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CRITICIZING THE SERMON

It is natural that we should prefer a sermon in which the Gospel's lessons are conveyed in polished language and with all the graces of the finished orator, to the simple homily which bears marks of the scant preparation which is the best that the overworked priest has been able to give it.

But the especial message of God to the listener's soul is quite as likely to come in the latter as the former.

"In my young priesthood, when I used to make the most careful preparation for a sermon," said an ecclesiastic who is now a distinguished pulpit orator, "I was once called on suddenly to preach out of my turn and without a moment for preparation. After a twenty minutes' talk on the Gospel of the day I left the pulpit dissatisfied with myself and sure that my hearers had a great cause for dissatisfaction. But as I entered the vestry after Mass a man approached me to ask me to hear his confession. 'I have not been in twenty years,' he said, 'but something in your sermon today struck home to me, and I've got to set myself right with God.' This experience," added the preacher, "gave me a new idea as to the relative importance of the means through which God speaks to His creatures."

We hear no sermon from which we can not take away a lesson, unless we are mere budgets of conceit and self-sufficiency.

The preacher deserves our most respectful interest and attention. It is just as rude to turn the leaves of our prayer books or examine the pictures in it during the sermon as it would be to look over a magazine or newspaper while some one was asking us a question or delivering a message otherwise.

We need not fear to show by the alert attention of our eyes or the smile which greets the touch of humor that we are taking every point. It is not helping a preacher to present him with a congregation of dough-faces.—St. Paul Bulletin.

DOGMA

IS NEEDED BY INFLUENTIAL MEN NOT IN CATHOLIC CHURCH

It is a great pity some one of the world-influential men does not interest himself in dogma and the laws of religion. As a rule, these men have methodical minds and system is evident in all their doings. One would expect them to insert this characteristic into their religious creed. But, as a rule, in this they waver. Any form of belief suits them. Just so long as there is some semblance of religion in the system that calls itself church is all they demand. To say the truth briefly, they place an ounce of importance upon religion where they give a pound to industrial, business and social life.

It is plain that the above is said of those outside the Catholic Church, for men of this faith know and feel that it is necessary "to seek first the kingdom of God," and this cannot be done effectively unless there is a clearly established way of doing so.

There is an individual occasionally who casts a searching glance at his faith and begins to discover a certain inconsistency about it. His voice is generally heard in lament and protest, and often an effort, though faint it be, is made to change its aspect, at least in some measure. But he finds that his voice does not carry far, nor his influence reach much beyond the sympathetic line of his admirers. There was a time when an innovation could make a mark in the world. The remarkable progress of the well-known heresiarchs substantiates this. Now it is totally different. The blinding progress of indifference has affected seriously, and apparently in an incurable manner, the vision of peoples not having the true faith of Christ. The part of the world that has lost this faith that it once had is slow to return to it, because of the error that was grafted into their minds; those who have never possessed it, because they see others thriving, as it appears, without it, are slow to come to the realization that it is necessary for the one faith established by God. The evil done by the apostates from our religion lives on, especially in these two lamentable conditions. People are slow to enter where order does not reign, but where, rather, chaos rules.

But much of the reason for the lack of unity lies in the fact that people underestimate the value of religion. In other words, they put it secondary to industrial and social, as well as scientific conditions. Religion must conform to the times, not the spirit of the times to religion. It has been expressed well recently by a writer in these words:

"Our national and religious life must be reinterpreted in harmony with our dominant ideals." Hence, according to him, religion must follow us, not lead us. But we are ever deviating; religion must follow us wherever we go. It will appear clear to every reader how nothing stable, to say the least, could ever result from such doctrine and from such practices. Besides, it totally destroyed the essence of true religion. Religion binds us to God, the times endeavor to have it bind Him to us. We are to be the dictators, not the Creator of us all. Our ideals are to be what society makes them—they are to dominate; religion must sanction them and conform to them. Where the fixed and set religion is not in harmony with these ideals, it must be "reinterpreted until it issues harmoniously."

Such is about the only unity inculcated by the man imbued with the spirit of the times. Religion and science must agree, so must religion and business and industry. But there is no need of a change in religion to effect this. Where it is otherwise, not religion but science—and it must in this case be false—and business and industry is at fault. If religion is not in harmony with ideals, these ideals—unless it be a false religion—are not correct. Where a change must come in the name of harmony, a housecleaning of science, industry and business is needed—and of religion as well, unless it is the "entire" religion of the Galilean.

