

EIGHT THE CRUCIFIX IN

PUBLIC

HONOURING THE SIGN OF REDEMPTION

(By "M. C. L." in Catholic Herald) A recent Anglican decision in

of bowing to the crucifix! kneeling before it !! praying before it !! and to prevent a recurrence of such scandals, it was decreed that the crucifix be placed somewhere where it could not be seen ewite so well it could not be seen quite so well. The suggestion was made that the guilty persons might not be Protestants at all; and indeed they may have been benighted Papists who could not pass the representation of the Crucified Redeemer with no more reverence, or display of devo-tion, than if it had been the graven image of Queen Anne or of Nelson on his pillar. However, not to do so is to be superstitious and idolatrous You may bow to the Throne or "Chair of State," and no one will even suggest its being secluded in a cellar or behind a wall to prevent honor being paid to it; to bow to it is reasonable and right, but to bow to a crucifix is Popish and sinful. You may salute the flag with a clear conscience, but not the emblem of redemption. The Chancellor of the Diocese of Liverpool stated last week that the use of that emblem "has for three hundred years been regarded by the country emblem at large as distinctive of Roman Catholics ;" and one is grateful to him for reminding everybody of the date when the Crucifix was rejected

for the Lion and the Unicorn. "The country at large" before that time honored the crucifix just as do Cath-olics everywhere today; and we should be very proud that our venas of infidels. However, the Great War opened the eyes of many to the significance and the potency of the emblem. Not a few discovered how im-portant a place religion and religious observances held in the public and private life of Catholic peoples, meeting crosses images and shrines every-where. To the "advanced" British sceptic, who thought that religion is a discredited myth nowadays, it must have been rather a shock to find that it had still so strong a hold upon so many. Perhaps where spiritual facts have no material embodiment,

the popular mind soon grows indifferent and sceptical, but where the ent and sceptical, but where the senses are constantly coming into touch with spiritual ideas there is little fear of indifference. We read in various books and articles on the

War how the British soldier was impressed by the spectacle of the crucifix intact amongst the ruins of church or cathedral. In "Contemptibles" we read that when "Tommy passed a csucifix "with its cluster of flowering graves, he would say 'Aip's We ought to have them at it pretty ? me, you know.' " Of course, "we" had them at home everywhere until the Reformation. Today, when "we" try to have them as memorials of those who died in the War, either they are smashed, not by German shells, but by home-made Huns, or banner as illegal by the Anglican Establishment. In this connection it may be noted that "somewhere in France" a representation of the Sacred Heart found favor in the eye of a Presbyterian minister. What Presbyterians at home would think of it is another matter. He had gone into a little village church, and on the end wall "there was a large painting of the Saviour showing His pierced hands and side to His dis-ciples, and over it the words : 'Behold His heart. Who so loved men.' Now that was just the help and com. fort which we most needed. Amid all the anxieties of the present it is well to be reminded of that Wounded Heart." (Scottish Mothers' Magazine, 1916.) Such reminders are, like the crucifix, "distinctive of Roman Catholics." Mention of the War sug-gests mention of a recent biography, to which ever informative "Catholic Book Notes" directs attention. (June issue.) It is the life of Father William Doyle, S. J., chaplain to the William Fusiliers, who was killed in August, 1917. A Belfast Orangeman wrote of him: "We couldn't possibly agree with his religious opinions, but we simply worshipped (sic) him for other things. He didn't know the meaning of fear, and he didn't know what bigotry was. He was as ready to risk his life to take a drop of water to a wounded Ulsterman as to assist men of his own faith and regiment. . . The Ulstermen felt his loss more keenly than anybody, and none were readier to show their marks of respect to the dead hero priest than were our Ulster Presby-terians." (Glasgow Weekly News, Sept 1, 1917.) Father Doyle received into the Fold both officers and men, "many of whom have never been in contact with Catholics before, knew nothing about the grandeur and beauty of our religion, and, above cer, by his Brigadier, and by General Hickie, but "superior authority" did not grant it. He had been recom-mend previously for the V.O. and the D.S.O., but neither was granted, and

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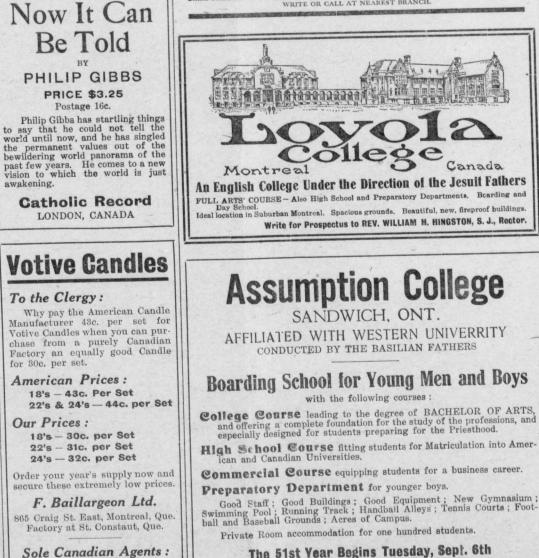
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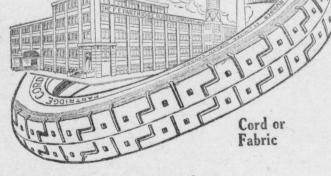
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