

FOUR

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LONDON, SATURDAY, JUNE 16, 1917

INDIVIDUAL EFFORT IN THE SPREAD OF CATHOLIC TRUTH

At the recent annual meeting of the English Catholic Truth Society Mr. Hilaire Belloc gave an address in which he emphasized the importance of individual effort. Catholics in this country (England) lived entirely surrounded by, permeated with, in constant reaction with a non-Catholic, an anti-Catholic society. We are surrounded by this ocean of non-Catholic thought and attitude in everything. How is it to be met?

"He thought that the corrective to the extraordinary point of view that he had put before them was that the method by which the Faith had always been propagated was by individual effort acting upon a few surrounding individuals—not upon the mass; it got to the mass later. So far as he could judge, the Church had never increased its power by efforts upon the mass; what had been done in that direction had been done by individuals."

Newman likewise wrote:

"I have already suggested what is too obvious almost to insist upon, that in making a select few the ministers of His mercy to mankind at large, our Lord was but acting according to the general course of His providence. It is plain every great change is effected by the few, not by the many; by the resolute, undaunted zealous few."

"But men are not easily wrought upon to be faithful advocates of any cause. Not only is the multitude fickle: but the best men—unless urged, tutored, disciplined to their work, give way; untrained nature has no principles."

By contrast we are reminded of an article by Ambrose Gallagher, O. S. B., in the Ecclesiastical Review for January. Here we have an aspiration for Catholic action which is at the opposite pole from that of the two English thinkers just quoted.

Father Gallagher would move the whole mass of Catholics; "We need the organized, unified, crystallized effort of our sixteen million people." Again: "A Lay Union through its conventions will solidify Catholic sentiment, bring unanimity of concerted action, sweep with watchful eye over the broad field of our national wants, impress the country with the numerical strength of our organism, and embody with dignity, leverage, and dynamic force the concentrated message of Catholic thought to society."

In the fervor of his grandiloquent advocacy of a Lay Union the writer seems to forget that there is something far greater already existing, Catholic unity divinely organized and sustained.

If we take an example or two, perhaps we shall see more clearly how widely Father Gallagher differs from Newman and Mr. Belloc in his conception of what form effective Catholic action should take. Speaking of the need of priests and lecturers in certain parts of the States, he faintly praises the Knights of Columbus for its work along this line and adds, "but the field is too broad for a limited organization." "Concurrent with this is the distribution and dissemination of Catholic literature upon a broad, specific and systematic plan." Of course the Lay Union "will guarantee both these activities, incorporating them perhaps later as an auxiliary of the Extension Society."

A more preposterous notion and one more at variance with all experience, it would be difficult to conceive.

Instead of waiting for the miraculous birth of these things from an impractical and impossible Lay Union why not begin by upholding the hands of Extension and the Catholic Truth Societies increasing their resources, and developing their activities until they reach the full and perfect fruition of their ideals.

If we waited for the "organized, unified, crystallized effort of our sixteen million people" we should have neither Extension nor Catholic Truth Societies nor Knights of Columbus nor anything else. Here again is a typical bit of pious spread-eagleism:

"A Catholic magazine that will take its rank in the field of literature with the prominent secular publications is another needed moral help to tone the higher intellectual breadth of Catholic life and thought in America. Not a religious publication is here specified, but a magazine of fiction, travel, art, literature, criticism, politics, sociology, economics, and religion, whose standard in literary values shall equal the best, and whose standard in moral values shall excel the best because imbued with Catholic morality. This is no reflection on existing publications. They nearly all are excellent in matter within limits, and admirable in purpose. But they lack scope. They make only a limited appeal and are restricted in circulation. The magazine which this article contemplates will be secular in all its advantages, national in all its influences, and Catholic in all its principles. A Lay Union may materialize this venture through its possibilities in finance and circulation."

Pico Della Mirandola, with his nine hundred theses concerning everything knowable, might hope for a modest place in this marvellous magazine. Magazines, as a matter of fact, with the everwidening sphere of knowledge tend more and more to specialization.

