

# The Catholic Record

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LONDON, SATURDAY, APRIL 3, 1920

## EDUCATION, PROGRESS AND CHRISTIANITY

In the present unsettled state of the world there are undoubtedly alarmists who see or profess to see danger where no danger exists. Amongst these are those hysterical persons—not always entirely disinterested—who pretend to think that the whole Labor movement is infected with Bolshevism and is therefore a menace to civilized institutions. This is not the position taken by the great Pontiff Leo XIII. to whose clear and statesmanlike vision the tendencies and influences which have brought about the present condition of things were an open book a generation ago. While he did not hesitate to condemn Socialism as that "deadly plague which is tainting society at its very core and bringing it to a state of extreme peril," he at the same time recognized that the spirit of "rapacious usury," which the Church had often condemned, had laid "on the teeming masses of the poor a yoke little better than that of slavery itself." While condemning the fundamental principles of Socialism as essentially wrong he blessed the efforts of those who strove for justice to the workingman.

While dissociating ourselves from those ill-informed or interested alarmists who confound these two considerations and confuse the issue, we are glad to note a wiser and more discerning spirit, occasionally, in the analysis of the present unrest throughout the world which has in many cases proved itself a danger to Christian civilization.

Such wise discernment is shown in a recent lecture by a great educationist, Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, President of Columbia University. The subject of the lecture was "Christian Education."

"The feeling that every change is progress and that in some mysterious way the outcome will be all right," declared Dr. Butler, "has no basis in fact unless we do our part."

The protest against this popular superstition is almost a commonplace amongst Catholics; yet nothing is more firmly rooted in the spirit and belief of the age than this quite baseless and utterly mistaken idea of inevitable "progress." G. K. Chesterton has pointed out that progress is motion, a moving forward if you will, but it depends entirely on the direction in which we are moving whether there is progress, in the usual acceptance of the term, or retrogression.

One reason why this fatalistic belief in progress prevails, is the universal tendency to flatter the prejudices, passions and self-esteem of the crowd. Time was when sycophants were found in the courts of kings; in this democratic age they are on the hustings, the platforms, in the pulpits and in the press. Ignorance of history and of the social conditions of the past has made this egotistic self-adulation possible; distorted historic perspective, due to the Protestant tradition, has made it easy, almost inevitable. Progress in the last few generations has led quite obviously to the Great War and the present social upheaval.

Dr. Butler points out another reason in "the tendency to avoid fundamental principles and discuss the details of education, politics, economics and religion."

True, we live in an age when principles are not even understood, much less grasped and made the basis of discussion. That is a radical defect in modern education.

Though President Butler does not, so far as the report of his address before us goes, say in so many words that civilization is the work of Christianity, that the Christian religion is

the informing principle of every civilized institution, that Christianity is the soul which vivifies the body of civilized society, he seems to take that truth for granted, and to point out to his hearers the dangers that threaten the basis of civilization.

"We would have to go back one thousand eight hundred years to find as highly organized opposition to Christianity as that which exists today."

"Christianity today is not only overlooked and neglected, but is positively antagonized. A new element has taken its place in the world. We are face to face with a teaching that holds Christianity to be not only an illusion and a superstition, but a fraud invented to gain control over men. This you will read in every tract of the Socialists, in every publication of the Bolshevists. The virtues extolled by the philosophers, humanity, charity, service, are held by them to be worthy only the attention of children, and the world must get along without them; from life must be excluded everything that partakes of religious belief and organization."

"In the Government schools of Russia, one hour each day is spent in removing the traces of what we call civilization and the Christian religion."

He remarks that one would not think such things possible at this late day; but he adds:

"Anything is possible today. The human mind was never more credulous. Never were people so easily moved. While we are comforting ourselves that although there may be a storm, the structure that has been built on such a foundation, and founded so securely, cannot be shaken, we forget that protection is not by faith alone, but by men who are to be leaders as well."

It is part of present day self-glorification of the corroding egotism which characterizes our age to regard the middle ages as the ages of superstition; closing our eyes to the appalling crudelity which makes possible the millions of adherents of Christian Science, Spiritism and other widespread superstitions—not the least of which is that every change is progress.

When Dr. Butler speaks of education he is treating of a subject on which he is especially well qualified to speak. President of one of the greatest of American universities, he has had exceptional opportunities to observe the crowning achievements of modern education. And the report of his address thus records his observations on education:

Dr. Butler then told of the inheritance children are entitled to, including an education of which religion is most essential.

