

The Catholic Record.

"Christianus mihi nomen est Catholicus vero Cognomen."—(Christian is my Name, but Catholic my Surname)—St. Pacien, 4th Century.

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THE POLITENESS OF THE GERMAN

There is one variety of ruthlessness which not the most ambitious of German critics seems to have found too mild, and the details of its exercise will be found in the official French publication concerning the deportations from Lille. Such a story is not to be found in modern literature. It reads more like an incident of a Babylonian invasion than the deliberate act of a Power which claims the special patronage of the Deity. It shows more clearly than ever that the proper place for the German War Lord is not Central Europe, but Central Africa—with a strong, high fence round!

It is surely a supreme instance of life's irony that the same paper which describes these horrors should also report a discussion going on in the Lokalanzeiger as to—manners at table! It seems that there is some anxiety lest German table manners have deteriorated during the war; but Teutons need not worry over much. Gnawing of bones is merely an emergency measure, "if not done in too ugly a fashion;" while a little special industry in the rescue of the last drop of soup is a proper economy in these times. So there is nothing to fear; and the world may rest assured that Germans have sated nothing of those courtesies for which they have always been famous.

"THE GREAT PUSH"

"The Great Push" which deals with the advance at Loos, is intensely thrilling, and alternately amuses and horrifies the reader, like all the work of the poet-navy-novelist. Here is a typical impression of a scene in Loos:

The Scottish had charged across the road in the morning, and hundreds had come to grief. They were lying everywhere, out in the fields, by the roadside, and in the roadway mixed up with the mud. How cold they looked, the killed lads lying on their backs in the open, their legs, bare from knee to hip, white and ghastly in the wan light of the blazing ammunition depot at Lens.

Mr. MacGill (stretch-bearer in the London Irish) is full of admiration for the individual Tommy; he maintains that the armies of the past have really been a mere item in the glory accredited to the leaders. The British Army of this war, he says, "will be remembered as an Army mighty in deed, prowess and endurance; an Army which outshone its figureheads."

In another chapter we read of a wounded soldier crying out: "no dressing for me yet; there are others needing help more than I." As a matter of fact, Mr. MacGill is by no means the first writer to insist that it is almost impossible to over-entire these gallant fellows and their fearless fronting of death and danger. The "Great Push" is a valuable record of trench life, and its author gives a moving and vivid description of the struggles and hardships of our heroic defenders.

LET US HOPE

Some changes at least seem plainly decreed for the coming years. There will be less artificiality in manners; "creep-mouse" ways, as Emerson styled the fashionable mincing walk and talk of the day, will be less in demand. Castles will disappear by degrees; self-respect will be diffused when society is leavened by the millions who have saved their country. Fraternity will be more common, servility hide itself in corners, many counters will cease to be reckoned as current coin. Venerable titles borne by organs of opinion one trustworthily will sink to the same level as conscienceless demagogic prints. Ignorance allied with easily acquired wealth will find its occupation rendered more hazardous. The millions who have been bamboozled for power and profit by self-interested scribes and pharisaic talkers will be more acute in forming judgments on foreign and home

affairs. Scoundrelism and pretence will not succeed so readily in the exploitation of soberly simple folk. Whatever else life in the trenches and individual responsibility in the deserted home may entail they are likely to broaden the scope of the general experience in practical matters. Perception and will are bound to create less conventional rules of behavior for vast numbers whose eyes have been opened to the real distinction of character and conduct.

THE COMMONPLACE

We all profess a contempt for the commonplace, and in that way we pose as something out of the common. In this life we seem all to be on the outlook for the wonderful. We are not content with the earth, but we must worship a star, and it is in this frame of mind that we objugate the commonplace, and regard the anathema "utterly commonplace" as the most damatory which can be applied either to a human being or a thing. We most of us live uncomfortably on our tiptoes instead of on the more stable soles of our feet. We are always expecting the marvellous to happen, and we are disappointed at the humdrum routine. We are looking to be amazed instead of satisfied, to being startled instead of amused. Of course, in a sense this is natural enough, for although uniformitarianism is the rule in science, there are characteristics and crises in human affairs, and it is these events that lay hold of our imaginations, just as the mountain-tops do by their golden prominence above the inconspicuous flat lands which lie at the feet of these capes in space. The hackneyed quotation that man never is but always to be blessed has some truth in it. Today is a tunnel, and we are in the dark with a bright hole of daylight at the other end to which we are hurrying, but which, as tomorrow becomes today, we never reach.

