

ADVISES RETREATS FOR JOURNALISTS

Brussels, May 29.—To show the estimation in which he is held by the Catholic press, a delegation of Catholic newspapermen called upon Cardinal Mercier during his jubilee celebration and presented him with an address. Cardinal Mercier made reply as follows: "All that I have been able to do must be referred to the Author of All Good. Literally crushed by the goodness of God, I have no words to express my gratitude to His Most Merciful Providence. The anniversary days of my sacerdotal ordination were days of prayer as well as days of joy, the joy of feeling myself in communion with my countrymen, with the faithful of my diocese, with you whose sentiments express the sentiments of the Belgian people."

"What I wish for you is the continued extension of your apostolate. The word 'Apostolate' was consecrated by Pius XI. in one of his encyclicals in which, after having described the evils of modern life, he set forth that never has the spirit of apostolate seized upon men so deeply as it does today. If it is to penetrate Catholic life, it must thoroughly penetrate yours; for it is upon your collaboration in the Catholic apostolate that we chiefly rely."

"Before the War, some friends of the press conceived the idea of setting aside annually a few days of silence and recollection for our journalists. Most willingly do I take up that idea again. Every day you are called upon to write on an endless variety of subjects without having the time necessary for recollection. It cannot be too often, therefore, physically, morally, apostolically, to spend a few days in retrospection and meditation. I do then express the wish to see you all assist at a retreat of this sort; for it will afford precious moments of rest to your soul and from it you will sail forth more united than ever. Every year that I have a chance to make an eight or ten days' retreat I feel refreshed, younger, better disposed to work. You cannot possibly always and all agree on all subjects; after those days of retreat you will part still holding on to your personal opinions on all questions that are free, but you will stand united upon the ground of charity."

CZECH CATHOLICS REJOICING

(By N. C. W. C. News Service) Prague, May 12.—Returns from supplementary town council elections, and the apparent killing of a new anti-Catholic proposal from bigots are proof that, despite frequent declarations to the contrary, Catholicism is flourishing in Czechoslovakia. The anti-Catholic activity in the country seems to have acted as a stimulus, and strong Catholic organizations throughout the land are now energetically centering their efforts on providing children with proper education by pressing the Government to retain the old system of denominational schools, and working for the rejection or modification of the proposals aimed at robbing the Church of its landed property through the so-called Estate Reform.

Election returns from the country towns and villages show a steady progress by the Catholic Party. Numerous communities voted in Catholic mayors, and in a great number of towns where Catholics had virtually no representation, they now hold a majority.

A short time ago, the "Progressives" came forward with a new proposal to permit non-Catholics to use Catholic churches and chapels for their religious services. Immediately a Catholic daily newspaper published the full wording of the measure, denouncing it as unconstitutional and an offense against the Catholic population, and urging Catholic deputies and ministers to prevent its passage. The result was that the bill has not even been discussed in the legislative chambers.

Another favorable sign is that the atheist threats of separation of Church and State and confiscation of church property are no longer

heard. Opponents of the Church were silenced, it is believed, by the results of the census, revealing the true number of Catholics in the country.

The great outpouring of Catholics for Holy Week services also acted as a check on the hostile propaganda, by providing a visible proof that the Czechs are truly a Catholic people. Processions with the Blessed Sacrament were held at nearly all the churches in Prague. Probably the most notable of these processions to wind its way through the streets was that at Smichov. It is estimated 10,000 persons marched, including Catholic boys and girl gymnasts in uniform, charitable and religious societies with lighted candles and flags, representatives of the town council and the schools, and the clergy. Most of the windows passed by the procession displayed burning candles, and all street car and vehicular traffic was halted. It was the largest procession the Church has ever held.

MURDER OF MISSIONER BY MONGOL BANDITS

Paris, May 16.—The "Missions Catholiques" has published a letter just received from Father Van Oost, of the Order of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (Belgian Mission of Scheut) telling of the assassination of Father Soenen of that order, a missionary to Soei Yuen, in Mongolia.

This letter shows the heroic energy of the missionaries who are working at the constant peril of their lives, for the evangelization of that difficult mission field. "On Christmas day," Father Van Oost writes, "our dear Father Soenen was assassinated in a cowardly manner by bandits. It was in the evening. Father Soenen and his companion Father Leemans, who had recently come from Europe were conversing quietly recalling touching memories of that great feast day which had brought them many consolations—numerous Communions, a large attendance of Christians at the various Masses. Suddenly four soldiers entered the room and asked for some medicine for one of them who claimed to have a violent toothache. Father Soenen immediately got up and went for his medicine kit, while Father Leemans went out a minute. Hardly had he taken two steps outside of the room when he heard several shots fired. Then more shots were fired at the entrance of the residence and a violent fusillade broke out in the village. It was part of a pre-arranged plan. The Christians were unable to get out without being shot."