To the Catholic who has held in season and out of season, through good report and evil report, that religion is the most essential factor in education, these words of the great educationist will be most grateful.

Catholics have made untold sacrifices to remain faithful to this outstanding truth, self-evident to the sincere and earnest Christian, and becoming increasingly obvious to the thoughtful agnostic as well. The Church in the nineteen centuries of accumulated wisdom and experience has ever insisted that education, primary, secondary and university, should be permeated, inspired and informed by the sacred heritage of the Christian religion.

Dr. Butler finds himself confronted with the results of sectarian division and his observations on religious education most find even amongst Catholics a most sympathetic hearing:

"He pointed out that this part of education cannot be given in the school."

"So long as there was a State religion, this was possible," he said, "but it is no longer. We must now make sure that the State make no difficulties in allowing the child to receive religious education, and the home and the Church then step in and supply the defect."

"The process of education is complex and difficult. The school alone or the college cannot bear the burden of complete education. It has no control over the environment of the child, and must transfer this function to other agents. The home must furnish the foundation and supply the atmosphere. The Church must co-operate with the home in rounding out and completing what has been started. If the Church and home do not do their part in handing down religious inheritance we will be on the road to a return to paganism. There is no other power. The Church once controlled all education, but this is not possible now, although there are those who believe it necessary. Certain it is that no obstacle should be put in the way of religious education."

It has been said, with what authority we know not, that Dr. Butler is one of those non Catholics who fully and generously recognizes the great service to the Nation performed by the Catholic Church in maintaining

religious schools. Here he states emphatically that no obstacle should be put in the way of religious education.

There is something for Catholics in President Butler's serious reflections on this subject more than a pleasing approval of the Catholic position with regard to the place of religion in education. Perhaps a little salutary self-examination and searching of conscience would be more wholesome for us than self-congratulation.

"The process of education is complex and difficult. The school alone or the college cannot bear the burden of complete education."

Apart altogether from the difficulties caused by a multiplicity of sects there is a consideration which should have a special weight with Catholics. For, let the school be never so Catholic, the home has its own special obligations, responsibilities and duties. There is a disposition sometimes observed on the part of Catholic fathers and mothers to shoulder on to religious teachers the entire burden of religious education. That can not be done without shirking responsibilities which God Himself has imposed on parents. "Handing down the religious inheritance" to their children is the most sacred obligation that rests on the conscience of Catholic parents.

We shall say nothing of the duties and obligations of priests and pastors other than this. The Catholic school does not and can not relieve them of the obligation of adequate catechetical instruction. It has been said that where there is no Catholic school both priests and parents are much more keenly alive to their duty in this respect, but where the school is Catholic and especially where the teachers are religious, there is sometimes a tendency to shuffle off both pastoral and parental duty on to them.

To return to the eminent educationist whose address we are considering:

"Indifference can block sometimes more effectively than opposition the onward march for an ideal, for opposition arouses the fighting spirit. We are now face to face with opposition and the more powerful indifference."

May we suggest that this truth, which Dr. Butler states with regard to Christianity in general, has also its special application to Catholics.

The thoughtful and observant university president concludes by warning against the prevalent feeling of optimism, which he strongly asserts is unjustified without effort on our part:

"We are all trustees. We pass through the world and have entrusted to us the great moral, intellectual and religious aspirations. We may abuse or neglect our trust. If we do, the generations to follow will know it and suffer."

This again has for every Catholic, lay or clerical, educated or unlettered, its cogent application which we shall leave to the judgment and conscience of our readers.

Closely related to the thought of President Butler is the message Archbishop Hayes sent the other day to a nonpartisan luncheon where prominent churchmen discussed the question: "Are American Religious Influences equal to the demand of Present Conditions?"

Archbishop Hayes wrote in part:

"The primary mission of the Church is to save the soul of America. Social service and philanthropic work are very secondary compared to reaching the souls of men and leading them to a spiritual contentment that the State, education and wealth have not within their power to bestow. If America seeks first the Kingdom of God and His justice, then all the other things will be added unto her."

"Save the soul of America and the body, political and social, will take care of itself."