BEING GROTESQUE

But it is well to note that those who are ashamed of being commonplace are very often trying to perform the difficult trick of raising the chair they are sitting upon. By far the largest number of people in the world are not unique, whatever they may think of themselves, and to try to be unique is only an affectation, and instead of producing something above the commonplace, only results in the grotesque, which is quite below the average level, which is content with inconspicuous goodness. But there is a morbid craving amongst men to be original, which is the madness of ambition. Wisdom knows that there is nothing new in the world and that the best we can do is to echo the voices which have sung or spoken before we were born. It is true we must vary the words of the ancients to make a claim upon modern ears; but, as a fact, we are echoes, and all our originality has been anticipated ages and ages ago.

THE BEAUTY OF THE COMMONPLACE

Of course, there are some people who are not commonplace. The maniac is one of these and the genius is said to be allied to him. It is the idea that we have genius, which is the exulting impression of most of us, that makes us cousin to the fool, while if we would be content to be commonplace we might be accepted by our fellows as a friend. Our claim to be above the common flouts their approaches. Instead of soaring, we might with patient feet do excellent works of kindness amongst our neighbors, which, while it is not recognized on our tombstones, is really the only triumph of which most of us are capable.

Have you noted that in foods it is the commonplace bread and ordinary dishes which never pall, and that it is the relishes and sardines which tire a jaded palate? And so it is with men. We can get along with the commonplace, but with the "savory" people who are out for surprises and mysteries and demand your admiration, we weary of their company and refuse to admit their exorbitant claim.

If we remember aright, the Scripture has it that nothing that God

had cleansed was to be called common, and it is an excellent attitude of mind to find merit in what we in our paltry pride are inclined to call low. One of the beauties of Bret Harte's tales was the finding of the nugget of character in the rough dirt and washings of Roaring Camp.

It is indeed a mercy that the common as distinguished from the rare is really honestly desirable. The best things are common and within the reach of all. The air is an ample reservoir for the lungs. The rain fills every cup, the sun shines upon us all; and if we consider it, these and human goodness are the best gifts which God has bestowed on mankind. "The rare"—we leave to the few connoisseurs. The curios of life are scarcely worth having, except for the reputation it brings to that net, the collector, and the envy which is the real gist of reputation.

PLAYGROUND AND FAIR PLAY

LOPSIDED PUBLIC SPORT IN WINNIPEG

The Winnipeg Tribune, in its issue of Monday last and under the caption: "More Playground Money Is Asked—Fletcher Would Establish New Community Centres Throughout Winnipeg," printed the following: "Establishing new community centres in various parts of Winnipeg is the problem both the board of control and the playgrounds commission will face in the near future, according to a letter from Robert Fletcher, chairman of the commission, to the controllers today.

Adults, as well as children, should be included in the plans which may be involved in the extension of the operations, he explained. "We trust you will give this matter your earnest consideration so that Winnipeg will not be forced to follow the lead of other Canadian cities," he declared.

He said the commission is besieged by applications for new recreation grounds and skating rinks, but "our appropriation is strained to the breaking point." He asked for more funds.

"If the citizens are anxious to have more money spent on playgrounds work we would be glad to spend it," declared Controller J. J. Wallace. "If they want \$5,000 more spent we can do it, or we can keep the outlays down." The subject was laid over. The above item will be read with interest by the trustees of St. Ignatius School, Fort Rouge. Here are a few facts: The members of St. Ignatius parish conduct a parochial school in which 175 children are in attendance and 5 teachers are employed. The children attending this school belong to parents who pay their school and other taxes to the city of Winnipeg. The teachers employed are all qualified. The curriculum followed in the school is identical with that followed in the Public schools in the city of Winnipeg. The members of St. Ignatius parish pay for the maintenance of this school, including teachers' salaries, and are educating these 175 children at their own expense. Not one penny is contributed by the city or the Manitoba government. The school taxes of the members of the parish go to pay for the education of Protestant children in the Public schools. The cost of educating a child in the Public schools in Winnipeg for one year amounts to approximately \$50. If these 175 children were being educated in the Public schools in Winnipeg it would cost the city \$8,750 a year. The city saves this sum through St. Ignatius parish paying for the education of these 175 city children.

