in whose veins courses Irish blood should pray, pray fervently, pray constantly, for suffering Ireland and for each and every valiant man and woman who by their heroic patience under diabolic provocation are fighting and winning the world's battle for freedom.

IRELAND BARS THE WAY

The Manchester Guardian, in the issue of October 29th, refers to the anti-British sentiment which is always more or less in evidence during a presidential campaign and which disappears when the campaign is over, without affecting the good relations between Washington and London. But it asserts that "it would be a grave mistake to think in this way of the present embittered contest."

Commenting on the campaign it goes on to say very emphatically precisely what the RECORD, commenting on the election results, said last week:

"Never within living memory has the stream of hostility to Great Britain been so strong and so varied in the United States as it is today. There are, as most people know, many causes contributory to this: a widespread mystification and horror at the condition of post-war Europe; suspicion as to certain aspects of British Imperial policy; misunderstandings inseparable from the changed economic relations between Britain and America. These are all important, but over and around everything is the horrible canker of Ireland. It is true that large numbers of English people cling still

to the belief that Ireland is a purely domestic question for ourselves. They do not realise the overpowering significance of the fact that about one-fifth of the population of the United States is of Irish origin. If they did, they would understand how futile and ruinous it is to imagine that America can ever, under any circumstances, be indifferent to the settlement of Ireland or be convinced by anything except the clearing of the English name and the full redemption, so far as that is possible, of the mistakes and terrors of the historic record. This twofold fact must be faced. The peace and welfare of the world is impossible without an active and cordial understanding between Britain and the United States, and we cannot hope for even the beginnings of such an understanding until the first great obstacle has been removed by a radical change of policy and spirit on the part of Great Britain towards the Irish people."

WHAT IS LOYALTY IN CANADA?

By THE OBSERVER

Some one may wonder why I confine the query to Canada? It is because I do not understand the thing which passes by that name in Canada. I know what loyalty means in England: It means faithfulness to the King, the Constitution, the laws in general (reserving the right to object to bad laws), and obedience to law and to the Parliament which makes the laws.

I know also what loyalty means in North-east Ulster. It means faithfulness to the tradition of "No Popery," and to the rule of the few over the many; and it means nothing else whatever.

But I don't quite know what loyalty means in Canada; at least I don't know what the rank and file of Protestant Canadians mean by the word. I know what loyalty means to me; it means loyal, faithful acceptance of the Canadian Constitution and laws; of the King's authority; and of the authority of Parliament and the Legislatures, including such parliamentary authority over Canada as still belongs to Great Britain.

But when I take up the Canadian papers, secular or Protestant, I find that loyalty, to them, means something else, something very different. I find that they regard a critic of Mr. Lloyd George as disloyal, or, at least, suspect of disloyalty. They do not hold themselves bound to admire, uphold and defend all the acts of every Canadian premier; but they regard the man who finds fault with the English premier much as they would regard him if he said: "Let's turn King George out and have a new King."

This, I suppose, is one of the phenomena of our tradition of colonialism. That tradition regards a Canadian premier as merely an agent or subordinate of the English Government; a Canadian Government as a sort of licensee of the authority of the English Government; and Canada, as a whole, as a mere colony or outpost of England.

There are a large number of Canadians who do really feel that there is something that smacks of disloyalty in finding fault with an English Government. The Canadian of the colonial tradition looks upon Mr. Lloyd George as somehow representing Canada when he passes a coercion bill for Ireland, or when he passes a make-believe Home Rule Bill for Ireland; when he says he'll hang the Kaiser and when he says he won't; when he says Germany shall pay the last penny, and when he releases her from half of the Treaty of Versailles.

In some mysterious way, the Government of England is supposed to be our Government; but with the remarkable difference from the Government that is really our own, that whilst we disagree with a full half of what our own Government does, half the Canadian population, if not more, hold themselves bound upon their loyalty to uphold and defend and approve all and whatsoever the Government of England may do.