There are still some high class magazines, however, which make their appeal to the reader of average culture, but it would be impossible to find amongst "prominent secular publications" a single one with anything like the ambitious aims proposed by Father Gallagher. We have in the Catholic World a Catholic magazine equal to the best amongst secular magazines of this class. Its articles are timely, give the Catholic point of view on questions of interest and are vastly informative even to educated Catholics. Equally applicable to them are the words of Hilaire Belloc with regard to Catholic Truth pamphlets: "I do not know in what proportion they are read by non-Catholics and Catholics, but, paradoxical as it may seem, it is almost as valuable when they are bought by the one as by the other, because we are living in a non-Catholic country and the mass of our people do not know how the Catholic view should be presented and what is to be said in favor of it." More is really accomplished for the spread of Catholic truth, for the real apprehension of the Catholic attitude on vital questions by getting one additional intelligent reader—Catholic or non-Catholic—for the Catholic World than by a thousand vague longings for "a magazine of fiction, travel, art, literature, criticism, politics, sociology, economics, and religion, . . . secular in all its advantages, national in all its influence, and Catholic in all its principles."

THE LATE DR. FILLATRE, O. M. I. Back in the eighties there was in the University of Ottawa a group of priests learned, zealous, imbued with a large share of that spirit which sent out from France the missionaries whose lives illumine the most heroic pages of Canada's early history. Among them was Father Fillatre, Professor of Philosophy, whose recent death in his native France took place at the age of sixty-nine years.

Born in 1848 at Gorron, in the diocese of Laval, Father Fillatre was ordained priest in 1871. Coming to Canada with a band of apostolic missionaries recruited for the Indian missions by the late Bishop Grandin, Father Fillatre made his profession as an Oblate of Mary Immaculate in 1875. But the Indians of the then unsettled North West were never to see the young priest whose generous zeal impelled him to place his life at their service. Recognizing his intellectual gifts and his scholarly attainments, his superiors added Father Fillatre to the teaching staff of the College of Ottawa.

The students of Ottawa who accepted things as a matter of course at the time, looking backward across the intervening years are now better able to realize the heroic devotion of these scholarly men to the duties they assumed toward the youth of a strange land and foreign tongue. Their simple, direct, Catholic point of view informed and inspired all their work for Catholic education. In another column we have quoted Hilaire Belloc's reference to a matter that he never tires insisting upon. In English-speaking countries Catholics are immersed in an ocean of non-Catholic if not anti-Catholic thought and attitude on everything. It would be difficult to measure the influence on Catholic life and thought of those learned sons of Catholic France who devoted themselves to Catholic education in Canada.

As Professor of Philosophy, Dr. Fillatre played a big part in this work. He was enthusiastic. He made metaphysics intensely interesting. Few indeed who sat beneath him but will remember with life-long gratitude the interest, the charm even, with which he invested those metaphysical principles which are the basis of all clear thinking and of all definite knowledge.

Though the College which he loved and for which he labored was departed from the lines laid down by its founders, Dr. Fillatre's influence will live in the minds and hearts and characters of his students.

ORANGE AND GREEN

The magnificent advance of the British troops goes far to prove that no German position is impregnable, that to the allied armies fully equipped and imbued with indomitable will nothing is impossible.

This passage from the account of the Associated Press Correspondent will be read with mingled feelings of regret and hope by millions:

"On all sides was heard great praise of the Irish troops, which participated in the victorious sweep over the very center of the Messines Ridge and to the farthest objective line beyond. Men from the south of Ireland fought alongside organizations from Ulster. There was considerable rivalry among the Irish forces as to which would make the better showing. When the fighting came, however, there was nothing to choose between them."

The Irishmen swept forward irresistibly and everywhere the German lines fell away, broken by their assaults. They fought gallantly and impetuously, and the only difficulty experienced was in holding them back to the fixed schedule. On the position map at one of the British headquarters offices the South Irishmen are represented by green flags and the Ulstermen by orange. They fly side by side."

No true Irishman throughout the world but will feel a thrill of pride and exultation on reading of his gallant countrymen, Orange and Catholic, side by side sweeping irresistibly forward united in a common cause, a common victory, many lying side by side in a common grave. It is a thousand pities that sordid politics can still divide at home the brothers of those who across the channel fight and die side by side, rivals only in gallant and heroic service to a cause which transcends all traditional divisions and dissensions.

Naturally one turns to the Irish Convention, the great war measure now under way to effect that long desired and long deferred settlement which it is hoped will bring about in Ireland the conditions prevailing at the front.

Through the Literary Digest we learn that the Irish World and the Freeman's Journal of New York regard the proposed Convention as a "very clever plan for discrediting Ireland and the Irish cause before the world devised by a very unscrupulous English politician." It has been stated, also, that the Carsonites will enter the Convention with the Premier's pledge that there will be no coercion for Ulster. These views, we have every reason to think, are utterly groundless. They are utterly incompatible with the Premier's statement:

"Evidence has accumulated from many quarters as to the importance from the War point of view of getting this controversy settled in order to win the good will and co-operation of the Irish race throughout the world. The support of Ireland as a whole is essential to victory. For that reason I appeal to Irishmen of all sections and especially the patriotic spirit of Ulster, to help."