And now we come to the playground proposition. The members of the parish provide a playground and skating rink for the children of the school which is frequented and used evenings by the Protestant children as well as by the Catholic children living in the district. This playground is also provided free by the parish. A short time ago the trustees of St. Ignatius school petitioned the Board of Control and City Council to have the playground used made free of city taxes. Their reasonable request was refused. On that occasion Controller Wallace put himself on record as being opposed to remitting the city taxes paid on account of this playground. We are loathe to believe that Controller Wallace fully understood the nature of the request, otherwise he would have gladly favored it. This may be inferred from the report in The Tribune wherein he declares that "if the citizens are anxious to have more money spent on playgrounds we should be glad to spend it." The trustees of St. Ignatius parish should at once take him at his word and go in a body before the Board of Control or the City Council and renew their application to have the tax on their playground remitted. And we feel sure the citizens of Winnipeg

will endorse any action taken by the Board of Control or City Council in granting the prayer of the petitioners. The request is such a reasonable one that no fair-minded man on either the Board of Control or City Council would wish to go on record as being opposed to it. Try again.—Northwest Review.

POLITICAL RELIGION

The two items following are taken from the Detroit Press. They will serve to show how favorably the Religion-in-Politics Movement is progressing. They do not seem to substantiate the moss-grown charge that Catholic priests are interfering in politics instead of attending to the business of religion. Tallahassee, Fla.—Jan. 8.—The Rev. Sidney J. Catts, a Baptist preacher who came to Florida four years ago from Alabama, was inaugurated governor here yesterday. In his inaugural address, he advocated carrying out the state project to drain the everglade swamps and to place all schools on an equal footing (i. e., abolish religion in private schools,) and urged passage of a law providing for police inspection of parochial schools, convents and nunneries.

Governor Catts was elected on a democratic-independent prohibition ticket. He had been defeated for the democratic nomination by a small margin.

(Special to The Free Press)

Lansing, Mich., Jan. 8.—Rev. Ralph Duff, of Armada, whose appointment as private secretary to Governor Sleeper was announced today, although a minister of the Congregational Church, has been active in politics in his own community for years.

While his fame as a worker for the Republican party never extended beyond St. Clair and Macomb counties until last August, when he was candidate in the primaries against the present Senator Lyman A. Holmes, he now becomes a state figure.

Before leaving the distasteful subject it might be noted that Rev. Mr. Catt ran on a prohibition-anti-Catholic ticket. Doubtless the fledglings who repudiated the judgment of Cardinal Gibbons on the prohibition question will subscribe to Rev. Mr. Catt's platform and bask in the oleaginous tolerance of political religionists until the present neo-paganism peels itself into a more advanced shape, like so many Peters basking among the hangers on in the outer Court of Pilate.—The Catholic Vigil.

ARMY CHAPLAINS

STRENUOUS LIFE AT THE FRONT

"THE PADRE IS A TRUMP ALWAYS"

To all his brother officers the chaplain is known as the padre (writes J. D. Irvine in the Daily Express). His profession is that of a minister of religion.

It is primarily as a spiritual guide and comforter to the troops that he is attached to the army. But while he keeps religion in the forefront, as he his sacred calling, our padre is a man who sees the essentially human side of war, who realizes that in moments of physical suffering the welfare of the body has paramount claims, and that in his leisure moments the soldier craves for instruction, amusement—and sport. The padre honestly panders to these tastes—whether in times of stress or in moments of recreation and relief.

I have seen him at work in the many different phases of his strenuous and anxious life. Watch him with the troops in the trenches. Shells fall thick and fast. Men are wounded; some are dying. To them the chaplain whispers words of spiritual comfort and hope.

Watch him a moment later, when the troops swarm out of their flimsy shelters, mount the parapets, and advance against the enemy. The ground is now strewn with wounded. The chaplain crosses with his comrades of the Royal Army Medical Corps into this shell-swept gateway of devastation and death. Hesteadies waverers among the stretcher-bearers by his cheery words and the force of his own example, as he helps to carry in the wounded to some place where hell is not being raked out of the earth.