"A SINN FEIN OUTRAGE"

The murder of the Lord Mayor of Cork had it occurred in Belgium during German occupation would have rung round the world as one more instance of the incredible brutality of Prussianism. It occurred in Ireland and the controlled news agencies attempt all sorts of sinister suggestions to make it appear that in some mysterious Irish way Sinn Fein is responsible. Mayor Mac Curtain was Sinn Fein in politics and an officer in the Sinn Fein volunteers.

As a matter of fact it is just one more added to the scores of murders of civilians in Ireland during the present military and coercionist regime and one that could not well be passed over in silence, or openly charged against Sinn Fein.

As in all cases, whether the victims are policemen or civilians, the

despatches have the stereotyped conclusion: "No arrests were made."

In any other country in the world if the police force were so utterly incompetent either to prevent or punish crimes we can imagine the comments and conclusions.

There is a very general, a universal belief in Ireland that the clique now in control of the Castle government are determined to leave nothing undone to provoke an exasperated people into open rebellion. Sinn Fein leaders have invariably and constantly warned the people against walking into that trap.

Nothing dumber, the Castle sets to work to deprive the people of every actual or possible leader.

After the assassination of Lord Mayor MacCurtain, when intense excitement prevailed, a proclamation signed by Father Dominic, Chaplain of the Republican Guard, was posted all over Cork. It read as follows:

"With a grievous heart, I announce to you the death of our Lord Mayor, Thomas MacCurtain, Commander of the Cork First Brigade of the army of the Republic. The public will observe Monday as a civil holiday to afford the citizens an opportunity of testifying their respect to our chief citizen, and their horror at the brutal and cowardly manner in which he was done to death. Let no provocation move our citizens to retaliation or to any unseemly act."

A section of the British press, and press despatches to this side of the ocean, are endeavoring to create the impression that Sinn Fein is anxious to pit its unarmed men against the rifles, machine guns, armored cars, tanks and bombing planes of the army of occupation. Absurd as that may seem to be it is ominous; it is in absolute accord with the Irish belief that the Government is determined to provoke a rising.

Sinn Fein leaders urge calmness and self-restraint; but these leaders are arrested and deported wholesale; imprisoned without trial—and without any intention of ever giving them a trial—in the jails of England.

In the House of Commons Ian MacPherson, defending the Irish government, referred to the Lord Mayor of Dublin who had been deported and imprisoned. "Much capital had been made," said the Irish Chief Secretary, "out of the deportation of the Lord Mayor of Dublin. There was no prospect of the gentleman Lord Mayor at that time."

That ought to satisfy any reasonable person; but Colonel Wedgwood Benn interjected the preposterous and pertinent question:

"Are you going to bring him to trial?"

Mr. MacPherson—"No. There is no intention of bringing him or any of the others to trial. They will be kept here under the regulations."

And yet over seven hundred years ago the Great Charter laid down that memorable article which lies at the base of our whole judicial system: "No freeman shall be seized or imprisoned, or dispossessed, or outlawed, or in any way brought to ruin; we will not go against any man nor send against him, save by the legal judgment of his peers, or by the law of the land."

"To no man," runs another, "will we sell, or deny, or delay, right or justice."

In an address in Dublin a few weeks ago Sir Horace Plunkett after his return from America said:

"Ireland had become increasingly through the last decade the final proof to every enemy of England in America that the British aims in war and peace were mere hypocrisy when they professed to have any regard whatsoever for the liberty of small nations. When a Government acted towards a section of its people in a way in which the great majority of its own people notoriously disapproved, that Government would provoke contempt abroad, which would find expression often in dangerous ways. If he had to prove that American opinion about Ireland mattered, he could bring an array of witnesses which would carry conviction to the world, which, incidentally, outside England, requires no proof. His first witness would be the Prime Minister, whose speech last December 2nd created the impression, which had since vanished, that at long last a serious attempt was about to be made to offer Ireland something which reasonable American opinion might conceivably approve. In America I found, as I have said publicly, a more bitter anti-English feeling than in all my forty years of observation. As usual, although due to many other causes, it was tangled up with the Irish trouble, and was generally expressed in what I may call Irish terms. Americans wanted Ireland to have as large a measure of self-government as was consistent with the military safety of the British Empire, for which many Americans believed they were as much concerned as the British."

He is no friend of Great Britain or of the British Empire who does not

openly condemn the present junker Parliament's shameful Prussianism in Ireland. In control of Parliament and Government are the very men who fomented and openly encouraged rebellion in Ulster, thereby killing the Irish Constitutional movement.