Even more emphatic and convincing was Lord Curzon's solemn statement in the House of Lords that the proposed means of settling the Irish question was a war measure as urgent as any taken since the outbreak of the War.

It would be utterly folly to attempt anything less than real and permanent settlement by consent. Ulster political leaders derived their strength from the support of the English Unionists. There is every evidence that this support will be forfeited if Ulster representatives assume a truculent and irreconcilable attitude. Partition is out of the question. There is but one reservation made by Lloyd George; that concerns the British treasury; he could not commit himself beforehand to any and every demand that might be made on it. Beyond that he pledged the British Parliament to carry into effect any decision arrived at by the Convention. The care taken, also, to make the Convention thoroughly representative of all phases of Irish opinion is an additional guarantee of a sincere desire to reach a solution of the problem.

Without any disposition to minimize the difficulties in the way of arriving at a settlement by consent of all the conflicting elements of Irish opinion and sentiment, we think it well to state our belief that the full force of Government influence is honestly behind this Government measure. Behind it, too, is the overwhelming sentiment of the people of Great Britain. If it failed it will not be for the reasons alleged by the distrustful and suspicious element of Irish-American opinion which is voiced by the Irish World.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

THE EXPANSION of English as a world-language is demonstrated in a foot note in the concluding volume of "The Cambridge History of English Literature." Whereas at the beginning of the seventeenth century there were about 6,000,000 people speaking the English tongue, and this number was very greatly exceeded by users of either French, German, Italian or Spanish, to-day English is spoken by about double the aggregate of French, Italian or Spanish, and by half as many again as speak German or Russian.

ONE OF the curious reversions of history has come to light in regard to a statue of Our Lady in the Dominican Priory Church at Haverstock Hill, London. The statue is of great interest in itself, being the work of a Flemish artist of the fifteenth century, and the fact that it adorned a pre-Reformation Dominican church in England renders it singularly fitting that it should now be restored to public veneration in a church of that Order. The curious reversion we speak of, however, is that the pedestal and canopy of old oak once formed part of the choir-stalls of St. Giles, Edinburgh, which were demolished and thrown into the street by the "reforming" zealots fired into iconoclastic fervor by the redoubtable John Knox. That it should have escaped destruction entirely at their hands and after three centuries be now restored to sacred uses is surely suggestive as well as curious. There are doubtless many such relics of a holy past still in existence and destined to similar restoration as the years go on.

THAT ENGLAND in particular is in these times of stress more than ever casting wistful glances back into the past is evident. The ruined way-

side shrines of Catholic France have told their own tale and preached the most eloquent of sermons to the spiritually destitute soldier from across the Channel. Time was when the crucifix was to him but the symbol of idolatry; now, as the result of his experiences, it has come to be the evidence of a living faith in the heart of his Catholic comrade. On his way to the trenches, or lying stricken upon the battlefield, these wayside crucifixes have been ever before him, and in the silent look, we are told by correspondent after correspondent, he has found strength or consolation. Little is it to be wondered at, therefore, that all through England a movement is on foot to erect similar wayside shrines—a movement which, if persevered in, must result in a re-born faith.

THE PART borne by the women and old men of France in maintaining the welfare and efficiency of their armies in the field is well described by a writer in the Cornhill Magazine—M. E. Clarke. "From the grey solitudes of Brittany," he says, "to the sunny hillsides of the Pyrenees, the peasants of France have kept the land under cultivation during nearly three years of war. Their young men have all gone to fight, and many of the men who are no longer young—for no part of the population has given so generously to the active army as the peasantry."

"IN CONSEQUENCE," continues this writer, "the greater part of the work on the land has fallen to the lot of the women, helped by the old men and the children. What they have achieved is stupendous, and their endurance has been epic. The results of their work have necessarily varied with the difference in climate, soil and experience; but from end to end of the country there is only one thing to say of the French peasants: their effort in the War has been magnificently patriotic." Which would seem to indicate that not by an infidel government, or a frankly secular press will the ultimate destiny of France be determined, but by the simple faith, the patient endurance, and the steadfast loyalty to all that is greatest and noblest in their history of the Catholic peasantry.