It is not laid down as part of the chaplain's duties that he shall act as an auxiliary to the R. A. M. C. in the thick of battle. But he does it. Very often the padre is the coolest of all the men under fire, and it is impossible to appraise at too high a ratio the value of his personal example. To the men he is a hero rather than a parson. Before they entered into this fight they may have heard him speak of holy things. Perchance he may have reminded them how man in the midst of life is in death, or he may have spoken of the glorious reward which comes to those who lay down their lives in a great and sacred cause. He may even have administered to them the sacrament of their Church. At this

moment they see in him only a man—a brave man, who is one of themselves, their equal in every risk and every sacrifice.

At casualty clearing stations the chaplains are there to receive the wounded, who already have obtained first aid before being handed over to the Red Cross transport. Each man is docketed with his name, rank, and unit, and the nature of his wound, and while the surgeons of the R. A. M. C. are engaged in professional inspection and classification the padre goes round among the men, speaks to them cheerily, and attends to their creature comforts.

The other day I came across some four hundred men—ragged, blood-stained, and weary—at one of the C. C. S.'s, as they are called. They needed nothing so much as sleep. They stretched themselves out on the cool grass. Some of them, parched with thirst, asked for a drink of water or a cup of tea. This was speedily brought to them.

"Now, then, boys," shouted a lusty lunged son of the Church, "what do you say to a cigarette? All of you who would like a cigarette please sit up." They all sat up, and the padre went round the crowd, handing out packets of "fags." It is in comparatively trivial incidents like these that one observes the fruits of "practical religion" in this war. They explain, too, why it is that the chaplain is so popular with the men.

"The padre is a trump always," said a wounded soldier to me on this same occasion. "He doesn't force religion upon you. He will pray with you if you ask him to. If you don't he will just trot off and fetch you a fag or a cup of tea as quick as winking." Then he added, without the least intimation of being profane: "God bless our chaplains. They're damned fine fellows."

The chaplain is a prodigious letter writer. A disabled soldier will say to him: "Do, please, write home to my people, sir. Tell them you've seen me; that I'm wounded, but that I am all right." Brave lads will say this when they know that they are not all right. The chaplain will answer:

"Yes, my boy, I will write to your mother. I will tell her how brave and good you have been, and how proud she ought to be of her son." The padre will pray softly by the bedside of the dying soldier. He will even make a will for him while yet the spark of human intelligence remains. He will collect his letters and all his little personal effects and send them to some place where he can be sure they will reach him. He will never return. He will write tenderly of last moments—how souls, made strong in the faith, winged their flight, while the bodies they dwelt in had been interred with the rites of Christian burial. I have seen these chaplains on the battlefield uttering the solemn office for the burial of the dead while the ruthless dogs of war have barked their loudest and fiercest—aye, while the instruments of death themselves have hurred overhead and one knew not whose turn might be next. Frequent Communion is administered to men on the eve of their going into battle.

Little altars, miniature houses of God, are erected in cellars and dug-outs. The men gather round and partake of the elements which are the sacred emblems of the Christian faith. Tomorrow they may die, but they will yield their young and precious lives fortified with the rites of their Church. As I write I have before me the sketch of a typical underground chapel which was constructed by a chaplain close to that dismal part of the front which converges on Gommecourt. The altar is built of empty ammunition boxes; its rails are old meat tins, the cross is made of wood cut from a neighboring tree, and the flowers which adorn the altar are simple wild flowers gathered from the hedgerows and fields. On the right of the altar is a gaping hole made by a Boche shell. Above the altar, in a roof where an attempt has been made to fashion some rude form of decorative work, is a swallow's nest. Men came here to pray. The chaplain held his service and administered holy Communion. This was before July 1. Many of the soldiers who prayed here are dead. But surely the spirit that led them to this little altar is immortal.

