

The Catholic Record

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LONDON, SATURDAY, NOV. 13, 1920

THE GREAT AND SOLEMN REFERENDUM

When we remember the towering Wilson a few short years ago, the eloquent spokesman of democracy whose words thrilled the hearts of all the peoples of the world, the fearless champion of the inalienable rights of small nations, whether under the military dominion of friends or foes, and contrast him with the Wilson of later days, shrunk to the stature and the status of a shifty and weakly obstinate politician endeavoring to impose his will on a great people, we have the key to the solution of what might otherwise appear as tremendous revulsion of sentiment in the American people. It was not the American people nor the sentiment of the American people that underwent such startling transformation. It was the metamorphosis of the Wilson of three years ago that wrought the change and it was the metamorphosed Wilson that was vomited from the mouth of the United States electorate. The measure of his recency to his professions was the measure of the American people's revulsion of sentiment towards him.

How such a metamorphosis of their champion came about, how such a crushing disappointment to the hopes of the oppressed peoples of all nations followed the high hopes raised by President Wilson's eloquent pronouncements is very clearly shown by the English economist, Mr. Maynard Keynes. The following extracts from his work, "The Economic Consequences of the Peace," may sufficiently indicate the process:

"When President Wilson left Washington he enjoyed a prestige and a moral influence throughout the world unequalled in history. His bold and measured words carried to the peoples of Europe above and beyond the voices of their own politicians. The enemy peoples trusted him to carry out the compact he had made with them; and the Allied peoples acknowledged him not as a victor only but almost as a prophet. In addition to this moral influence the realities of power were in his hands. . . . With what curiosity, anxiety, and hope we sought a glimpse of the features and bearing of the man of destiny who, coming from the West, was to bring healing to the wounds of the ancient parent of his civilization and lay for us the foundations of the future. . . . The disillusion was so complete, that some of those who had trusted most hardly dared speak of it. Could it be true? they asked of those who returned from Paris. Was the Treaty really as bad as it seemed? What had happened to the President? What weakness or what misfortune had led to so extraordinary, so unlooked-for a betrayal? . . . The first glance at the President suggested not only that, whatever else he might be, his temperament was not primarily that of the student or the scholar, but that he had not much even of that culture of the world which marks M. Clemenceau and Mr. Balfour as exquisitely cultivated gentlemen of their class and generation. But more serious than this, he was not only insensitive to his surroundings in the external sense, he was not sensitive to his environment at all. What chance could such a man have against Mr. Lloyd George's unerring, almost medium-like, sensibility to every one immediately around him? To see the British Prime Minister watching the company, with six or seven senses not available to ordinary men, judg-

ing character, motive, and subconscious impulse, perceiving what each was thinking and even what each was going to say next, and compounding with telepathic instinct the argument or appeal best suited to the vanity, weakness, or self-interest of his immediate auditor, was to realize that the poor President would be playing blind man's bluff in that party. Never could a man have stepped into the parlor a more perfect and predestined victim to the finished accomplishments of the Prime Minister. The Old World was tough in wickedness anyhow; the Old World's heart of stone might blunt the sharpest blade of the bravest knight-errant. But this blind and deaf Don Quixote was entering a cavern where the swift and glittering blade was in the hands of the adversary. He could take the high line; he could practice obstinacy; he could write Notes from Sinai or Olympus; he could remain unapproachable in the White House or even in the Council of Ten and be safe. But if he once stepped down to the intimate equality of the Four, the game was evidently up."

Perhaps one of the most illuminating and significant things in connection with the whole tremendous upheaval in American politics is the fact that the overwhelming majority of the daily press in the United States steadily upheld President Wilson in his apostasy from his professions and declarations, and branded the patriotic Senators who opposed him as contemptibly and shamelessly partisan.

The result of the elections shows how little a great and wealthy press may either reflect or mould public opinion.

The League of Nations supported and advocated by the press was the one great issue of the electoral campaign. The personality of the candidates exercised no influence; the other planks of the political platforms were altogether negligible. The Wilson League of Nations accounted for the entire disruption of the party upholding it, and for the unprecedented victory of its opponents.

The Globe makes characteristic comment which ought to satisfy the intelligent curiosity of the Globe readers. It said that as Tammany supported Cox good women would probably doubt the sincerity of Cox's prohibition sentiments and vote the other way!