THERE CAN be no doubt that the German propaganda has up to the present time been very active in Spain, especially among those of the "Intellectuals" who, in disregard of theological considerations, have affected to see in Teutonic Kultur the surest antidote to political unrest. Some of the clergy also are known to have, on the same plea, imbibed German ideas. The Bishops, however, and the most influential classes in Spain are attached to the ideals of the Allies. The former have as a body made it clear that they regard German philosophy as utterly opposed to Christian teaching, and that German ascendancy would mean a severe blow to the Church. Accordingly, they are doing everything possible to counteract the German propaganda. The Archbishop of Tenacona, has openly declared that Catholics cannot in good faith support the cause of Lutheran Prussia. With such ideas prevalent in the highest ecclesiastical circles, and with the national temper inflamed into white heat over the ruthless sinking of Spanish ships, it is not unreasonable to assume that the country will yet wheel into line on the Allied side.

COMMENTING UPON Montreal as the meeting-place this year of the Presbyterian General Assembly, the official organ of that body has this to say:

"This is the meeting place of the two races, separated by language and religion, in whose hands the destiny of our country chiefly lies. What wisdom, what forbearance, what sympathetic insight into the standpoint of others; what high nobility of temper and of aim, are needed if we are to find a way by which our differences may be overcome and the divergent elements united in the task of building up a happy, prosperous, and God-fearing Canadian nation!"

WORDS VERY true and very timely, it must be owned. But, it is pertinent to ask, does our contemporary regard the Presbyterian scheme of "French Evangelization," persevered in for a long course of years with every accompaniment of slander and vituperation against the Faith of the French Canadian and against his priests, as consistent with this affirmation?

THE PRESBYTERY of Winnipeg, urging upon the Assembly the immediate consummation of Union with the Methodist and Congregational bodies, delivers itself after this fashion:

"As Parliaments and other deliberative bodies are legislating in the midst of the terrible War in Europe, the Churches may well rise as soon as possible to the high position of accomplishing a Union in order that the Saviour's prayer may be somewhat answered, 'That they all may be one!'"

"Somewhat answered" is rather good! But why not widen their vision and look beyond the petty amalgamation which these good people have in mind to that larger union which, having God-given Authority as its centre, can alone make for permanency and ensure that Christ's prayer shall be wholly answered.

T. P. O'CONNOR'S LETTER

IRISH HOPES AND FEARS CENTRE IN THE CONVENTION

BELIEF THAT SANITY AND GOOD SENSE WILL PREVAIL

SPECIAL CABLE TO THE CATHOLIC RECORD (Copyright 1917, Central News)

London, June 9th.—The prospects for the Irish convention continue to rise and fall like a barometer. Each passing day sees a change. Delay, which is always dangerous, has been greatly increased by the action of the Orangemen. The government plan was ready more than a week ago and the Irish leaders without accepting any responsibility but in order to help expedite matters, agreed to the proposals but the Orangemen balked and insisted on first holding a committee meeting rather than a general council. And so the days have passed without anything definite being accomplished.

If this attitude of Orange irreconcilability be persisted in, it is quite possible, though not probable, that the proposed convention for the settlement of the Irish Home Rule question may never sit. Under the government plan every county, city and town in Ireland would be represented, thus covering the entire urban and rural population. Five members were allowed the Orangemen, only about one-fifth of their representation. The same number of delegates was allowed the Southern Unionists and three members to the Protestant churches as compared with four allotted to the Catholics. Though the former represents only a fourth of the population, what the Orangemen dread is that all parties in Ireland, including the Southern Unionists, will combine against partition and partition still seems to be their unalterable goal.

On the other hand Murphy of the Independents is leaving no stone unturned in his attempts to wreck the convention by the vilification of the Irish leaders and mendacious suggestions that they are helping Premier Lloyd George to rig the convention and by also demanding the most impossible condition before they will consent to enter the convention.

The difficulty of finding a satisfactory chairman for the body still continues. General Smuts, of Boer War fame, would willingly consent to preside over the convention if all parties equally demanded him, but the Orangemen suspect him too good a home ruler. Speaker Lowther of the House of Commons, who is possibly the next choice, finds he has too much work already on his hand to accept the chairmanship even if the various factions could agree on him. Other names which have been considered are Lord Sloughnessy and Lord Chief Justice Madden of Victoria.

If the convention, in spite of all the obstacles thrown in the way, finally does succeed in convening it is quite possible that business and professional men, of whom fifteen will be nominated by the government, may finally induce the politicians to get together and agree to some acceptable compromise. However, I certainly feel that I must warn the American public, especially the Irish section of it, that the proposed convention will no more end than it will begin the Irish question.

In the meantime signs continue and even multiply that in our own interest and that of our Allies, England must in some manner settle the question for all time. The protest of the Russian Government joins that of American opinion against the very great inconsistency of fighting for the small nations and the principle of nationality in Europe while leaving both principles unrealized in Ireland. And indeed, England to-day is much more anxious for a settlement of this long disputed question than is Ireland.