I have referred to the chaplain as a pro-service, which will take place simultaneously along the whole line of our front, as well as in every town and village where British troops are assembled in France. Prayers will be offered up for our country and Empire, for our sailors and soldiers—and for victory. Our dead will be remembered in the words of the text—"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." We shall offer up thanksgiving, too, for mercies vouchsafed to us during two years of war. And we shall not forget the simple yet poignant words of the soldier's prayer: "Bless us in body and in soul, and make us a blessing to our comrades." Support us in life and comfort us in death.—Mail and Empire.

WHO IS TO BLAME?

As we write this Archbishop Orozco and Bishop de la Mora are imprisoned in Mexico City. A press dispatch states that they are to be tried by court martial on charge of sedition. The penalty for such a crime is death. Fantastic charges will be laid against them. Sentence will not be determined on guilt or innocence. It goes without saying that they will be found guilty. Everyone knows that their sole crime is that they are bishops of the Catholic Church. We do not think that they will be murdered. The regime of Carranza is too cowardly even for that. They will languish in jail, amid filth and fever, and they will be loaded down with dishonor and blasphemy. Thus our tutelage to the United States, has been presented with an automobile by Mr. Wm. J. O'Connor, the owner of the Buffalo Courier. The presentation was made by a delegation of priests.

CATHOLIC CONGRESS

CATHOLIC LAITY OF ITALY CONVENTION IN ROME

(By Catholic Press Association Cable)

Rome, Jan. 25.—The Catholic Congress held here last week was the most important gathering of the faithful that has been held here for many years. It was attended by leading laymen from all parts of the country. It was decided to take steps to unite Italian Catholics more closely than at present, so that they may confront, as a great compact body, the social, economic, and political problems which are certain to arise when the War is over. In reply to an address of homage and devotion presented to him in behalf of the congress, Pope Benedict sent words of approval of its work, gave all engaged in it his apostolic blessing, and concluded by expressing a hope that a just and lasting peace may soon come.

ST. THOMAS a BECKET

EIGHTH CENTENARY OF BIRTH OF MARTYRED BISHOP

London, Jan. 15.—England soon will celebrate the 800th anniversary of the birth of Thomas a Becket, the most celebrated Catholic prelate in English annals. The exact date of the commemoration has not yet been decided. Authorities differ as to the year in which Becket was born, some giving the date as Dec. 21, 1117, others as 1118, and still others as 1119. The consensus of opinion now favors the first named date. The great Saxon hero, priest and martyr was assassinated on Dec. 29, 1170.

It is related that Gilbert, the father of a Becket, had in his youth accompanied a crusade to the Holy Land. While in Syria he was taken prisoner by a Saracen of high rank, and confined in the dungeon of a castle. The young Englishman's personal attractions and miserable condition aroused the pity of his captor's daughter, and she soon became violently enamored of him, and visited him frequently in his dungeon. The fair Mohammedan at length contrived to effect his liberation, first exacting a promise from Gilbert that as soon as he had reached his own land he should send for and marry her.

Evidently there was not a great deal of chivalry or gratitude in the heart of Gilbert a Becket, for he permitted the years to pass without even sending a message to his lovely maiden who was awaiting his coming. With a love and faith unbounded the Saracen girl at length decided to seek the distant England, which was the home of her lover and after long wanderings and many vicissitudes, she accomplished that perilous enterprise.

Arrived in London, she set about the difficult task of searching out her lover, and fortune favoring her, she found him. He had not married, and to his eternal credit he was willing to reward the fair Syrian maiden with a marriage by taking her to his home and heart. Previous to the marriage she renounced Mohammedanism, professed her conversion to Christianity, and was baptized in St. Paul's cathedral, six bishops assisting at the ceremony. The only child of this marriage was Thomas a Becket.

EXILES BUILD HOME

MARIST BROTHERS, DRIVEN OUT OF MEXICO, ERECT HOME IN TEXAS

During the past few months a large and permanent Catholic institution has been built in the north-eastern suburbs of San Antonio, Texas, but its erection has been going on so quietly that even comparatively few Catholics have known anything about it. It is the novitiate and scholasticate of the Marist Brothers, exiled from Mexico, who decided to establish themselves permanently in San Antonio, owing to the present religious persecution in their own beautiful but unhappy land. The Brothers are now occupying the building which was solemnly dedicated by Right Rev. Bishop Shaw on January 2, the centenary of the founder of the Order.—St. Paul Bulletin.