Let those who see discord investigate Catholicism. They will then see a religion that makes, not one that is made. They will discover, moreover, that it is, like Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever, and yet, "ever ancient and ever new." In other words, it is eternal truth in itself and in what it diffuses.—D. in Denver Register.

FRENCH NATIONAL PILGRIMAGE

Some fifteen thousand pilgrims from all parts of France attended the national pilgrimage to Pontmain, and a large number of Bishops were present. The Neologists, the Patriotic League of Frenchwomen, Brancardiers of Lourdes, priests, soldiers, the good press, and all the various Catholic organizations took part in the great procession, which was led by the ladies of Laval, bearing a banner embroidered with a representation of the apparition of Pontmain.

This took place on January 17, 1871. Our Lord appeared to a group of children on a starry frosty winter's evening, as they were going home, talking of the misfortunes of their country, for which they had been praying. Elevated a few feet from the ground the Blessed Virgin, crowned with stars, told the children to pray and pray and continue to pray without ceasing, and there would be a speedy deliverance for France. Since then a great basilica has risen on the place of the apparition and pilgrimages visit it yearly.

The Bishop of Laval, who organized this national demonstration for victory and peace, asked the Holy Father to give one of the Bishops present the privilege of bestowing the apostolic benediction on the crowd. In a letter from Cardinal Gasparri this privilege is willingly conferred by the Pope, who expresses pleasure at this pious and general supplication for mercy at a time when society, Europe, and especially France, stand so much in need of spiritual aid in the midst of the direst calamities.—Church Progress.

DEATH OF MRS. C. O'LEARY

The death of Mrs. Catherine O'Leary, which occurred on Aug. 28, in Otonabee, we are sorry to announce. The funeral was held from her late residence to St. Joseph's church, where the Solemn Requiem Mass was sung by her son, Rev. M. O'Leary, Bracebridge, assisted by Rev. J. J. O'Brien of the Sacred Heart church, as deacon and the Rev. D. A. Casey, editor Canadian Freeman, as sub-deacon. Mr. John O'Leary (cousin) St. Augustine Seminary, was master of ceremonies. The Right Rev. M. J. O'Brien, Bishop of Detroit; Rev. M. J. McGuire, Douro; Rev. V. G. McCadden, Wooler; Very Rev. Dean McColl, Detroit; Rev. W. T. Mengler, Lakefield; Rev. J. V. McCauley, Sacred Heart church, Detroit; Rev. P. J. Galvin, Downeyville; Rev. Father Murray, St. Michael's College, Toronto, and Rev. J. Powers, Detroit, were present in the sanctuary.

The Very Rev. Dean McColl, Immaculate Conception church, Peterborough, preached the funeral sermon. Death was always a fearsome thing, he said, because it was a penalty. The business of life was to prepare for death. The deceased understood this great truth and therefore her death was a happy one. For blessed

are the dead who die in the Lord. Their work follows them. And the good works of the deceased were legion. She had always been an ideal Catholic mother, solicitous about the temporal interest of her family but more solicitous about the things of God as was evidenced by the fact that she had given two of her sons to the service of the Altar in the holy priesthood. His Lordship Bishop O'Brien pronounced the last absolution after which he addressed a few words to the congregation extending his sympathy to the bereaved and paying a warm tribute to the virtues of the deceased. Mrs. O'Leary, who had reached the age of seventy-five years, is survived by five sons: John, Maurice, William, of Otonabee, Rev. M. J. O'Leary, Bracebridge, and Joseph of St. Augustine Seminary; and four daughters, Mrs. Louis McDonald and Mrs. Thomas Lynch, Otonabee; Mrs. Wm. Hoehship, Montreal and Mrs. John McCann, Bracebridge. One son, Rev. P. J. O'Leary, predeceased her two years ago.

Mrs. O'Leary is survived by thirty-one grandchildren. The pall-bearers were the four sons: John, Maurice, William and Joseph O'Leary; Thomas Lynch, son-in-law, and Jas. Leahy, brother.

REVIVAL OF FRENCH RELIGION

NON-CATHOLIC WRITER TELLS OF DEEP STIRRING OF FAITH AMONG CATHOLICS OF FRANCE

(By Stoddard Dewey, in New York Nation) Paris, August 12. — Is there a renaissance of religion going on in France? The Union Sacree has been a good reason for not speaking about it. Jesuits and Christian Brothers by the hundreds, curés and other priests by the thousands and are wounded and killed beside the "lay" school teacher and the Protestant minister and the Jew, with a Freemason corporal mayhap leading them.