And as Sir Horace Plunkett said on the occasion above referred to:

"Even more disconcerting was the presence on the Cabinet Committee which hatched out the Bill of men who had threatened the empire with civil war if Parliament should dare to fulfil its pledges to our country."

Sir Horace says further that the soldiers hate their job in Ireland. It can hardly be otherwise with decent and normal men. But as H. N. Brailsford wrote in the Daily Herald after the Amritsar Massacre became known in England:

"This crime was a sign of the times. It is to this that five years of habitual killing have brought us. This means what the Russian atrocities, the American lynchings, the crimes of passion also mean. . . . If we go on like this it is an end of civilization. Back to savagery, you say? Nothing of the kind. The savage has only his sticks and stones and arrows. This is savagery armed with the aerial bomb, the machine gun, and poison gas. India today, Ireland tomorrow, England the day after. There are General Dyer's today in Dublin. These clean looking young men in trench helmets whom you may see in Sackville Street, they, too, have suffered the nervous change of war. They know that it is quite easy to kill. Day by day the news warns us that we are heading straight for just such a massacre as this in Ireland. And then, be sure of this, generals who have practised first on Indians, and then on Irishmen, will know how to deal with strikers."

Let us not confound the present English government with England.

That there are Englishmen whose sense of justice is outraged by the malignant spirit which informs the Irish Government is evident from this despatch:

London, March 26.—The Weekly Nation, in its issue of tonight, says the police and soldiers raid about 1,000 Irish homes weekly; that Gen. Sackett-Payne, who commanded the Carsonite army in Ireland, has been called in by Field Marshal Viscount French, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, to assist in the rule of Nationalist Ireland, and that Inspector Smith, who was chief of the Belfast police when cargoes of rifles for Sir Edward Carson's force were being landed, is now head of the Royal Constabulary.

And the following is not without its relevancy to what precedes: indeed it is a pertinent comment on the whole situation:

Annapolis, Md., March 26.—Acting on a resolution adopted by the Maryland House of Delegates, Governor Ritchie today sent a letter to Eamon De Valera, "President of the Irish Republic," inviting him to address that body.

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be lulled into overlooking the tendencies of the times in which we live. Appeals to the senses are growing more numerous and more varied and more seductive.

Changes in the moral fibres of men and women do not come all at once, whether they are good changes or bad changes. Neither moral gain nor moral loss comes to large numbers in a month or in a year. The devil does not hope to win large numbers to loose moral views at one blow; he tampers first with the base on which their virtue is built; with the barriers by which innocence is protected.

Satan cannot usually succeed in tempting a good man or woman into overt acts of sin by sudden attack. He does sometimes do so; but usually he plays a patient waiting game, whilst he diminishes their barrier to sin, and puts before them the pleasures of sin by veiled suggestion.

It is because we forget that this is the devil's method of attack that we tolerate his approaches with the soothing, pleasing terms "sport," and "a good time," and smilingly accept his flattering suggestion that our mothers and grandmothers were "old-fashioned," and that we, of course (behold us now wreathed in smiles), are "up to date," no more "Sweet Sixteen" or "demureness" for us. How the devil must laugh when he sees young people who are still good getting ready to assist him in his efforts to make them bad.

Where are these new notions coming from, that sweet young womanhood is "old fashioned," and that only sporty girls can now expect recognition, or hope to have "a good time?"

Just beneath the "Notes and Queries" on the same page of the Star, I found the theatre advertisements. Some of them were illustrated. In one illustration a man holds a woman in a passionate, sensuous grip, her head flung back across his arm, her hand pulling down his head, his hand clasping her bare shoulder; the whole attitude of both is sensuous.

In another, a man holds a woman before him; she is bent double backward; her head hanging down; her person held close to his; the whole attitude sensual and suggestive.

We are glad to see that the Legislature of Manitoba is taking measures to deal with theatrical advertising. It is time for all our legislatures to take a hand at that. We wonder whether they have enough appreciation of the magnitude of the attacks that are now being made on the virtue of purity, and enough manliness to ignore the sneers of those who are libertine at heart or callous in conscience, who invariably deride all attempts to protect the young from the temptations of lust, but who never have a word to say in criticism of those who make a dirty living by tempting the pure and gratifying the impure.

Where are those loose ideas coming from? The idea that girls must be "sporty," must ogle and dance "sportily" and be not too particular about an indecent joke or a dirty story? Where are our young people getting those notions?