The New York Times, however strenuously pro League of Nations, hardly dares to give that sort of pap to its most infantile clients. It has this savage comment on the notorious facts of which it knows its ordinarily intelligent readers are fully aware:

"But new, strange and enormous reinforcements came to them without virtue or effort on their part, and these account for the staggering overplus of the Harding figures. The proof of it is seen in the figures of the Republican vote and of the Republican majorities in such Democratic strongholds as New York City and Boston. The Irish vote, the German vote, taking no thought about the League of Nations, about any American interest or concern, prompted solely by solidarity for interests not American, went solidly over to the Republican candidate. And this happened all over the country. The magnitude of the majority for Mr. Harding is sufficiently explained by this demonstration of interests in alien causes. It was foreseen, it was well understood, it was known that it would bring millions of votes to the Republicans."

As the German vote is normally Republican, and the Irish vote Democratic in about the same proportion, it is quite evident that it was the Irish vote that brought the bulk of the "new, strange and enormous reinforcements" to the uncompromising opponent of the League of Nations. It is hardly necessary to vindicate the Americanism of Irish Americans.

Before the elections Judge Coholan of the New York Supreme Court published a letter from which these are extracts:

"The proposed League of Nations, the plan of which originated very largely with Lord Robert Cecil, would impose upon the world a Super-Government which would be English in interest, in sympathy and in fact, and I am opposed to such a plan—not through bitterness of feeling against the English people but because I regard the English governing class as the great remaining obstacle to universal freedom. . . .

"We would become moral partners in every act of Lloyd George and his fellow statesmen in their campaigns of oppression and aggression against peoples struggling to be free. . . . We would endorse his present methods in Ireland, which are the negation of government and the repudiation of civilization."

What Judge Coholan thought—and what millions of Irish-American men and women thought—of the Democratic bait for the Irish vote is pretty well expressed by this omniscient and patriotic Irish-American:

"To talk of bringing the cause of Ireland before the League of Nations under Article XI, is futile puerility or ardent hypocrisy."

The controlled cables give us editorial extracts from the Government kept press. We may await the clear-seeing comment of the independent English dailies and periodicals in full confidence that the lesson of the American elections will not be lost on intelligent Englishmen.

The lesson for England—so often pointed out by far-seeing English men—is that the longed-for Anglo-American entente while present conditions continue is impossible. Ireland bars the way.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT IN MICHIGAN

In the elections just concluded in the neighboring Republic there was raised in the State of Michigan an issue of vital interest to Catholics. There was thrust into the troubled waters of politics a proposed amendment to the State Constitution which would make it compulsory for every child from six to sixteen to attend the Public Schools. The avowed aim and purpose of its proponents was the destruction of Parochial Schools, though it would do away with other private schools as well.

It must be remembered that there are no Separate Schools as we know them in any of the United States. Catholics pay all their school taxes to the Public Schools. Not a single dollar of school taxes is given to the up-keep of Parochial Schools. These, as their name indicates, are maintained out of parish funds and by voluntary contributions of Catholics, who build, equip and maintain these schools for conscience' sake after paying their full school tax for the building and maintenance of the Public Schools.

In these circumstances one might imagine that the meanness of bigots, if not compelled to commend the fidelity to religious ideals, the rare spirit of self-sacrifice and the noble achievement of American Catholics in establishing and maintaining their Parochial School system, would be at least ashamed into silent admiration. But, alien though it be to the institutions of the great Republic, bigotry, naked and unashamed, appealed to envy, jealousy, distrust, intolerance, and the spirit of religious persecution. Needless to say it endeavored to cover this noisome brood of evil passions with the mantle of patriotism.

The miserable campaign may perhaps have served a good purpose.

Men of the highest standing, men of all religions and of none, were compelled to discuss the proposed amendment and thus the principles involved were driven home to the minds and hearts of many who might otherwise never have grasped them so clearly and so intelligently. A specimen or two of the discussion which preceded the vote may serve to show the high plane on which it was carried on, as well as the depth and cogency of the arguments advanced by the lovers of fair play, decency and liberty.

The Rev. Russell H. Brady, pastor of the Central Methodist Episcopal Church of Pontiac, with clear-seeing patriotism denounced the false principles and evil spirit of the bigots and with commendable love of truth paid an honest tribute to the work of the Parochial schools. In public meeting he declared:

"This is a day when the rights of American citizens are in the balance. . . .