When calm had at last returned, Father Leemans found his companion lying in a pool of blood, but still alive. He had been fatally wounded in the head, the chest and the abdomen. With touching devotion and fully conscious, he received the last Sacraments. The following morning at nine o'clock, Father Soenen died, pardoning his assassins.

"This is merely the first act—a sanguinary act—of the tragedy which is going to take place here," continues Father Leemans. "Our Governor, General Ma Fu Siang, is on very good terms with the missionaries, but he finds it impossible to repress these disorders. His soldiers do not obey him. He cannot rely on his troops, being sure only of a few hundred Mohammedan soldiers who form his personal bodyguard."

Eight-tenths of the others are affiliated with the secret society 'Ko lao noi' which is bolshevist in principle and the executive body of which is formed of local bandits. Officials and notables are all members of a society, the object of which is a mystery even to some of its members.

"In addition to this the local militia is all 'Ko lao noi' and made up of bandits.

"Unless General Ma sends for more troops it is certain that repression will become impossible. Bands of brigands are wandering through the land, gaining in numbers and the soldiers do not even attempt to pursue them."

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Mr. O'Callaghan's report further says: "The effort to induce Americans to manufacture tires in Ireland is only a small part of a general plan which embraces amongst other schemes the establishment of a sugar refinery to which after the lapse of a reasonable time it is intended to link up the manufacture of sugar from sugar beets. But I was assured that if Ireland wants to take full advantage of her wonderful geographical position, she should begin the establishment of an Irish mercantile marine flying the Irish flag."

Although not entirely satisfied with the importation tariffs recently adopted in Southern Ireland, the Federation of Irish Industries takes them as an earnest desire of the authorities to meet the necessities of the case in the difficult circumstances of the moment. The Federation advocates tariffs not for the purpose of increasing employment and retaining the population. It fears that the tariffs imposed are not sufficiently drastic to obtain the industrial results required. It suggests that in the further development of the policy of protection an advisory body should be established to assist the Minister of Finance.

QUARREL OVER SPOILS

Marion, Ind., June 6.—Another squabble over division of the profits has resulted in bringing the Ku Klux Klan into court again. This time it is the "Women of the Ku Klux Klan," through the organization's attorneys suing Mrs. Daisy Douglass Barr of Fairmont, Ind. for an accounting of money collected in initiation fees and for the sale of robes. Mrs. Barr is the wife of Thomas Barr, Deputy State Bank Commissioner.

The story, as set forth by Klan attorneys in their bill of complaint, is that about a year ago the plaintiff organization entered into a contract with Mrs. Barr whereby she was given the right of organizing the women's Klan in Indiana, Kentucky, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, New Jersey, and Minnesota. For this privilege she was to pay to the organization \$1 for each person initiated. On this basis the defendant actually paid in \$5,085 the complaint recites. The dispute arises out of the allegation of the Klan that it is believed there were at least 40,000 more members taken in, for whom no accounting was given and no fee paid into the Klan treasury.

Another phase of the squabble involves the rake-off which the Klan is supposed to collect from the sale of each robe purchased by a subject of the Invisible Empire. Mrs. Barr, it is alleged, agreed to buy all the robes for the initiates from the Klan itself. The complaint says this would have meant a profit of from \$1.80 to \$1.65 on each robe, and that 40,000 robes are involved.

"THE CONQUERED BANNER"

Washington, June 3.—A tribute to the late Rev. Abram J. Ryan, post-priest of the Confederacy, was paid by Representative Isaac R. Sherwood of Ohio during the Memorial Day exercises in the House of Representatives. Gen. Sherwood referred to many of the songs and poems which inspired the men of the opposing armies during the Civil War and ended by saying: "The greatest dramatic poem of the South was written by Father

Ryan, the chaplain of a Mobile (Ala.) regiment, who was captured at Fort Sanders in the charge on Fort Sanders in east Tennessee. He wrote 'The Conquered Banner,' the last sad requiem of the Confederacy. It was written with a pencil in a hospital at Knoxville, Tenn., in a single hour."

General Sherwood is the oldest man now alive who held the rank of General during the Civil War. He is a veteran member of the House of Representatives, having been first elected to that body in the Forty-third Congress.

DIED

RANSON.—At Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., on June 2nd, 1924, Mr. John F. Ranson, in his seventy-third year. May his soul rest in peace.

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