CATHOLIC NOTES

The will of T. Herbert Shriver, of Westminster, Md., makes bequests to the extent of \$30,000 to educational and charitable institutions.

In the Church of the Our Father, on Mount Olivet, in Jerusalem, which is on the spot on which Christ taught it, the Our Father is written in different languages on 35 slabs.

Mount St. Scholastica's academy, Canon City, Colo., was badly damaged by fire recently. It is conducted by the Benedictine Sisters of the Chicago motherhouse. The damage amounted to about six thousand dollars.

The Rt. Rev. John Bonzano, Apostolic Delegate to the United States, has been presented with an automobile by Mr. Wm. J. O'Connor, the owner of the Buffalo Courier. The presentation was made by a delegation of priests.

Two golden jubilees of much interest occurred in December. Cardinal Logue celebrated his fiftieth year in the priesthood, and the Rev. Bernard Vaughan, S. J., attained his fiftieth anniversary in the Society of Jesus.

New York, Jan. 17.—His Eminence Cardinal Farley has just announced from the Archdiocese of New York a net contribution to the Catholic foreign missions of \$205,615.50 for the past year. This is the largest sum ever contributed by an individual diocese to the support of missions in the far East. With the resources cut off from Europe, the interest of the Catholics of the United States is most timely and helpful.

Mr. Vernon Z. Reed has presented a marble bust of Pope Benedict XV. to the Cathedral of Denver. The work was executed by an Italian sculptor in Rome. Mr. Reed also presented to the same Cathedral a bust of Pope Pius X., in memory of the Pope's kindness to Mr. Reed's children whom he received in audience. He is a non-Catholic, but two of his children have entered the Church.

For nine years the Rev. Peter J. O'Callaghan of the Catholic University, Washington, D. C., and formerly of Chicago, has labored to secure the liberty of Herman Billik, who was convicted of murder and sentenced to be hanged in 1907 in Chicago. The sentence was later commuted to life imprisonment. Father O'Callaghan was convinced that the aged man was innocent and later developments proved his conviction. The pardon was granted January 3, by Governor Dunne.

San Francisco, Cal., Jan. 15.—The new stained glass windows in St. Patrick Church were solemnly blessed yesterday by Most Rev. Archbishop Edward J. Hanna. These windows are attracting much attention both because of their singular beauty as well as by the subjects represented in them. St. Patrick and the evangelists are shown in the 5 sanctuary windows, while the patron saints of all the counties of Ireland together with scenes connected with the founding of the church by St. Patrick are depicted in the other windows.

A cable dispatch from Rome announces the appointment of Mgr. Lauri as intendant to the Southern Republics of Peru and Bolivia, succeeding Mgr. Scaparkini. American students who have made their course at the Propaganda will read of this appointment with pleasure and satisfaction. Mgr. Lauri was for a score of years an honored professor of Sacramental Dogmatic Theology in that university. Several years ago he was a visitor to America, and was the guest of various Alumni Associations of the American College.

In the death of the Rev. Renny Laforet, D. D., says the Catholic News, the New York archdiocese has lost one of its most learned priests. For fifteen years Father Laforet was professor of Sacred Scripture in the theological seminaries at Troy and at Dunwoody, resigning from the latter institution in 1897 on account of ill health. For the past nineteen years he occupied the very important office of censor librorum of the archdiocese. Father Laforet's death occurred on Thursday morning, Jan. 18, at Mount St. Francis, the convent of the Missionary Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis, in Peekskill, where he was stationed as spiritual director.

Messrs. Burns and Oates, of London, England, have just produced a handsomely illustrated booklet entitled "Catholics of the British Empire and the War," which contains many interesting records of the heroism of priests and soldiers. At the beginning of the conflict there were only 15 Catholic chaplains in the Army; there are now 465. The Navy possessed only 4 Catholic chaplains, while it has now 81. The following is the return of the numbers of Catholic chaplains now serving with the Army and Fleet: Army: British, 872; Canadian, 86; Anzac, 32; India, 5; South Africa, 2; Trinidad, 1; Malta, 5; South America, 1; Newfoundland, 1; Total, 455. Navy: British, 80; Australian, 1. Total, 81.