"In Pontiac I visited a Parochial school which is under the direction of Father Ryan, who is now on this platform. I went into every room and was privileged to ask any question that I wanted to ask. I found everything there was truly patriotic. In one room of fourth graders I asked for the rendition of the Star Spangled Banner and mark you there was no leader nor any musical instrument to accompany them. They leaped to their feet and sang it perfectly. . . . It is for us to turn our attention to the common enemies of the Stars and Stripes or we will be turning gatling guns on one another. . . . I charge that behind this amendment there is very bad company. I charge that Bolshevism is behind it. Socialism is behind it. I charge too, that behind this amendment there is a war if the time comes when we have no God."

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Mr. Perry D. Gray, a non-Catholic citizen of Flint, after asserting that the proposed amendment was "the most radical, the most revolutionary, and the most far-reaching in its effect of any law ever proposed in the history of the State, if not of the Nation," proceeded to give such a masterly analysis of the law, such a clear exposition of the principles violated by it, that we are tempted to quote more extensively than the exigencies space will permit.

In part he said:

"I am not a Catholic. I am not speaking in defense of the Catholic Church, its history, its doctrines or its practice. Neither am I defending the Parochial schools, as such. The principles involved in this question are broader and deeper and of more far reaching import than the fate or fortunes of any religious sect or system. They involve the inherent, sovereign, constitutional rights of every man, woman, and child in America; the right of the parent as against that of the State to educate his child under whatever circumstances he may deem best so long as he conforms to the standard as by law laid down, and the rights of all in the exercise of their religious convictions. These two great principles subordinate all other phases of the question. These are the principles on which the fate of the measure will hinge when it is finally decided before the Supreme Court. It will not be what the Catholic Church has done or is doing, or proposes to do, nor yet will the relative merits of the Public as against the Parochial School enter as a determining factor in that decision. The one, and only great question will be 'Does this proposed law take from the individual any of the rights granted him by the Supreme law of the land?' It is useless, therefore, to talk about Americanism, 'A More Liberal Education,' 'The Bigger, Broader Things to be Obtained,' and all that sort of thing. The constitution knows nothing of such things; besides the broadest, biggest, deepest, most important thing involved in this question is that of HUMAN RIGHTS."

"This goes right to the root of the matter. Of course the references to 'Americanism,' 'The Bigger, Broader Things to be Obtained,' 'A More Liberal Education' are some of the sorry rags of rhetoric by which the bigots sought to cover the naked hideousness of their proposed religious persecution. With what pitiful hypocrisy do they extol civil and religious liberty while trying to use the school system to serve the purpose more honestly and openly attained in these ages when persecution for conscience' sake was accounted righteous, but which we loudly profess to have outgrown. Mr. Gray went to the very heart of the matter when he said that 'the broadest, biggest, deepest, most important thing involved in this question is that of HUMAN RIGHTS.' There all law is halted; civil authority may not for any cause invade this sacred sphere."

This courageous and outspoken American whom we have been quoting regretted that any fellow-citizen could fail to see "in this Amendment the most sinister, the most menacing, the most dangerous and damaging piece of legislation ever proposed in the history of this country, that should it become a law the wedge will have entered that mighty bulwark of American freedom. The right of every one to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience, will sooner or later be given in pieces. . . . It is the inherent, fundamental, sovereign and constitutional right of every man, woman and child in America that is menaced by this proposed law. To hold any other opinion is, in my mind, to misinterpret the spirit and philosophy of American history as revealed in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution."

The spirit of rabid intolerance which inspired this ugly campaign against civil and religious liberty, and against the human rights of parents, was no doubt long fostered

in secret. Having at length ventured into the open it has evoked such clear enunciation of the principles involved that it may unwittingly and against its will have been productive of much good.

The comment of the Detroit Free Press after the votes were counted is doubtless the echo of what all sane and self-respecting Americans are saying:

"The rejection by the people of Michigan of the proposed school amendment to the State constitution is emphatic and complete, and there is room for confident belief that the project is buried beyond any likelihood of disinterment."

TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION

The High School situation in London illustrates very clearly the anomalous position of Catholics with regard to secondary education. The Collegiate Institute building was burned down some months ago, and the question has arisen whether one central school should be erected to replace the burned building, or whether the city should undertake to erect three separate buildings on different sites each with its own staff and equipment. The present Board favors the three schools scheme.