From many sources. From indecent pictures. From dirty books and magazines. From the growing laxity in conversation; from the growing sensuousness of dancing, as has been frequently remarked of late.

Shall the barriers be let down, or kept up? Modesty in conduct and in conversation; purity of ideals; reticence; and resentment of dirt, are the barriers which protect innocence of heart.

If our young people begin to form to themselves as an ideal, not a clean hearted, modest, reticent, "sweet sixteen" but a "sixteen" which is cynical; which is ready for "sport," which thinks it old-fashioned to resent a "sporty" joke, or a hug; or to refuse to dance "close-up," why then, Satan has a very fair chance of breaking down the barriers in this generation.

But, there is more than that to be said: a generation is only a short time in the long course of Satan's war against God. If our fathers and mothers had been "sporty" what would we be now?

What will our children be?

NOTES AND COMMENTS

AS ANNOUNCED in the daily papers a memorial of the men from the parish who died gloriously in France and Flanders is to be erected in front of the church of Our Lady, Guelph. This is as it should be, and the example might very well be followed

throughout the length and breadth of the country. The Catholic young men of Canada did their part nobly in the great War. It is therefore fitting that for the benefit of future generations visible memorials of that fact should be erected everywhere.

AN ANGLICAN clergyman writing to the Canadian Churchman describes himself as a "Catholic Protestant." Anglicans, he argues, are "Catholic," because they have the "Catholic" ministry, the Catholic faith and the Catholic sacraments. They are Protestant because they "protest" against the errors, superstitions and false claims of the Roman Church.

NOW, PROTESTANTS claim but two sacraments while the Catholic Sacraments are seven. Anglicans, corporately and severally also claim but two, hence they must be Protestant, and their pretension to "Catholic sacraments" necessarily, therefore, falls to the ground. Even a superficial examination will show that Anglican pretensions to a "Catholic ministry," and "Catholic faith," rest on no surer foundation. The triple claim is erected on the merest assumption, refuted alike by antiquarian arguments, visible facts, and the unequivocal testimony of their own Articles and formularies.

BUT WHEN he comes to the "Protestant" end of the stick the Churchman's correspondent has a more secure grip, for on that score his qualifications are unexceptionable. The Church of England is and always was Protestant and no special pleading such as our Anglican friends (who have grown ashamed of the term, and yet shrink from wholly relinquishing it,) can wash out the "damned spot." Self-interest, indeed, forbids that it should. "If we repudiate the name 'Protestant,'" says the Churchman writer, "how can we maintain our claim to a share in the value of the land, etc. left to support the 'Protestant' religion?"—a consideration which is in harmony at once with past history and existing conditions.

WE WROTE last week of the poet Keats, and of the interesting circumstance that a brother, sharing somewhat the family gift, lived for many years in Kentucky and died there in 1841. Not that there is in the subject anything of special interest to Catholics as such, but because of its general interest to all who love good literature, we are tempted this week to say something of the more gifted brother's sojourn and death in Rome twenty years earlier.

ENGLISH SPEAKING visitors to the Eternal City and especially those interested in literature invariably turn their steps to the Piazza di Spagna where stands the house dedicated many years ago to the joint memory of Keats and Shelley. This house in which Keats breathed his last was purchased by a group of English and American admirers and forever set apart as a memorial. It is a modest house, which in Keats and Shelley's day was a pension or boarding house. It is described as having about it a quiet seriousness, as if the shade of the author of "Hyperion" still lingered about it. Some notes from one who has visited it should be of interest to those of us less fortunate in that respect.

IN THE little entrance hang some old engravings which are said to give one an idea of the Piazza di Spagna, before what are known as the Spanish Stairs were built. The central room has been transformed into a reading room, around the walls of which run bookshelves of dark walnut. Ezekiel's bust of Shelley holds a prominent place in this room, also another by his friend Keats. In another room the shelves hold two hundred editions of Keats' and Shelley's works, which themselves bear silent testimony to the continuing and growing fame of the two poets. But by far the most interesting spot is the little bedroom in which Keats died, with its two windows, one of which looks out over the Piazza, and the other on the picturesque stairs leading up to the church, della Trinita de Monte. From that window can be seen what is familiar to Roman visitors as the most beautiful flower market in the world.

IN THE small bedroom thus pathetically consecrated to fame, Keats died in the arms of his faithful friend Severn. The ceiling and the little fireplace have been left just as when Keats lived there, and there