A state of unrest still persists in many sections of Ireland, although Joseph Devlin received one of the biggest receptions of his life last Sunday in Connemara. He was met at every station along his route by enthusiastic and cheering crowds.

If the convention can soon be summoned: if its composition is such as to satisfy Ireland and then if its membership is able to reach a reasonable compromise, Ireland will probably soon settle down as all that is sane and honest remains inflexibly attached to the Irish party. The release of the Sinn Fein prisoners will certainly take place, the delay in the

matter being entirely due to a desire not to give the Orangemen any further reason for delaying or refusing to take part in the proposed convention.

ON THE BATTLE LINE

BRITISH FORCES yesterday completed an operation commenced during the previous night north of the Scarpe River, resulting in the capture of enemy positions on a front of a mile and the taking of a number of prisoners. General Haig's brief report of the event says: "The British gained all their objectives."—Globe, June 7.

ADDITIONAL REPORTS of the British victory of Thursday, official and unofficial alike, show that its importance has not been exaggerated in any particular. It was a win of magnitude, in which every arm of the service played a part. Striking testimony to its importance comes in the German official report, which admits the loss of Wyschaete, Messines and other points, and speaks of a withdrawal into positions between the bend of the canal north of Hallebeke and the Douve basin, west of Warneton. This line may not be held by the Germans, despite their talk, as behind it are the Comines Canal and the Lys River. Another successful advance by the British would mean that the foe would be compelled to retreat across waterways under conditions of peril. It is not unlikely that the enemy will prefer to continue his retreat farther east. The redemption of Belgium and the freeing of France will not be speedy accomplishments, but they are well begun. A report that cavalry is again active against the Germans is of interest. Over 6,400 prisoners have been taken by the British, the ground consolidated, and several German counter-attacks have been repulsed, according to last night's British official reports.

GERMAN DEFENCE upon the machinery of war has received a rude shock as the result of Thursday's fighting. For more than two years the enemy had worked almost incessantly to strengthen and maintain the Messines Ridge. He had applied the lessons of the bitter experiences of the Somme and Arras battles to the problem of making stronger still a position he already considered to be impregnable. And then he lost it in a day, because the British, whom he once despised, have shown themselves to be more than a match in devising weapons of warfare not only to meet the best that the German could use, but to make that best of no avail in the hour of testing. Proof of the state of efficiency attained by the British in the weapons and the art of war is carried in all the phases of the latest success, and in none more than in the statement that the losses were light.

FRENCH FORCES may soon have to bear the brunt of a tremendous offensive by the enemy in an attempt to save his face following his defeat by the British. Southeast of St. Quentin and on the Aisne front the artillery bombarded the French lines with great violence, and in the former sector made attempts to leave their trenches in order to attack. These, the French reports say, were frustrated. There is no reason yet for abandoning the idea that the French have a big attack in preparation, and careful reading of the reports from day to day justifies the conclusion that the German activity is based on the hope of defeating this plan in its inception.

REPORTS THAT Austria has sent a peace mission to Russia probably have a basis in truth, though they may be denied. Austria has everything to gain by an early peace. She has suffered much since she set about with a light heart to whip little Serbia. The Italians again report the repulse of further enemy attacks on the Carso.—Globe, June 9.

VATICAN GAINING PRESTIGE AS WORLD FACTOR

EVEN FRENCH ARE RELUCANT RESUMPTION OF RELATIONS WITH HOLY SEE

The signs of the times in France are said to show a remarkable change of opinion. "Republicans of the left" are demanding the resumption of diplomatic relations with the Vatican. Three important articles from the same source appear in the authoritative in a number of Debats, and show that the national interests demand such representation. Particular attention is paid to the questions which will arise when peace comes, and especially those of the Orient, where the Holy See has great influence.

All are beginning to feel the truth of Mgr. Glorieux's words regarding the power and prestige of the Papacy and the reasons for the humiliating and complete failure of the Hague convention. This eloquent bishop says of the Peace Conference and the Pope: "He will be there, as head of the Catholic Church, as temporal Sovereign of the Vatican, in virtue of his diplomatic right, still vigorous and always recognized and practiced, as mediator, the most accredited by the actual role and prestige of the Papacy, and as the most disinterested arbitrator to direct moral conflicts, sanction decisions and make them obligatory on the conscience. The nations do not wish to renew the fiasco of the Hague Congress when the absence of the Pope derived the conventions of diplomacy and of the