No Government surely could wish for a happier fate than to find itself upheld by servility in the guise of loyalty. Never, since the days of Lord North, more than a century ago, has any English Government been able to command the entire servility of the people of that country in the name of loyalty, and under penalty of being suspect, if not convicted, of treason. And English public men must be vastly amused when they see Canadians not only willing, but eager, to occupy a position of subservience and servility from which their own constituents emerged a century ago.

Such is the attitude of so many Canadians that their numbers make one ashamed for the reputation of Canada for political intelligence. But there is another matter to be noted: We have something else in Canada: We have a strong infusion of loyalty as it is understood in North-east Ulster; that is, absolute loyalty to nothing but "No Popery" and the natural right of Protestants to rule over Catholics, irrespective of relative numbers, and disarding, for practical purposes, all theories of democracy and of majority rule. To those who have "the Ulster mind," whether in North-east Ulster or in Canada, loyalty to the King, Parliament, the Constitution and the law is merely "conditional loyalty;" and the condition is that there shall be no "truck or trade" with the Scarlet Woman, the "Pope of Rome."

And, if any observer or student of Canadian views, opinions, and mental processes, wants to understand the mental processes of those Canadians who take as a daily duty the task of justifying all that is done in Downing Street, or in Dublin Castle, he must take into account those two facts, the existence of colonial servility which puts on the guise of loyalty; and the existence of "No Popery" prejudice, which reduces this curious loyalty to the narrow limits of the condition mentioned, and makes it, for all its apparent scope, merely conditional loyalty.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

AMONG the events of the hour there is nothing more certain or emphatic than that Dr. Conan Doyle, once Catholic, (that is, so far as birth and early training could make him so), later noisily agnostic, has now, in his adoption of the spiritualist cult, gone to the very limits of superstition and credulity. His every successive utterance on the subject, given to the world in the periodical press, brings this out more and more clearly. He who formerly was the most pronounced of materialists, and had only sneers and jibes for the supernatural as manifested in Christian teaching, now, in advocacy of his new-found "truth" whines about the "dense stupidity and materialism of the scientific, religious, journalistic world," in regard thereto.

"Is it not a perfect insanity of incredulity," he asks in his latest deliverance, "to wave these things (spiritistic phenomena) aside because they will not fit into our present philosophies?" When one remembers that from the day that he abandoned the Church of his fathers until caught up in the meshes of spiritualism, sheer materialism had no more ardent devotee than Arthur Conan Doyle, nor any agnostic writer of his generation been more impatient of the preaching of the supernatural, this, his latest utterance, becomes singularly instructive. In the light of his own career it is not difficult to appraise the value of his present advocacy.

IN THE current revival of interest in Church Extension and Foreign Missions it is interesting to be reminded of the existence of a congregation of nuns devoted exclusively to the conversion of the Jews. This congregation was founded in Paris in 1848 by the famous brothers Ratisbonne, themselves converts from Judaism. It was established under the patronage of Our Lady of Sion, was approved by Pope Pius IX. in 1847, and now boasts of over five hundred members, with houses in Paris, Rome, London, Trieste, Vienna, Constantinople and Jerusalem. With the great flow of Jews across the Atlantic in recent years the time would seem to be ripe for the extension of this order of Sion to this continent. The claim of Israel to Catholic missionary zeal has not yet been realized at anything like its tremendous importance.

REFERRING to the Jews and the familiar object which their synagogues have now become in the larger American and Canadian cities, an article in one of the current secular periodicals, recalls the fact that the ancient festival of the Passover is still celebrated just as described in the Old Testament Scriptures, not by the Jews, but by the people they once despised, and by them only—the Samaritans. The Jews themselves, in the older lands as in this, notwithstanding the boasts of the "Orthodox" element to fidelity to ancient rites and customs, bend upon them the indubitable marks of time. The Samaritans, on the contrary, as we are told, still gather