Before the war the intellectual and the moral, and even the physical life of the French people was cruelly misunderstood in foreign countries, as French behaviour in war has more than proved. So, too, their religious life was not only misunderstood, but it was commonly underestimated. Lately, it was mixed up with magnifying legends of anti-Catholic political activity in France. Such activity cannot cease from existence, but it is largely suspended by the enduring explosion of war and danger common to the lives of all. This is, at most, a very negative revival of religion.

Any positive revival which has been brought about by war must be sought in the armies of France, which hold her able-bodied citizens, or in the civil population where women and the ailing are at work with aged men and boys, "all revolving into the doom" of their people. To all war keeps ever present the one foundation of religion in practice. "Forget death, and there will be little common religion," is the conclusion of the English writer who thought most resolutely of these things; but he took pains to add "what religion is in its broadest definition—it is life cultivated under God, in the presence of death." No one can doubt the presence of death among the French people. Has it perchance been cultivating life under God—or whatever other form of words expresses any proper renaissance of religion?

If the question is taken to mean growth of Catholic religious organization in France, or increase in political power of the Catholic Church, or conversion of professed non-Catholics to Catholicism, then it had best be relegated to some later time of peace. For then we shall have time to study the effect of this war on the souls of Frenchmen and French women. The legend that, among French people nominally Catholics, only women practiced their religion and men gave religion a thought only when they felt themselves dying cries desperately for a priest, was worn out before this war began.

If there has been an increase in the manifestation of religious sentiment which, if ever, must be sincere now—it has to be reckoned under the head of religious revival. Only that revives which still lives, but in which life was failing and even was no longer perceptible.

FRENCH ARE AT HEART CATHOLIC

The immense majority of Frenchmen, even Socialist workmen, have always had their children baptized and make their First Communion, just as was done for themselves by their own parents. When they think of God at all, he is still the Catholic God. "Good God!" For them the Christian religion is what it has been in the formularies of their race for fifteen hundred years, "Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman." This is the religious seed sown through all the centuries. Has war revived it?

Unless a foreigner has entered long and closely into the intimate life and feelings of the French people, and, to some degree, shares with them their spiritual inheritance, he will find it difficult to learn the true answer to such a question. We cannot expect French soldiers at the front to sign a round robin, or French families at the rear to hold mass meetings, to tell the world—We are religiously revived. All that can be done is to observe and gather, with the sympathy which is the first condition of any knowledge of a

TOO BACKWARD

Is it not true that Catholics have as a general rule not taken the active part they should in social service work? Bishop Muldoon declares that his experience has led him to this conclusion. For instance: But two Catholics were on the national child labor committee. That was not right, but it was not the fault of the committee. Many Catholics were invited to join. Of course, many of the recent so-called movements have been only immoral fads, of which Catholics could not approve and to which they could not lend their co-operation. But there are sensible and useful movements to which we can lend our aid. And we are not doing our full duty unless we take our share of the burden of securing salutary reforms. We must, however, be able to discriminate. A craze for fads is worse than inaction; and too many people mistake fads for real "uplift" movements because others call them such.

At the same time, Catholic thought and Catholic moral teaching should permeate and leaven movements for the general good. Catholic principles should be made known in order to counteract the dangerous theories that are brazenly put forth by "advanced" writers. Just now, the "birth control" movement is popular. A few years ago it was eugenics and sex hygiene. Next year probably it will be some new immorality advocated under the guise of "uplift." We must be prepared to combat these monstrosities as well to give our co-operation to what is of value in new movements.

We do not care to frame excuses for Catholics in their backwardness and their apparent suspicion of social "uplift" movements. A great deal of it is probably due to indifference or to unwarranted timidity. But a good share of it is due to well-founded suspicion of the motives and purposes of these later movements. We can scarcely blame Catholics for their slowness in taking up with new movements. They are not experts in judging of them at a first glance and distinguishing the good from the bad. Of course, we have only ourselves to blame if we do not perform our share of the constructive work that is needed to make society better. But our leaders have not been over-anxious to point the way for us to go.—True Voice.

Not the least element of permanence in this revival of religious habits comes from this long living together, through hardships and dangers, of Frenchmen who are priests and Frenchmen who, before the war might never have spoken with a priest. This applies particularly to workmen from cities—and to priests themselves. The French priest is usually the son of peasants or of middle-class family of towns. In the religious orders the higher social classes are often represented, and of course, sometimes in the parish clergy. But it has been the great difficulty of the French priest to find common language with the workman of organized labor; and the workmen have often been made diffident or worse towards the curé by politics. In the army, during the war, all barriers have been broken down. All are comrades day and night together, speaking the same army argot, in common struggle and danger, helping each other, interested in each other's life, living, fighting, dying in one mass.