The local papers inform us in flaring headlines that "Three Collegiate will be the Issue in a Hot Campaign in the Board of Education Election." Opinion is sharply divided. In some quarters opposition to the greatly increased taxation involved in the second scheme is very pronounced. There is no doubt that this issue will dominate all others and determine the result of the election. But the six thousand Catholics of London will cast not one single vote for or against the proposal favored by the Board.

Yet every single Catholic will be called upon to pay dollar for dollar with his Protestant fellow-citizens in the taxation required to erect, equip, staff and maintain these schools. Apart from the question of cost is the question of which plan will best serve the interests of secondary education in London. In the "hot campaign" over this issue to help decide the question on its merits, not a single Catholic vote will be cast. In passing we may say that personally we favor the three-school plan. Experience has shown conclusively, we believe, that the successful working of High Schools is in inverse ratio to their size. The school with a very great number of pupils suffers both in efficiency and discipline. But that is not the question. The glaring anomaly is this, that in a matter to be decided by the votes of the people not a single Catholic will cast a vote, though every Catholic in London is equally interested in the cost involved and in the merits of the plan that will eventually be adopted. It will be urged that the Separate School Board appoints two representatives to the Board of Education which controls our common interests in secondary education. That is a sop to Caribbees. It does not affect what we have said in the least. Catholics, like non-Catholics, will differ in their views on the question in issue. Why should they be deprived of equal rights at the polls. Why should not each and every Catholic, like each non-Catholic, have a voice in the decision of this matter?

A High School Board should be elected by all the people, if all the people are to be taxed to maintain High Schools. Then each individual member of this Board represents all the people, is amenable to the general public opinion, Catholic as well as non-Catholic; and accountable to all alike for his stewardship. We might not have a single Catholic on the Board in that case; but we should be adequately represented, and we could exercise a direct influence over the Board as a whole and over each individual member thereof. As it is, the control of secondary education is practically confined to non-Catholics, yet Catholics are compelled to bear their full share of the burdens of maintenance of secondary schools.

We believe after very mature consideration and after taking competent counsel on the matter, that Catholics are entitled, legally and constitutionally, to their own Separate High Schools quite as much as they are to Separate elementary schools. And that if their educational interests

had been intelligently looked after that fact would ere now have been clearly established.

The present London situation should at least serve to bring home to Catholics the fact that in the matter of secondary education they are the victims of a law that imposes on them taxation without adequate or effective representation, a grievance that in more virile times was the occasion of historic protests.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

THE NEW President of the United States rejoices in the name of "Gamaliel"—Warren Gamaliel Harding. That he may take after his Scriptural namesake in wisdom and prudence and sanity of judgment, in his attitude towards the great questions that now confront the world's statesmen will be the pious hope of every friend of peace, or of law and order. It was St. Paul's proud boast that as a Jew he had been "brought up at the feet of Gamaliel." It is within President Harding's power to be a Gamaliel to the youth of the Republic over which he has been chosen to preside.

FATHER RYAN, the "Poet Priest of the South," as a text in a Canadian Methodist pulpit, is an incident worth noting. Father Ryan by his gifts of song became not only the laureate of the Confederacy, but a messenger of hope and consolation to burdened souls in every clime. The strains of the "Song of the Mystic," the special subject of the discourse alluded to, have, like those of the "Hound of Heaven," passed into current speech, voicing as they do the unuttered thoughts and aspirations of myriad souls "harrowed by care," and borne down by the materialistic trend of the age. In the "Valley of Silence" alone—the "dim-voiced valley," as the poet so pathetically sings—may the "fretted soul" find that Rest and Peace which the multitude has bartered for a "mess of pottage."

"Do you ask me the place of the Valley, Ye hearts that are harrowed by Care? It lieth afar between mountains, And God and His angels are there: And one is the dark mount of Sorrow, And one the bright mountain of Prayer!"

A SCIENTIST of name—Col. J. G. Warren, of the Corps of Engineers, United States Army, assures the public that it is possible to develop the full power of Niagara Falls, industrially, without marvelling its beauty. As he states, the defacement of the Falls, or any part of them for commercial purposes, would be justly regarded as "intolerable vandalism." If, then, Col. Warren can avert the defacement, and at the same time develop the power, the people of not only the two countries most concerned, but of the world, will not withhold from him his due measure of honor and gratitude.

IT WOULD not be a Baptist Convention if it dispersed without the customary tirade of slander and vituperation against "Rome," and that assembled at Brantford last week maintained the sorry tradition. The Baptist body are to be congratulated, however, on the possession of a few adherents with a more enlightened understanding and courage to voice their convictions. The Rev. D. W. Terry and Principal Wearing of Woodstock, are entitled to this honorable distinction. Mr. Terry protested against the silly slanders to which, as a member of the convention he had been obliged to listen, and questioned the right of any Protestant to criticize the Catholic Church on its marriage laws. In supporting Mr. Terry, Principal Wearing made a strong plea for a more sympathetic attitude towards French Canadians, whom "they did not know." These wise admonitions notwithstanding, the convention stuck to the traditional Baptist policy of mendacity.

CURRENT ISSUES of literary periodicals give much space to Christophe Plantin, the great Catholic printer, whose four-hundredth anniversary was celebrated in Antwerp in August. Little, however, is said about his part in upholding by his press the Catholic cause in that trying time. In an age when heresy was rampant and essayed to destroy the old order, Plantin devoted his press to the production of those fine quarto missals and office books, "printed luxuriously in red and black" which are still the glory of the art. One

periodical which lauds the beauty and skill of his productions, but makes no allusion whatever to his Catholic faith, reproduces a view of his press room in which the most conspicuous object is a statue of the Blessed Virgin and Child, placed high against the wall as if overseeing the work of the establishment.

To those who still labor under the senseless delusion that the Catholic Church has never encouraged the circulation of the Bible, there is much food for thought in the fact that the greatest and most famous piece of printing that came from the Plantin Press is the Polyglot Bible—the *Biblia Regia*. Says a writer in the Boston Transcript: "It is frequently said that Philip II. of Spain paid for this publication, which was compiled with the help of the scholar Montanus, whom Philip II. sent to Belgium for the purpose. . . . but it seems fairly certain that the great labor and expense that such a work entailed was borne by the house of Plantin, at least for a considerable period."

"THIS PLANTIN Bible—as it has come to be called—," says the same writer, "contains the Old Testament in Hebrew and Greek, Aramaic paraphrases, the Vulgate, a Greek and Syria version of the New Testament, lexicons, etc., and was printed in eight volumes. It is now one of the valuable pieces of book adventure, not because most of the copies have been lost, or because it is at present valuable as a Bible, (for later and more complete Bibles were soon published to succeed it) but for the reason that it is a remarkable example of the art of printing." That Plantin should have been the first, however, to have embarked on so great an "adventure," and that he was inspired thereto by his Catholic faith, and encouraged by the Church, should not be forgotten by those who, even in our day, profit by his labors.

THE IRISH BISHOPS PROTEST AGAINST SAVAGERY OF GOVERNMENT

DUBLIN, Oct. 21.—The pronouncement of the Irish bishops on the state of Ireland is regarded as the greatest impeachment in modern annals. The bishops set out by declaring that it is not easy for the pastors of the flock to uphold the law of God and secure its observance when oppression is rampant in a country where "terrorism, partially and failure to apply the principles of which its members have proclaimed are the characteristics of government."

The task is rendered well-nigh impossible, and, unhappily, by such means as these in an aggravated form. Ireland is now reduced to a state of anarchy, they declare. The bishops recall that "when the country was crimeless" they reminded the Government that substitution of repression for freedom would lead to the "most deplorable consequences."

"Now on a truly appalling scale the people have to endure countless indiscriminate raids and arrests in the depths of night; prolonged imprisonments without trial; savage sentences from tribunals that command and deserve no confidence; the burning of houses, towns, halls, factories, creameries and crops; the destruction of industries to pave the way for famine—all done by men madly armed with plundered drink and bent on looting."

"The flagging and massacre of civilians are perpetrated by the forces of the British crown who have established a reign of frightfulness which far surpasses the horrors of Turkish atrocities or in the outrages of the red army of Bolshevist Russia."

Themselves opposed to crime from whatever side it comes, the bishops cite the words of Cardinal Logue uttered some months ago condemning the murder of a policeman. The Cardinal at the same time epitomized the governmental crisis that were then gripping the people to desperation. The words of his Eminence were:

"All pretence of strict discipline has been thrown to the winds and these who profess to be the guardians of the law and order who have become the most audacious votaries of lawlessness and disorder."

INDISCRIMINATE VENGEANCE

On the same occasion the Cardinal declared that "they have been over-rezzing the country and making night hideous by raids, rifle, fire, bombing and destruction of property that reckless and indiscriminate shooting in crowded places have made many innocent victims, that towns are sacked as in the rude warfare of earlier ages; that those who run through fear are shot at night."