IMPORTANCE OF LARGE FAMILIES

Rene Bazin, the celebrated French Catholic publicist, has written a brochure which is being scattered broadcast over France, on the importance of large families which, he says, are even more necessary than common to the country, a statement that applies to other nations as well as to France. He treats eloquently the Catholic and moral ideal of marriage in which the child is the "raison d'être" of the sacrament, not an accident of the married state. He has a good answer for those censorious and inquisitive people who are asking him whether he himself is the father of a family. He replies with pride that he has eight children, all of whom are living, and who have so far presented him with twelve grandchildren.—Church Progress.

THE CHEERFUL FACE

Do not be grumpy in your own home. Some folks save all their smiles for company or special occasion. It is far more necessary to happiness to be cheerful in your own home and with your own family. If the home is happy one can bear rudeness met elsewhere. If the home is happy, the happiness will radiate among neighbors and friends. One gives the sensible advice, "Come down in the morning as if you had just heard a pleasant piece of news." Bring that cheerfulness to the breakfast table. It will improve your appetite and aid digestion. It gives a good beginning to the day, makes work easier and helps endure the day's vexations. If you have worries, keep them to yourself unless you must tell them. When you must reveal your worries, choose the right one to share your burden. There is no need to tell troubles to the entire household, when few can be of any help. Why cloud the joys of others and be a wet blanket to enthusiasm? Most things that are worried over are things that never happened. Take notice of worries and you will find this true. If you have problems, they are better solved by facing them with calmness and cheerfulness than in a gloomy spirit. It is said that there is no faculty so happy as the faculty of thinking you are happy. The Scotch have a saying: "A man is weal or woe, as he thinks himself so."

May every morning seem to say, "There's something good on the way, and God sends His love to you."

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

There is food and thought in these items from an exchange: Don't be afraid to brighten the life of your wife, your son, your neighbor or friend by some word of praise; don't hold back what would be better if said; praise those that deserve it—even your wife! Sometimes it's the only pay they get; if you have something good on your mind, say it!—Catholic Bulletin.

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DIED

HAYLOW.—At his late residence Lot 14, Concession 6, East Oxford, on Monday, August 7th, 1916, Mr. James Haylow, native of County Meath, Ireland, aged seventy-five years. May his soul rest in peace.

CASSIDY.—At Maynooth Station Ont., Helen Fitzgerald, daughter of William Fitzgerald and Margaret Ann Netterville and wife of Thos. Cassidy, aged forty-three years. May her soul rest in peace.

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OUR GIFT TO AMERICAN EDUCATION

In a recent article in a New York secular paper, the Rev. John J. Wynne, S. J., estimated that there are over 7,000 Catholic schools in the United States of every grade from the kindergarten to the university, and for every need, for the defective as well as for the normal; for teachers as well as for pupils; industrial, technical, professional and seminary. Besides these, there are night, club, settlement, social and summer schools and a great number of teachers' institutes. The Catholic schools in Alaska, Hawaii, the Philippines and Porto Rico are not enumerated here. In these 7,000 and more scholastic institutions there are over 1,700,000 pupils in attendance, of whom 1,497,949 were in the 5,588 schools of elementary grade at the beginning of the present school year in September, 1915. In the academies and colleges there are over 120,000, in the university and professional schools about 8,500; in the industrial and technical, 17,600; in seminaries, 6,200; in training schools, 9,000; in various institutions for dependent children about 30,000, besides several thousand in night, club, settlement, social and summer schools.—Sacred Heart Review.

HARD ON THE FANS

Thousands of baseball enthusiasts will read with interest this "call" from the Catholic Bulletin: "Many Catholic young men—and old men, too—who have at their fingers' ends the records of all the prominent baseball players in the country and the scores and batting averages of the various teams, would find it difficult to enumerate the different colors of the vestments worn at Mass and to tell their significance, or to give a list of the best religious books to place in the hands of a prospective convert anxious to get a correct idea of Catholic teaching. How many 'fans' who can name the members of a baseball team can enumerate the eight Beatitudes or the seven Gifts of the Holy Ghost; and yet, is it too much to expect that a Catholic of ordinary intelligence will retain such a familiarity with the little catechism of his youth as will enable him to tell an enquirer what the teaching of the Church is on matters of faith and morals?"

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